

Assembly Hall, the BYU Marriott Center, and locations in many countries around the world. We note that Elders Derek A. Cuthbert and Devere Harris are seated on the stand in the Assembly Hall, and Elders Robert E. Wells and Jack H. Goaslind are seated on the stand in the BYU Marriott Center.

For the information of the brethren in outlying areas, we announce that at the session this afternoon, Robert Edward Sackley and Larry Lionel Kendrick were sustained as members of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and that Sister Michaelene P. Grassli was sustained as president of the General Primary, with Betty Jo Nelson Jepsen as her first counselor and Ruth Broadbent Wright as her second counselor. Sister Dwan J. Young was released as general Primary president to accompany her husband, who has been called to serve as president of the Canada Calgary Mission.

All of you are special guests tonight, but we are pleased to have in attendance in the Tabernacle Brother Michael Smith, a member of the All-American Academic basketball team, and Brother Brian Taylor, who was a teammate of his on the BYU WAC championship team.

The singing during this session will be furnished by a men's choir from the Ogden and Mount Ogden regions under the direction of Brother Jerry F. Simon with Brother Clay Christiansen at the organ.

We shall begin by the choir singing "The Iron Rod." Following the singing, Elder Hugh W. Pinnock, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will offer the invocation.

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The choir sang "The Iron Rod."  
Elder Hugh W. Pinnock offered the invocation.

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### President Monson

The choir will now favor us with that beautiful number, the favorite of President Benson's, "How Great Thou Art." Following the choir number, Elder James E. Faust of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will speak to us.

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The choir sang "How Great Thou Art."

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## Elder James E. Faust

### Responsibility to the sisters

It is an awesome and humbling responsibility to address the priesthood of the Church. I feel impressed, brethren, to speak to the men and the boys who hold the priesthood of Almighty God concerning our responsibility to the faithful sisters of the Church. You might wonder why I would want to address this subject. I wonder myself, but I am prompted to, and feel there is a need. I believe that we as members of the Church, and as the holders of the priesthood, will never achieve our potential without having in our lives the blessings of the unique quali-

ties of our mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, and all of the good women of the Church.

Perhaps you have all heard the story, and it is just a story, of the insensitive man who held two season tickets to the basketball games at the local university. His wife died, and a day or two later he went to the game. The seat previously occupied by his wife was empty. Someone said, "Those seats of yours must be very expensive. Couldn't you find a member of the family to come and sit in your wife's seat?" The man answered, "No, they couldn't come. They've all gone to her funeral."

I fear that we brethren often get far too engrossed in the apparent importance of our own activities and relegate the less visible contributions of the sisters to a lesser role. They serve very quietly and effectively, often unnoticed, unrecognized, and unappreciated.

### **Husbands, love your wives**

The priesthood places upon the fathers the responsibility of being the head of the family and the home. What does being the head of the family mean? It is a priesthood power, and the Doctrine and Covenants, section 121, makes it clear that all priesthood responsibilities must be exercised "only by persuasion, . . . by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned" (D&C 121:41). Holding the priesthood does not mean that a man is a power-broker, or that he sits on a throne, dictating in macho terms, or that he is superior in any way. Rather, he is a leader by authority of example. Paul's counsel to the Ephesians included, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). As Christ lifts us all, so must we, rather than put down women or anyone.

Nowhere does the doctrine of this church declare that men are superior to women. Paul said to the Corinthians, "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:11). Each brings his or her own separate and unique strengths to the family and the Church. Women are not just cooks, stewards of our homes, or servants. They are much more. They are the enrichment of humanity.

### **Young men, learn to appreciate women**

It is most important that you Aaronic Priesthood holders learn what strengths you have as men. Possibly you were foreordained to great priesthood callings. You need to learn that these masculine strengths are great, noble, and God-given; however, they also have some

limitations. Because of these limitations, it is equally important to learn how the influence of good women in our lives can complement these strengths and overcome these limitations. As you walk on the way to eternity, it is important to gain some understanding and appreciation for the wonderful endowments and callings God has given uniquely to women.

### **The highest place of honor**

I wonder if we really understand the fullness of these queenly endowments. If we could recognize the true greatness of these women, we would not treat them as we sometimes do. The world often uses and abuses women. We holders of the priesthood should honor good women in and out of the Church as true sisters, not as objects and sources of service or pleasure. Our consideration for women should spring from esteem for the daughters of Zion and an awareness of their true identity more than from a concern with their functions and roles.

President Ezra Taft Benson has stated, "Man is at his best when complemented by a good woman's natural influence" (in *Woman* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979], p. 69).

In 1935 the First Presidency stated, "The true spirit of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gives to woman the highest place of honor in human life" (James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-75], 6:5). This has been confirmed by President Heber J. Grant: "Without the wonderful work of the women I realize that the Church would have been a failure" (*Gospel Standards*, comp. G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1941], p. 150).

### **Influence of good women**

You young men who hold the Aaronic Priesthood need to know that you cannot achieve your potential without the influence of good women, particularly your mother and, in a few years, a good

wife. But it is too soon for you deacons and teachers to think seriously about dating. Dating, along with temple marriage, will come at the appropriate season in your life. You have to be elders to go to the temple.

In preparation for that surpassing experience, it is important for you to learn now to appreciate the special gifts of the good sisters of the Church, whom God has so abundantly endowed with talents. Your eternal helpmate will gently hold you to your potential. She will give loving and thoughtful encouragement, as well as comfort and discipline. She will also lift you up when you are down and bring you back to earth when you are puffed up. She will bless your life in countless ways. As President Kimball said, "Brethren, we cannot be exalted without our wives. There can be no heaven without righteous women" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, p. 7; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, p. 5).

### Creation's masterpiece

In recent years a debate has raged about the equality of the sexes. Women are not in any sense lesser creations than men. In fact, they lose something when they are compared to men. President David O. McKay stated, "A beautiful, modest, gracious woman is creation's masterpiece" (*Gospel Ideals* [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953], p. 449). Daniel Defoe, the great English writer, stated, "A woman of sense and manners is the finest and most delicate part of God's creation, the glory of her Maker. . . . He gave the best gift either God could bestow or man receive" ("The Education of Women," in *England in Literature*, ed. Robert C. Pooley [Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1963], pp. 261-62).

Surely the secret citadel of women's inner strength is their spirituality. In this they equal and even surpass men, as they do in faith, morality, and commitment when truly converted to the gospel. They have "more trust in the Lord [and] more hope in his word" ("More Holiness Give Me," *Hymns* [1985], no. 131). This inner

spiritual sense seems to give them a certain resilience to cope with sorrow, trouble, and uncertainty.

### Respect women

Any form of physical or mental abuse to any woman is not worthy of any priesthood holder. President Gordon B. Hinckley has stated, "I feel likewise that it ill becomes any man who holds the priesthood of God to abuse his wife in any way, to demean or injure or take undue advantage of the woman who is the mother of his children, the companion of his life, and his companion for eternity if he has received that greater blessing" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, p. 112; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, p. 77). This, of course, means verbal as well as physical abuse.

A husband should always try to treat his wife with the greatest courtesy and respect, holding her in the highest esteem. He should speak to her in a kind and a soft manner, showing his love by word and deed. As she feels this love and tenderness she will mirror it and return it tenfold.

I believe that of the two parties in a male-female relationship, the bearer of the priesthood has the greater duty to see that the commandments of God, the standards of the Church, and parental authority are honored. Likewise, when male and female violate these commandments, I believe the priesthood holder is generally more blameworthy because he has been entrusted with the great, righteous power to act in the name of God. One who violates this trust demeans both this ultimate power and himself and seriously injures the woman who has his confidence.

### Responsibilities while dating

When you boys become priests and elders and begin to date, you need to know that the best place to date is at church and church-related activities. As you date, you will be entrusted by a girl's parents with their most cherished blessing. You will have the responsibility to protect not only her well-being, but also

her honor, even above your own safety. One of the duties of manhood is to safeguard womanhood. When you become a parent, you cannot shirk this responsibility to be concerned for the dating of your own children.

Before my first mission, when I was attending the university, I invited a lovely young lady to attend the university's junior prom dinner dance. I had dated this fine girl a few times before. Every time we came home from a date, her father would be in his big leather chair, fully dressed, waiting for us.

As I went to pick her up the evening of the dance at the university, her father said, "What time will you be home?" I responded, "Sir, as you know, this is a special dinner-dance at the university; the dinner is scheduled to be served after the dance, so we would like to stay out later than usual." I added, "You may not wish to wait up for us that late." He simply said, "I will be waiting for you." The dance was special, but the dinner service was terribly slow. I soon developed indigestion. The longer it went, the worse I felt. When we got back to her home, I found the father had kept his promise. There in his big leather chair was this wonderful, concerned family patriarch waiting for one of his fine daughters to be safely back under his own roof. He said something like this, "What keeps you out so late, James?"

### **The covenant of marriage**

It is a grave responsibility and a transcendent blessing when a man and a woman make vows and covenants and receive the ordinances of marriage. When within the covenant of marriage a man and a woman invoke the great powers of creation, they literally become partners with God in creating new human life. Thereafter a man has a sacred obligation of support, care, and protection for his helpmate and the children he has fathered.

### **Women's roles**

In my lifetime the women's role in administering care and mercy has changed. They seem to have less time to magnify the feelings of charity and benevolence that the Prophet Joseph said come naturally to them (see *History of The Church*, 4:605). Life has become harder and more complex; in some ways, it demands more of all of us. It has become more difficult for mothers and wives to meet all of the challenges and expectations that are placed upon them. Our seemingly insatiable appetites for material things suggest that probably these demands could very well increase in the future.

If our good women are to continue in their primary roles as nurturers, teachers, homemakers, and managers, they will need more support and help in order for them to find time to give compassionate service to their families and others. If this help is withheld, our lives, our homes, the Church, and the world will be the poorer, for so much love, gentleness, and understanding will be lost.

You young men have had your mothers to lovingly nurse you when you were ill, wash your clothes, cook your meals, transport you, wait on you, and generally respond to your needs. All my life, a good woman, either my mother or my wife, has prepared most of my nourishment, kept my clothes clean, and provided a loving atmosphere at home. They did this willingly because of their great desire to show their love through service. But marriage and mothering is more than the routine of washing socks, making beds, and putting food on the table. It is also not being taken for granted; it is being appreciated and being appropriately thanked. It also means being helped.

A married woman often has many roles, which may include wife, grandmother, mother, daughter, nurturer, executive, caretaker, friend, sister, and so forth. Even with the additional demands placed upon women in our day, men generally have not responded with commensurate helpfulness. Recent

research indicates that men have increased their helping in the home only twenty-seven additional minutes per week. The conclusion is, "Women are still the primary caretakers and managers" (Mary Lou Simms, "Women Learning to Let Go of Roles—And Guilt, Too," *Deseret News*, 25 Feb. 1988, sec. C, p. 3). They also carry so much of the burdens of the kingdom.

President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., referring to the faithful women of the early Church, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children, stated: "From that time until now woman has comforted and nursed the Church. She has borne more than half the burdens, she has made more than half the sacrifices, she has suffered the most of the heartaches and sorrows" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1940, p. 21).

### The highest, holiest service

The First Presidency of this church has said: "Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind" (*Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:178). The priesthood cannot work out its destiny, nor can God's purposes be fulfilled, without our

helpmates. Mothers perform a labor the priesthood cannot do. For this supernal gift of life the priesthood should have love unbounded for the mothers of their children. Men should give them honor, gratitude, reverence, respect, and praise. A man who fails to gratefully acknowledge his debt to his own mother who gave him life is insensitive to the Holy Spirit. I wish to acknowledge to both my mother and my wife a debt which is so great I shall never be able to repay it.

In conclusion, I wish to repeat that I do not believe that God's purposes on earth will ever be achieved without the influence, strength, love, support, and special gifts of the elect women of God. They are entitled to our deepest veneration, our fullest appreciation, and our most profound respect. I believe angels attend them in their motherly ministry. That we may so honor them I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Monson

Elder James E. Faust of the Council of the Twelve Apostles has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to listen to Bishop Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

## Bishop Henry B. Eyring

### Value of consistent effort

From the islands of the Pacific to the highlands of South America, I've seen boys working to turn dreams into reality. In fact, I've seen it so often that it merges into one image, one picture. It's of a small boy, maybe nine or ten, in shorts, barefoot, and with a torn shirt. He's on a patch of dirt, alone, and he's looking down at a white-and-black-checked ball. He takes a step toward it, his leg swings through, and the ball shoots off, about seven feet above the ground, where it might zip past a goalie into the net—except there's no goalie and no net;

there's just the boy and the ball. And then he runs to the ball, puts it in place with his foot, and kicks it. And he does it over and over again.

You don't know where he lives, but you know that he'll take the ball home with him and that more than likely he keeps it near the place he sleeps. He sees it when he gets up and when he goes to bed. He may even dream about that ball shooting toward the goal.

You know that because you've done something like it yourself. It may have been a basketball. I can remember looking down at the ball in my hands on one freezing winter day and seeing my bloody