

Eternal Perspectives

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In the riveting story depicted in Genesis and portrayed in Cecil B. DeMille's great film *The Ten Commandments*, Egypt's pharaoh, Ramses II, stood on an elevated vantage point and witnessed the parting of the Red Sea as the children of Israel crossed on dry land. Subsequently, he watched his prized soldiers and chariots follow in pursuit as the waters closed in upon them and washed them away to perish in the sea. In the movie version, he returned to his palace, where his queen taunted him about the lack of response from the Egyptian gods, and Ramses spoke this great line: "Moses' god is God."

Pharaoh's very trying experiences had finally led him to a previously denied perspective. Perspective is how we see things from where we are. But perspectives may change, depending upon our experiences and circumstances.

The God of the Old Testament was Jehovah, Jesus Christ, who came into the world to be our Savior. He is the literal Son of God the Father, whose plan he was chosen to fulfill.

From your vantage point today, what do you know and believe about God? Can you say, as did Ramses of old, that Moses' god is God? And what does that mean? Do you conduct your life differently because of what you believe? Do you know what God wants for you?

I believe that the time to act is now. There is some urgency for us to appraise our perspectives, just as when Joshua of old challenged us, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15). As the second coming of the Savior approaches, circumstances will try men's souls to the point that, "if possible," even the very elect shall be deceived (see Matthew 24:24, Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22).

Recently we have been warned again. In the October 1998 general conference of the Church, President Gordon B. Hinckley said:

I am suggesting that the time has come to get our houses in order. . . .

. . . There is a portent of stormy weather ahead to which we had better give heed. . . .

*. . . That's all I have to say about it, but I wish to say it with all the emphasis of which I am capable. ["To the Boys and to the Men," *Ensign*, November 1998, pp. 53–54]*

As all of us will be tried and tested, how can we find our true anchor, our iron rod, and our safe and holy place to stand?

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What are your challenges? What are your perspectives on living each day? What are your *lived* value systems? To what do you look forward in your future? When I asked a group of my young friends this question, there were some wonderful and interesting answers: “I want to be successful; I want to have a good and loving family; I wish to have eternal life, but I can’t do lots of the things I should do until I get out of school; I want to have lots of money; I want to have good friends.” One answer stood out from the others: “I really haven’t thought about it that much.”

For some of us it is easy to spend our time drifting from day to day doing that which seems most pressing while giving little thought to that which is most important. We need to understand that what we do determines the direction we travel and the destination at which we will arrive. What we value will be what we spend our time and effort on. From a higher perspective, then, my question is, Is what we are spending our time on worth it?

A certain man, having lived a long and productive life, was getting ready to meet his Maker. One night he had a dream during which he was told that because he had been generous with his considerable worldly wealth he would be permitted to take his most valued possession with him when he passed on to the other world. The next morning, the old man set out to put his affairs in order. He liquidated his assets and gave half of all he had to charities and other good purposes. The other half he had converted into gold bars. Upon his death, so the story goes, Saint Peter met him and welcomed him to his new home. But when he noticed the large and heavy bag that the man was carrying, Saint Peter reminded him that no one could bring any earthly goods with them to this place. The old man described his dream and indicated that he had been given special permission to bring this treasure with him.

“Okay,” said Saint Peter, “if you have permission. But may I see what you chose as your greatest treasure?” When Saint Peter looked into the bag, he stepped back in amazement and questioned, “For your treasure you brought *pavement*?”

It is a matter of perspective. What we cling to here on the earth that seems so valuable to us may really be quite valueless in the true sense. If we really *believe* that God is a real and living God, then how can this knowledge alter, change, or determine our perspective?

As recorded in the Pearl of Great Price, Moses learned *his* true identity. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “And, behold, thou art my son” (Moses 1:4). But then,

behold, Satan came tempting him, saying: Moses, son of man, worship me.

And it came to pass that Moses looked upon Satan and said: Who art thou? For behold, I am a son of God, in the similitude of his Only Begotten; and where is thy glory, that I should worship thee? . . .

Get thee hence, Satan; deceive me not; for God said unto me: Thou art after the similitude of mine Only Begotten. [Moses 1:12, 13, 16]

Like Moses, we are sons and daughters of a living God. This knowledge of our true identity can change our perspective when we realize how much the Lord loves and values each one of us. It is important to recognize that “the worth of souls is great in the sight of God” (D&C 18:10) and that we are literally his spirit children: “He created man, male and female, after his own image and in his own likeness” (D&C 20:18).

Just as Satan tried to deceive Moses, so also will he try to deceive us and influence our perspectives. However, we can say, as Moses did, “Get thee hence, Satan; deceive me not.” He tries to deceive us by making the facade of sinful, worldly pleasures attractive enough to overshadow the values that the Lord would have us live.

Moses' knowledge of his identity as a son of God gave him the perspective to see Satan as the impostor he is.

If we have developed a personal testimony of our Savior, we will have strength to face our problems and challenges. As our friend, he will stand by us and protect us against the temptations of Satan. Although we will still have problems and trials, our capacity to handle them will increase. We will be able to say, as did the Apostle Paul:

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. [2 Corinthians 4:8–9]

In some ways we live in a world of deceit. Satan is the master of deceit. He truly desires the fruits of this generation and sculpts wrong behaviors that are accepted and even flaunted in contemporary society and popularized in the media. Values and ideas that worldly perspectives define as acceptable almost always lead us to unhappiness and disappointment.

God knows you individually. He knows what you can be. He has the complete perspective of what you can become.

Some years ago a newspaper reporter was assigned to interview workers on a construction site to get a firsthand story about the project. He approached one man who was breaking great rocks and filing them down in order to have smooth and even surfaces and corners.

"What are you doing here with these huge rocks?" he asked.

Looking up, annoyed, the man said, "What do you think I'm doing? I hack away at these filthy rocks all day long. My back is bent and I'm tired. Day after day I do the same thing!"

"Well," said the reporter, "this certainly isn't a very pleasant job. I don't envy you."

He approached another man who appeared to be doing the same thing. The reporter was

hesitant to interrupt him but finally asked, "Can you tell me what you're doing, sir?"

The man stood up, wiped his sweaty brow, and, pointing to a rough but very large foundation, said, "Can't you see? We are building a cathedral. Its spires will rise to the sky, and my children and grandchildren will remember that I had a great part in it."

"Oh," said the reporter, "this is a very important thing you are doing."

"Yes," said the man. "How lucky I am."

Two people can be doing the same thing but with quite different perspectives. Our perspective becomes the lens through which we view life.

Our continuous mission in this life is to search for God and, in finding him, receive him completely in our lives. Christ said:

But if ye receive me in the world, then shall ye know me, and shall receive your exaltation; that where I am ye shall be also.

This is eternal lives—to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. I am he. Receive ye, therefore, my law. [D&C 132:23–24]

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

On the evening prior to his crucifixion, the Savior met with his apostles at what has come to be called the Last Supper. In the scriptural account of that evening's events, Christ told of the qualification for gaining eternal life: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Commenting on this scripture, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote:

It is one thing to know about God and another to know him. We know about him when we learn that he is a personal being in whose image man is created; when we learn that the Son is in the express image of his Father's person; when we learn that both the Father and the Son possess certain specified

attributes and powers. But we know them, in the sense of gaining eternal life, when we enjoy and experience the same things they do. [McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971), 1:762; emphasis added]

Now, here, I believe, is the key to changing an earthly perspective to an eternal one. Continuing, Elder McConkie said:

To know God is to think what he thinks, to feel what he feels, to have the power he possesses, to comprehend the truths he understands, and to do what he does. Those who know God become like him, and have his kind of life, which is eternal life. [Ibid.]

Here is the point I want to make: Our perspective must be God's perspective or, in the end, it will be worthless. Elder Neal A. Maxwell likes to quote William Law, an English clergyman of the 18th century, who said it this way: "If you have not chosen the Kingdom of God, it will make in the end no difference what you have chosen instead" (quoted in Maxwell, *The Smallest Part* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1973], p. 1). What we value must be what God values, or in the end it will be worthless. It is all a matter of perspective. We are living in an environment of earthly viewpoints or vistas or vantage points, and we must step back and see things as they really are. But it takes more than distance for us to see from the eyes of an eternal perspective.

I have chosen four possible aspects of earthly perspectives that keep us from seeking and finding an eternal perspective:

Number one: There are some folks who are simply disinterested in spiritual concerns and future consequences. When times are good, it is easy to forget our dependence on the Lord. We drift in our comfort zone without making clear commitments on which perspectives we will focus our lives. Being disinterested is possibly the most difficult to

correct. It is too easy to take spiritual things lightly and casually.

Like my young friend who just hadn't given his future much thought, we need to be reminded that our time is short. It is easy to drift along in relatively smooth waters until we reach the rapids. A prudent perspective would be to prepare before it is too late. As the five foolish virgins found at midnight, it was too late to buy the needed oil for the lamps. They were not permitted to enter the wedding party with the bridegroom. How tragic it will be if we have chosen to avoid the responsibility of aligning our perspectives with God's until it is too late. Alma teaches us a significant principle: "For behold, *this life* is the *time* for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of *this life* is the day for men to perform their labors" (Alma 34:32; emphasis added).

We cannot know when it will be our time to be called home. "For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his" (Alma 34:35).

A very wonderful man who suffered serious health problems and was on a course of temporary recovery shared his sacred feelings. The late Rex E. Lee, president of this university, spoke from this pulpit and shared how his perspective had changed as his life had been in a precarious balance and then spared for a time. In essence he said that each day was a precious gift from God and that he would never again take one day for granted. We must not waste the time we have here to work out our salvation. Let's remember that each day is precious, and opportunities abound to focus our perspective on the paths that the Lord would have us take.

Number two: Being *deceived* can keep us from receiving eternal blessings. We have already acknowledged that Satan tempts us by deceit. Things are not always what they seem to be.

A young wife may feel much pain as she longs to have a child but is unable to, and another may have children easily but find raising them inconvenient and disruptive to her personal plans.

From the perspective of a six-year-old child, it seems like Christmas will never come. But for an adult it seems like the time before Christmas gets shorter and shorter. Young people think they will never get old. But time does not stand still, and older people wonder how it happens so quickly. There are endless examples of distortion of reality and false premises.

A measure of air quality in Japan is the ability to see Mount Fuji from a certain observatory in Tokyo. A Japanese newspaper reported that from this observatory, Mount Fuji had been sighted only something like 27 times in 1997, although in 1998 it had been sighted something like 43 times. The article went on to explain that it was not so much a change in the pollution levels as the fact that the observatory had been moved from the eighth floor to the 23rd floor. Perspectives change as we go higher.

Claudius Ptolemaeus, or Ptolemy, an Alexandrian astronomer who lived between A.D. 100 and 170, tried to explain celestial motion by using the theory that the earth was the center of the universe and that the sun and other planets revolved around the earth. His principal scientific efforts were documented in a compendious work of 13 volumes. They described in meticulous detail an explanation of celestial patterns and motions. For 14 centuries this was the universally accepted and authoritative system of astronomy. Now we know that the premise that the universe revolves around the earth was a false premise. Making an earthly perspective the center of our universe will result in the same discovery: that it is a false premise. (See *Encyclopedia Americana*, s.v. "Ptolemy.")

Number three: *Compromise* is one of the adversary's operative words. Those who do

not have an eternal perspective will always challenge integrity.

There are many examples that can help us develop the strength to make righteous choices. Mohandas K. Gandhi is one such example:

His mother taught him that to eat meat was wrong, inasmuch as it necessitated the destruction of life, so Gandhi pledged to his mother that he would remain a strict vegetarian throughout his life. . . .

Then Gandhi was taken very ill and his life was despaired of. His physicians tried to persuade him that if he would drink a little beef broth, his life might be saved, but Gandhi said, "Even for life itself we may not do certain things. There is only one course open to me—to die, but never to break my pledge."

*. . . As a result of this trait of integrity, Gandhi's followers renamed him the Mahatma, or the Great Soul. [Sterling W. Sill, *The Laws of Success* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1975), pp. 186–87]*

Although we may not agree with the tenets of his beliefs, we admire his honor. To him the pledge he made to his mother was sacred.

Do we fear man more than God? For some there is a fear that it is neither cool nor popular to defend righteous living. It is too easy to be consumed with how we look, how we are connected socially, what kind of clothes we wear, or how we can acquire wonderful possessions. Of course it is important to have friends, to look well, and to have a comfortable and beautiful living environment, but from ancient times the Lord has told his people not to be idol worshipers. The Lord's perspective was abundantly clear when he gave the commandments to Moses:

*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . .*

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. [Exodus 20:3–5]

There are enticing idols lurking in all places to tempt us to compromise our gospel-centered perspectives.

What perspectives do you have about gaining your education? We must not compromise knowledge with expediency. One student may look at a general education course as something to “get over with,” and another will find the same course life-changing as doors not yet dreamed of are opened. The Lord has admonished us to learn all things of the world—under the world, in, and above. We must understand the perspective that all knowledge is important, as are the individual gifts and talents given to the Lord’s children.

Talents and interests are gifts from God and should not be compromised:

For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God.

To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby. [D&C 46:11–12]

In his parable of the talents, Christ taught that our gifts should be multiplied and cherished, that our lives here can be rich, and that we can bless the lives of others. *There are no unimportant gifts.* All components of truth and knowledge must be valued.

Human existence cannot be understood in its totality through any one mode of inquiry. For example, science, history, and art all reveal different truths about any one subject or event. These three fundamental forms of inquiry and the languages needed to use them form the core of a basic curriculum that teaches the knowledges and skills of civilization. [From the pamphlet “Teacher Education in the Arts Disciplines: A Statement

of the Working Group on the Arts in Higher Education,” p. 8]

Any education would not be complete that does not address things of a spiritual nature and the three great branches of learning: the arts, letters, and sciences. We are missing important perspectives in our pursuit of knowledge if we do not experience all three.

Often, less emphasis is placed on the arts. The appropriate study and practice of the arts reveal them to be a medium by which our spirits are touched and moved to higher levels of receptivity and understanding. When appropriately magnified, these gifts can help us realize truths that may not be perceptible in any other way. Latter-day Saints have always valued the arts and all that is “of good report or praiseworthy” (Articles of Faith 1:13). It may be of interest to you to know that Utah was the first in the nation to have an arts council that fostered the arts and culture in the lives of its citizens. This year is the centennial of that organization.

Brigham Young was a particular supporter of the arts. Always keeping the gospel perspective, he advocated and actively participated in music and dance and theatre and was a skilled craftsman and fine furniture maker. He believed in the refining and edifying influence of the arts. He stated:

There is no music in hell, for all good music belongs to heaven. Sweet harmonious sounds give exquisite joy to human beings capable of appreciating music. [JD 9:244]

Those who cannot serve God with a pure heart in the dance should not dance. . . .

If you wish to dance, dance; and you are just as much prepared for a prayer meeting after dancing as ever you were, if you are Saints. If you desire to ask God for anything, you are as well prepared to do so in the dance as in any other place, if you are Saints. [JD 6:148]

“The spirit and the body are the soul of man” (D&C 88:15). Neither is complete without the other. And the absence of the spirit from the body is looked upon as a bondage (see D&C 45:17, 138:50). We came to the earth to gain a body. We look upon this as a great and precious gift. The study of the human body with an aesthetic perspective is also desirable and necessary.

Creativity must be important to our great creator. Creativity is not limited to the creative and performing arts. Opportunities for problem solving and creativity must be evident in any complete education. We must not be *deceived* into believing that God gave us talents and gifts that were not to be magnified for the benefit of his children.

Number four: The fourth challenge is *distraction*. One of my students answered my query “To what do you look forward in the future?” by stating that he really wanted an eternal family and the blessing of having them all go back to live with Heavenly Father and his son Jesus Christ. The problem was that he had so many things to do that he didn’t have time to worry about it very much—much less to set one more goal. He was willing but very distracted.

What does it take to get our attention? This good brother who had righteous desires but felt that he could not fulfill them because he was too busy in school will probably find that his life will fill up just as much when he is out of school. We are often caught up in the busy demands and choices of life. Soon we look back and realize that a year or five years or 10 years have gone by and we are still saying that someday we will get to the things that we wish and need to do. How sad it will be if we spend our lives climbing ladders only to find that they are against the wrong walls.

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24).

Christ said, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad” (Matthew 12:30).

We only have so much time in a day, in a year, in a lifetime. We have to decide what it is that is important to us. What do we value and care deeply about? Then and only then will we be able to keep our sights on eternal perspectives and avoid distraction.

Some of us may need to speed up, and others need to slow down. From the perspective of being too casual, we need to determine to take action. From the perspective of being too busy, the action may be to pause and regroup. In all cases we could benefit from taking the time to ponder and pray.

The Prophet Joseph Smith received much of the restored gospel through pondering and praying for the Lord’s perspective on his questions. The heavens opened and are still open to us if we will inquire.

Christ counseled the people of Nephi: “Go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand” (3 Nephi 17:3). Take time to consider the perspectives that are important in your life.

It is important for us to be cautious that we do not become *disinterested, deceived, compromised, or distracted*. We have all the blessings of the earth given to us to be used with prudence and thanksgiving. We must keep our perspective focused on our God. *It is the gospel of Jesus Christ that gives us the true perspective, one that we can know and trust—an eternal perspective through which we will not be deceived.*

The Lord, speaking of you and our day through the prophet Isaiah, declared:

And they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: . . . and thou

shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me. [Isaiah 49:22–23; emphasis added]

Waiting upon the Lord means having hope in the Lord and trusting in him. My young brothers and sisters, please, be not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Remember the bold testimony and example of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans: “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16).

It takes some courage to live the gospel with an eternal perspective. Courage is faith put into action, acting on what we believe.

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). This advice is only magnified by President Spencer W. Kimball’s well-known directive: “Do it.”

I have been moved over and over again by the devotion of the early Saints of the Church and of the pioneers. They left or lost most of their earthly possessions. They suffered sickness and hardship. Some buried fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, husbands, wives, or babies along the way—many knowing from the beginning that they might not complete the journey. Still they went on and thanked God for the blessings of being a part of building Zion. They lived their lives in faith and sacrifice because they had an eternal perspective.

An eternal perspective helps us to fulfill our purposes in this life. God has given each of us important things to do during our time here on earth.

As we develop ourselves spiritually, we can learn to see “things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24). By viewing our lives from the perspective of eternity, we realize that the difficulties we face in mortality are transitory. The Lord told the suffering Joseph Smith:

My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes. [D&C 121:7–8]

An eternal perspective helps us understand that adversity can be a springboard to growth. Elder Dallin H. Oaks declared:

Seen with the perspective of eternity, a temporal setback can be an opportunity to develop soul power of eternal significance. Strength is forged in adversity. Faith is developed in a setting where we cannot see what lies ahead. [“Spirituality,” *Ensign*, November 1985, p. 63; emphasis added]

Here is another wonderful perspective from President Brigham Young, always clear and direct:

I say to the brethren who are leaving home. pray for your families. . . . You must feel—If they live, all right; if they die, all right; if I die, all right; if I live, all right; for we are the Lord’s, and we shall soon meet again. [JD 6:276]

We have a remarkable, inspired, living prophet to give us the Lord’s perspective. President Gordon B. Hinckley has stated:

The Lord has shown you what is good, and he has given you a commandment and a mandate to do justly, and I emphasize that; to love mercy, and I emphasize that; and to walk humbly with thy God, which needs constant emphasis in this world where there is much of egotism, conceit, and arrogance. I do not hesitate to promise that if you will live up to these standards as believers and performers, your lives will be fulfilling and your efforts fruitful of great good. [BYU commencement address, 15 August 1991, pp. 3–4]

I believe that the Lord wishes us to be happy and to have joy. The greatest joy is in the

peace of knowing that we are following the path that leads us to eternal life, that our house is in order, and that we are preparing to meet our Savior. The greatest gift is eternal life (see D&C 14:7).

A loving Heavenly Father has made provision for our human weaknesses. He knows our quest for exaltation is a gradual, lifelong process. All he asks is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all . . . things shall be added unto you" (3 Nephi 13:33).

Jesus Christ has marked the path and led the way: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me. . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:29–30).

I plead with you to return to the scriptures in some way that opens your mind and heart to be taught. . . .

. . . I also plead with you to be determined to pray with all the energy of your heart, that you might have every gift that a loving Heavenly Father knows you must have to serve His Son and to endure against the powers of darkness. [Henry B. Eyring, "Always," CES fireside at BYU, 3 January 1999, pp. 5–6]

Primary songs teach us simple and beautiful truths. One such song is "A Child's Prayer," by Janice Kapp Perry:

*Heavenly Father, are you really there?
And do you hear and answer ev'ry child's prayer?
Some say that heaven is far away,
But I feel it close around me as I pray.
Heavenly Father, I remember now
Something that Jesus told disciples long ago:
"Suffer the children to come to me."
Father, in prayer I'm coming now to thee.*

*Pray, he is there; Speak, he is list'ning.
You are his child; His love now surrounds you.
He hears your prayer; He loves the children.
Of such is the kingdom, the kingdom of heav'n.
["A Child's Prayer," Songbook, pp. 12–13]*

Again, Christ promises us with his tender love:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye are little children, and ye have not as yet understood how great blessings the Father hath in his own hands and prepared for you;

And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours.

And he who receiveth all things with thankfulness shall be made glorious; and the things of this earth shall be added unto him, even an hundred fold, yea, more. [D&C 78:17–19]

Mormon tells those who do not believe in Christ:

And now, I speak also concerning those who do not believe in Christ.

Behold, will ye believe in the day of your visitation—behold, when the Lord shall come, yea, even that great day when the earth shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, yea, in that great day when ye shall be brought to stand before the Lamb of God—then will ye say that there is no God? [Mormon 9:1–2]

Paul answers

*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . ;
And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
[Philippians 2:10–11]*

Keeping commandments and making and honoring covenants brings a true perspective.

From my own perspective, "I stand all amazed at the love Jesus offers me." That wonderful hymn echoes my feelings: "Oh, it is wonderful that he should care for me / Enough to die for me!" ("I Stand All Amazed," *Hymns*, 1985, no. 193).

I know that our Heavenly Father is real, that he hears and answers our prayers, and that he cares deeply and tenderly for each one of us. I love the Savior for his gift of salvation for each of us. I cannot express in words the complete gratitude I feel for his blessings to me.

It is my prayer that your perspectives will be eternal perspectives; that you can wait upon the Lord with hope and joy; and that you will not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ. May

we be able to come to his altar with our sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, for meekness does not resist counsel. May we choose to be engaged in service that helps us to know the meaning of charity. May we use our gifts to bless others and resist the temptations of Satan.

And, finally, may we know that God is God and make our ways his ways is my prayer in the holy name of Jesus Christ. Amen.