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He Lives! All Glory to His Name!

Our understanding of and faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ will provide strength and capacity needed for a successful life.

It is Easter morning, that holy day designated throughout all Christendom to commemorate the victory of Jesus Christ over death. His Resurrection broke what to that point had been the unyielding chains of death. He opened the path whereby each of Heavenly Father's children born to earth would have the opportunity to rise from death to live again.

How our Father in Heaven must have rejoiced that sacred day when His totally obedient, completely worthy Son shattered the chains of death. What eternal purpose would our Father's plan of happiness have had except it be made alive through the infinite and eternal Atonement of His gloriously obedient Son? What eternal purpose would have come from the Creation of the earth, where intelligences tabernacled with spirits would receive a body, if death were the end of existence and none would be resurrected? What a glorious moment that morning was for all who understood its significance.

Easter is that sacred season when the heart of each devout Christian turns in humble gratitude to our

beloved Savior. It is a season that should bring peace and joy to all who love Him and show it by obeying His commandments. Easter brings thoughts of Jesus, His life, His Atonement, His Resurrection, His love. He has risen from the dead "with healing in his wings" (Malachi 4:2; 3 Nephi 25:2). Oh, how we all need that healing the Redeemer can provide. Mine is a message of hope based on principles embodied in the teachings of the Master Teacher, Jesus Christ.

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can understand more fully the breadth and depth of healing provided by His Atonement because we have the fullness of His doctrine. We realize that what He has willingly done with immense suffering and sacrifice will affect us not only in this life but throughout all eternity.

This Easter, as you remember the Resurrection and the price paid and the gift given through the Atonement, ponder what the scriptures teach of those sacred events. Your personal witness of their reality will be strengthened. They must be more than principles you



law, we receive a blessing. When we break a law, there is nothing left over from prior obedience to satisfy the demands of justice for that broken law. The Savior's Atonement permits us to repent of any disobedience and thereby avoid the penalties that justice would have imposed.

My reverence and gratitude for the Atonement of the Holy One of Israel, the Prince of Peace and our Redeemer, continually expand as I strive to understand more about it. I realize that no mortal mind can adequately conceive, nor can human tongue appropriately express, the full significance of all that Jesus Christ has done for our Heavenly Father's children through His Atonement. Yet it is vital that we each learn what we can about it. The Atonement is that essential ingredient of our Father in Heaven's plan of happiness without which that plan could not have been activated. Your understanding of the Atonement and the insight it provides for your life will greatly enhance your productive use of all of the knowledge, experience, and skills you acquire in mortal life.

I believe that it is instructive to try to imagine what the Atonement required of both the Father and His willing Son. Three of the challenges the Savior faced were:

First, an enormous sense of responsibility, for He realized that except it be done perfectly, not one of His Father's children could return to Him. They would be forever banished from His presence since there would be no way to repent for broken laws and no unclean thing can exist in the presence of God. His Father's plan would have failed, and each spirit child would have been under the eternal control and torment of Satan.

Second, in His absolutely pure mind and heart, He had to

memorize. They must be woven into the very fiber of your being as a powerful bulwark against the rising tide of abomination that infects our world.

The prophet Lehi declared a profound truth when he stated: "Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth. Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered" (2 Nephi 2:6-7). That scripture indicates that for the proud and haughty, it is as though there never were an Atonement made.

Jesus Christ lives. He is our Savior, our Redeemer. He is a glorious, resurrected being. He has the capacity

to communicate love that is so powerful, so overwhelming as to surpass the capacity of the human tongue to express adequately. He gave His life to break the bonds of death. His Atonement made fully active the plan of happiness of His Father in Heaven.

Jesus administers the balance between justice and mercy conditioned upon our obedience to His gospel. He is the light for all mankind. He is the fountain of all truth. He fulfills all of His promises. All who obey His commandments will earn the most glorious blessings imaginable.

Without the Atonement, Father in Heaven's plan of happiness could not have been placed fully into effect. The Atonement gives all the opportunity to overcome the consequences of mistakes made in life. When we obey a

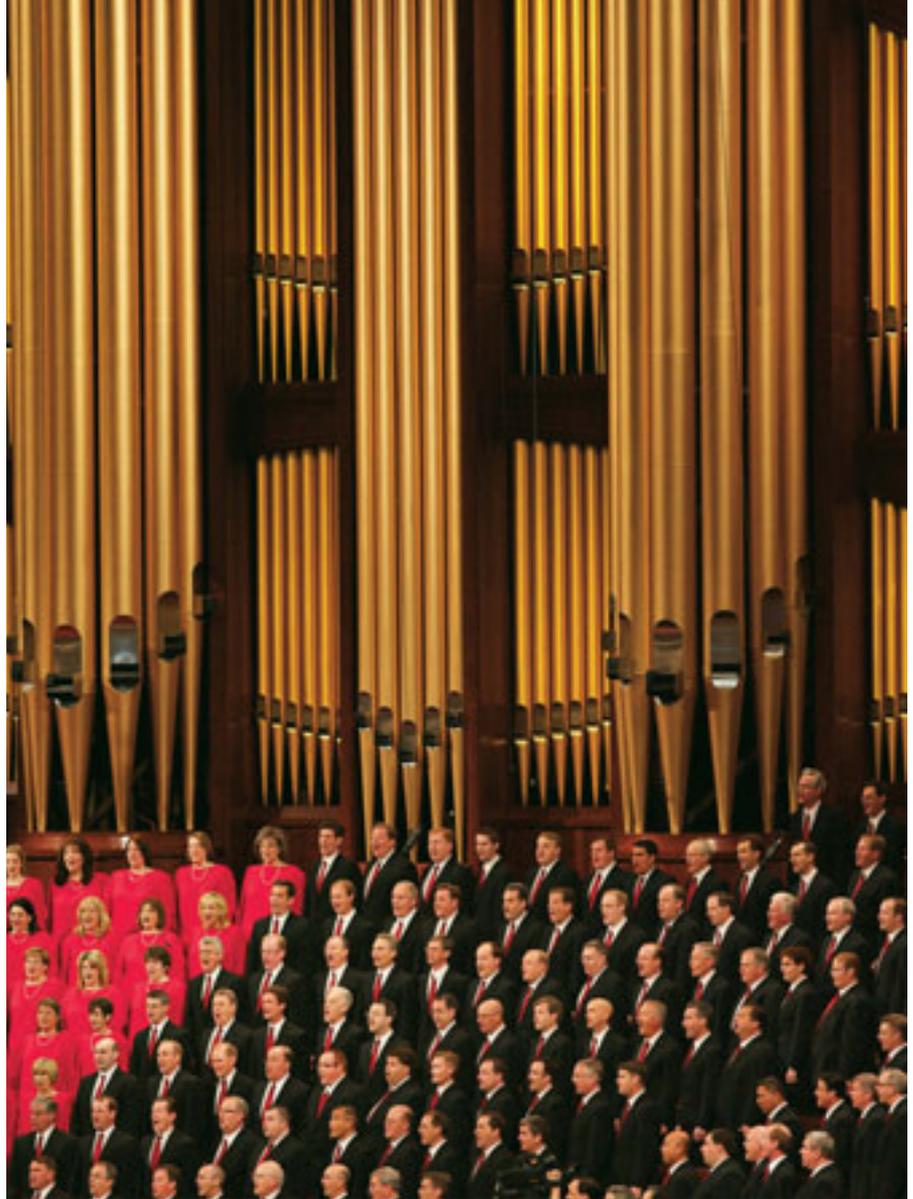
personally feel the consequences of all that mankind would ever encounter, even the most depraved, despicable sins.

Third, He had to endure the vicious attack of Satan's hordes while physically and emotionally pressed to the limit. Then, for reasons we do not fully know, while at the extremity of His capacity, at the time the Savior most needed succor, His Father allowed Him to shoulder the onerous responsibility with only His own strength and capacity.

I try to imagine what an intensely poignant moment it must have been for our Father in Heaven when the Savior cried out from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34). I don't believe Father in Heaven forsook His Son on the cross. I do believe the cry was motivated when that Son felt removed the sustaining support He had always enjoyed from His Father. His Father recognized that the Savior needed to accomplish the Atonement totally and completely on His own, without external support. The Father did not abandon His Son. He made it possible for His perfect Son to win the eternal fruits of the Atonement.

None of us can ever adequately appreciate in mortality the full beneficial consequences of the Atonement.

There is an imperative need for each of us to strengthen our understanding of the significance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ so that it will become an unshakable foundation upon which to build our lives. As the world becomes more devoid of foundational standards and as honor, virtue, and purity are increasingly cast aside in the pursuit of appetite, our understanding of and faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ will provide



strength and capacity needed for a successful life. It will also bring confidence in times of trial and peace in moments of turmoil.

I energetically encourage you to establish a personal study plan to better understand and appreciate the incomparable, eternal, infinite consequences of Jesus Christ's perfect fulfillment of His divinely appointed calling as our Savior and Redeemer. Profound personal pondering of the scriptures accompanied by searching, heartfelt prayer will fortify your understanding of and appreciation for His priceless Atonement. Another powerful way to learn of Jesus Christ and His Atonement is through consistent temple attendance.

May each of us renew our determination to teach true principles within

the sanctity of our homes. As we do that, we will provide the greatest opportunity for happiness for the spirits entrusted to our care. Use the Church as a righteous tool to strengthen the home, but recognize that as parents we have the fundamental responsibility and privilege to be guided by the Lord in the upbringing of the spirit children He has entrusted to our care.

The vital importance of teaching truth in the home is fundamental. The Church is important, but it is in the home where parents provide the required understanding and direction for children. It is truly said that the most important callings in time and eternity are those of father and mother. In time we will be released from all other assignments we receive

but not from that of father and mother.

As you ponder—not just read but ponder and meditate—on scriptural passages, the power of the Holy Ghost will distill truths in your mind and heart as a secure foundation in this uncertain time in which we live. As parents, prepare your children for the challenges they will encounter. Teach them truth, encourage them to live it, and they will be all right no matter how severely the world is shaken.

This Easter, resolve to make the Lord Jesus Christ the living center of your home. Be sure that every decision you make, whether it be of a spiritual or physical nature, be guided by the thought “What would the Lord Jesus Christ have me do?” When the Savior is the center of your home, it is filled with peace and serenity. There is a spirit of calm assurance that pervades the home that is felt by the children and adults alike.

The best way to make a permanent change for good is to make Jesus Christ your model and His teachings your guide for life.

Should you have been disobedient to His commandments and feel unworthy, recognize that this is why the Lord, Jesus the Christ, laid down His life. Through His Atonement He has opened forever the opportunity to overcome such mistakes, to repent of improper choices, and to conquer the negative effects of a life contrary to His teachings.

The Savior loves each of us and will make it possible for our every need to be satisfied as we qualify by obedience for all of the blessings He wants us to have on this earth. I love and adore Him. As His authorized servant I solemnly testify with every capacity of my being that He lives, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■