

draw upon the comforting, strengthening, enabling, and healing power of the Atonement.

Sisters, I love you. I don't know many of you personally, but I do know *who* you are! We are covenant-keeping daughters in His kingdom, and endowed with power through our covenants, we are prepared to do our duty.

Relief Society prepares women for the blessings of eternal life by awakening us spiritually to increase in faith and personal righteousness. Let us begin with ourselves. Let us begin where we are. Let us begin today. When we are spiritually awake, we will be better able to strengthen families and homes and help others.

This is a work of salvation, and the strengthening and enabling power of the Atonement makes it possible. Awaken to who we are. Awaken to our duty. We are daughters of our Heavenly Father, who loves us. Of this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. Zina D. Young, in *Woman's Exponent*, Oct. 15, 1877, 74.
2. Romans 13:11-12.
3. Mosiah 18:8-11.
4. Robert D. Hales, "Modesty: Reverence for the Lord," *Liahona*, Aug. 2008, 21; *Ensign*, Aug. 2008, 36.
5. Boyd K. Packer, "How to Survive in Enemy Territory," *Liahona*, Oct. 2012, 35; *New Era*, Apr. 2012, 3.
6. Alma 5:26.
7. Alma 5:14.
8. *Daughters in My Kingdom: The History and Work of Relief Society* (2011), 29.
9. Sarah Rich, in *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 30.
10. Matthew 11:28.
11. In *Daughters in My Kingdom*, 30.
12. Research conducted by Jolene S. Allphin from stories and company rosters; see *Tell My Story, Too*, 8th ed. (2012).
13. Doctrine and Covenants 84:88.
14. Isaiah 40:31.
15. Thomas S. Monson, "The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2011, 92.



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The Lord Has Not Forgotten You

Our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ, know us and love us. . . . We can feel of Their love and compassion in our suffering.

As we meet sisters around the world, we are amazed at the strength of your testimonies. So many of you are first- or second-generation members of the Church. We see many sisters serving in multiple callings, traveling long distances to attend church, and sacrificing to make and keep sacred temple covenants. We honor you. You are the Lord's modern-day pioneers!

Recently my husband, Mel, and I met a volunteer tour guide named Mollie Lenthal as we visited a museum in Australia. We found out that Mollie, a lovely woman in her 70s, has no children and has never married. She is an only child, and her parents have been deceased for many years. Her closest relatives are two cousins who live on another continent. Suddenly, I was overwhelmed with the Spirit testifying to me, almost as if Heavenly Father were speaking: "Mollie is *not* alone! Mollie is *my* daughter! I am her Father! She is a very important daughter in *my* family, and she is *never alone!*"

One of my favorite stories from the Savior's life is the story of Lazarus.

The scriptures tell us that "Jesus loved Martha, . . . her sister [Mary], and [their brother] Lazarus."¹ Word was sent to Jesus that Lazarus was very ill, but Jesus did not come immediately; He stayed away two more days, stating that "this sickness is . . . for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."²

Hearing that Jesus was coming, Martha "went and met him,"³ telling Him what had happened. Lazarus had "lain in the grave four days already."⁴ Grieving, Martha ran back to her home to tell Mary that the Lord had come.⁵ Mary, weighed down with sorrow, ran to Jesus, fell down at His feet, and wept.⁶

We are told that "when Jesus therefore saw [Mary] weeping, . . . he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled," and asked where they had laid him.

"They said unto him, Lord, come and see."⁷

Then we read some of the most compassionate, loving words in scripture: "Jesus wept."⁸

Apostle James E. Talmage wrote, "The sight of the two women so



overcome by grief . . . caused Jesus to sorrow [with them] so that He groaned in spirit and was deeply troubled.”⁹ This experience testifies of the compassion, empathy, and love that our Savior and our Heavenly Father feel for each of us every time we are weighed down by the anguish, sin, adversity, and pains of life.

Dear sisters, our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ, know us and love us. They know when we are in pain or suffering in any way. They do not say, “It’s OK that you’re in pain right now because soon everything is going to be all right. You will be healed, or your husband will find a job, or your wandering child will come back.” They feel the depth of our suffering, and we can feel of Their love and compassion in our suffering.

Alma testified:

“And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

“And he will take upon him . . . their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, . . . that he may know . . . how to succor his people according to their infirmities.”¹⁰

When we wonder *if* we are known by our Savior and our Father in Heaven or *how well* They know us personally, we might remember the Savior’s words to Oliver Cowdery:

“If you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things.”¹¹

Earlier the Savior stated to him, “There is none else save God that knowest thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart.”¹²

The Savior reminded Oliver that He knew every detail of that pleading prayer—and remembered the exact time, the very night.

Many years ago my husband became very ill with a rare disease. As the weeks went by and the sicker he became, the more I became convinced that he was dying. I told no one of my

fears. We had a large, young family and a loving, eternal marriage, and the thought of losing my husband and raising my children by myself filled me with loneliness, despair, and even anger. I am ashamed to say that I pulled away from my Heavenly Father. For days I quit praying; I quit planning; I cried. I finally came to the realization that I could not do this alone.

For the first time in many days, I knelt down and poured out my heart to my Father in Heaven, pleading for forgiveness for turning away from Him, telling Him all of my deepest feelings, and finally crying out that if this was what He really wanted me to do, I would do it. I knew He must have a plan for our lives.

As I continued on my knees to pour out my heart, the sweetest, most peaceful, loving feeling came over me. It was as if a blanket of love was flowing over me. It was as if I could feel Heavenly Father saying, “That was all I needed to know.” I determined never to turn away from Him again. Gradually and amazingly, my husband



began to get better until he made a full recovery.

Years later my husband and I knelt by the side of our 17-year-old daughter and pleaded for her life. This time the answer was no, but that same feeling of love and peace that our Savior has promised was just as powerful, and we knew that even though Heavenly Father was calling her back home, everything would be all right. We have come to know what it means to cast our burdens upon the Lord, to know that He loves us and feels compassion for us in our sorrows and pain.

One of the sweetest father-to-son moments in the Book of Mormon is Alma the Younger's testimony to his son Helaman. Alma described the "inexpressible horror" he felt as he imagined coming into the presence of God to be judged of his many transgressions. After feeling the weight of

all his sins for three days and nights, he repented and pleaded with the Savior to have mercy on him. He described to Helaman the "exquisite and sweet" joy of remembering his pains "no more." Instead of feeling "inexpressible horror" at the thought of coming before the throne of God, Alma saw a vision of "God sitting upon his throne" and declared, "My soul did *long* to be there."¹³

Is that not how we feel, my dear sisters, as we repent and contemplate the love, the mercy, and the gratitude we feel for our Heavenly Father and our Savior—that we too "long to be there," to be embraced by Their loving arms once again?

Just as the Lord has testified to me that He has not forgotten His precious daughter Mollie Lenthal, I testify that He has *not forgotten you!* Whatever sin or weakness or pain or struggle or trial you are going through, He knows

and understands those very moments. He loves you! And He will carry you through those moments, just as He did Mary and Martha. He has paid the price that He might know how to succor you. Cast your burdens upon Him. Tell your Heavenly Father how you feel. Tell Him about your pain and afflictions and then give them to Him. Search the scriptures *daily*. There you will also find great solace and help.

Our Savior asked:

"For can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. . . .

". . . I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."¹⁴

"I have commanded that *none* of you should go away, but rather have commanded that ye should come unto me, that ye might feel and see; even so shall ye do unto the world."¹⁵

That is our charge. We must feel and see for ourselves and then help all of Heavenly Father's children to feel and see and know that our Savior has taken upon Himself not only all our sins but also our pains and our suffering and afflictions so that He can know what we feel and how to comfort us. I testify of Him in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. John 11:5.
2. John 11:4.
3. John 11:20.
4. John 11:17.
5. See John 11:28.
6. See John 11:32.
7. John 11:33–34.
8. John 11:35.
9. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 493.
10. Alma 7:11–12.
11. Doctrine and Covenants 6:22.
12. Doctrine and Covenants 6:16.
13. See Alma 36:14–22; emphasis added.
14. 1 Nephi 21:15–16.
15. 3 Nephi 18:25; emphasis added.