

A CARING AND COURAGEOUS PROPHET

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I am honored to have been invited to speak at the funeral of a mighty prophet of God, President Thomas S. Monson. My heart is drawn out to his family and to all who mourn his passing. There are millions of people across the earth who share that sense of loss. He was loved by those who knew him from his stirring and inspiring talks and his leadership. The number of individuals who loved him through his personal kindnesses is known only to the God who sent him to care for them.

Caring for others happened often in the ministry of President Monson. He would go to visit someone in need, feel while he was there an impression to go to another person, and then to another. More than a few times, such a person said, “I knew you would come.” He or she may have known, the Lord may have known, but President Monson didn’t know when he started out. However, those who knew he would come also knew that God loved them enough to send His servant. They felt the love of God through President Monson’s kindness to them. The love of God, and love for God’s children, permeated his life.

That love began early and endured with him to the end. In his personal service and as he led in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, he treated these words of the prophet Isaiah as the word of God. Isaiah wrote of the law of the fast, which has as a focus care for those in need:

“Is [this law] not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide



not thyself from thine own flesh?

“Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward.

“Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. . . .

“And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, . . . and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not” (Isaiah 58:7–9, 11).

In the Lord’s service over a lifetime, President Monson cared for those in temporal and spiritual

need, and he received those promised blessings. When he called on the Lord in prayer, the Lord answered. And to Thomas Monson came the assurance that the Lord was there.

President Monson often quoted the promise that the Lord would be with us in our faithful service for Him. Those promises were true in his experience.

Doctrine and Covenants 84:88 was a favorite: “Whoso receiveth you, there I will be also, for I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up.”

Because he knew that promise was a reality,



President Monson was optimistic. It also made him courageous. When he had to make difficult and important choices, he expected the Lord would answer his prayer and show him the way to go. When he was called to go into what appeared to be dangerous or perilous situations, others were afraid, yet he felt no fear. He believed that the Lord went before him and that angels were placed around him to bear him up. That proved true. His daughter, Ann, who has spoken so movingly today, stood near him hours before he passed away. I was blessed to be there.

As I looked on his face, I thought that the Lord's promise was being fulfilled. He had been surrounded and borne up by human angels—and perhaps more.

I felt the assurance that the resurrected Lord, who has gone before him into the spirit world, waited with outstretched arms. I felt a burning testimony, which I now bear to you, that President Monson knew the Lord, that he had been cleansed through the Atonement as he gave his all in the service of the Lord and of the Father's children. He had come to know the Lord.

He loved the Lord. And he said he knew that the Lord loved him.

President Monson lived the life that King Benjamin commended to us:

"I say unto you, I would that ye should remember to retain the name written always in your hearts, that ye are not found on the left hand of God, but that ye hear and know the voice by which ye shall be called, and also, the name by which he shall call you.

"For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart? . . .

"Therefore, I would that ye should be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works, that Christ, the Lord God Omnipotent, may seal you his, that you may be brought to heaven, that ye may have everlasting salvation and eternal life" (Mosiah 5:12–13, 15).

I testify that Jesus is the Christ. I bear solemn witness that, through His sinless life and His infinite Atonement, all of the children of Heavenly Father who come into mortality will be resurrected. Through the ministration of angels to Joseph Smith, the prophet of the Restoration, the full priesthood keys were restored. Those keys were passed in an unbroken line to President Monson. They included the power to seal families together for all eternity. President Monson knew that and so testified. That priesthood power will continue in the Savior's Church on the earth until He comes again.

President and Sister Monson were sealed by that power. I pray a blessing on all their posterity that they may have the assurance that the Lord watches over them and that they may anticipate a glorious and eternal family reunion. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■