

President Monson

Elders George R. Hill III and John R. Lasater of the First Quorum of the Seventy have just addressed us.

It will now be our privilege to listen to Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi, also a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and currently serving as president of the Hawaii Honolulu Mission.

Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi

My dear brothers and sisters, I bring greetings from the Saints and missionaries in the beautiful islands of Hawaii. I say to you, aloha!

Today, I would like to ask a question: My dear brothers, are we treating our wives as daughters of God? Are you treating *your* wife as a daughter of God?

A daughter of God. The words have a special feeling. Even as you say them, you feel a reverence. You may say, "Oh, Brother Kikuchi, of course I treat her as a daughter of God!" But my next question is, How *much* do you treat and honor her as a daughter of God? Let's stop and think of your lovely companion. She was entrusted to you by Heavenly Father as a special daughter of God.

I believe that in this lifetime, the closest person or neighbor that you can have in your life is your sweet wife. She is your sweetheart! She is your love! She is your best friend! She is your lover! And she is a daughter of God!

Love thy wife

The Lord's teaching to the lawyer was very clear:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is *like unto it*, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39; italics added).

Yesterday, our beloved prophet, President Ezra Taft Benson, said that above everything we do in our lives, we must place the first commandment first—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

The second is also like the first. The Lord said, "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Brothers, among all the children of our Father in Heaven, don't you think your wife is the closest neighbor that you can have?

The Lord said, "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart" (D&C 42:22).

Truly, "marriage is ordained of God" (D&C 49:15). "Marriage is honorable in all" (Hebrews 13:4).

Abraham's commitment

When the Lord told Abraham to offer his only son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah, Abraham took Isaac, two servants, and a donkey and built an altar (see Genesis 22:2-3). On the way, Isaac asked, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Though Father Abraham knew that Isaac was the one, he said, "My son, God will provide" (vs. 7-8).

When the time came, Abraham was willing to offer Isaac, and Isaac did not run away (see vs. 9-11). Brothers and sisters, in our marriages, we need both the commitment of Abraham and also the spirit of Isaac.

Behold thy mother

At the time of his unendurable agony, the Savior looked down on his mother, Mary, and introduced John to her, saying, "Woman, behold thy son!" And to John he said, "Behold thy mother!" The scripture records that John "took her unto his own home" (John 19:26-27).

Are we worthy to be entrusted by the Lord to take care of one of our Heavenly Father's daughters?

The Savior must have a special feeling toward the women of the world, because the first person that saw the resurrected Lord was a woman, Mary Magdalene. Oh, how special that was! (See John 20.)

Jonathon H. Napela

May I share today a story about a person who lived in such a way, *in an eternal*, loving companionship in Hawaii.

In 1850, Brigham Young sent ten missionaries to the Hawaiian Islands. Without understanding the language and culture, the missionaries found the work extremely difficult. Eventually they became discouraged, including the mission president. They became so discouraged that five of the ten left to go home. The youngest of the remaining missionaries, Elder George Q. Cannon, was determined to stay. He went to the Lord in prayer. The Lord inspired him to go to Lahaina on Maui. He did so.

As he approached this town, two ladies went screaming into a nearby house and brought out a local gentleman. The previous night, this man had had a dream that a messenger of God was coming to his town and that he must feed him. Elder Cannon was invited to stay and preach in the home of this man, Jonathon H. Napela, who was a very well-educated man and the magistrate of that district (see Alma 10:4).

Subsequently, Elder Cannon and Jonathon Napela became very close friends, like Alma and Amulek in the Book of Mormon (see Alma 10–15). Because of the guiding hand of God and Brother Napela's great help, along with the hospitality and kindness of the Hawaiian Saints, the missionary work began to excel in Hawaii, and the foundation was laid.

His great and deep love

Many years later, in 1873, Kitty, the wife of this great man, Jonathon Napela, contracted leprosy. She was a beautiful and noble woman in the early days of the

Church in Hawaii. Today modern medical knowledge has advanced so that this disease is no longer fatal, but at that time, there was no cure for this dreadful disease. In order to prevent the spreading of this disease, once you contracted it you were forced to live on one of the seashores in the leper colony on Molokai. The lepers were taken there by boat. The sailors were so afraid of this disease that they pushed the patients into the sea, forcing them to swim to shore.

Because his wife had to go to Kalaupapa, the leper colony, Jonathon, too, wanted to go. He took her hand and they went there together. Why would he do this? Because he loved her so much! He knew that life is eternal and love is eternal, even through days of "sickness and health."

Oh, how much do I love my wife? Oh, do I love her as a daughter of God, as Jonathon loved his wife? Would I be willing to go to a place like that to be with her? Would you be willing to demonstrate your pure love like Jonathon? Brethren, are we honoring our companions? Are we caring? Are we thoughtful? We must be, because God has joined us together (see Mark 10:9).

History records that this valiant and giant man of God worked in the leper colony and fought to obtain government assistance for the lepers to have a more comfortable place to live. He was a giant in the pure love of Christ for his own people. Oh, I can almost hear the words of Paul to the Corinthians when he said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal" (1 Corinthians 13:1).

This good brother later contracted that same disease and died even before his wife passed away. She followed him two years later. Husbands, do you love your wife as a daughter of God? Oh, "husbands, love your wives" as daughters of God, "even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25).

I know that God lives! This is his church. I know that the Savior lives!

I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, who restored this church. I know that our beloved prophet, even President Ezra Taft Benson, is the living oracle of God and an example to us. The Book of Mormon is true. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Monson

We have just heard a beautiful message from Elder Yoshihiko Kikuchi, a member of the First Quorum of the

Seventy and currently the president of the Hawaii Honolulu Mission.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "I Know That My Redeemer Lives," following which Sister Dwan J. Young, who was released yesterday as general president of the Primary, will speak to us.

The choir and congregation sang "I Know That My Redeemer Lives."

Dwan J. Young

Strong and valiant children

Holly loved the towering pine tree in front of her home. Its branches shaded her favorite place to play.

The day of the accident, there were three younger children listening to Holly read under the tree. Suddenly, in her mind, something whispered to her. Holly's heart started to thump as the command echoed in her head, "Move!" She responded at once. Scrambling to her feet, she shouted to the children to run. She grabbed the smallest one, and the rest followed. The children thought it was a game until they heard a terrible crash.

A driver had lost control of his car and hit the big pine tree where the children had been reading only minutes before. They would have been badly hurt if they hadn't moved. Some of the children were so frightened that they started to cry. But not Holly. She was thinking about the small voice she had heard in her mind and heart that told her to move. She knew that the warning had come to her from the Holy Ghost. The gift that she had received from Heavenly Father after she had been baptized and confirmed had helped her, just as she had been promised. (See Elaine Cannon, *Baptized and Confirmed: Your Lifeline to Heaven* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986], pp. 36-37.)

Now, there are many Hollies among us—children who have been taught to be

sensitive to the Spirit. Who are these children? Our beloved President Benson told us not long ago, "God has saved for the final inning some of His stronger and most valiant children, who will help bear off the kingdom triumphantly" (*Ensign*, Apr. 1987, p. 73). They are all sons and daughters of God, each with a special mission to perform. Their self-esteem grows as they learn who they truly are.

A challenging environment

But many of our children today are learning under less than ideal circumstances. Even in elementary schools, some of the children are confronted with drugs, alcohol, profane language, and even immorality among their classmates. In many cases, family members are involved in so many activities away from home that there is no time for parents and children to develop meaningful relationships with one another. Fewer families are praying together and eating their meals together. Fewer fathers are spending time with their children, and more mothers are too tired at the end of the day to share an hour of reading or visiting with their children. Time that could be spent with family members is often spent watching television. By the age of eighteen, a child has typically spent more time in front of the television set than in school.