

“You held a nation in your lap”

Over the years I have wondered what President Kimball meant when he reminded me of that street orphan in Cuzco and repeated, “That experience has far greater meaning than you have yet come to know.” One day he added, “You held a nation on your lap.”

Now in my 78th year, I understand what President Kimball was seeing; I know what he meant. That boy in Cuzco and the one in Japan and the other children about the world profoundly influence what I think and how I feel and what I pray for most earnestly. I constantly think of little children and their parents who struggle to raise them in ever more perilous times.

Treasure most how family treats children

Like my Brethren, I have traveled all over the world. Like my Brethren, I have held positions of trust in education, in business, in government, and in the Church. I have written books and, like them, have received honors, degrees, certificates, plaques. Such honors come with the territory and are undeserved.

Assessing the value of those things, the one thing I treasure more than any of them—more than all of them put together—the thing of most value to me is how our sons and daughters and their

husbands and wives treat their children and how, in turn, our grandchildren treat their little ones.

When it comes to understanding our relationship with our Heavenly Father, the things my wife and I have learned as parents and grandparents that are of most worth knowing, we have learned from our children.

This blessing has come to me as a gift from my wife. The Lord said of such women, “[A wife is given to a man] to multiply and replenish the earth, according to my commandment, and to fulfil the promise which was given by my Father before the foundation of the world, and for their exaltation in the eternal worlds, that they may bear the souls of men; for herein is the work of my Father continued, that he may be glorified” (D&C 132:63).

With women such as this to be the mothers of children, we see why the Lord revealed that “great things may be required at the hand of their fathers” (D&C 29:48).

I bear witness that the gospel is true and that the power of it is to bless little children. I pray earnestly that the children and youth and their parents will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, that it will be a guide and a protection to them, that it will bear in their hearts the testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Earl C. Tingey

An income and expense journal

Last Christmas I received a special gift from my mother. She had carefully kept in her possession over these many years a little book I first received from my parents in 1944, when I was 10 years of age.

This is the book. It is a journal in which I was taught to record on a weekly basis my income and expenses.

As an example, my entry for the week of 29 July 1944 records that I started the week with \$24.05 on hand and earned \$7.00 working on our family farm. For expenses, I spent 5 cents for candy, \$3.45 for a purchase, 20 cents for a movie, and \$2.37 for personal clothing. I also invested \$20.00 in a war savings bond and paid 70 cents tithing. I ended the week with \$4.28 on hand.

I remember questioning my father whether my wage of 25 cents an hour might be increased. But remembering that a movie was 20 cents and candy cost only 5 cents, I now realize I was probably overpaid.

As I looked through this journal of more than 50 years ago, I noted that every week during the years 1944 and 1945, I paid tithing of 10 percent of my income for that week. In December 1944 I recorded that I had paid \$12.35 in tithing that year—a full tithing.

This is where and how I learned to pay tithing.

Teach the principle of tithing to children

My wife and I taught our children the importance of setting aside tithing each week as they received an allowance or earned money babysitting or doing special jobs. They put the tithing in a little box. On fast Sunday they gave the tithing to the bishop. They also learned the value of money by saving a goodly portion of the balance of their income for a future mission and education.

Our grandchildren are now following a similar pattern.

Let us teach this principle to our children and be sure they see us paying tithing. President Joseph F. Smith said:

“Our children, as soon as they become old enough to earn means, should be taught to pay their tithing, that their names may be written in the book of the law of the Lord.”¹

In my day, in Primary, we learned this little poem:

What is tithing?
I will tell you every time.
Ten cents from a dollar
And a penny from a dime.

Tithing in biblical times

The doctrine of tithing is woven like a tapestry throughout the scriptures. Abra-

ham paid tithing to Melchizedek.² The children of Israel were taught to bring their tithes to the Lord.³ Probably the most quoted scripture on the subject of tithing in the Old Testament is found in Malachi:

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. . . .

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”⁴

The amount of tithing we pay is the most perfect and equitable arrangement of which I know. It is one-tenth of our increase. All, from the poorest to the richest, pay the same percentage. Christ taught that principle in the story of the widow’s mite:

“And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

“And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

“And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

“For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.”⁵

A mite is a very small coin. It was the smallest coin used by the Jews. It was one-sixty-fourth of a Roman silver penny.

Law of tithing revealed at Far West

In this dispensation the Lord has established the law of tithing as the law of revenue of His Church. Without it we could not carry out the eternal purposes of the Lord. It is also a law by which we show our loyalty to the Lord and prove

ourselves worthy of privileges, ordinances, and blessings.

I was recently in Independence, Missouri, and felt a need to drive an hour north to Far West. The Latter-day Saints settled Far West in 1836 as a place of refuge from persecution. Far West became the county seat, with an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 inhabitants. It was the headquarters of the Church for a season. My own ancestors lived there.

As I arrived at Far West and looked about, all I could see was rolling farmlands. There was no city, no roads, and no buildings. There was only a peaceful, grassy temple site containing four cornerstones, surrounded by a modest fence.

In 1838 the Saints were driven from Far West. Joseph Smith and others were arrested and taken to the nearby Liberty Jail. There they languished under the most horrible conditions imaginable for six months. My own ancestors suffered terribly in Far West and almost lost their lives.

As I stood in Far West and visualized what it once was, I opened my scriptures and read section 119 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This revelation was given through the Prophet Joseph Smith at Far West on 8 July 1838, in the midst of these persecutions:

“And this shall be the beginning of the tithing of my people.

“And after that, those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord.”⁶

I thought to myself that the law of tithing could not have been received by the members of the Church at a less opportune time than then. But they received it, and the members commenced living this new law at a time when they were losing their possessions and, in some cases, their lives. As I visited Far West, I gained a spiritual testimony of the law of tithing that was stronger and deeper than I had ever before felt.

Counsel to new members to pay tithing

I would like to offer a word of counsel to the many thousands of members joining the Church today as a result of the diligent efforts of our missionaries. Exercise your faith. Pay your tithing. This law may be different from that to which you were accustomed prior to your baptism. But nothing you do as a new convert will more completely prepare you to enjoy the wonderful blessings that await you—even temple blessings—than paying your tithing.

Now, a brief word of counsel to missionaries. Teach tithing to your investigators in such a way that they will gain a testimony of this wonderful principle of the gospel.

Paying tithing in difficult circumstances

Joseph F. Smith’s mother was known as “Widow Smith.” She was the widow of Hyrum Smith, who was martyred with the Prophet Joseph. She once rebuked the tithing clerk who stated that because of her poverty, she should not have to pay her tithing. She said: “‘Would you deny me a blessing? If I did not pay my tithing, I should expect the Lord to withhold his blessings from me. I pay my tithing, not only because it is a law of God, but because I expect a blessing by doing it. By keeping this and other laws, I expect to prosper, and to be able to provide for my family.’”⁷

Did she prosper? Her son and grandson became Presidents of the Church, and her descendants today include a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and many notable Church leaders.

Speaking of his mother, Joseph F. Smith once said she paid “tithes of her sheep and cattle, the tenth pound of her butter, her tenth chicken, the tenth of her eggs, the tenth pig, the tenth calf, the tenth colt—a tenth of everything she raised.”⁸

I was once teaching the law of tithing to a group of Church leaders in Africa.

One brother said, "Elder Tingey, how can I pay tithing when I have no income?" I inquired and determined that he had a large family of seven or eight children and was unemployed. I asked how he fed his family. He said he had a small garden and raised geese. I asked, "What do the geese do?" He replied, "They lay eggs." I responded, "What if one morning you discovered 10 geese eggs in the nests of your geese?" A light flickered on in his soul. "I could take one egg and give it to my branch president," he answered. He understood, and he could become a full-tithe payer.

Paying tithing brings a special peace

As we pay and teach our children to pay tithing, we develop a family that is deeply rooted in making and keeping temple covenants. The most glorious of all blessings we receive in this life and in the eternities are blessings that come from knowing that our families are sealed together for all eternity. Today some may find that they are denying themselves these privileges by their failure to pay tithing. To those who find themselves in

this situation, my counsel is to exercise your faith, prove the Lord herewith, and pay your tithing.

A special peace that will surpass all understanding will come to you and your family as you pay a full tithing. You will find that all fears concerning finances and care of family will diminish. You will come to know that your Heavenly Father loves you.

I am grateful that my parents taught me to pay tithing. I bear my humble testimony that paying tithing is a true principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 231.
2. See Genesis 14:18–20.
3. See Deuteronomy 12:6.
4. Malachi 3:8, 10.
5. Mark 12:41–44.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 119:3–4.
7. Quoted in *Gospel Doctrine*, 229.
8. *Gospel Doctrine*, 229.

The choir and congregation sang "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Sister Mary Ellen W. Smoot

Relief Society helps develop inner strength

On behalf of my counselors and the Relief Society general board, we acknowledge the members of the Church worldwide, and specifically the women, who through their faithfulness and devotion, make sacrifices of their time and talents to bless the lives of individuals and families around the world.

In the blessing President Gordon B. Hinckley gave me when I was set apart, he spoke of the service the Relief Society can render. He said, "This is a tremendous organization, perhaps the largest and oldest of its kind in all the world. Its mission is to do good and to help those in

distress and need, to bring about the processes of education, good homemaking, and other skills into the lives of women throughout the world."

We have as our guides the Relief Society declaration; home, family, and personal enrichment meetings; and the visiting teaching program. These tools have been carefully evaluated and are now in place to help sisters expand their inner strength through service and unity.

Inner strength of Susanna Stone Lloyd

To demonstrate the kind of inner strength I am talking about, I would like to share the story of Susanna Stone Lloyd,