

AN OLIVE LEAF

"... plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord's message of peace to us."
(See History of the Church, 1:316 and D&C 88.)

"MORE HUMILITY AND PATIENCE AND FORGIVENESS"

By President Howard W. Hunter

Following the 30 May 1994 death of President Ezra Taft Benson, Howard W. Hunter read this statement at a press conference on 6 June where it was announced that the Quorum of the Twelve had met and ordained him to be the next Church president.

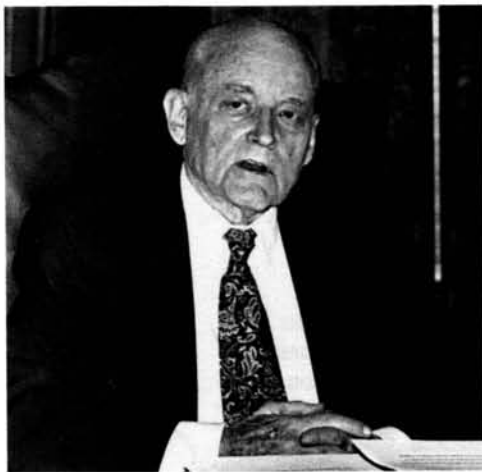
OUR HEARTS HAVE BEEN very tender since the death of our dear friend and brother, Ezra Taft Benson. We love him very much and will miss his company and sweet counsel. I have felt his loss in a particularly personal way in light of the new responsibility that has come to me since his passing. I have shed many tears and have sought my Father in Heaven in earnest prayer with a desire to be equal to the high and holy calling which is now mine.

My greatest strength through these past hours and recent days has been my abiding testimony that this is the work of God and not men, that Jesus Christ is the authorized and living head of this Church and He leads it in word and deed. I pledge my life, my strength, and the full measure of my soul to serving Him fully.

To the membership of the Church in every country of the world and to people everywhere I extend my love.

There are two invitations I would like to leave with the members of the Church as we strive to keep the commandments of God and receive the full measure of His blessings. First of all, I would invite all members of the Church to live with ever-more attention to the life and example of the Lord Jesus Christ, especially the love and hope and compassion He displayed.

I pray that we might treat each other with more kindness, more courtesy, more humility and patience and forgiveness. We do have high expectations of one another, and all can improve. Our world cries out for more disciplined living of the commandments of God. But the way we are to encourage that,



We do have high expectations of one another, but the way we are to encourage is "by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned."

as the Lord told the Prophet Joseph in the wintry depths of Liberty Jail, is "by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; . . . without hypocrisy, and without guile." (D&C 121:41, 42.)

To those who have transgressed or been offended, we say come back. To those who are hurt and struggling and afraid, we say let us stand with you and dry your tears. To those who are confused and assailed by error on every side, we say come to the God of all truth and the Church of continuing revelation. Come back. Stand with us. Carry on. Be believing. All is well, and all will be well. Feast at the table laid before you in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and strive to follow the Good Shepherd who has provided it. Have hope, exert faith, receive—and give—charity, the pure love of Christ.

Secondly, and in that same spirit, I also invite members of the Church to establish the temple of the Lord as the great symbol of their membership and the supernal setting for their most sacred covenants. It would be the deepest desire of my heart to have every member of the Church temple worthy. I would hope that every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend, even if proximity to a temple does not allow immediate or frequent use of it.

Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and means and personal circumstances allow. Let us go not only for our kindred dead, but let us also go for the personal blessing of temple worship, for the sanctity and safety which is provided within those hallowed and consecrated walls. The temple is a place of beauty, it is a place of revelation, it is a place of peace. It is the house of the Lord. It is holy unto the Lord. It should be holy unto us.

Thank you for your courtesy this morning. 