

“Come, Come, Ye Saints”

BRUCE C. HAFEN

I welcome the BYU community this morning as we begin another school year. I especially welcome those who are new among us. In many searches and circumstances, we have prayed you here, just as you have prayed about coming here.

We who gather today in the Marriott Center are the largest part, but not the entirety, of the BYU community, whose members and influence now stretch into a far-flung empire that serves and blesses much of the earth. One evening a few months ago I spoke by phone to Noel Reynolds, who was participating in a conference of scholars on the Dead Sea Scrolls at the BYU Jerusalem Center. One of my children interrupted to tell me that Phillip Smith of the BYU—Hawaii faculty was calling on the other line. As I put Noel on hold long enough to tell Phil I would call him back, I realized that the easternmost and westernmost outposts of Brigham Young University had just come together “live,” right there in my Orem telephone lines. I verified with my two callers that the sun was just going down in Hawaii as it was just coming up in Israel. And then it hit me: the sun never sets on the Cougar Kingdom!

With that note on the breadth of life at BYU, may I describe a recent morning when I sensed some heights of life at BYU. On the morning

of June 21, I welcomed the Institute of Applied Statistics to our campus. Those number crunchers were ecstatic to be meeting at the nation’s largest private, church-related university on the longest day of the year, the warmest June 21st in 23 years, following the wettest Utah May in 17 years. They quivered with delight to discover that the Talmage Building has 130,893 square feet and that the BYU campus has 638 acres, 482 buildings, and 399 miles of sidewalks. They loved learning that the BYU Statistics Department has done a special study on skiing accidents to help those who come to Utah for the 2002 Winter Olympics. According to these statistically valid data, most skiers who break their legs on Utah slopes do so on the last run of the day.

As I left the statisticians to go to my office that morning, I saw Hugh Nibley walking toward me near the ASB parking lot. Suddenly he stopped walking, turned around, and began looking intently northward. The inimitable Nibley removed his sunglasses, tipped back his canvas hat, and stood transfixed, as though his eyes drank in a vision. Then I saw what

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had stopped him—and an aesthetic and spiritual view of BYU replaced the statistical one. A clearing storm and rising sun had left a ring of heavy, low clouds around the neck of Mt. Timpanogos, like a richly flowered lei. The familiar Timp skyline poked above the clouds, glistening in the sunlight with a light layer of fresh snow, the white peaks contrasting brilliantly with the blue sky and the full green foreground. I stopped, too, looking not just at Timp but at Hugh Nibley looking at Timp. No matter how many hundreds of times he had seen that mountain, no matter how full his head from his latest reading and his always brimming stream of consciousness, Hugh looked up longingly at Timp. He doesn't take it for granted. For Nibley, Timp is like a wonderful poem or painting or scripture or trip to the temple—always revealing new meaning and new inspiration to those who probe its depths. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's lines apply with special force to life at BYU:

*Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.*
[*Aurora Leigh*, book 7, lines 820–23]

We have been trying to combine both statistical and spiritual perspectives on BYU during this past year's work on the self-study. We are reviewing the university at two levels simultaneously: a study of each department, both academic and academic support; and a large-scale institutional evaluation. We have done some of this work to satisfy the 10-year requirements of our regional accrediting association, but much of it we have imposed upon ourselves, trying to build a better BYU. The project has four purposes: (1) to enable a fresh and complete dialogue about the purpose and the performance of each program or activity and of the entire university; (2) to clarify our priorities and make our resource allocations more closely

reflect those priorities; (3) to create a set of tools that enable future improvement and increased accountability; and (4) to involve the entire BYU community with the Board of Trustees in shaping and defining BYU's future destiny. If the Church of the 21st century can have only one university, what should it look like?

I have been at once elated and sobered by the amount of time and energy so many of you have given to the self-study. I have never seen better committee work or better cross-campus collaboration. The members of the campus community also showed their good faith by willingly accepting, as premises for their reasoning, the constraints and guidelines established by the Board and the administration before the study began. The net result is the most thoughtful analysis of our work at BYU in a long time. With the wonderful side benefit of a renewed sense of community and shared purposes.

We've all wondered how the coming change in the university's leadership will affect the self-study. After reviewing in detail the project's findings and current status, Commissioner Henry B. Eyring has encouraged us to keep moving on our original timetable, which calls for an initial set of recommendations to him by November. The Board of Trustees will then be involved before the accreditation report is submitted in early 1996. Because the self-study is more a process than an event, much of what is being done now will have its greatest influence next year and beyond. Elder Eyring will discuss the self-study further tomorrow in the meetings for all faculty and for all administrators and staff personnel who have been involved in it.

One reason why the self-study can simply keep moving is that it was always intended to be a project for the entire community. Administrators come and go, but the Board, the faculty, and the staff at BYU enjoy ongoing continuity. Thus the process has tried to maximize openness and participation. We

seek a shared vision for BYU that is analyzed and informed by the community, shaped by the administration, then further shaped and guided by the Board.

As the multiple components of the self-study have started coming together, several university-wide themes are emerging. Unlike the sage who observed that an administrator is a solution in search of a problem, our institutional committees have explored both diagnosis and prescription possibilities regarding several strategic issues. Before the administration decides what it should propose to the Board, we need to hear the community's responses to the diagnoses and prescriptions the committees are proposing. Tomorrow you will have an opportunity for that, and we welcome your direct written observations as well. Today I will emphasize several institutional themes that are coming into focus, and tomorrow you will hear more detailed impressions.

In what follows I will draw upon numerous data sources developed in the past year. Our able institutional task committees have developed very sophisticated research designs and conducted a long list of rigorous empirical studies among every relevant population in the BYU community, within and beyond the campus. To take a couple of examples, these research reports include the "University Values Survey," which analyzes the relative importance assigned by the faculty and other BYU personnel to 99 possible university goals—comparing how we "ought" to pursue each goal with how we actually "are" pursuing it; an exhaustive survey of 11,000 recent BYU alumni, which yielded a return rate above 70 percent; and a comprehensive study of student perspectives called "The Student Experience."

In general, the aggregation of this data reveals a university that is remarkably robust and healthy. Nonetheless, some change is needed. I will note seven institutional themes, devoting more time to some than to others.

First, the data show an incredibly high level of agreement among all of the university's constituents that BYU's most important purpose, and its most distinctive characteristic, is to nurture an educational environment based on the integration of both spiritual and academic values. Given the priority of that widely shared premise, it is most heartening to discover that an overwhelming percentage of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and Church members all find that, in general, the university is effectively fulfilling this high aspiration. These are not trivial findings in a day when American higher education is being buffeted to an unprecedented degree by philosophical confusion and dwindling public support.

However, our Committee on the External Environment tells us that certain forces will increasingly threaten our ability to pursue this unique and successful mission. Because of a disturbing pattern of social deterioration and moral permissiveness, combined with a trend toward secular sameness throughout higher education, we can expect less tolerance for religious explanations of BYU's distinctiveness. This puts a premium on our ability to perform with unarguable competence. Only if we demonstrate clear professional soundness can we defend our religiously based approach against ever less tolerant critics. As Elder Neal Maxwell once said, we cannot let the world condemn our value system by pointing to our professional mediocrity. To the extent that BYU people respond favorably to this challenge, the coming environment will not only tolerate us—many in that environment will look to us for both moral and intellectual leadership in American and international society. It will be a time of great opportunity for us, and I believe we will be equal to it.

This theme of an integrated spiritual and academic learning environment does produce some challenges on the campus. Our Combined Surveys Analysis Committee found that this theme engenders strong feelings, not

because some care about it and others don't, but precisely because everyone cares about it so much. On closer analysis, the Committee reported the rich insight that, although BYU faculty differ among themselves about the choice of *means* to achieve religious development and the integration of spiritual and academic goals, the faculty do not differ about the importance of the ultimately religious *ends* for which the university exists. There is stunningly broad agreement that BYU's most important specific goals are to develop students who behave ethically, who serve God and their fellow beings, and who have strong testimonies of the restored gospel. But people choose various ways of achieving these goals, leading not only to a variety of approaches but also to deep concerns among some about the methods used by others.

I find great reassurance in these insights. Ours is not a community that is divided about its loyalties. It is, rather, a community of sometimes diverse opinions about how best to fulfill our deeply shared loyalties to the Lord, his Church, and our students. It helps me to realize that differing approaches to shared ends will produce occasional tensions. Those tensions are healthy—even needed, when handled properly—in part because not all students respond well to the same approach.

For example, I know a BYU student who is struggling to gain a testimony of the gospel. It bothers him when some of his 19-year-old peers glibly begin speaking the language of testimony and missionary enthusiasm as if they were performing a role in a play. He and I both know a few returned missionaries who played the missionary role for a time, then came home and stepped out of their roles as effortlessly as they had stepped into them. Integrity is a crucial issue in developing an authentic, rather than a superficial, belief structure. I am haunted by a little boy's question to his grandfather: "Was that a true story, Grandpa, or were you just preaching?" Each of our students must

come to know through honest and genuine experience that the Restoration really is "a true story" and not just "preaching" or role playing.

At the same time, the desire for integrity in testimony can go so far that it demands more certainty and more advance explanations than may be possible in a mortal sphere where we walk by faith and not by sight. That is why a teacher who, in the name of integrity, delights in publicly expressing his doubts or challenging Church authority can undermine the development of students' religious faith. Alma taught us that we *cannot* know the truth of his words to complete certainty before we take the long walk—sometimes the leap—of faith. So how can we help each BYU student develop spiritual integrity in an attitude of faith? The best answer just might vary with the individual student and with the distinctive experience each of us brings to the teaching task.

A teacher who wants to encourage a student to be more believing may emphasize the need to trust authority; a teacher who wants to emphasize students' responsibility for their own learning may encourage a student to ask probing questions. One person's approach can seem wrongheaded to those who take a different approach. When that happens, let us not dogmatically condemn another teacher's choice of *means* to the ends we all share. We might even consider the strengths of the other person's approach as we adapt our advice to the needs of an individual student. Our tolerance for differing means should, of course, stay within boundaries that affirm professional civility and reinforce the divinity of the Lord's church. But we would do well to avoid leaping to conclusions about the methods and motives of our colleagues on many professional as well as religious questions, large and small. For instance, we should be just as skeptical about the claimed influence of anonymous letter to Salt Lake City alleging antispiritual attitudes at BYU as we are about the claims of anonymous

letters to the faculty alleging antiintellectual attitudes in remodeling the Bookstore.

A second major theme from the self-study is that the spiritual and educational welfare of BYU students is clearly the number one concern of the faculty and the staff. Of all the goal categories in the values survey, our community ranks the cluster dealing with *students* well ahead of all other categories. And the good news is that the students themselves are, on the whole, quite satisfied with their BYU education in both its spiritual and academic dimensions. Recent empirical studies also show that a BYU education has strong positive effects, not only on our students' prospects for employment and graduate studies, but also on their future Church commitments and activity.

However, our research tells us that we have serious shortcomings in how we respond to particular student needs. For example, The Student Experience Committee report found considerable student disappointment, and it found two common causes for many student problems: (1) a lack of real relationships with faculty and (2) impersonal treatment by campus entities. Particularly for freshmen, this and other studies demonstrate that classes are too often taught by graduate students, many classes are too large, and large classes are statistically related to excessively high rates of dropout and nonattendance. Moreover, our approach to both academic and career advisement needs major renovations, including special attention to advisement for women students.

In addition, the university has given inadequate attention to defining and evaluating its intended educational aspirations—not just academic outcomes, but all that we expect our students to gain from a BYU education. Last winter we introduced a draft document entitled “The Aims of a BYU Education,” which was widely discussed and then revised. A final version of this statement has now been warmly endorsed by the Board of Trustees as an impor-

tant instrument of university policy—but it won't mean a thing if it is left in drawers or three-ring binders. We must find ways to bring the spirit and the substance of that eloquent statement to life in the experience of every student, every faculty member, and all others in the BYU community.

Measured against those specific aspirations, we already know that we are falling short in teaching students the attitudes and skills that energize lifelong learning and that instill a mind-set of public service and a sense of obligation to society. The data reported by many faculty also underscore the need to strengthen our students' communications skills, especially in writing.

Interestingly, the third major theme is related to the second: members of the BYU community generally sense that we should pay more attention to teaching. Ours is a strong teaching university that values the scholarly and creative work of its faculty. Still, simply because this community values teaching so highly, the self-study is identifying a number of ways to become even stronger. For example, most faculty believe that teaching is insufficiently rewarded here, partly because we need to do a better job of evaluating teaching quality.

In addition, I hear a growing consensus that BYU simply must give careers in teaching a more honored place in the eyes of our students and the public—not only because we must replace 60 percent of our own faculty due to retirements and attrition in the next 10 years, but also because the nation's public school system simply cries out for us to provide that system with more imaginative and energetic support. It may be time for BYU to consider a new, institution-wide emphasis on teacher education. The nation hungers for better schools, the Church has a rich tradition of service-oriented teaching, and BYU was historically a teachers college—a “normal” college. Years ago David O. McKay believed that when the day came that BYU could not admit all the Church

members who would want to study here, the university should train more and better school teachers with the unique vision of a BYU education so they could pass that vision along to an ever-widening circle of students.

One hears echoes of concern about teaching throughout American higher education these days. Many college and university leaders now acknowledge that typical PhD programs focus so single-mindedly on honing research skills that they make little serious effort to help prospective university faculty learn how to teach—even though most PhD students enter their programs to become college-level teachers. The Faculty Center at BYU has undertaken a successful orientation program for new faculty here, but we could do far more to provide intensive, substantial training for new faculty, not only for the profession of college teaching, but also to transmit BYU's unique educational vision. In addition, our Task Committee on Educational Technology tells us that we must undertake new measures to clarify the place of technology in teaching and to increase our support for promising technology-based innovations.

To emphasize teaching is not to deemphasize the importance of scholarship. Indeed, as one BYU task committee has written, "Rewards for teaching excellence not rooted in scholarship would be meaningless, [even] counterproductive." Still, the committee found that "if we want good teaching, we have to evaluate and reward it at least as conscientiously as we do research or creative work and citizenship. We are not doing that currently." With better evaluation we can "give teaching its proper place in the value structure of the university."

A fourth theme deals with issues of university governance and communication. Our task committees have found some faculty and staff concern about inadequate participation in campus decision making. The Combined Surveys Analysis Committee offered the insight that those registering this concern are not necessar-

ily asking for greater roles in governance; they mostly want better two-way communication with administrators based on a foundation of mutual understanding, candor, and trust.

Some of us in the administration have also at times felt a communications gap, which may be our perception of the same organizational distance that others sense. This is a complex organization, and the administration has needed better tools to understand departmental-level units well enough to provide well-informed support and accountability. We have also needed more of the small-scale settings and the foundation levels of information that foster mutual understanding.

Whatever else we may do to bring ourselves closer together, I have sensed that the self-study itself is revealing some promising possibilities. This process is enabling an unusually complete, candid, and fair-minded exchange on matters of substance and mutual importance. Support units and academic departments and colleges have fully articulated their aspirations and concerns, which are being reviewed by an independent self-study committee with extensive involvement by deans and university administrators. There will be more administration interaction with both academic and support units after the committee completes its recommendations. Our experience together is teaching us the value of better communication on matters both philosophical and programmatic. In addition, we are learning how a more rigorous program review process and increased databases can better inform all of our interaction. As suggested by the first theme I mentioned, we are blessed at BYU with a level of shared educational vision that cannot possibly be matched at any other university this size. In Leo Tolstoy's phrase, we enjoy the "spirit of the army" (see Hafen, "Spirit of the Army," in the 1994 Annual University Conference addresses). On that natural foundation, surely we can find ways to keep alive the spirit of the self-study, which can be one way

of bringing this large and busy campus closer together.

I will mention only briefly two other emerging themes, because our colleagues will talk more about them tomorrow. The fifth theme is that we are overloading the faculty. This issue has two different dimensions—(1) trying to do too much and (2) lacking focus in setting priorities and allocating resources. This is an important problem because it especially affects how the university allocates the precious resource of faculty time. Faculty frustrations in this area can aggravate normal tensions over teaching versus research issues and can make faculty feel they don't have time for students. A sense of overload can also contribute to the impression that the university is sending mixed messages, at times appearing to aspire to more than it is willing to pay for.

The theme of the overextended faculty is related to an occasional lack of clarity in academic programs and sometimes in what a department, or the university, expects of an individual faculty member. One of the chief values of the self-study process is that its evaluation phase is identifying gaps and ambiguities that can be remedied by simplifying, prioritizing, and refocusing in academic programs. In addition, two institutional committees are recommending ideas that will help us define individual faculty roles and rewards in new ways.

As a sixth theme, the self-study shows some evidence of emerging tensions between the loyalties that faculty feel to their academic disciplines/ departments and the loyalties they feel toward BYU as an institution. In his book *The Academic Revolution*, David Riesman argues that university faculties are generally shifting their loyalties away from their institutions and toward their disciplines, a potentially dangerous development for students and for campus coherence. BYU faculty have always felt an unusual degree of allegiance to this campus, but as our academic stature has increased, we

have encouraged our faculty to earn the respect of their disciplinary peers. That respect remains crucial, but it should not trump institutional claims lest we undermine the university's overriding commitments to religious education, general education, interdisciplinary work, and BYU's distinctive educational mission.

A seventh, rather specific theme has arisen within the strategic concern of how BYU's unique resources can bless the Church. The Church needs BYU people who can do quality scholarly work on a variety of important religious subjects. To frame the issues under this heading, the Board of Trustees recently approved a general policy indicating that BYU faculty, including those outside Religious Education, may undertake controlled amounts of Church-related scholarship with appropriate forms of approval and peer review. The Board also authorized the creation of an on-campus coordinating body on religious scholarship, along with creating a clarified partnership between BYU and the independent Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS).

I've not said much about themes relating to the academic support areas of the university because those evaluations are not yet in, having been designed to follow the academic reports. However, we are already seeing the need to clarify a number of departmental roles in the support areas as we compare original purposes with contemporary needs. In addition, we need to clarify how staff and administrative personnel may more efficiently exercise appropriately delegated authority. We will continue to share impressions about these and related topics.

Speaking more generally now, I began with a couple of images in my mosaic of memories from the year just past. I'd like to share four more such images. I think of a group of several hundred thoughtful educators I met in Zurich, Switzerland, who are concerned about the deterioration of the social, intellectual, and

moral fabric in Western society. When they learned about Brigham Young University, with 1,500 faculty and nearly 30,000 bright and able students who live drug-free lives of integrity, chastity, and rigorous intellectual and spiritual development, one of them asked in a voice near tears, “Is there really such a place? Are there really 30,000 students in one place who freely choose to live and learn that way? Such a place fulfills my dream for the ideal education, for it builds the ideal society.”

I think next of a moment last spring in an advisory board meeting in New York City for a group of scholars interested in issues of religion and society in the United States and beyond. A noted religious and intellectual leader unexpectedly asked if I would tell the group “what is new these days among the Mormons.” He explained that he was asking this question because he realizes increasingly that, compared to other American religious groups, the Mormons are becoming what he called “major players,” a growing Church with “great vitality.” Others in the group commented on the growing influence they see across the country from faithful and able Mormon scholars, mostly from the BYU faculty. They also displayed an astute understanding of the spectrum that ranges from Mormon scholars who are faithful to their Church to those who are uncomfortable with their Church—a phenomenon they have commonly seen in other religious groups. They continued with serious but sincere questions, wondering why we do missionary work in Latin America and how our leaders are chosen. It became very clear to me that these sophisticated people knew more about us than we might assume. And they take BYU very seriously, urging our help in addressing the social and religious issues of the day. To them, this university is coming of age, both intellectually and spiritually—and it is doing so not in spite of our serious religious commitments, but precisely because of them.

Then I recall the picture of Rex Lee presiding recently at his last BYU commencement. He doesn’t want any of us to start a good-bye party now that lasts four months, but I won’t have a better opportunity than today to thank him and Janet for teaching me by the power of their example how to deal gracefully with adversity. Their lives these past few years capture what I would call “grace under pressure.”

In the sport of diving, a diver is judged not only by his or her overall execution, but by the difficulty of the particular dive. The responsibilities Rex has carried these past six years would never be easy, but under the physical constraints he has faced, the difficulty quotient kept ratcheting upward until his was one really tough dive. Yet he has done it with exquisite grace. I have known Rex Lee at close range for a long time, and I’ve never known anyone who was more cheerful and more patient in the midst of aggravating and sometimes agonizing afflictions. And what I have learned in watching him is that his patience and cheerfulness have invited the Lord’s strength into his life.

In the 24th chapter of Mosiah we read the story of Alma and his people, who were in bondage to the wicked Amulon. Because Alma’s people could not fight back, they cried to God in their hearts for deliverance. The voice of the Lord came to them, promising that, because of their covenants with him, the Lord would “ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs . . . that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.” As Alma and his people responded faithfully, we read, “The Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:14–15). Eventually the Lord delivered them from their bondage.

President Lee has had the same experience as did Alma and his people: when we are graceful in affliction, submitting “cheerfully

and with patience to all the will of the Lord," then God is graceful too—and his grace gladly bears up against all the pressure there is.

Finally, let us consider Alma's story in a more general application to life at BYU. Before going to bed one night last week, I picked up my current late-night reading, which is Orson F. Whitney's biography of Heber C. Kimball. I read there a quotation from D&C 45:66-67 about the New Jerusalem, called Zion: "a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God; And the glory of the Lord shall be there." And then I went to sleep. Just before five the next morning, I awoke to find so many thoughts in my mind that I couldn't go back to sleep. I got up and wrote down a few ideas, hoping vainly that I could then return to sleep.

The thread of these ideas was that Mosiah 24 is not only a story about patience in adversity—it is also a story about what happens to all the people who come fully to Christ through his atonement and thereby enjoy the influence of his presence in this life. As the Lord told the early Saints, "I am in your midst and ye cannot see me" (D&C 38:7). The sacrament prayer promises that if we are faithful and always remember him, we may always have his spirit to be "with" us. The people who have this experience are the Saints of the Most High God. Then these words began running through my mind, so familiar, but with a meaning I never knew before:

*Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear;
But with joy wend your way.
Though hard to you this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.*
["Come, Come, Ye Saints," *Hymns*, 1985, no. 30]

Perhaps this means, come, ye Saints, all ye that are heavy laden, come to the Savior of Mankind; keep your covenants with him, and he will carry not only the burden of your sins—he will also ease the burdens of your

hardest toil and labor "that even you cannot feel them upon your backs." Then you will wend your way with the joy that Adam and Eve discovered when they embraced the covenants of the Atonement amid the burdens of the lone and dreary world. Even called it "the joy of our redemption" (see Moses 5:10-11).

And though the journey of mortality can sometimes be very hard, grace shall be as your day—meaning, in Nephi's words, "it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do" (2 Nephi 25:23). Thus the Lord's grace extends further as our individual days grow longer, and harder. If we are faithful he will give us whatever the "day" of our personal circumstances may require.

Then came another line from the song:

*We then are free from toil and sorrow, too;
With the just we shall dwell!*

Who are "the just"? All those whose uneven printed margins are "justified," made straight; those for whom Christ satisfied the demands of justice. They will inhabit the celestial kingdom, for, according to section 76, they are the "just" men and women who are "made perfect through Jesus" (D&C 76:69).

The verse continues:

*But if our lives are spared again
To see the Saints their rest obtain,
Oh, how we'll make this chorus swell—
All is well! All is well!*

How do the Saints obtain their "rest"? The prophet Mormon once spoke of "the peaceable followers of Christ [who] have obtained a sufficient hope [that they] can enter into the rest of the Lord" (Moroni 7:3). Joseph F. Smith described "the rest of the Lord" as a deep spiritual peace the Lord bestows on those Saints "who have set their eyes upon the mark of their high calling with an invincible determination in their hearts to be steadfast in the truth,

and who are treading in humility and righteousness the path” of the “followers of Jesus Christ.” The Lord’s influence gives those who enter into his rest a tangible “spiritual contentment . . . here upon the earth, . . . now, today” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 126–27).

We read in D&C 84 that Moses “sought diligently to sanctify his people. . . . But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord . . . swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory” (D&C 84:23–24). To see the Saints obtain their rest, then, is to see their “invincible determination” lead them into the influence of the Lord’s presence.

Perhaps, in addition to being a memorable song of encouragement and hope for weary pioneers, “Come, Come, Ye Saints” is—like the story of Alma and his people in their bondage—also a song about the meaning of the Lord’s gracious power in the adversity and toil of our lives. If so, it is also a song about the extraordinary blessing of living among a community of believers who yearn to enter the rest of the Lord.

God promised the Nephite people as a community that if they would keep his commandments, they would “prosper in the land.” We ordinarily assume the word “prosper” in this context means material prosperity. I once heard Elder Marion D. Hanks offer an alternative interpretation; namely, that “prosper in the land” means being within the constant influence of the Lord’s presence. He derives this interpretation from the Lord’s phrasing of his promise: “Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; but inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence” (2 Nephi 1:20). The Saints’ faithfulness thus allows them to enter into his rest and to stay there.

I believe this promise extends to the Saints of the BYU community. When we so live that

this community “prosper” in this sense, we are in the world but we are not of the world. We are no longer of the world because having the Lord’s Spirit abide with us lifts us above the constraints of mortality, even as it strengthens us to endure the demands of mortality. As Alma’s people found, God’s influence makes our mortal burdens lighter. As Moses found when he entered God’s presence, that holy environment replaces our myopic sense of time with the eternal perspective of Him for whom all things are present. And as Joseph F. Smith taught, the Lord blesses those who enter into his rest to be free from “unsettled, restless” feelings of mortal discouragement, “suspicion, unrest, [and] uncertainty” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 126). In this condition of transcending our own mortality, we will have cast the influence of Satan from our midst as Moses did before regaining the Lord’s presence. We will also be free from the spirit of contention, which cannot be where God is. Then we will know what Enos called “the joy of the saints” (Enos 1:3).

In some miraculous way, living this close to the Lord can transform our perspective and ultimately our nature. Perhaps this transformation is symbolized by our movement during mortality from the telestial to the terrestrial world, enabled by overcoming the adversary and increasing our obedience. We know this can happen to individuals. Can it happen to communities? Joseph and Brigham and Heber thought a community of faith made the transformation more likely because of the reinforcement made possible when people “love one another and never dissemble, But cease to do evil and ever be one” (“Now Let Us Rejoice,” *Hymns*, 1985, no. 3). That is why the early Saints longed for Zion—“a land of peace, . . . a place of safety . . . ; And the glory [the presence] of the Lord shall be there” (D&C 45:66–67). Is it inconsistent to think of a university as such a place? No, for the Lord himself said, “I . . . am well pleased that there should be a school in Zion” (D&C 97:3).

Someone recommended recently that BYU should have a religious monument on the campus symbolizing our distinctive understanding of restored Christianity and our collective commitment that we will overcome the profane life and live the sacred life. But perhaps these 638 acres are already holy ground, and perhaps the Carillon Tower is already such a religious symbol. But only those who know the hourly song of the carillon bells take off their shoes; the rest just enjoy the music.

Each of us is under pressure. Some of us just can't do all that is expected of us, and as a result we don't live as we planned to and we are not always there for those who need us most. Some of us feel great financial pressure. Some of us are pressured by personal weaknesses, others by high-pressure people who tempt us or manipulate us. Some of us feel the pressure of children who disappoint us or spouses who have come to seem too distant from us. Especially in our university life we may feel the pressure of not performing well enough or, worse, performing well but being misjudged or otherwise not supported by those who supervise our work. The passing years may have brought us failing health or the loss of those we most loved. The self-study tells us about the pressures of being institutionally overcommitted without enough attention to

students who need us or enough communication with colleagues who don't understand us.

May the song of the bells remind us of the Lord's promise to give us strength, insight, and grace under such pressures, easing the burdens that are placed on our shoulders. May we be like Hugh Nibley, feeling the reverence to lift our eyes to the hills or to take off our shoes on holy ground, thereby regaining perspective. May we be like the Lees and the people of Alma, submitting cheerfully and with patience to God's will. May our own religious lives reflect spiritual integrity in an attitude of faith so that our personal example can be our students' best teacher. We can live this way at BYU, for this is a school in Zion.

So when the carillon bells ring out across the campus at every hour, "Come, come, ye Saint, no toil nor labor fear; But with joy wend your way," may we know for whom these bells toll—they toll for the Saints of the Most High God. And may the bells call us as individuals and as a community to come unto Christ until we are within his holy influence, where, even in this life and in this place, we and our precious students may together enjoy the eternal quality of life God gives to all the obedient. Then we will know that *all* is well. For this I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

