

Mortality Works!

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Mandaitra ny fiainana an-tany!

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Despite the challenges we all face, our loving Heavenly Father has designed the plan of happiness such that we are not destined to fail.

For several years I was assigned to home teach an older sister in my ward. She did not have an easy life. She had various health problems and experienced a lifetime of pain due to a childhood accident on the playground. Divorced at age 32 with four young children to raise and provide for, she remarried at age 50. Her second husband passed away when she was 66, and this sister lived an additional 26 years as a widow.

Despite her lifelong challenges, she was faithful to her covenants to the end. This sister was an avid genealogist, a temple attendee, and a collector and writer of family histories. Though she had many difficult trials, and without question she felt at times sadness and loneliness, she had a cheerful countenance and a gracious and pleasant personality.

Nine months after her passing, one of her sons had a remarkable experience in the temple. He learned by the power of the Holy Ghost that his mother had a message for him. She communicated with him, but not by vision or audible words. The following unmistakable message came into the son's mind from his mother: "I

Na dia eo aza ireo fanamby izay atrehantsika rehetra, ilay Raintsika any An-danitra be fitiavana dia efa namolavola ny drafitry ny fahasambaranana mba tsy ho voalahatra tsy hahomby isika.

Nandritra ny taona maro dia voatendry ho mpampianatra isan-tokantrano ho an'ny ranabavy zokiolona iray tao amin'ny paroasy nisy ahy aho. Tsy mba nanana fiainana mora izy. Nanana olana ara-pahasalamana isan-karazany izy ary niaina fijaliana nandritra ny androm-piainany, izay vokatry ny loza nihatra taminy tamin'ny fahazazany teo amina tokontany filalaovana. Nisara-panambadiana izy teo amin'ny faha-32 taonany niaraka tamin'ny zaza efatra notezaina sy novelomina, ary nanambady indray izy tamin'ny faha-50 taonany. Nodimandry tamin'ny faha-66 taonany ilay vadiny faharoa ary nananotena izy avy eo nandritra ny 26 taona fanampiny.

Na dia teo aza ireo fanamby natrehany nandritra ny fiainany manontolo dia nahatoky tamin'ireo fanekempihavanany hatramin'ny farany izy. Mpahay tetiarana, mpandeha any amin'ny tempoly ary mpanangona sy mpanoratra tantaram-pianakaviana ikoizana ity ranabavy ity. Na dia niatrika fitsapana sarotra maro aza izy, ary tsy isalasalana fa nahatsapa alahelo sy fanirery indraindray, dia nanana endrika falifaly sy toetra miantra ary koa miramirana izy.

Niaina zavatra mahatalanjona tao amin'ny tempoly ny zanany lahy iray, sivy volana tao-rian'ny nahafatesany. Nahafantatra tamin'ny alalan'ny herin'ny Fanahy Masina izy fa nanana hafatra ho azy ny reniny. Nifandray taminy izy, saingy tsy tamin'ny alalan'ny fahitana na teny ren'ny sofina. Tonga tao an-tsain'ily zanakalahy

want you to know that mortality works, and I want you to know that I now understand why everything happened [in my life] the way it did—and it is all OK.”

This message is all the more remarkable when one considers her situation and the difficulties this sister endured and overcame.

Brothers and sisters, mortality works! It is designed to work! Despite the challenges, heartaches, and difficulties we all face, our loving, wise, and perfect Heavenly Father has designed the plan of happiness such that we are not destined to fail. His plan provides a way for us to rise above our mortal failures. The Lord has said, “This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”

Nonetheless, if we are to be the beneficiaries of the Lord’s “work and ... glory,” even “immortality and eternal life,” we must expect to be schooled and taught and to pass through the refiner’s fire—sometimes to our utter limits. To completely avoid the problems, challenges, and difficulties of this world would be to sidestep the process that is truly necessary for mortality to work.

And so we should not be surprised when hard times come upon us. We will encounter situations that try us and people who enable us to practice true charity and patience. But we need to bear up under our difficulties and remember, as the Lord said:

“And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name’s sake, shall find it again, even life eternal.

“Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies [or your problems, challenges, or the tests of this life], for I have decreed ... , saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant ... that you may be found worthy.”

When we feel distraught or anxious about our problems or feel that we might be receiving

ity hafatra azo antoka izay avy tamin’ny reniny ity: “Tiako ho fantatrao fa mandaitra ny fiainana an-tany, ary tiako ho fantatrao fa azoko ankehitriny ny antony nitrangan’ny zava-drehetra [teo amin’ny fiainako] araka ny nitrangan’izany, ary nety izany rehetra izany”

Vao mainka miavaka io hafatra io rehefa mandinika ny toe-javatra nisy azy sy ny fahasahiranana niaretan’io ranabavy io ary noreseny isika.

Ry rahalahy sy ranabavy, mandaitra ny fiainana an-tany! Novolavolaina izany mba handaitra! Na dia eo aza ireo fanamby sy ratram-po ary fahasahiranana izay atrehantsika rehetra, ilay Raintsika any An-danitra be fitiavana sy hendry ary tonga lafatra dia efa namolavola ny drafitry ny fahasambaran’ny mba tsy ho voalahatra tsy hahomby isika. Ny drafiny dia manome fomba iray hahafahantsika mandresy ireo tsy fahatomombanantsika ety an-tany. Hoy ny Tompo: “Indro izao no asako sy voninahitra—ny manatanteraka ny tsy fahafatesana sy ny fiainana mandrakizain’ny olona.”

Na izany aza, mba hisitrahantsika ny “[asa] sy ... [voninahitra]” izay an’ny Tompo, dia ny “tsy fahafatesana sy ny fiainana mandrakizay” izany, dia tsy maintsy manampò ny hobeazina sy hampianarina isika ary handalo ilay afon’ny mpan-drendrika, indraindray hatramin’ny faran’ny fetra zakantsika mihitsy aza. Ny fisorohana tanteraka ny olana sy fanamby ary fahasahiranana eto amin’ity tontolo ity dia midika ho fihodivirana ny dingana izay tena ilaina mba handairan’ny fiainana an-tany.

Noho izany, tsy tokony ho gaga isika rehefa tonga amintsika ny fotoan-tsarotra. Hiatrika toe-javatra izay hisedra antsika isika ary olona izay hanosika antsika hampihatra ny tena fiantrana sy faharetana. Saingy mila miaritra ny fahasahiranantsika isika ary mahatsiaro, araka izay nolazain’ny Tompo fa:

“Ary na zovy na zovy no manolotra ny ainy noho ny foto-kevitro, noho ny anarako, dia hahazo izany indray, dia fiainana mandrakizay.

“Koa aza matahotra ny fahavalonareo [na ireo olanareo sy ireo fanamby, na ireo fitsapana amin’ity fiainana ity], satria efa notapahiko ..., hoy ny Tompo, fa hozahako toetra amin’ny zava-drehetra ianareo raha toa ka hitoetra ao amin’ny fanekehampihavanako ... mba hahitana fa mendrika ianareo.”

Rehefa mahatsapa ho mikorotan-tsaina na sahiran-tsaina momba ny olantsika isika na

more than our fair share of life's difficulties, we can remember what the Lord said to the children of Israel:

"And thou shalt remember all the way[s] which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what [is] in thine heart, whether thou [would] keep his commandments, or no."

As Lehi taught his son Jacob:

"Thou hast suffered afflictions and much sorrow. ... Nevertheless, ... [God] shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain. ... Wherefore, I know that thou art redeemed, because of the righteousness of thy Redeemer."

Because this life is a testing ground and "dark clouds of trouble hang o'er us and threaten our peace to destroy," it is helpful to remember this counsel and promise found in Mosiah 23 relating to life's challenges: "Nevertheless—whosoever putteth his trust in [the Lord] the same shall be lifted up at the last day."

As a youth, I personally experienced great emotional pain and shame that came as the result of the unrighteous actions of another, which for many years affected my self-worth and my sense of worthiness before the Lord. Nevertheless, I bear personal witness that the Lord can strengthen us and bear us up in whatever difficulties we are called upon to experience during our sojourn in this vale of tears.

We are familiar with Paul's experience:

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations [I have received], there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

We don't know what Paul's "thorn in the

mahatsapa fa mety mahazo fahasahiranana ny fiainana mihoatra noho ny anjara sahaza ho antsika, dia afaka mahatsiaro ny zavatra nolazain'ny Tompo tamin'ny zanak' Isiraely:

"Ary tsarovy [ireo] lalana rehetra izay nitondran'i Jehovah Andriamanitrao anao tany an'efitra izao efapolo taona izao, hampanetry tena anao sy hizaha toetra anao ary hahalala izay ao am-ponao, na hitandrina ny didiny ianao, na tsia."

Araka ny nampianarin'i Lehi an'i Jakôba zananilahy hoe:

"Efa niaritra fahoriana sy alahelo betsaka ianao. ... Kanefa ... [Andriamanitra] hanokana ny fahorianao ho tombontsoanao. ... Noho izany dia fantatro fa efa voavotra ianao noho ny fahamarinan'ny Mpanavotra anao."

Koa satria ity fiainana ity dia toerana fitsapana ary "maizina ny lalan[a] ka maloka ny fiainan[a]," dia manampy ny mahatsiaro ity torohevitra sy fampanantenana hita ao amin'ny Môzià 23 ity mikasika ireo fanambin'ny fiainana: "Kanefa—na zovy na zovy no mametraka ny fitokiany [amin'ny Tompo], dia izy no hasandratra amin'ny andro farany."

Niaina manokana fanaintainana lehibe ara-pihetseham-po sy henatra aho, fony aho mbola zatovo, vokatry ny tsy rariny nataon'olona iray hafa, izay nisy fiantraikany nandritra ny taona maro teo amin'ny lanja omeko ny tenako manokana sy ny fahatsapako fahamendrehana teo anatrehan'ny Tompo. Na izany aza dia mijoro ho vavolombelona manokana aho fa ny Tompo dia afaka mampahery antsika sy manohana antsika amin'izay mety ho zava-tsarotra iainantsika mandritra ny fivahinantsika eto amin'ity lohahan-dranomaso ity.

Tsy zoviana amintsika ny zavatra niainan'i Paoly:

"Ary fandrao hirehareha noho ny habetsaky ny fanambarana [izay voaraiko] aho, dia nasiana tsilo tamin'ny nofo, dia irak'i satana hamely ahy, fandrao hirehareha aho.

"Izany no nangatahako intelo tamin'ny Tompo, mba hialan'izany amiko.

"Nefa hoy Izy tamiko: Ampy ho anao ny fahasoa avako; fa ny heriko dia tanterahina amin'ny fahalemena. Koa mainka sitrako ny hirehareha amin'ny fahalemeko, mba hitoeran'ny herin'i Kristy amiko."

Tsy fantatsika hoe inona ilay "tsilo tamin'ny

flesh” was. He chose not to describe whether it was a physical ailment, a mental or emotional infirmity, or a temptation. But we don’t need to know that detail to know that he struggled and pleaded with the Lord for help and that, ultimately, the Lord’s strength and power are what helped him through it.

Like it was for Paul, it was through the Lord’s help that I was eventually strengthened emotionally and spiritually and finally recognized after many years that I have always been a person of worth and worthy of the blessings of the gospel. The Savior helped me to overcome my feelings of unworthiness and to extend sincere forgiveness to the offender. I finally understood that the Savior’s Atonement was a personal gift for me and that my Heavenly Father and His Son love me perfectly. Because of the Savior’s Atonement, mortality works.

While I was eventually blessed to recognize how the Savior rescued me and stood by me through those experiences, I clearly understand that the unfortunate situation of my teenage years was my personal journey and experience, the resolution of which and eventual outcome cannot be projected onto those who have suffered and continue to suffer from the unrighteous behavior of others.

I recognize that life’s experiences—good and bad—can teach us important lessons. I now know and bear testimony that mortality works! I hope that as a result of the sum of my life’s experiences—good and bad—I have compassion for innocent victims of another’s actions and empathy for the downtrodden.

I sincerely hope that as a result of my life’s experiences—good and bad—I am kinder to others, treat others as the Savior would, and have greater understanding for the sinner and that I have complete integrity. As we come to rely on the Savior’s grace and keep our covenants, we can serve as examples of the far-reaching effects of the Savior’s Atonement.

nofon”i Paoly. Nisafidy izy ny tsy hanoritsoritra hoe aretina ara-batana ilay izy ve, sa kilema aratsaina sa ara-pihetseham-po, sa fakam-panahy. Saingy tsy mila mahafantatra izany antsipiriany izany isika vao mahafantatra fa nitolona sy nitalaho tamin’ny Tompo izy mba hahazoana fanampiana ary nony farany dia ny tanjaka sy ny herin’ny Tompo no nanampy azy namakivaky izany.

Tahaka an’i Paoly dia nahazo hery ara-pihetseham-po sy ara-panahy ihany aho tamin’ny alalan’ny fanampian’ny Tompo, ary nony farany dia lasa nahafantatra aho taorian’ny taona maro fa olona misy lanjany sy mendrika ny fitahian’ny filazantsara foana aho. Nanampy ahy handresy ny fahatsapako tsy fahamendrehana sy hanolotra famelana amin-kitsim-po ho an’ily olona nandratra ny Mpamonjy. Nony farany dia takatro fa ny Sorompanavotan’ny Mpamonjy dia fanomezana manokana ho ahy ary tia ahy amin’ny fomba lafatra ny Raiko any An-danitra sy ny Zanany. Noho ny Sorompanavotan’ny Mpamonjy dia mandaitra ny fiainana an-tany.

Na dia voatahy aza aho tamin’ny farany mba hahalala ny fomba nanavotan’ny Mpamonjy sy ny nijoroany teo anilako nandritra ireo zavatra niainako ireo, dia takatro mazava tsara fa ny toe-javatra nampalahelo tamin’ny fahatanorako dia diakosy traikefako manokana, ka ny fanapahan-kevitra hiova sy ny vokatry farany naterak’izany dia tsy azo ampitahaina amin’ny an’izay nijaly sy mbola mijaly noho ny fitondran-tena tsy rariny ataon’ny hafa.

Tsikaritro fa ireo zavatra iainana eo amin’ny fiainana, ny tsara sy ny ratsy, dia afaka mampianatra antsika lesona manan-danja. Fantatro izao ary mijoro ho vavolombelona aho fa mandaitra ny fiainana an-tany! Manantena aho fa vokatry ny fitambaran’ireo zavatra niainako teo amin’ny fiainako, ny tsara sy ny ratsy, dia manana fangorahana ho an’ireo tsy manan-tsiny niaran’ny voka-dratsin’ny fihetsiky ny hafa aho sy miombom-pihetseham-po amin’ireo voahitsakitsaka.

Manantena amin-kitsim-po aho fa vokatry ny zavatra niainako teo amin’ny fiainako, ny tsara sy ny ratsy, dia tsara fanahy kokoa amin’ny hafa aho, mandray ny hafa tahaka ny ho nataon’ny Mpamonjy, manana fahatakarana lehibe kokoa momba ny zavatra lalovan’ily mpanota ary manana fahitsiana tanteraka kokoa. Rehefa miantehitra amin’ny fahasovan’ny Mpamonjy sy mitandrina ny fanekempihavanantsika isika dia

I share a final example that mortality works.

Elder Hales's aunt, Lois VandenBosch, and his mother, Klea VandenBosch.

My mother did not have an easy journey through mortality. She received no accolades or worldly honors and did not have educational opportunities beyond high school. She contracted polio as a child, resulting in a lifetime of pain and discomfort in her left leg. As an adult, she experienced many difficult and challenging physical and financial circumstances but was faithful to her covenants and loved the Lord.

When my mother was 55, my next older sister passed away, leaving an eight-month-old baby daughter, my niece, motherless. For various reasons, Mom ended up largely raising my niece for the next 17 years, often under very trying circumstances. Yet, notwithstanding these experiences, she happily and willingly served her family, neighbors, and ward members and served as an ordinance worker in the temple for many years. During the last several years of her life, Mom suffered from a form of dementia, was often confused, and was confined to a nursing facility. Regrettably, she was alone when she passed away unexpectedly.

Several months after her passing, I had a dream I have never forgotten. In my dream, I was sitting in my office at the Church Administration Building. Mom entered the office. I knew she had come from the spirit world. I will always remember the feelings I had. She did not say anything, but she radiated a spiritual beauty that I had never before experienced and which I have difficulty describing.

Her countenance and being were truly stunning! I remember saying to her, “Mother, you are so beautiful!” referencing her spiritual power and beauty. She acknowledged me—again without speaking. I felt her love for me, and I knew then

afaka ny ho lasa ohatra amin'ny vokatra lehibe hoentin'ny Sorompanavotan'ny Mpamonjy.

Hizara ohatra iray farany aho fa mandraitra ny fiainana an-tany.

Lois VandenBosch, nenitoan'ny Loholona Hales, sy i Klea VandenBosch, reniny.

Tsy mora ny fiainana nandalovan'ny reniko nandritra ny fiainana an-tany. Tsy nahazo mari-pankasitrahana na voninahitra avy amin'izao tontolo izao izy ary tsy nanana fahafahana hianatra ankoatra ny lisea. Voan'ny lefakozatra izy tamin'ny fahazazany, izay niteraka fanaintainana sy tsy fahazoana aina teo amin'ny tongony havia nandritra ny androm-piainany. Rehefa lehibe izy dia niaina toe-javatra sarotra sy fanamby ara-batana sy ara-bola maro, saingy nahatoky tamin'ny fanekempihavanany sy tia ny Tompo.

Rehefa 55 taona ny reniko, dia nodimandry ny zokiko vavy faharoa, namela zanaka vavy valo volana, zanak'anabaviko, kamboty reny. Noho ny antony maro samihafa, dia lasa nitaiza ny zanak'anabaviko nandritra ny 17 taona manaraka i Neny, matetika tao anatin'ny toe-javatra tena sarotra. Kanefa, na dia teo aza ireo zavatra niainana ireo dia nanompo tamim-pifaliana sy an-tsitraro ny fianakaviany sy ny manodidina azy ary ny mpikambana tao amin'ny paroasy izy ary mpanantanteraka ôrdônansy tao amin'ny tempoly nandritra ny taona maro. Nandritra ireo taona maromaro farany niainany, dia voan'ny karazana aretin-tsaina démence i Neny, matetika very saina, ary notanana tany amin'ny toeram-pitsaboana sy fitaizana ny be antitra. Nampalahelo fa irery izy rehefa nodimandry tampoka.

Volana maro taorian'ny nahafatesany dia nanana nofy tsy hohadinoiko na oviana na oviana aho. Tao amin'ilay nofiko dia nipetraka tao amin'ny biraoko tao amin'ny Biraom-pitantanana ny Fiangonana aho. Niditra ny birao i Neny. Nahafantatra aho fa avy any amin'ny tontolon'ny fanahy izy. Hotsaroako hatrany ilay fahatsapana nananako. Tsy niteny na inona na inona izy, fa namiratra hatsarana ara-panahy izay mbola tsy niainako hatrizay ary sarotra amiko ny mamari-paritra azy.

Tena nahatalanjona tokoa ny tarehiny sy ny endriny! Tsaroako ny nilazako taminy hoe: “Neny a, tena tsara tarehy ianao!” manondro ny hery sy ny hatsarany ara-panahy. Nanaiky ny zavatra nolazaiko izy, fa tsy mbola niteny ihany

that she is happy and healed from her worldly cares and challenges and eagerly awaits “a glorious resurrection.” I know that for Mom, mortality worked—and that it works for us too.

God’s work and glory is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. The experiences of mortality are part of the journey that allows us to grow and progress toward that immortality and eternal life. We were not sent here to fail but to succeed in God’s plan for us.

As King Benjamin taught: “And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.” In other words, mortality works!

I testify that as we receive the ordinances of the gospel, enter into covenants with God and then keep those covenants, repent, serve others, and endure to the end, we too can have the assurance and complete trust in the Lord that mortality works! I testify of Jesus Christ and that our glorious future with our Heavenly Father is made possible by the grace and Atonement of the Savior. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

anefa. Tsapako ny fitiavany ahy, ary fantatro tamin’izay fotoana izay fa faly izy ary sitrana tamin’ny fiahiahiana sy ny fanambin’izao tontolo izao ary miandry mafy ny “fitsanganana amin’ny maty be voninahitra”. Fantatro fa nandaitra tamin’i Neny ny fiainana an-tany, ary mandraitra amintsika koa izany.

Ny asan’ Andriamanitra sy ny voninahiny dia ny manatanteraka ny tsy fahafatesana sy ny fiainana mandrakizain’ny olona. Ireo zavatra iainana eto amin’ny fiainana an-tany dia ampahany amin’ily dia izay mamela antsika hitombo sy hivoatra mankany amin’izany tsy fahafatesana sy fiainana mandrakizay izany. Tsy nalefa ety isika mba ho lavo fa mba hahita fahombiazana kosa amin’ny drafitr’ Andriamanitra ho antsika.

Araka ny nampianarin’i Benjamina Mpanjaka: “Ary ankoatra izany dia mba maniry aho ny hisaintsainanareo ny toetry ny fitahiana sy fahasambaran’ireo izay mitandrina ny didin’ Andriamanitra. Fa indro izy ireo dia tahiana amin’ny zava-drehetra, na ara-nofa na ara-panahy; ary raha mitoetra ho mahatoky hatramin’ny farany izy ireo dia raisina any an-danitra, fa amin’izany no hahazoany miara-monina amin’ Andriamanitra ao amin’ny toetry ny fahasambaran’ny mifarana na oviana na oviana.” Raha fintinina dia hoe: mandaitra ny fiainana an-tany!

Mijoro ho vavolombelona aho fa rehefa mandray ireo ôrdônansin’ny filazantsara isika, manao fanekempihavanana amin’ Andriamanitra ary mitandrina ireo fanekempihavanana ireo, mibebaka, manompo ny hafa ary maharitra hatramin’ny farany, isika koa dia afaka mahazo antoka sy fitokiana tanteraka ny Tompo fa mandaitra ny fiainana an-tany! Mijoro ho vavolombelona ny amin’i Jesoa Kristy aho, fa ny hoavintsika be voninahitra miaraka amin’ny Raintsika any An-danitra dia azo tanterahina noho ny fahasoavana sy ny Sorompanavotan’ny Mpamonjy. Amin’ny anaran’i Jesoa Kristy, amena.