

O Youth of the Noble Birthright

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Ry zatovo manana fizokiana ambony

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God trusts you, the children of the covenant, to help with His work of bringing all His children safely home to Him.

Elder Stevenson, this is a conference never to be forgotten.

Our family has always enjoyed a little book called *Children's Letters to God*. Here are a few:

“Dear God, instead of letting people die and having to make new ones, why don't you just keep the ones you've got right now?”

“How come you only have ten rules, but our school has millions?”

“Why did you put the tonsils in if you're just going to take them out again?”

Today there isn't time to answer all these questions, but there is another question I often hear from young people that I would like to address. From Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, to Thomas, Idaho, the question is the same: “Why? Why must Latter-day Saints live so differently from others?”

I know it's hard to be different—especially when you are young and want so badly for other people to like you. Everyone wants to fit in, and that desire is magnified to unhealthy proportions in today's digital world filled with social media and cyberbullying.

Ianareo zanaky ny fanekempihavanana no atokisan' Andriamanitra mba hanampy amin'ny asany hitondra ny zanany rehetra hody soa aman-tsara any Aminy.

Ry Loholona Stevenson, fihaonambe tsy hohadinoina na oviana na oviana ity.

Nankafizin'ny fianakaviako foana ny boky iray antsoina hoe *Children's Letters to God* (Taratasy nosoratan'ny ankizy ho an' Andriamanitra). Ireto misy vitsivitsy:

“Ry Andriamanitra malala, tsy aleonao ve avela ho velona fotsiny ireo olona efa eto amin'izao toy izay avela ho faty dia asiana hafa vao teraka indray?”

“Fa maninona no folo fotsiny ny lalàna apetrakao, kanefa an-tapitrisany ny ao amin'ny sekolinay?”

“Fa maninona no nasianao ny kambon-tenda raha hoesorina indray izany avy eo?”

Tsy misy fotoana hamaliana ireo fanontaniana rehetra ireo androany, saingy misy fanontaniana iray hafa henoko matetika avy amin'ny zatovo izay tiako horesahina androany. Hatrany Oulan-Bator, Mongolie, ka hatrany Thomas, Idaho, dia mitovy ihany ilay fanontaniana hoe: “Nahoana? Nahoana ny Olomasin'ny Andro Farany no tsy maintsy miaina amin'ny fomba tena tsy mitovy amin'ny an'ny hafa?”

Fantatro fa sarotra izany hoe tsy mitovy amin'ny hafa izany, indrindra fa rehefa tanora ianao ary maniry mafy ny ho tian'ny zatovo hafa mitovy aminao. Te hanan-toerana ny rehetra, ary mitombo izaitsizy izany faniriana izany ka lasa tsy mahasoana anatin'ny tontolon'ny nomerika amin'izao fotoana izao izay feno tambajotran-tserasera sy fampijaliana amin'ny alalan'ny

So, with all that pressure, why do Latter-day Saints live so differently? There are many good answers: Because you are a child of God. Because you have been saved for the last days. Because you are a disciple of Jesus Christ.

But those answers don't always set you apart. Everyone is a child of God. Everyone on earth right now was sent here in the latter days. And yet not everyone lives the Word of Wisdom or law of chastity the way you strive to. There are many valiant disciples of Christ who are not members of this Church. But they do not serve missions and perform ordinances in houses of the Lord on behalf of ancestors like you do. There must be more to it—and there is.

Today I would like to focus on an additional reason that has been meaningful in my life. In 1988 a young Apostle named Russell M. Nelson gave an address at Brigham Young University called “Thanks for the Covenant.” In it, then-Elder Nelson explained that when we use our moral agency to make and keep covenants with God, we become heirs of the everlasting covenant God has made with our forebearers in every dispensation. Said another way, we become “children of the covenant.” That sets us apart. That gives us access to the same blessings our forefathers and foremothers received, including a birthright.

Birthright! You may have heard that word. We even sing hymns about it: “O youth of the noble birthright, carry on, carry on, carry on!” It's a compelling word. But what does it mean?

In Old Testament times if a father passed away, his birthright son was responsible for the care of his mother and sisters. His brothers

internet.

Koa noho izany, ao anatin'ireo tsindry rehetra ireo, dia nahoana ny Olomasin'ny Andro Farany no manana fomba fiaina hafa be toy izany? Misy valiny maro mahavaly tsara izany: Satria zanak' Andriamanitra ianao. Satria note-hirizina ho amin'izao andro farany izao ianao. Satria mpianatr'i Jesoa Kristy ianao.

Saingy tsy mbola mampiavaka anao amin'ny hafa ihany ireo valiny ireo. Zanak' Andriamanitra daholo ny rehetra. Samy nalefa ety amin'izao andro farany izao ny olona rehetra ety an-tany amin'izao fotoana izao. Kanefa tsy ny olona rehetra no miaina ny Tenin'ny Fahendrena na ny lalàn'ny fahadiavam-pitondrantena amin'ny fomba iezahanao miaina izany. Maro ireo mpi-anatr'i Kristy maherifo izay tsy mpikambana ato amin'ity Fiangonana ity. Kanefa tsy manao asa fitoriana ny filazantsara amin'ny fotoana feno ary tsy manatanteraka ôrdônansy ao amin'ny tranon'ny Tompo ho an'ireo razambe tahaka izay ataonareo izy ireo. Tsy maintsy hoe misy valiny hafa ankoatra ireo. Ary tena misy tokoa.

Anio aho dia te hifantoka amin'ny antony iray fanampiny izay nanan-danja tokoa teo amin'ny fiainako. Tamin'ny 1988 ny Apôstôly vao herotreron'ny iray antsoina hoe Russell M. Nelson dia nanao lahateny tao amin'ny Oniversite Brigham Young izay mitondra ny lohateny hoe “Thanks for the Covenant (Misaotra noho ny fanekehampihavanana).” Nanazava ny Loholona Nelson tamin'izany tao anatin'izany fa rehefa mampiasa ny safidim-pitondrantenantsika hanao sy hitandrina fanekehampihavanana amin' Andriamanitra isika dia lasa mpandova ny fanekehampihavanana maharitra mandrakizay izay nataon' Andriamanitra tamin'ireo razambentsika nandritra ny fotoampitantanana rehetra. Raha lazaina amin'ny fomba hafa dia lasa “zanaky ny fanekehampihavanana” isika. Mampiavaka antsika amin'ny hafa izany. Ahafahantsika mahazo ireo fitahiana noraisin'ireo ray aman-dreny razambentsika izany, isan'izany ny fizokiana.

Fizokiana! Mety efa nahare io teny io ianareo. Mihira hira ao amin'ny fihirana momba izany mihitsy aza isika hoe: “Ry zatovo manana fizokiana ambony, mandrosoa! Mandrosoa! Mandrosoa!” Teny mahalasa saina izany. Fa inona anefa no dikan'izany?

Tamin'ny andron'ny Testamenta Taloha raha nodimandry ny raim-pianakaviana iray, dia ny zanany lahimatoa no tompon'andraikitra amin'ny

received their inheritance and left to make their way in the world, but the birthright son did not go anywhere. He would marry and have his own family, but he would stay until the end of his days to govern the affairs of his father's estate. Because of this added responsibility, he was given an added measure of the inheritance. Was leading and caring for others too much to ask? Not when you consider the additional inheritance he was given.

Today we are not talking about your birth order in earthly families or Old Testament gender roles. We are talking about the inheritance you receive as a joint heir with Christ because of the covenant relationship you have chosen to enter with Him and your Father in Heaven. Is it too much for God to expect you to live differently than His other children so you can better lead and serve them? Not when you consider the blessings—both temporal and spiritual—that you have been given.

Does your birthright mean you are better than others? No, but it does mean you are expected to help others be better. Does your birthright mean you are chosen? Yes, but not chosen to rule over others; you are chosen to serve them. Is your birthright evidence of God's love? Yes, but more important, it is evidence of His trust.

It is one thing to be loved and another thing entirely to be trusted. In the For the Strength of Youth guide, we read: "Your Father in Heaven trusts you. He has given you great blessings, including the fullness of the gospel and sacred ordinances and covenants that bind you to Him and bring His power into your life. With those blessings comes added responsibility. He knows you can make a difference in the world, and that requires, in many cases, being different from the world."

Our mortal experience could be compared to a cruise ship on which God has sent all His

fikarakarana ny reniny sy ireo anabaviny. Nahazo ny loany ireo rahalahiny dia nandeha nanao ny fiainany tany amin'izao tontolo izao, fa ny zanaka lahimatoa kosa dia tsy nandeha na taiza na taiza. Nanambady izy dia nanana ny fianakaviany manokana, saingy nijanona mandra-pahafatiny teo amin'ny toerana nahalehibe azy mba hitantana ny fananan-drainy. Noho io andraikitra fanampiny io dia nomena lova fanampiny izy. Diso tafahoatra ve ny zavatra nangatahina taminy mba hitarika sy hikarakara ny hafa? Tsia rehefa mieritreritra ny lova fanampiny nomena azy ianao.

Anio isika dia tsy miresaka momba ny filaharan'ny fahaterahanareo ao amin'ny fianakaviana eto an-tany na ny anjara asan'ny lahy sy ny vavy tamin'ny andron'ny Testamenta Taloha. Miresaka momba ny lova raisinareo amin'ny maha-mpirara-mandova amin'i Kristy isika noho ny fifandraisana ara-panekepimihavanana nosafidianareo hatao Taminy sy tamin'ny Rainareo any An-danitra. Diso tafahoatra ve raha toa ka miandrandra anareo hiaina amin'ny fomba hafa noho ny an'ireo zanany hafa ny Ray any An-danitra mba hahafahanareo mitarika sy manompo amin'ny fomba tsara kokoa? Tsia, rehefa mieritreritra ireo fitahiana na ara-batana na ara-panahy izay omena anareo ianareo.

Moa ve ny fizokiana anananao midika hoe tsara kokoa noho ny hafa ianao? Tsia, fa midika kosa izany hoe andrasana hanampy ny hafa ho lasa tsaratsara kokoa ianao. Moa ve ny fizokiana anananao midika hoe voafidy ianao? Eny, kanefa tsy voafidy hanjaka amin'ny hafa. Voafidy hanompo azy ireo ianao. Porofon'ny fitiavan' Andriamanitra ve ny fizokiana anananao? Eny, kanefa manan-danja kokoa noho izany, dia porofon'ny fatokiany izany.

Samy hafa tanteraka mihitsy ny hoe tiana sy atokisana. Vakintsika ao amin'ny boky torolalana Ho Zato Mahery! Ny hoe: "Matoky anao ny Rainao any An-danitra. Nomeny fitahiana lehibe ianao, anisan'izany ny fahafenoan'ny filazantsara sy ireo ôrdônansy sy fanekempihavanana masina izay mamatotra anao Aminy ary mitondra ny heriny ho eo amin'ny fiainanao. Misy andraikitra fanampiny miaraka amin'ireo fitahiana ireo. Fantany fa afaka mitondra fiovana tsara eto amin'izao tontolo izao ianao, ary izany dia mitaiky, amin'ny toe-javatra maro, ny tsy hitovianao amin'izao tontolo izao."

Azo ampitahaina amin'ny sambo lehibe fitsangantsanganana izay nandefasan' Andria-

children as they journey from one shore to another. The voyage is filled with opportunities to learn, grow, be happy, and progress, but it is also full of dangers. God loves all His children and is concerned about their welfare. He does not want to lose any of them, so He invites those who are willing to become members of His crew—that’s you. Because of your choice to make and keep covenants, He offers you His trust. He trusts you to be different, peculiar, and set apart because of the important work He trusts you to do.

Think of it! God trusts you—of all the people on the earth, the children of the covenant, His crew members—to help with His work of bringing all His children safely home to Him. No wonder President Brigham Young once said, “All the angels in heaven are looking at this little handful of people.”

When you look around on this cruise ship called earth, you might see other people sitting in lounge chairs drinking, gambling in casinos, wearing clothing that is too revealing, scrolling endlessly on cell phones, and wasting too much time playing electronic games. But instead of wondering, “Why can’t I do that?,” you can remember that you are not an ordinary passenger. You are a member of the crew. You have responsibilities that passengers do not have. As Sister Ardeth Kapp once said, “You can’t be a life[guard] if you look like all the other swimmers on the beach.”

And before you become discouraged by all the extra obligations, please remember that crew members receive something the other passengers do not: compensation. Elder Neil L. Andersen has said, “There is a compensatory spiritual power for the righteous,” including “greater assurance, greater confirmation, and greater confidence.”—Like Abraham of old, you receive greater happiness and peace, greater righteousness, and greater knowledge. Your compensation is not merely a

manitra ny zanany rehetra miala avy amin’ny moron-tsiraka iray miampita eny amin’ny iray hafa ny fiainantsika eto an-tany. Feno fahafahana hianatra, hivoatra, ho faly, ary handroso ao anatin’ily dia, saingy feno loza ihany koa izany. Tia ny zanany rehetra Andriamanitra ary miraharaha izay mahaso azy ireo. Tsy tiany hisy ho very amin’izy ireo, ka noho izany dia manasa ireo izay vononany ho lasa mpikambana ao amin’ny ekipany Izy, dia ianao izany. Noho ny safidinao hanao sy hitandrina fanekempihavanana, dia hametrahany ny fitokisany ianao. Matoky anao Izy mba tsy hitovy amin’ny hafa, ho voafidy, ary hiavakanoho ny asa manan-danja izay atokisany fa hataonao.

Eritrereto anie izany e! Amin’ireo olona rehetra eto an-tany, dia ianareo, zanaky ny fanekempihavanana, ireo mpikambana ao amin’ny ekipany, no atokisan’ Andriamanitra mba hanampy amin’ny asany hitondra ny zanany rehetra hody soa aman-tsara any Aminy. Tsy mahagaga raha nilaza ny Filoha Brigham Young indray mandeha hoe: “Mijery ity vondron’olona vitsy ity ny anjely rehetra any an-danitra.”

Rehefa mijery ny manodidina eto amin’ity sambo lehibe fitsangantsanganana antsoina hoe tany ity ianao, dia mety hahita olona hafa mipe-traka eo amin’ny seza lava misotro zava-pisotro, miloka any amin’ny casino, manao fitafiana mampitanjaka be, mitety tsy an-kijanona ny votoatin-javatra ao amin’ny finday, na mandany fotoana be loatra milalao kilalao elektrônika. Kanefa ho solon’ny fanontanian-tena hoe “Fa maninonaahono tsy mahazo manao izany?” dia azonao atao ny mitadidy fa tsy mpandeha tsotra mitovy amin’ny rehetra ianao. Mpikambana ao amin’ny ekipan-tsambony ianao. Manana andraikitra tsy ananan’ireo mpandeha ianao. Hoy Rahavavy Ardeth Kapp indray mandeha hoe: “Tsy afaka ny ho [mpanavotra ain’olona] ianao raha mitovy amin’ireo mpilomano rehetra eny amoron-dranomasina.”

Ary alohan’ny maha lasa kivy anao noho ireo adidy fanampiny rehetra, dia miangavy anao aho hitadidy fa mahazo zavatra izay tsy azon’ireo mpandeha rehetra ireo mpikambana ao amin’ny ekipan-tsambo: mahazo karama. Hoy ny Loholona Neil L. Andersen hoe: “Misy hery ara-panahy mifono valisoa ho an’ireo olo-marina,” isan’izany “ireo toky lehibe kokoa sy fanamafisana bebe kokoa ary fahatokian-tena bebe kokoa.” Tahaka an’i Abrahama fahiny, ianao dia mahazo fifaliana

mansion in heaven and streets paved with gold. It would be easy for Heavenly Father to simply give you all that He has. His desire is to help you become all that He is. Thus, your commitments demand more of you because that is how God is making more of you.

It's "a lot to ask of anyone, but you're not just anyone"! You are youth of the noble birthright. Your covenant relationship with God and Jesus Christ is a relationship of love and trust in which you have access to a greater measure of Their grace—Their divine assistance, endowment of strength, and enabling power. That power is not just wishful thinking, a lucky charm, or self-fulfilling prophecy. It is real.

As you fulfill your birthright responsibilities, you are never alone. The Lord of the vineyard labors with you. You are working hand in hand with Jesus Christ. With each new covenant—and as your relationship with Him deepens—you hold each other tighter and tighter until you are firmly clasped together. In that sacred symbol of His grace, you will find both the desire and the strength to live exactly how the Savior lived—differently from the world. You've got this because Jesus Christ has got you!

In 2 Nephi 2:6 we read, "Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth." Because He is full of truth, He sees you as you really are—flaws, weaknesses, regrets, and all. Because He is full of grace, He sees you as you really can be. He meets you where you are and helps you repent and improve, overcome and become.

"O youth of the noble birthright, carry on, carry on, carry on!" I testify that you are loved—

sy fiadanana lehibe kokoa, fahamarinana lehibe kokoa, ary fahalalana lehibe kokoa. Tsy fonenana any an-danitra sy lalana vita amin'ny volamena fotsiny no valisoanao. Ho mora amin'ny Ray any An-danitra ny hanome anao fotsiny izay rehetra ananany. Ny hanampy anao ho lasa tahaka ny maha-Izy Azy manontolo no faniriany. Noho iza ny dia mitaky misimisy kokoa aminao ny fanoloran-tenana apetraka aminao satria izany no fomba hanampian' Andriamanitra anao ho tonga amin'izay tena tokony hahatongavanao feno.

"Be loatra izany na iza na iza angatahana izany, saingy tsy na iza na iza fotsiny ianareo!" Zatovo manana fizokiana ambony ianareo. Fifandraisana ombam-pitokiana ny fifandraisana ara-panekempihavanana nataonareo tamin' Andriamanitra sy i Jesoa Kristy izay ahafahanareo mahazo betsaka kokoa amin'ny fahasoavan' Izy Ireo, dia ny fanampiana masina sy ny fanomezana tanjaka ary ny fanomezana hery hahavitan-javatra avy amin' Izy Ireo. Izany hery izany dia tsy finoanoam-poana fotsiny, na resaka vintana, na faminaniana ho tanteraka ho azy. Tena misy ilay izy.

Tsy irery na oviana na oviana ianareo rehefa manatanteraka ny andraikitrareo noho ny fizokiana anananareo. Miara-miasa aminareo ny Tompon'ny tanimboaloboka. Miara-miasa akaiky amin' i Jesoa Kristy ianareo. Isaky ny manao fanekempihavanana vaovao, sy rehefa mihalalina ny fifandraisanareo Aminy, dia mifamikitra ianareo mandra-pifamihinanareo mafy. Ao anatin'izany tandindona masin'ny fahasoavany izany dia ho azonao ny faniriana sy ny tanjaka hiaina tahaka izay niainan'ny Mpamonjy mihitsy—tsy mitovy amin'ny an'izao tontolo izao. Ho vitanao izany satria manohana anao i Jesoa Kristy!

Vakintsika ao amin'ny 2 Nefia 2:6 ny hoe: "Noho izany, ny fanavotana dia tonga amin'ny alalan'ny Mesia Masina sy ao Aminy; satria feno fahasoavana sy fahamarinana Izy." Satria feno fahamarinana Izy dia amin'ny tena maha-ianao anao no ahitany anao, ny tsy fahatomombanana, ny fahalemena, ny nenina, sy ny zavatra rehetra. Satria feno fahasoavana Izy, dia mahita anao araka izay tena azonao hahatongavana Izy. Manolo-tanana anao amin'ilay ianao amin'izao fotoana izao Izy ary manampy anao hibe-baka sy hihatsara, handresy sy ho lasa izay tokony hahatongavanao.

"Ry zatovo manana fizokiana ambony, mandrosoa, mandrosoa, mandrosoa!" Mijoro ho

and you are trusted—today, in 20 years, and forever. Don't sell your birthright for a mess of pottage. Don't trade everything for nothing. Don't let the world change you when you were born to change the world. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

vavolombelona aho fa tiana ianareo, ary atokisana ianareo, amin'izao fotoana izao, afaka 20 taona ary mandrakizay. Aza amidy hahazoana hanina tsy misy dikany ny fizokiana. Aza amidy amin'ny tsinontsinona ny rehetra anananao. Aza avela hanova anao izao tontolo izao satria ny hanova izao tontolo izao no antony nahaterahanao. Amin'ny anaran'i Jesoa Kristy, amena.