

# The Atonement of Jesus Christ Provides the Ultimate Rescue

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## Jesu Kristi forsoning er den ultimative redning

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*As we turn to Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, He rescues us from the storms of life through His Atonement.*

The Atonement of Jesus Christ provides the ultimate rescue from the trials we face in this life. President Russell M. Nelson assigned me to dedicate the Casper Wyoming Temple late last year. It was a profound, emotional, and spiritual experience. It brought into clear focus the role temples play in rescuing God's children through the Savior's Atonement.

The stakes in the Casper Wyoming Temple District include a portion of the overland trail used by Latter-day Saint pioneers between 1847 and 1868. In preparation for the temple dedication, I reread some of the history of the trail along the Platte River near Casper and continuing to Salt Lake City. The trail had been a thoroughfare for hundreds of thousands of western emigrants. My primary emphasis was the more than 60,000 Latter-day Saint pioneers who traveled the trail.

Most of our pioneers came by wagon, but about 3,000 crossed in 10 handcart companies. Eight of these handcart companies made the monumental trek with remarkable success and few deaths. The Willie and Martin handcart companies of 1856 were the exception.

I reviewed the accounts of the Willie and Martin handcart companies from the time the terrible weather conditions commenced. I became intimately aware of the challenges they faced at the crossing of the Sweetwater River, Martin's Cove, Rocky Ridge, and Rock Creek Hollow.

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*Når vi vender os til Jesus Kristus, verdens Frelser, redder han os fra livets storme gennem sin forsoning.*

Jesu Kristi forsoning er den ultimative redning fra de prøvelser, vi møder i livet. Præsident Russell M. Nelson gav mig til opgave at indvie templet i Casper i Wyoming i slutningen af sidste år. Det var en stor, følelsesladet og åndelig oplevelse. Den satte klart fokus på den rolle, templer spiller i at redde Guds børn gennem Frelserens forsoning.

Stavene i tempeldistriktet i Casper i Wyoming omfatter en del af den rute, der blev brugt af sidste dages hellige pionerer mellem 1847 og 1868. Som forberedelse til tempelindvielsen genlæste jeg en del af historien om ruten, der gik langs floden Platte River nær Casper og videre til Salt Lake City. Den rute var en gennemfartsvej for hundredtusinder af emigranter, der vandrede mod vest. Mit primære fokus var på de flere end 60.000 sidste dages hellige pionerer, der rejste langs ruten.

De fleste af vores pionerer rejste i vogne, men omkring 3.000 foretog rejsen i ti håndkærrekompagnier. Otte af disse håndkærrekompagnier foretog den monumentale vandring med bemærkelsesværdig succes og blot få omkomne. Willies og Martins håndkærrekompagnier i 1856 var undtagelsen.

Jeg gennemgik beretningerne om Willies og Martins håndkærrekompagnier fra det tidspunkt, hvor de forfærdelige vejrforhold begyndte. Jeg blev meget bevidst om de udfordringer, de mødte, da de krydsede Sweetwater River, Martin's Cove, Rocky Ridge og Rock Creek Hollow.

Between Storms, by Albin Veselka

I had not been inside the Casper Temple prior to the dedication. When I entered the foyer, my attention was immediately drawn to an original handcart painting titled *Between Storms*. The painting was clearly not intended to depict the tragedies that had occurred. As I gazed at it, I thought, "This painting is correct; the vast majority of handcart pioneers did not experience tragedies." I could not help feeling that this is like life in general. Sometimes we are between storms and sometimes between clouds and sunshine.

Heaven's Portal, by Jim Wilcox

When I turned to the original painting on the other wall, titled *Heaven's Portal*, I realized that this beautiful summer painting of what was called "Devil's Gate," with the calm and clear Sweetwater River flowing through it, presented the beauty of the Lord's creation, not just the challenges the pioneers faced in that horrible winter season.

Then I looked forward, behind the recommend desk, and saw a beautiful painting of the Savior. This immediately invoked overwhelming feelings of gratitude. In a world of great beauty, there are also enormous challenges. As we turn to Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, He rescues us from the storms of life through His Atonement in accordance with the Father's plan.

For me, the foyer was a perfect preparation for the temple ordinance rooms that allow us to receive the ordinances of exaltation, to make sacred covenants, and to fully accept and experience the blessings of the Savior's Atonement. The Father's plan of happiness is based on the Savior's atoning rescue.

The pioneer experience provides Latter-day Saints with a unique historical tradition and a powerful collective spiritual legacy. For some, the migration had been years in the making after being forcefully driven from both Missouri and Nauvoo. For others, it began after President Brigham Young announced the handcart plan, which was intended to make emigration more affordable. The handcarts cost much less than wagons and oxen.

A missionary in England, Millen Atwood, said that when the handcart plan was announced,

Mellem storme [*Between Storms*], af Albin Veselka

Jeg havde ikke været inde i templet i Casper forud for indvielsen. Da jeg trådte ind i forhallen, blev min opmærksomhed straks fanget af et originalt håndkærremaleri med titlen *Mellem storme* [*Between Storms*]. Maleriet havde tydeligvis ikke til hensigt at skildre de tragedier, der havde fundet sted. Mens jeg betragtede maleriet, tænkte jeg: »Dette maleri er korrekt; størstedelen af håndkærrepionererne oplevede ikke tragedier.« Jeg kunne ikke lade være med at føle, at det er ligesom livet i al almindelighed. Nogle gange er vi mellem storme, og andre gange er vi mellem skyer og solskin.

Himlens portal [*Heaven's Portal*], af Jim Wilcox

Da jeg fik øje på maleriet på den anden væg, som bærer titlen *Himlens portal* [*Heaven's Portal*], indså jeg, at dette smukke sommerlige maleri af det sted, der kaldes »Djævelens port«, hvor den rolige og klare flod, Sweetwater River, løber igennem, viser skønheden i Herrens skaberværk og ikke blot de udfordringer, som pionererne stod over for den forfærdelige vinter.

Dernæst så jeg lige frem, bag anbefalings-skranken, og så et smukt maleri af Frelseren. Dette fremkaldte straks overvældende følelser af taknemmelighed. I en verden fuld af skønhed findes der også enorme udfordringer. Når vi vender os til Jesus Kristus, verdens Frelser, redder han os fra livets storme gennem sin forsoning i overensstemmelse med Faderens plan.

For mig var forhallen en perfekt forberedelse til templets ordinancværelser, hvor vi kan modtage ophøjelsens ordinancer, indgå hellige pagter og helhjertet tage imod og opleve velsignelserne ved Frelserens forsoning. Faderens plan for lykke er baseret på den redning, der findes i Frelserens sonoffer.

Pionerernes erfaringer udgør en unik historisk tradition og en stærk kollektiv åndelig arv for de sidste dages hellige. For nogle havde migrationen været flere år undervejs, efter de var blevet tvunget til at forlade både Missouri og Nauvoo. For andre begyndte den, efter præsident Brigham Young bekendtgjorde planen med håndkærre, som var et forsøg på at gøre emigration mere økonomisk overkommelig. Håndkærreterne var meget billigere end vogne og okser.

Millen Atwood, der var missionær i England, sagde, at da planen med håndkærre blev be-

“it ran like fire in dry stubble, and the hearts of the poor Saints leapt with joy and gladness.” Many had “prayed and fasted day after day, and night after night, that they might have the privilege of uniting with their brethren and sisters in [the] mountains.”

Most of the handcart Saints experienced hardship but avoided major adverse events. But two handcart companies, the Willie company and the Martin company, experienced starvation, exposure to freezing weather, and many deaths.

Most of these travelers sailed from Liverpool, England, in May of 1856 aboard two ships. They arrived at the handcart outfitting site in Iowa City in June and July. Despite warnings, both companies departed for the Salt Lake Valley too late in the season.

President Brigham Young first became aware of the perilous situation of these companies on October 4, 1856. The next day he stood before the Saints in Salt Lake City and said, “Many of our brethren and sisters are on the plains with handcarts, ... and they must be brought here; we must send assistance to them ... before the winter sets in.”

He asked the bishops to provide 60 mule teams, 12 or more wagons, and 12 tons (10,886 kg) of flour and proclaimed, “Go and bring in those people now on the plains.”

The combined number of pioneers in the Willie and Martin handcart companies was approximately 1,100. Some 200 of these precious Saints died along the trail. Without the timely rescue, many more would have perished.

The winter storms began nearly two weeks after the first rescuers left Salt Lake City. The accounts of members of the Willie and Martin companies describe devastating challenges after the storms began. These accounts also depict the great joy when the rescuers arrived.

Describing the arrival scene, Mary Hurren said: “Tears streamed down the cheeks of the men, and the children danced for joy. As soon as the people could control their feelings, they all knelt down in the snow and gave thanks to God.”

Two days later, the Willie company had to travel the most difficult part of the trail, going over Rocky Ridge, in a freezing storm. The last of them didn't reach camp until 5:00 the next morning. Thirteen people died and were buried

kendtgjort bredte den »sig som ild i tørt strå, og de fattige helliges hjerter summede af glæde og fryd.« Mange havde »bedt og fastet dag efter dag og nat efter nat for at få det privilegium at forene sig med deres brødre og søstre i bjergene«.

De fleste af de hellige, der rejste med håndkærter, oplevede modgang, men undgik store ulykker. Men to håndkærrekompanier, Willies kompagni og Martins kompagni, oplevede alvorlig sult og blev udsat for frostvejr, og der var mange, der døde.

De fleste af disse rejsende sejlede fra Liverpool i England i maj 1856 ombord på to skibe. De ankom til forsyningsstedet for håndkærter i Iowa City i juni og juli. Trods advarsler tog begge kompagnier af sted mod Salt Lake-dalen for sent på året.

Præsident Brigham Young blev først klar over disse kompagniers farefulde situation den 4. oktober 1856. Den næste dag stod han foran de hellige i Salt Lake City og sagde: »Mange af vores brødre og søstre er ude på prærien med håndkærter, og de er nødt til at blive bragt hertil; vi må sende hjælp til dem, inden vinteren sætter ind.«

Han bad biskopperne om at skaffe 60 muldyrspand, 12 vogne eller flere og ca. 11.000 kg mel og erklærede: »Tag ud og hent de mennesker, der befinder sig på sletterne.«

Det samlede antal pionerer i Willies og Martins håndkærrekompanier talte ca. 1.100. Omkring 200 af disse dyrebare hellige døde på rejsen. Hvis redningen ikke var blevet sat ind i tide, ville mange flere være omkommet.

Vinterstormene begyndte næsten to uger efter, at de første redningsfolk forlod Salt Lake City. Beretningerne fra medlemmerne af Willies og Martins kompagnier beskriver de frygtelige udfordringer, de oplevede, da stormene begyndte. De skildrer også den store glæde, de oplevede, da redningsfolkene ankom.

Mary Hurren beskrev deres ankomst og sagde: »Tårerne løb ned ad mændenes kinder, og børnene dansede af glæde. Så snart folk kunne beherske deres følelser, knælede de alle ned i sneen og takkede Gud.«

To dage senere måtte Willies kompagni bevæge sig igennem den vanskeligste del af ruten, som gik over Rocky Ridge, i en isnende storm. De sidste ankom ikke til lejren før kl. 5 næste morgen. Tretten mennesker døde og blev begra-

in a common grave.

On November 7, the Willie company was nearing the Salt Lake Valley, but that morning there were still three deaths. Two days later, the Willie company finally reached Salt Lake, where they had a marvelous greeting and were welcomed into the homes of the Saints.

That same day, the Martin company was still 325 miles (523 km) back on the trail, continuing to suffer from cold and inadequate food. A few days earlier, they had crossed the Sweetwater River to reach what is now called Martin's Cove, where they hoped to find protection from the elements. One of the pioneers said, "It was the worst river crossing of the expedition." Some of the rescuers—like my great-grandfather David Patten Kimball, who was just 17 years old, along with his young friends "George W. Grant, Allen Huntington, Stephen Taylor, and Ira Nebeker—spent hours in the frigid water," heroically helping the company make the Sweetwater crossing.

While this event has received much attention, as I learned more about the rescuers, I realized that all of them were following the prophet and played critical roles in saving the stranded Saints. All the rescuers were heroic, as were the emigrants.

Studying their story, I appreciated the precious relationships and the long-term eternal vision among the emigrants. John and Maria Linford and their three sons were members of the Willie company. John died hours before the first rescuers arrived. He had told Maria that he was glad they had made the journey. "I shall not live to reach Salt Lake," he said, "but you and the boys will, and I do not regret all we have gone through if our boys can grow up and raise their families in Zion."

President James E. Faust provided this marvelous summary: "In the heroic effort of the handcart pioneers, we learn a great truth. All must pass through a refiner's fire, and the insignificant and unimportant in our lives can melt away like dross and make our faith bright, intact, and strong. There seems to be a full measure of anguish, sorrow, and often heartbreak for everyone, including those who earnestly seek to do right and be faithful. Yet this is part of the purging to become acquainted with God."

In His eternity-shaping Atonement and Resurrection, the Savior broke "the bands of

vet i en fælles grav.

Den 7. november nærmede Willies kompagni sig Salt Lake-dalen, men den morgen var der alligevel tre personer, der døde. To dage senere nåede Willies kompagni endelig frem til Salt Lake, hvor de fik en vidunderlig velkomst og blev budt ind i de helliges hjem.

Samme dag var Martins kompagni stadig 523 kilometer væk og led fortsat af kulde og mangel på mad. Nogle få dage tidligere havde de krydset Sweetwater River for at nå til det, der nu kaldes Martin's Cove, hvor de håbede at finde ly for uvejret. En af pionererne sagde: »Det var ekspeditionens værste krydsning af en flod.« Nogle af redningsfolkene, såsom min oldefar, David Patten Kimball, der blot var 17 år gammel, og hans unge venner, »George W. Grant, Allen Huntington, Stephen Taylor og Ira Nebeker, tilbragte timer i det iskolde vand« og hjalp på heroisk vis kompagniet med at krydse Sweetwater-floden.

Denne begivenhed har fået stor opmærksomhed, men efterhånden som jeg har lært mere om redningsfolkene, har jeg indset, at de alle fulgte profeten og spillede en afgørende rolle i at redde de strandede hellige. Alle redningsfolkene var heltemodige, og det samme var emigranterne.

At studere deres historie har givet mig en påskønnelse af de dyrebare relationer og den langsigtede, evige vision, der var blandt emigranterne. John og Maria Linford og deres tre sønner var medlemmer af Willies kompagni. John døde, få timer før de første redningsfolk ankom. Han havde fortalt Maria, at han var glad for, at de havde foretaget rejsen. »Jeg når ikke frem til Salt Lake i live,« sagde han, »men det gør du og drenge, og jeg fortryder intet af alt det, vi har været igennem, hvis vores drenge kan vokse op og stifte familie i Zion.«

Præsident James E. Faust kom med denne fantastiske opsummering: »Vi kan lære en storslået sandhed af håndkærrepionerernes tapre indsats. Alle må gennem lutringens ild, og det ubetydelige og intetsigende i vores liv kan smelte bort og gøre vores tro klar, helstøbt og stærk. Alle oplever fortvivelse, sorg og hjertesorger, også dem, der oprigtigt stræber efter at gøre det rette og forblive trofaste. Men det er en del af den renselsesproces, hvorved vi lærer Gud at kende.«

Frelseren brød med sin evige forsoning og opstandelse »dødens bånd, idet han [vandt] sejr



death, having gained the victory over death” for everyone. For those who have repented of sins, He has “taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice.”

Without the Atonement, we cannot save ourselves from sin and death. While sin can play a significant role in our trials, life’s adversities are compounded by mistakes, bad decisions, evil actions by others, and many things outside of our control.

Preach My Gospel teaches: “As we rely on Jesus Christ and His Atonement, He can help us endure our trials, sicknesses, and pain. We can be filled with joy, peace, and consolation. All that is unfair about life can be made right through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”

During this Easter season, our focus is on the Savior and His atoning sacrifice. The Atonement provides hope and light at a time that for many seems dark and dreary. President Gordon B. Hinckley declared, “When all of history is examined, ... [there is] nothing ... so wonderful, so majestic, so tremendous as this act of grace.”

I share three recommendations which I think are particularly relevant for our day.

First, do not underestimate the importance of doing what we can to rescue others from physical and especially spiritual challenges.

Second, gratefully accept the Savior’s Atonement. We all should strive to exhibit joy and happiness even as we face the challenges of life. Our goal should be to live optimistically on the sunny side of the street. I have observed my precious companion, Mary, do this her entire life. I have appreciated her sparkling, uplifting approach even as we have faced problems throughout the years.

My third counsel is to set aside consistent time to faithfully contemplate the Savior’s Atonement. There are many ways to do this in our personal religious observance. However, attending sacrament meeting and partaking of the sacrament are especially significant.

Equally important is regular attendance in a temple where possible. The temple provides a continuing remembrance of the Savior’s Atonement and what it overcomes. And, even more important, temple attendance allows us to provide a spiritual rescue for our deceased loved ones and more distant ancestors.

over døden» for alle. For dem, der har omvendt sig fra synder, har han »påtaget sig deres syndighed og deres overtrædelser, forløst dem og tilfredsstillet retfærdighedens krav«.

Uden forsoningen kan vi ikke frelses fra synd og død. Selvom synd kan spille en væsentlig rolle i vores prøvelser, forværres livets modgang af fejltagelser, dårlige beslutninger, andres onde handlinger og mange ting, som vi ikke har kontrol over.

IForkynd mit evangelium står der: »Når vi sætter vores lid til Jesus Kristus og hans forsoning, kan han hjælpe os med at udholde vores prøvelser, sygdomme og smerter. Vi kan blive fyldt med glæde, fred og trøst. Alt, hvad der er urimeligt ved livet, kan blive gjort godt igen ved Jesu Kristi forsoning.«

I denne påsketid er vores fokus på Frelseren og hans sonoffer. Forsoningen giver håb og lys i en tid, der for mange synes mørk og dystert. Præsident Gordon B. Hinckley erklærede: »Når verdenshistorien gennemgås ... [vil] intet være så vidunderligt, så majestætisk, så fantastisk som denne nådegerning.«

Jeg deler tre anbefalinger, som jeg mener er særligt relevante for vores tid.

For det første, undervurder ikke betydningen af at gøre, hvad vi kan for at redde andre fra fysiske og især åndelige udfordringer.

For det andet, modtag med taknemmelighed Frelserens forsoning. Vi bør alle stræbe efter at udvise glæde og lykke, selv når vi står over for udfordringer i livet. Vores mål bør være at leve med optimisme og se livet fra den lyse side. Jeg har set min dyrebare ledsager, Mary, gøre dette hele sit liv. Jeg har påskønnet hendes strålende, opløftende tilgang, selv når vi har oplevet problemer gennem årene.

Mit tredje råd er konsekvent at afsætte tid til trofast at tænke over Frelserens forsoning. Der er mange måder at gøre dette på i vores personlige religiøse efterlevelse. Dog er tilstedeværelse ved nadvermøder og deltagelse i nadveren særligt betydningsfuldt.

Lige så vigtigt er det regelmæssigt at tage til templet, hvor det er muligt. Templet giver en fortsat erindring om Frelserens forsoning, og hvad den overvinder. Og endnu vigtigere er det, at tempelbesøg giver os mulighed for at yde en åndelig redning for vores afdøde kære og fjernere forfædre.

President Russell M. Nelson, at our last conference, emphasized this principle and added, “[Temple] blessings ... help to prepare a people who will help prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord!”

We must never forget the sacrifices and examples of prior generations, but our adulation, appreciation, and worship should be centered on the Savior of the world and His atoning sacrifice. I testify that the key to the Father’s plan of happiness is the Atonement wrought by our Savior, Jesus Christ. He lives and guides His Church. The Atonement of Jesus Christ provides the ultimate rescue from the trials we face in this life. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Præsident Russell M. Nelson understreger dette princip ved vores sidste konference og tilføjede: »[Tempel] velsignelser forbereder ... et folk, der vil være med til at forberede verden på Herrens andet komme!«

Vi må aldrig glemme tidligere generationers ofre og eksempler, men vores beundring, påskønnelse og tilbedelse bør være centreret omkring verdens Frelser og hans sonoffer. Jeg vidner om, at nøglen til Faderens plan for lykke er forsoningen, som blev udvirket af vor Frelser, Jesus Kristus. Han lever og vejleder sin Kirke. Jesu Kristi forsoning er den ultimative redning fra de prøvelser, vi møder i livet. I Jesu Kristi navn. Amen.