

Reverence for Sacred Things

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Migao mo Mea Paia

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O Le Korama a Aposetolo e Toasefululua

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Reverence for the sacred fosters genuine gratitude, expands true happiness, leads our minds to revelation, and brings greater joy to our lives.

In the book of Exodus, we travel with Moses to the slopes of Mount Horeb as he turned aside from his daily cares—something we all should be willing to do—to see the burning bush that was not consumed. As he approached, “God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And [God] said, ... put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” In great reverence, humility, and wonder, Moses removed his shoes and prepared himself to hear the word of the Lord and to experience His holy presence.

That sacred mountain epiphany was an experience filled with awe-inspiring reverence, connected Moses to his divine identity, and was, in fact, a key element of his transformation from a humble shepherd to a powerful prophet, leading him to walk a new path in life. Similarly, each of us can transform our discipleship into a higher pattern of spirituality by making the virtue of reverence a sacred part of our spiritual character.

The word *reverence* can be traced to the Latin *verbrevereri*, which means to “stand in awe of.” In the gospel sense, this definition mingles with a feeling or attitude of profound respect, love, and gratitude. Such expression for the sacred by those who have a contrite heart and deep devotion to God and Jesus Christ fosters increased joy in their souls.

O le migao mo le paia e aumaia ai le lotofaafetai faamaoni, e faalautele ai le fiafia moni, e tata'i atu ai o tatou mafaufau i faaaliga, ma aumaia ai le olioli sili atu i o tatou olaga.

I le tusi o Esoto, tatou te malaga ai ma Mose i malifa o le Mauga o Orepa, a o ia faataatia ese ona atugaluga faaleaso—o se mea e ao ia i tatou uma ona naunau e fai—e vaai atu i le laautalatala na mu ae lei faaumatia. A o faalatalata atu o ia, “Sa valaau le Atua ia te ia mai totonu o le laautalatala, ma fetalai mai, Mose, Mose. Sa ia fai atu, O a'u lenei. Sa fetalai atu [le Atua], ina to ese ia ou seevae i ou vae, aua ua sa lava le eleele o loo e tu ai nei.” I le migao tele, lotomauualalo, ma le maofa, sa to ese ai e Mose ona seevae ma saunia o ia lava e faalogo i le afioga a le Alii ma ia iloa Lona afio ai ma le paia.

O lena aafiaga paia i le mauga, sa o se aafiaga e tumu i le migao ma le musuia maoae, na fesootai atu ai Mose i lona faasinomaga paia ma o le mea moni, o se elemene autu o lona liua mai se leoleo mamoe faatauvaai se perofeta mamana, ma taitai atu ai o ia e savali i se ala fou o le olaga. E faapena foi, e mafai foi e i tatou taitoatasi ona suia lo tatou aveai ma so'o i se mamanu maua-luga atu o le faaleagaga, e ala i le aveai o le mana o le migao o se vaega paia o o tatou uiga faaleagaga.

O le upumigaoe maua mai i le veape Latina o lerevereri, o lona uiga o le “tu atu ma le ofo i le.” I le uiga faaletalalelei, o lenei faauigaga e lualuagia faatasi ma se lagona po o se uiga o le faaaloalo maoae, alofa, ma le lotofaafetai. O lena faailoaga mo le paia, e i latou e i ai se loto momomo ma se tuuto loloto i le Atua ma Iesu Keriso, e aumaia ai le olioli faateleina i o latou agaga.

Reverence for sacred things is the greatest manifestation of a vital spiritual quality; it is a by-product of our connection to holiness and reflects our love for and proximity to our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ. It is also one of the most elevated experiences of the soul. Such virtue directs our thoughts, hearts, and lives toward Deity. In fact, reverence is not just an aspect of spirituality; it is the essence of it—the foundation upon which spirituality is built, creating a personal connection to the divine, as taught by our children when they sing, “When I am rev’rent, I know in my heart Heav’nly Father and Jesus are near.”

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are invited to cultivate the gift of reverence in our lives in order to open ourselves to a deeper communion with God and His Son, Jesus Christ, simultaneously strengthening our spiritual character. Had we more of such feelings in our hearts, there would be undoubtedly greater joy and delight in our lives, and there would be less room for sorrow and sadness. We must remember that showing reverence for sacred things gives meaning to much of what we do every day and strengthens our feeling of gratitude—inspiring awe, respect, and love for higher and holier things.

Unfortunately, we live in a world where showing reverence for sacred things is becoming increasingly uncommon. In fact, the world celebrates the irreverent, as any perusal of a tabloid magazine, television program, or the internet attests. The absence of respect for the sacred produces an increasing casualness in attitude and carelessness in conduct, which can rapidly spiral one generation into apathy and catapult the next generation into misery.

Irreverence can also lead us away from the bonds that covenants with God provide and diminish our sense of accountability before Deity. Consequently, we run the risk of caring only about our own comfort; satisfying our uncontrolled appetites; and ultimately arriving to the unholy place of despising sacred things, even God, and consequently our divine nature as children of Heavenly Father. Irreverence toward sacred things furthers the adversary’s aims by disrupting our sensitive channels of revelation, which are crucial for our spiritual survival in our day.

The meaning and importance of reverence

O le migao mo mea paia, o se faailoaga silisili lea o se uiga auaumama faaleagaga taua; o se fua lea o lo tatou fesootai i le paia ma atagia ai lo tatou alolofa mo, ma le latalata atu i lo tatou Tama Faalelagi ma lo tatou Faaola, o Iesu Keriso. O se aafiaga aupito faaeaina foi lea o le agaga. O lena mana e tata’i atu ai o tatou mafauauga, loto, ma olaga i le Atua. O le mea moni, o le migao e le na o se itu o le faaleagaga; o le ute lea—o le faavae e fau ai i luga le faaleagaga, e fatuina ai se sootaga patino i le lagi, e pei ona aoao mai e a tatou fanau pe a latou pepese: “A ou migao, ou te iloa i lo’u loto ua lata mai le Tama Faalelagi ma Iesu.”

I le avea ai ma soo o Iesu Keriso, ua valaaulia i tatou e atia’e le meaaloa o le migao i o tatou olaga ina ia tatala atu ai i tatou lava i se fesootaiga loloto atu ma le Atua ma Lona Alo o Iesu Keriso, ma faamalolosia ai foi o tatou tagata faaleagaga. A tele atu na lagona i o tatou loto, o le a le tau-mate le sili atu o lo tatou olioli ma le fiafia i o tatou olaga, ma o le a itiiti ai se avanoa e faavauvau ma faanoanoa ai. E tatau ona tatou manatua o le faaali atu o le migao mo mea paia, e faamatala ai le tele o mea tatou te faia i aso taitasi ma faamalolosia ai o tatou lagona o le lotofaafetai—maofa musuia, faaaloalo, ma le alolofa mo mea maua-luga ma paia atu.

Ae paga lea, ua tatou ola i se lalolagi ua matuai faateleina ai le lē masani e faaalia le migao mo mea paia. O le mea moni, e patipatia e le lalolagi mea e lē migao, i soo se faaaogaina o mekasini matautia, o polokalama televise, po o mea e faaalia i le initoneti. O le leai o se faaaloalo mo mea paia e fanau mai ai se faateleina o le faasamasamanoa i uiga faaalia ma le faatalalē i le amio, lea e afua ai ona vave ona lē popole le tasi tupulaga ma matua’ia ai ona faanoanoa le isi tupulaga.

O le lē migao foi e mafai ona ta’ita’iese ai i tatou mai noataga e maua mai feagaiga ma le Atua ma faaitiitia ai o tatou lagona o le tali atu i luma o le Atua. O le taunuuga, e lamatia ai i tatou i le na o le manatu i lo tatou lava lelei; ma faamalie ai o tatou lava mana’oga e lē mataofiofia; ma i’u ai ina taunuu i nofoaga e lē paia o le inoino i mea paia, e oo lava i le Atua, ma faapena ai lo tatou natura paia o fanau a le Tama Faalelagi. O le lē migao i mea paia, e atili faateleina ai faamoemoega o le fili e ala i le faalavelaveina o o tatou ala o faaaliga ia e taua mo lo tatou tumau faaleagaga i lo tatou taimi.

O le uiga ma le taua o le migao mo mea e

for what is sacred is well outlined throughout the scriptures. One instance in the Doctrine and Covenants would seem to indicate that reverence toward our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, is an essential virtue for those who attain the celestial kingdom.

As a church we strive to hold the Father and the Son in the utmost sacredness and respect in every aspect, including how we depict Their images. The guidance of the Holy Ghost is a crucial component in determining how these images should reflect the sacred nature, character, and godly attributes of the Father and of the Son. We are very careful to avoid portraying elements that could distract from our primary focus on our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and Their teachings, including how we apply advanced tools offered by technology, such as using artificial intelligence (AI) to generate content and images.

This same principle is applied to any source of information available through the official communication channels of the Church. Every lesson, book, manual, and message is carefully developed and approved under the direction of the Spirit to make sure we maintain the sacred virtue, values, and standards of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In a recent message for the young adults of the Church, Elder David A. Bednar taught, “To navigate the complex intersection of spirituality and technology, Latter-day Saints should humbly and prayerfully (1) identify gospel principles that can guide their use of artificial intelligence and (2) strive sincerely for the companionship of the Holy Ghost and the spiritual gift of revelation.”

My dear brothers and sisters, as sophisticated as modern technology has become, it simply cannot simulate the wonder, awe, and amazement found in the kind of reverence born from the influence of the Holy Ghost. As followers of Christ, we need to be careful not to weaken our connection with God and His Son by using AI-generated content and images inappropriately. We should remember that relying on a modern technological “arm of flesh” is an inadequate and disrespectful substitute for the inspiration, edification, and witness that can be received only through the power of the Holy Ghost. As Nephi declared: “O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust

paia, o loo matuai ootoo lelei mai i tusitusiga paia uma. O se tasi o faaitaiga i le Mataupu Faavae ma Feagaiga o le a foliga ai e ta’u mai ai o le migao i lo tatou Tama Faalelagi ma Lona Alo o Iesu Keriso, o se itu e tatau ai mo i latou e mauaina le malo selesitia.

I le avea ai o se ekalesia, tatou te finafinau e tuu le Tamā ma le Alo i le paia aupito maua ma le faaaloalo i ona itu uma, e aofia ai le ala tatou te faaalia ai o La’ua foliga. O le taitaiga a le Agaga Paia o se vaega taua i le filima’otia ai o le auala e ao ona atagia ai le natura paia o nei foliga, amio, ma uiga faaleatua o le Tamā ma le Alo. Tatou te matua faaeteete lava ia aloese le faaalia o elemene e ono tata’iese ai mai lo tatou taula’iga muamua i lo tatou Tama Faalelagi ma Lona Alo o Iesu Keriso ma a La’ua aoaoga, e aofia ai le auala tatou te faaoga ai meafaigaluega faama’ite ua aumaia e le tekinolosi, e pei o le faaogaina o le atamai faafoliga (AI) e fatu ai anofale ma ata.

O le mataupu faavae lava lenei e faaoga i soo se faapogai o faamatalaga e maua e ala i alaleo aloaia o fesootaiga a le Ekalesia. O lesona uma, tusi, tusilesona, ma savali ua atina’e ma le faaeteete ma ua faamaonia i lalo o le taitaiga a le Agaga ia mautinoa ai o tatou tausisia le avanoa taua, o tulaga faatauaina, ma tulaga faatonuina o le talalelei a Iesu Keriso. I se savali talu ai nei mo talavou matutua o le Ekalesia, na aoa mai ai Elder David A. Bednar, “Ina ia faatautaia le faauilavea faigata o le faaleagaga ma tekinolosi, e ao i le Au Paia o Aso e Gata Ai ona faailoa ma le agaga tatolo (1) mataupu o le talalelei e mafai taiala ai lo latou faaogaina o le atamai faafoliga ma le (2) taumafai malosi ma le faamaoni mo le faapaaga a le Agaga Paia ma le meaaloa faaleagaga o faaaliga.”

O’u uso e ma tuafafine pele, po o le a le atamai faalelailagi ua oo i ai tekinolosi faaonapo nei, ae le mafai ai lava ona natia le maoa’e, maofa, ma le ofotele e maua i le ituaiga o migao e fanau mai le tosinaga a le Agaga Paia. I le avea ai o ni soo o Keriso, e manaomia ona tatou faaeteete ia aua nei faavaivaia la tatou sootaga ma le Atua ma Lona Alo e ala i le faaogaina ma le lē tatau o le ‘anofale ma ata fatu faafoliga. E ao ina tatou manatua o le faalagolago i se “lima o le tagata” faatekinolosi faaonapo nei, o se suitulaga lē talafeagai ma le lē faaaloalo lea mo musumusuga, faamalamalama, ma le molimau lea e na o le mana o le Agaga Paia e mafai ona maua ai. E pei ona ta’ua e Nifae, “Le Alii e, ua ou faalagolago

in the arm of flesh.”

In another revelation, the Prophet Joseph Smith was instructed that temples erected unto the Lord should be a place of reverence to Him. Throughout his ministry, our dear prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, has strongly emphasized our worship in reverence in the sacred temple. In the house of the Lord, we are taught about entering into the holy presence of the Father and the Son. I have always found it instructive and even inspiring that one of the first things we do upon entering the temple and preparing ourselves to participate in the sacred ordinances there is to remove our shoes and change into our white clothing. Like Moses, if we are intentional, we can recognize that taking off our worldly shoes is the beginning of stepping onto holy ground and being transformed in higher and holier ways.

Brothers and sisters, we do not need to climb to the top of a mountain, like Moses did, to discover reverence for sacred things and convert our discipleship into a deeper level of spirituality and devotion. We can find it, for example, as we strive to protect our home environment from worldly influences. This can be accomplished by sincerely and fervently praying before our Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ and seeking to better know our Savior through our diligent study of the word of God found in the scriptures and in the teachings of our prophets. Additionally, such spiritual transformation can come as we strive to honor the covenants we have made with the Lord by living in obedience to the commandments. These efforts can bring a quiet and certain stillness to our hearts. Focusing on such actions can surely help transform our homes into reverent places of spiritual refuge—personal sanctuaries of faith where the Spirit resides, much like the mountain experience of Moses.

We can also experience such spiritual transformation as we faithfully participate in the Church’s worship service, including tuning our hearts to the Lord through our sincere singing of sacred hymns. Turning aside—like Moses—from worldly distractions, especially our cell phones or anything not in harmony with this sacred moment, enables us to turn our full attention to

ia te oe, ma o le a ou faalagolago pea ia te oe e faavavau. O le a ou lē tuu atu lo u faalagolago i le lima o le tagata.”

I se isi faaaliga, sa faatonuina ai le Perofeta o Iosefa Samita e faapea, o malumalu e faatutuina i le Alii e ao ona avea o se nofoaga o le migao ia te Ia. I Lana misiona atoa, sa faamamafa malosi mai ai e lo tatou perofeta pele, o Peresitene Russell M. Nelson, lo tatou tapuai ai i le migao i malumalu paia. I le maota o le Alii, e aoaoina ai i tatou e uiga i le ulufale atu i le afioaga paia o le Tamā ma le Alo. Ou te mauaina pea i taimi uma le aoga ma le musuia, o se tasi o uluai mea tatou te faia i le ulufale atu i le malumalu o le tapenaina lea o i tatou lava e auai e faatino sauniga paia iina, o le aveese lea o o tatou seevae ma sui i o tatou laei papa’e. Faapei o Mose, afai tatou te faia ma le loto i ai, e mafai ona tatou iloaina o le aveesea o o tatou seevae faalelalolagi o le amataga lea o le la’a atu i elele sa ma ua suia ai i ala maualuluga ma paia atu.

Uso e ma tuafafine, tatou te le tau fe’ā’ei i le tumutumu o se mauga, pei ona sa faia e Mose, ia iloa ai le migao mo mea paia ma liua ai lo tatou avea ma soo i se tulaga loloto atu o le faaleagaga ma le tuuto. E mafai ona tatou iloa, mo se faataitaiga, a o tatou finafinai e puipuia le siosiomaga o o tatou aiga mai tosinaga faalelalolagi. E mafai ona faataunuina lena mea e ala i le tatalo ma le lotofaamaoni ma le naunautai i lo tatou Tama Faalelagi i le suafa o Iesu Keriso ma saili ia iloa atili lo tatou Faaola e ala i lo tatou sutesue ma le filiga i le afioaga a le Atua o loo maua i tusitusiga paia, ma i aoaoga a o tatou perofeta. E le gata i lea, o lena ituaiga o suiga faaleagaga e mafai ona oo mai pe a tatou finafinai e faamamalu feagaiga na tatou osia ma le Alii e ala i le ola i le usiusitai i poloaiga. O nei taumafaiga e mafai ona aumaia se toafilemu lē leoa ma le mautinoa i o tatou loto. O le taulai atu i na faatinoga, e mafai ona fesoasoani moni e suia ai o tatou fale i ni nofoaga migao o le sulufaiga faaleagaga—malutaga patino o le faatuatua e afio ai le Agaga, e faapei foi o le aafiaga o Mose i le mauga.

E mafai foi ona tatou o’o i lena ituaiga o suiga faaleagaga pe a tatou auai ma le faamaoni i sauniga tapuai a le Ekalesia, e aofia ai le liliu atu o o tatou loto i le Alii e ala i lo tatou lagiina ma le faamaoni o viiga paia. O le faatafa ese—pei o Mose—mai faasalavei faalelalolagi, aemaise o a tatou telefoni feavea’i po o se isi lava mea e le ogatasi ma lena taimi paia, e mafai ai ona tatou

partaking of the sacrament, with our minds and hearts focused on the Savior and His atoning sacrifice along with our own covenants. Such sacramental focus will foster a reverently renewing moment of our communion with the Savior and will make the Sabbath a delight and transform our life.

Ultimately, we can experience this spiritual change in our discipleship as we regularly worship in the mountain of the Lord's house—our holy temples—and strive to live with covenant confidence, especially when we face the trials of mortal life.

My wife and I have personally experienced some sacred mountain moments in reverence as we have strived to apply these principles in our life, which has caused a meaningful transformation in our discipleship. I remember like it was yesterday walking through the cemetery before burying our second child, who was born prematurely and did not survive, while my wife was still recovering in the hospital. I recall praying to God with great fervency and reverence, asking for help to cope with that challenging trial. In that instant, I received a clear and powerful spiritual assurance in my heart: Everything will be fine in our lives if my wife and I endure, holding on to the joy that comes from living the gospel of Jesus Christ. What seemed like an overwhelming, sorrowful challenge at the time turned into a sacred, reverent experience, a capstone that has helped sustain our faith and has given us confidence in the covenants we have made with the Lord and in His promises for me and my family.

My brothers and sisters, reverence for the sacred fosters genuine gratitude, expands true happiness, leads our minds to revelation, and brings greater joy to our lives. It places our feet on holy ground and lifts our hearts to Deity.

I testify to you that as we strive to incorporate such virtue into our daily lives, we will be able to increase our humility, expand our understanding of God's will for us, and strengthen our confidence in the promises of the covenants we have made with the Lord. I witness that as we embrace this gift of reverence for sacred things—whether in the mountain of the Lord's house, in a meetinghouse, or in our own homes—we will be filled with astounding amazement and awe as we connect to the perfect love of our Heavenly

tuu atu la tatou gauai uma i le taumamafa ai i le faamanatuga, ma o tatou mafauafau ma lotou ua taulai atu i le Faaola ma Lana taulaga togiola faatasi ai ma a tatou lava feagaiga. O lenei taulai atu i le faamanatuga o le a aumaia ai se taimi migao o le faafouina o a tatou fesootaiga ma le Faaola ma o le a avea ai le Sapati o se mea fiafia ma suia ai o tatou olaga.

O le taunuuga, e mafai ona tatou o'o i lenei suiga faaleagaga i lo tatou avea ai ma so'o a o tatou tapuai e le aunoa i le mauga o le maota o le Alii—o o tatou malumalu paia—ma finafinau e ola ma le mautinoa i feagaiga, aemaise ai pe a tatou fetaiai ma tofotofoga o le olaga nei.

Ua ma o'o patino ma lo'u toalua i nisi o taimi paia i le mauga, i le migao a o ma finafinau e faa'oga nei mataupu faavae i o ma'ua olaga, lea na afua ai se suiga 'anoa i lo ma avea ai ma so'o. Ou te manatua e faapei o ananafi le savavali e ui atu i le fanuamaliu a'o le'i tanuina le ma atalii lona lua, o le sa fanau le au ma e le'i ola, a o i ai pea lo'u toalua i le falemai. Ou te manatua le tatolo atu i le Atua ma le lotonaunau tele ma le migao, e talosagaina se fesoasoani ou te taulimaina ai lenei tofotofoga faigata. I lenei taimi, sa ou maua ai se faamautinoaga manino ma le mamana i lo'u loto: O le a lelei mea uma i o ma olaga pe afai ma te tutumau ma lo'u toalua, ma uumau i le olioli e oo mai i le ola ai i le talalelei a Iesu Keriso. O le mea sa foliga o se luitau lofutina, ma faanoanoa i lenei taimi na liua i se aafiaga paia, migao, ma se taualuga na fesoasoani e lagolagoina ai lo ma'ua faatuatua ma sa maua ai le mautinoa i feagaiga sa matou osia ma le Alii, ma i Ana folafolaga mo a'u ma lo'u aiga.

O'u uso e ma tuafafine, o le migao mo le paia e aumaia ai le lotofaafetai faamaoni, e faalautele ai le fiafia moni, e tata'i atu ai o tatou mafauafau i faaaliga, ma aumaia ai le olioli sili atu i o tatou olaga. E tuuina ai o tatou vae i luga o eleele sa, ma siitia ai o tatou loto i le Atua.

Ou te molimau atu ia te outou, a o tatou finafinau e tuufaatasia lenei mana i o tatou olaga i aso taitasi, o le a mafai ona tatou faateleina lo tatou lotomauualalo, faalautele lo tatou malamalama i le finagalo o le Atua mo i tatou, ma faamalolosia lo tatou talitonu mautinoa i folafolaga o feagaiga na tatou osia ma le Alii. Ou te molimau atu a tatou opoina lenei meaalofo o le migao mo mea paia—pe i le mauga o le fale o Ieova, i se faletapu, pe i o tatou lava fale—o le a faatuuina i tatou i le maofa maoa'e ma tatou te ofo a o tatou fesootai

Father and Jesus Christ. I reverently witness
these truths in the sacred name of our Savior and
Redeemer, Jesus Christ, amen.

atu i le alofa atoatoa o lo tatou Tama Faalelagi ma
Iesu Keriso. Ou te molimau atu ma le migao i nei
upumoni, i le suafa paia o lo tatou Faaola ma le
Togiola o Iesu Keriso, amene.