

“Draw Near unto Me”

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“Songeni Karibu Nami”

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Mshauri wa Pili katika Urais wa Kwanza

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Jesus Christ loves each of us. He offers us the opportunity to draw closer to Him.

My dear brothers and sisters, it is a joy for me to be with you in this general conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is His Church. We are gathered in buildings and homes all over the world in His name.

We take His name upon us when we enter His kingdom by covenant. He is the resurrected and glorified Son of God. We are mortals, subject to sin and death. Yet, in His love for each of us, the Savior invites us to come closer to Him.

Here is His invitation to us: “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

There are times we feel close to the Savior Jesus Christ. And yet, sometimes during our mortal trials, we feel some distance from Him and wish for an assurance that He knows what is in our hearts and loves us as individuals.

The Savior’s invitation includes the way to feel that assurance. Draw near Him by always remembering Him. Seek Him diligently through scripture study. Ask through heartfelt prayer to Heavenly Father to feel closer to His Beloved Son.

There is a simple way to think about it. It is what you would do if you were separated for a time from dear friends. You would find a way to communicate with them, you would cherish any message you received from them, and you would do all you could to help them.

Yesu Kristo anampenda kila mmoja wetu. Yeye hutupa fursa ya kumkaribia zaidi.

Wapendwa wangu akina kaka na akina dada, ni shangwe kwangu kuwa pamoja nanyi katika mkutano huu mkuu wa Kanisa la Yesu Kristo la Watakatifu wa Siku za Mwisho. Hili ni Kanisa Lake. Tunakusanyika katika majengo na nyumbani kote ulimwenguni katika jina Lake.

Tunajichukulia jina Lake wakati tunaingia katika ufalme Wake kwa agano. Yeye ndiye Mwana wa Mungu aliyefufuka na kutukuka. Sisi ni wanadamu tunaathiriwa na dhambi na kifo. Hata hivyo, katika upendo Wake kwa kila mmoja wetu, anatalika tuje karibu Naye.

Huu ndio mwaliko Wake kwetu: “Songeni karibu nami na mimi nitasogea karibu nanyi, nitafuteni kwa bidii nanyi mtanipata, ombeni, nanyi mtapewa, bisheni nanyi mtafunguliwa.”

Kuna nyakati tunahisi kuwa karibu na Mwokozi Yesu Kristo. Na bado, wakati mwingine katika majaribu ya maisha ya duniani, tunahisi kiasi fulani kuwa mbali Naye na kutamani uhakikisho kwamba Yeye anajua kile kilicho moyoni mwetu na kutupenda kama watu binafsi.

Mwaliko wa Mwokozi hujumuisha njia ya kuhisi uhakikisho huo. Songa karibu Naye kwa daima kumkumbuka Yeye. Mtafute kwa bidii kupitia kujifunza maandiko. Omba kwa sala ya dhati kwa Baba wa Mbinguni ili kuhisi ukaribu na Mwana Wake Mpendwa.

Kuna njia rahisi ya kulifikiria hili. Hiki ndicho ambacho ungekifanya kama ungetenganishwa kwa muda kutoka kwa marafiki wa dhati. Ungetafuta njia ya kuzungumza nao, ungethamini ujumbe wowote unaopokea toka kwao, na ungefanya yote uyawezayo ili kuwasaidia.

The more that happened, the longer it lasted, the deeper the bond of affection would be strengthened, and you would feel yourself drawing ever nearer. If much time passed without the cherished communication and the opportunity to help one another, the bond would weaken.

Jesus Christ loves each of us. He offers that opportunity to draw closer to Him. As with a loving friend, you will do it in much the same way, by communicating through prayer to Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ, listening for cherished guidance from the Holy Ghost, and then serving others for the Savior cheerfully. Soon you would feel that blessing of drawing nearer to Him.

In my youth, I experienced the joy of coming closer to the Savior—and of His coming closer to me—through simple acts of obedience to the commandments. When I was young, the sacrament was offered during an evening meeting. I can still remember one specific night, more than 75 years ago, when it was dark and cold outside. I remember a feeling of light and warmth as I realized that I had kept the commandment to gather with the Saints to partake of the sacrament, covenanting with our Heavenly Father to always remember His Son and keep His commandments.

At the end of the meeting that night, we sang the hymn “Abide with Me; ’Tis Eventide,” with the memorable words “O Savior, stay this night with me.”

These words brought an overwhelming sense of the Spirit to me, even as a young boy. I felt the Savior’s love and closeness that evening through the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Years later I wanted to rekindle the same feeling of the Savior’s love and the closeness I had felt to the Lord during that sacrament meeting in my youth. So I kept another simple commandment: I searched the scriptures.

In the book of Luke, I read of the third day after His Crucifixion and burial, when faithful servants had come, out of love for the Savior, to anoint His body. When they arrived, they found the stone rolled away from the tomb and saw that His body was not there.

Two angels stood by and asked why they were afraid:

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?

“He is not here, but is risen: remember how

Kadiri hili linavyotendeka, linavyozidi kuendelea, uhusiano wa kina wa upendo ungeimarishwa, na mngehisi kukaribia. Kama muda mrefu ungepita bila mawasiliano ya kuthaminiwa na fursa za kusaidiana, muunganiko ungekuwa dhaifu.

Yesu Kristo anampenda kila mmoja wetu. Yeye hutupa fursa ya kumkaribia zaidi. Kama vile rafiki mwenye upendo, utafanya katika njia sawa na hiyo, kwa kuwasiliana kupitia sala na Baba wa Mbinguni katika jina la Yesu Kristo, kusikiliza mwongozo wa thamani kutoka kwa Roho Mtakatifu na kuwatumikia wengine kwa ajili Mwokozi kwa furaha. Punde wewe utahisi ile baraka ya kusogea karibu Yake.

Katika ujana wangu, nilipitia shangwe ya kuwa karibu na Mwokozi—na Yeye kuwa karibu nami—kupitia matendo rahisi ya utiifu wa amri. Nilipokuwa mdogo, sakramenti ilitolewa wakati wa mkutano wa jioni. Bado ninaweza kukumbuka hususani jioni moja, zaidi ya miaka 75 iliyo-pita, wakati nje pakiwa na giza na baridi. Nina-kumbuka hisia ya mwanga na joto nilipotambua kwamba nilikuwa nimeshika amri ya kukutana na Watakatifu kushiriki sakramenti, kuweka maagano na Baba yetu wa Mbinguni ya daima kumkumbuka Mwanawe na kushika amri Zake.

Mwishoni mwa mkutano usiku ule, tuliimba wimbo “Baki Nami; Kumekuchwa,” ikiwa ni pamoja na maneno ya kukumbukwa “Mwokozi, baki nami.”

Maneno haya yalileta kwangu hisia kali toka kwa Roho, na hata katika uvulana wangu. Nilihisi upendo na ukaribu wa Mwokozi jioni ile kupitia faraja ya Roho Mtakatifu.

Miaka mingi baadaye nilitaka kuhisi hisia sawa na zile za upendo na ukaribu wa Mwokozi nilizozihisi Kwake wakati wa mkutano wa sakramenti ujanani mwangu. Hivyo basi nikatii amri nyingine rahisi: Nilipekua maandiko.

Kwenye kitabu cha Luka, nilisoma kuhusu siku ya tatu baada ya Kusulubiwa Kwake na kuzikwa, wakati watumishi waaminifu walipokuja, kutokana na upendo wao kwa Mwokozi, ili kuupaka mwili Wake mafuta. Walipofika, waliku-ta jiwe limeviringishwa kutoka kaburini na waka-ona kwamba mwili Wake haukuwemo kaburini.

Malaika wawili walisimama na kuwauliza ni kwa nini walikuwa wakiogopa:

“Kwa nini mnamtafuta aliye hai katika wafu?

“Hayupo hapa, amefufuka: kumbukeni

he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,
“Saying, The Son of man must be delivered
into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified,
and the third day rise again.”

That evening at dusk, two disciples walked
from Jerusalem on the road to Emmaus, and the
resurrected Lord appeared to them and walked
with them.

The book of Luke allows us to walk with
them that evening:

“And it came to pass, that, while they com-
muned together and reasoned, Jesus himself
drew near, and went with them.

“But their eyes were holden that they should
not know him.

“And he said unto them, What manner of
communications are these that ye have one to
another, as ye walk, and are sad?

“And the one of them, whose name was
Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only
a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the
things which are come to pass there in these
days?”

They told Him of their sadness that Jesus
had died when they had trusted He would be the
Redeemer of Israel.

There must have been affection in the risen
Lord’s voice as He spoke to these two sorrowful
and mourning disciples.

As I continued to read, there came these
words that warmed my heart, just as I had felt
when I was a little boy:

“And they drew nigh unto the village, whith-
er they went: and he made as though he would
have gone further.

“But they constrained him, saying, Abide
with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is
far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.”

The Savior accepted that night the invitation
to enter the house of His disciples. He sat at meat
with them. He took bread, blessed it, broke it,
and gave it to them. Their eyes were opened, and
they knew Him. Then He vanished out of their
sight.

Luke recorded for us the feelings of those
blessed disciples: “And they said one to another,
Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked
with us by the way, and while he opened to us the
scriptures?”

The two disciples then rushed back to

alivyosema nanyi alipokuwa bado akiwa Galilaya,

“Akisema, imempasa Mwana wa Adamu
kutiwa mkononi mwa wenye dhambi, na kusulu-
biwa, na kufufuka siku ya tatu”

Jioni ile kwenye giza hafifu, wanafunzi wawili
walitembea kutoka Yerusalemu kwenda Emau na
Bwana aliyefufuka aliwatokea na kutembea nao.

Kitabu cha Luka kinaturuhusu kutembea nao
jioni ile:

“Ikawa katika kuzungumza na kuulizana
kwao, Yesu mwenyewe alikaribia, akaandamana
nao.

“Macho yao yakafumbwa wasimtambue.”

“Akawaambia, Ni maneno gani haya mnay-
osemezana hivi mnapotembea na mna huzuni?

“Akijibu mmoja wao, jina lake Kleopa,
akamwambia, Je! Wewe peke yako mgeni katika
Yerusalemu, hata huyajui yaliotukia humo siku
hizi?”

Walimwambia kuhusu huzuni yao kwam-
ba Yesu alikuwa amekufa wakati walikuwa
wameamini kuwa Yeye angekuwa Mkombozi wa
Israeli.

Lazima kungekuwa na upendo katika sauti
ya Bwana aliyefufuka alipozungumza na wana-
funzi hawa wawili wenye huzuni na kuomboleza.

Wakati nilipoendelea kusoma, yalikuja ma-
neno haya ambayo yaliufurahisha moyo wangu,
sawa na vile nilivyohisi wakati nikiwa mvulana
mdogo:

“Wakakaribia kile kijiji walichokuwa wakien-
da, naye alifanya kama anataka kuendelea mbele.

“Wakamshawishi wakisema, Kaa pamoja
nasi, kwa kuwa kumekuchwa, na mchana unak-
wisha. Akaingia ndani kukaa nao.”

Mwokozi alikubali usiku ule mwaliko wa
kuingia nyumbani kwa wanafunzi Wake. Aliketi
mezani nao. Akachukua mkate, akaubariki, akau-
mega na kuwapa. “Mara macho yao yakafumbu-
liwa, na wakamtambua ni yeye. Kisha akapotea
kutoka uwepo wao.

Luka alituandikia hisia za wanafunzi hao
waliobarikiwa: “Wakaambiana, Je! Mioyo yetu
haikuwaka ndani yetu hapo alipokuwa akisema
nasi njiani, na kutufunulia maandiko?”

Wanafunzi hao wawili walikimbia kurudi

Jerusalem to tell the eleven Apostles what had happened. As they were sharing their experience, the Savior appeared again.

He stood in the midst of them and “saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” He then reviewed the prophecies of His mission to atone for the sins of all His Father’s children and to break the bands of death.

“And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

“And ye are witnesses of these things.”

Just as His beloved disciples, every child of Heavenly Father who has chosen to enter through the gate of baptism is under covenant to be a witness of the Savior and to care for those in need throughout our mortal lives. This commitment was made plain for us by the great Book of Mormon prophet Alma centuries ago at the Waters of Mormon:

“As ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light;

“Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places ... , even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, ... that ye may have eternal life.”

As you are faithful to these promises, you will find that the Lord keeps His promise to be one with you in your service, making your burdens light. You will come to know the Savior, and in time you will come to be like Him and “be perfected in him.” By helping others for the Savior, you will find that you are drawing nearer to Him.

Many of you have loved ones who are wandering off the path to eternal life. You wonder what more you can do to bring them back. You can depend on the Lord to draw closer to them as you serve Him in faith.

You may remember the Lord’s promise to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon when they were away from their families on His errands: “My friends Sidney and Joseph, your families are well; they are in mine hands, and I will do with them

Yerusalemu na kuwaambia Mitume wale kumi na moja kile kilochokuwa kimetendeka. Wakati wakishiriki uzoefu wao, Mwokozi alitokea tena.

Alisimama katikati yao, “akawaambia, Amani iwe kwenu.” Kisha alirejelea unabii kuhusu kazi Yake ya kufanya upatanisho kwa ajili ya dhambi za watoto wote wa Baba Yake na kuvunja pingu za kifo.

“Akawaambia, Ndivyo ilivyoandikwa, kwam-ba Kristo atateswa na kufufuka siku ya tatu:

“Na kwamba mataifa yote yatahubiriwa kwa jina lake habari ya toba na ondoleo la dhambi, kuanza tangu Yerusalemu.

“Nanyi ndiye mashahidi wa haya.”

Kama vile kwa wanafunzi wake wapend-wa, kila mtoto wa Baba wa Mbinguni ambaye amechagua kuingia kupitia lango la ubatizo yuko kwenye agano la kuwa shahidi wa Mwokozi na kwa maisha yote kuwatunza wale wenye uhitaji. Kujitoa huku kuliwekwa wazi kwetu kupitia Alma, nabii mkuu wa Kitabu cha Mormoni karne nyingi zilizopita kwenye Maji ya Mormoni:

“Kama mnatamani kujiunga na zizi la Mungu, na kuitwa watu wake, na mko radhi kubeba mizigo ya mmoja na ya mwingine, ili iwe miepesi;

“Ndiyo, na mko tayari kuomboleza na wale wanaomboleza; ndiyo, na kufariji wale ambao wanahitaji kufarijiwa, na kusimama kama mashahidi wa Mungu nyakati zote na katika vitu vyote, na katika mahali popote ... ,hata hadi kifo, ili muweze kukombolewa na Mungu, na ..., kwamba mpokee uzima wa milele.”

Mnapokuwa wakweli kwenye ahadi hizi, mtagundua kwamba Bwana hutimiza ahadi Zake za kuwa nanyi kwenye huduma yenu, akifanya mizigo yenu kuwa miepesi. Mtakuja kumjua Mwokozi, na baada ya muda mtakuwa kama Yeye na “kukamilishwa kupitia Yeye.” Kwa kuwasaidia wengine kwa ajili ya Mwokozi, mtagundua kwamba mnasonga karibu Naye.

Wengi wenu mnao wapendwa wanaopotea kutoka kwenye njia ya maisha ya milele. Mnajiuliza mnaweza kufanya nini zaidi ili kuwarudisha. Mnaweza kumtegemea Bwana kusonga karibu yao wakati mnapomtumikia Yeye kwa imani.

Unaweza kukumbuka ahadi ya Bwana kwa Joseph Smith na Sidney Rigdon walipokuwa mbali na familia zao katika kazi Yake: “Marafiki zangu Sidney na Joseph, familia zenu ni njema, wako mikononi mwangu, na nitawafanyia nion-

as seemeth me good; for in me there is all power.”

As you bind up the wounds of those in need, the Lord’s power will sustain you. His arms will be outstretched with yours to succor and bless the children of our Heavenly Father.

Every covenant servant of Jesus Christ will receive His direction from the Spirit as they bless and serve others for Him. Then they will feel the Savior’s love and find joy in being drawn closer to Him.

I am a witness of the Resurrection of the Lord as surely as if I had been there with the two disciples in the house on Emmaus road. I know that He lives.

This is His true Church—the Church of Jesus Christ. We will, on the Day of Judgment, stand before the Savior, face to face. It will be a time of great joy for those, in this life, who have drawn close to Him in His service and can eagerly anticipate to hear His words: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”

I testify as a witness of the risen Savior and our Redeemer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

avyo kuwa ni vyema; kwani ndani yangu kuna uwezo wote.”

Mnapofunga vidonda vya wale wenye uhitaji, nguvu ya Bwana itawasaidia. Mikono Yake itan-yoosha pamoja na ya kwenu kuwakomboa na kuwabariki watoto wa Baba wa Mbinguni.

Kila mtumishi mwenye maagano wa Yesu Kristo atapokea mwongozo Wake kutoka kwa Roho wakati wanapobariki na kutumikia wengine kwa ajili Yake. Kisha wao watahisi upendo wa Mwokozi na kupata shangwe ya kusonga karibu Yake.

Mimi ni shahidi wa ufufuko wa Bwana kwa uhakika kama vile nilikuwepo jioni sawa na ile pamoja na wanafunzi wawili nyumbani walioku-wa wakielekea Emau. Ninajua kuwa Yeye anaishi.

Hili ni Kanisa la kweli—Kanisa la Yesu Kristo. Sisi, katika Siku ya Hukumu, tutasimama uso kwa uso na Mwokozi. Utakuwa ni wakati wa shangwe kuu kwa wale, katika maisha haya, wamesonga karibu Naye katika huduma Yake na wanaweza kwa shauku kutegemea kusikia maneno Yake: “Vyema, mtumwa mwema na mwaminifu.”

Ninashuhudia kama shahidi wa Mwokozi aliyefufuka na Mkombozi wetu, katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.