

Compensating Blessings

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Baraka za Kufidia

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While many circumstances in life may be beyond our control, none of us is beyond the reach of the Lord's infinite blessings.

Serving in the Presiding Bishopric, I have had the privilege of meeting Latter-day Saints around the world in a variety of places and cultures. I have been continually inspired by your abiding faith and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet I have also been moved by the diverse and often difficult circumstances many of you face—challenges such as illness, disability, limited resources, fewer opportunities for marriage or education, abuse by others, and other limitations or constraints. At times, these trials may seem to hinder your progress and challenge your genuine efforts to live the gospel fully, making it more difficult to serve, worship, and fulfill sacred duties.

My dear friends, if you ever feel limited or disadvantaged by the circumstances of your life, I want you to know this: The Lord loves you personally. He knows your circumstances, and the door to His blessings remains wide open to you no matter the challenges you face.

I have learned this truth through a personal experience that, though seemingly insignificant, left a lasting impression on me. At the age of 22, while serving in the French Air Force in Paris, I was thrilled to learn that Elder Neal A. Maxwell, an Apostle of the Lord, would be speaking at a conference on the Champs-Élysées. However, just before the event, I received orders to drive a senior officer to the airport at the exact time the conference was set to take place.

Huku hali nyingi katika maisha zinaweza kuwa nje ya udhibiti wetu, lakini hakuna yeyote kati yetu asiyeweza kufikiwa na baraka za Bwana zisizo na kikomo.

Kuhudumu katika Uaskofu Kiongozi, nimekuwa na fursa ya kukutana na Watakatifu wa Siku za Mwisho kote ulimwenguni katika maeneo na tamaduni tofauti. Nimekuwa nikiendelea kuvutiwa na imani yetu ya kudumu na kujitolea kwa Bwana Yesu Kristo. Lakini pia nimeguswa na hali tofauti na mara nyingi ngumu ambazo wengi wenu mnakabiliana nazo—changamoto kama vile ugonjwa, ulemavu, uchache wa rasili-mali, fursa chache za ndoa au elimu, unyanyasaji unaofanywa na wengine, na vizuizi vinginevyo au vipingamizi. Nyakati fulani, majaribu haya yanaweza kuonekana kuzuia maendeleo yako na kujaribu jitihada zako za dhati za kuishi injili kikamilifu, ikifanya kuwa vigumu zaidi kuhudumu, kuabudu na kutimiza majukumu matakatiifu.

Marafiki zangu wapendwa, kama utahisi kupungukiwa au kukatishwa tamaa na hali za maisha yako, nataka ujue hili; Bwana anakupenda wewe binafsi. Anajua hali zako, na mlango wa baraka Zake unabaki wazi kwako bila kujali changamoto unazokabiliwa nazo.

Nimejua ukweli huu kupitia uzoefu binafsi ambao, ingawa unaonekana usio wa kipekee, umeacha alama ya kudumu kwangu. Katika umri wa miaka 22, wakati nikihudumu katika Jeshi la Anga la Ufaransa huko Paris, nilifurishwa kujua kwamba Mzee Neal A. Maxwell, Mtume wa Bwana, angeongea katika mkutano huko Champs-Élysées. Hata hivyo, kabla tu ya tukio hili, nilipokea amri ya kumwendesha ofisa mwandamizi kwenda uwanja wa ndege katika

I was disappointed. But determined to attend, I dropped the officer off and rushed to the conference. After finding a parking spot, I sprinted down the Champs-Élysées to the meeting place and arrived breathless with only five minutes left before the meeting ended. Just as I entered, I heard Elder Maxwell say, “I will now give you an apostolic blessing.” In that instant, I had a beautiful, unforgettable spiritual experience. I was overcome by the Spirit, and the words of the blessing seemed to penetrate every fiber of my soul as though they were meant just for me.

What I experienced that day was a small yet powerful manifestation of a comforting aspect of God’s plan for His children: When circumstances beyond our control prevent us from fulfilling the righteous desires of our hearts, the Lord will compensate in ways that allow us to receive His promised blessings.

This reassuring truth is grounded in three key principles found in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ:

God loves each of us perfectly. “He inviteth [us] all to come unto him and partake of his goodness.” His plan of redemption ensures that everyone, without exception, will be granted a just opportunity to one day receive the blessings of salvation and exaltation.

Because God is both just and merciful and His plan is perfect, He will not hold us accountable for things beyond our control. Elder Neal A. Maxwell explained that “God ... takes into merciful account not only our desires and our performance, but also the degrees of difficulty which our varied circumstances impose upon us.”

Through Jesus Christ and His Atonement, we can find the strength to endure and ultimately overcome all of life’s challenges. As Alma taught, the Savior took upon Himself not only the sins of the repentant but also “the pains and the sicknesses of his people” and “their infirmities.” Thus, beyond redeeming us from our mistakes, the Lord’s mercy and grace sustain us through injustices, deficiencies, and limitations imposed by our mortal experience.

Receiving these compensating blessings comes with certain conditions. The Lord asks us

muda ule ule ambao mkutano ulipangwa kufanyika.

Nilikuwa nimevunjika moyo. Nikidhamiria kuhudhuria, nilimshusha ofisa yule na kuwa-hi kwenye mkutano. Baada ya kupata mahali pa kuegesha gari, nilikimbia haraka kuelekea Champs-Élysées mahali pa mkutano na niliwasili nikiwa sina pumzi zikibaki dakika tano tu kabla ya mkutano kumalizika. Nilipoingia tu, nilimsikia Mzee Maxwell akisema, “Sasa nitawapeni baraka za kitume.” Katika wakati huo, nilipata uzoefu kiroho mzuri, usiosahalika. Nilizidiwa na Roho na maneno ya baraka yalionekana kupenya kila nyuzi ya nafsi yangu kana kwamba yalikuwa yamekusudiwa kwa ajili yangu mimi tu.

Kile nilichokipitia siku ile kilikuwa kidogo lakini dhahirisho lenye nguvu la kipengele cha kufariji cha mpango wa Mungu kwa ajili ya watoto Wake: Wakati hali zilizo nje ya uwezo wetu wa kudhibiti zinapotuzuia kutimiza matamania yetu ya haki ya mioyo yetu, Bwana atafidia katika njia zinazoturuhusu sisi kupokea baraka Zake zilizoahidiwa.

Ukweli huu wa kutia moyo umejikita katika kanuni tatu muhimu zinazopatikana katika injili ya urejesho ya Yesu Kristo:

Mungu anampenda kila mmoja wetu kikamilifu. “Anatualika [sisi] sote kuja Kwake na kupokea wema Wake.” Mpango Wake wa ukombozi unahakikisha kwamba kila mmoja, pasipo tofauti, atapewa fursa ya haki ya siku moja kupokea baraka za wokovu na kuinuliwa.

Kwa sababu Mungu ni mwenye haki na mwenye huruma na mpango Wake ni mkamilifu, Yeye hatatuwajibisha kwa vitu vilivyo nje ya udhibiti wetu. Mzee Neal A. Maxwell alieleza kwamba “Mungu ... anazingatia siyo tu tamaa zetu na matendo yetu, bali pia viwango vya ugumu ambavyo hali zetu tofauti huziweka juu yetu.”

Kupitia Yesu Kristo na Upatanisho Wake, sisi tunaweza kupata nguvu ya kuvumilia na mwishowe kuzishinda changamoto zote za maisha yetu. Kama Alma alivyofundisha, Mwokozi alijichukulia juu Yake siyo tu dhambi za wenye kutubu, bali pia “maumivu na magonjwa ya watu wake” na “mapungufu yao.” Hivyo, zaidi ya kutukomboa sisi kutokana na makosa yetu, rehema na neema ya Bwana inatusaidia sisi kupitia kukosekana kwa haki, na viziwi vinavyotokana na uzoefu wetu wa duniani.

Kupokea baraka hizi za kufidia huja na masharti kadhaa. Bwana anatutaka tufanye “yote

to do “all we can” and to “offer [our] whole souls as an offering unto him.” This requires a deep desire, a sincere and faithful heart, and our utmost diligence in keeping His commandments and aligning our will with His.

When our earnest efforts fall short of our aspirations due to circumstances beyond our control, the Lord still accepts the desires of our hearts as a worthy offering. President Dallin H. Oaks taught, “We will be blessed for the righteous desires of our hearts even though some outside circumstance has made it impossible for us to carry those desires into action.”

As the Prophet Joseph Smith worried about his brother Alvin, who had died without receiving essential gospel ordinances, he received this comforting revelation: “All that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of [the gospel], who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of [the celestial kingdom of God].” The Lord then added, “For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.”

What matters to the Lord is not merely whether we are able but whether we are willing to do all we can to follow Him as our Savior.

A friend once comforted a young missionary grieving over his early release due to health reasons, despite his sincere prayers and earnest desire to serve. This friend shared a scripture in which the Lord declared that when His children “go with all their might” and “cease not their diligence” to fulfill His commandments, “and their enemies [which may include adverse circumstances in our lives] hinder them from performing that work, behold, it behooveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those [people], but to accept of their offerings.”

My friend testified to this young man that God knew he had given his very best in answering the call to serve. He assured him that the Lord had accepted his offering and that the blessings promised to all faithful missionaries would not be withheld.

The Lord’s compensating blessings often come through the kindness and service of others who help us accomplish what we cannot do on our own. I remember a time when, living far from one of our daughters in France, we felt

tuwezayo” na “kutoa nafsi [yetu] yote kama matoleo Kwake.” Hii inahitaji hamu ya kina, moyo wa dhati na wa uaminifu, na bidii ya juu kabisa katika kushika amri Zake na kuonisha mapenzi yetu na Yake.

Jitihada zetu za dhati zinapokuwa pungufu ya matamano yetu kutokana na hali zilizo nje ya uwezo wetu, Bwana anaweza bado akakubali matamano ya mioyo yetu kama matoleo yenye kustahili. Rais Dallin H. Oaks alifundisha, “Tutabarikiwa kwa matamano ya haki ya mioyo yetu hata kama baadhi ya hali za nje zimefanya isiwezekane kwa sisi kutimiza matamano hayo kwa vitendo.”

Wakati Nabii Joseph Smith alipokuwa na wasiwasi kuhusu kaka yake, ambaye alikuwa amefariki dunia pasipo kupokea ibada muhimu za injili, alipokea ufunuo wenye kufariji: “Wale wote watakaokufa sasa na kuendelea bila kuifahamu [injili] ambao wangelipokea kwa moyo wao wote, watakuwa warithi wa [selestia wa Mungu].” Kisha Bwana akaongeza, “Kwani Mimi Bwana nitawahukumu watu wote kulingana na matendo yao, kulingana na tamaa za mioyo yao.”

Lililo muhimu kwa Bwana siyo tu kama-tunawezabali kama tukotayarikufanya yote tunayoweza ili kumfuata Yeye kama Mwokozi wetu.

Wakati mmoja rafiki alikuwa akimfariji mmisionari kijana juu ya kupumzishwa kwake mapema kutokana na sababu za kiafya, licha ya sala zake za dhati na hamu yake ya dhati ya kuhudumu. Rafiki huyu alishiriki andiko ambalo ndani yake Bwana alitamka kwamba watoto Wake “wanapokwenda kwa nguvu zao zote” na “hawaachi juhudi yao” ili kutimiza amri Zake, “na adui zao [ambao wanaweza kujumuishwa hali mbalimbali katika maisha yetu] zinawazuia kutimiza kazi hiyo, tazama inanilazimu Mimi kutoitaka tena kazi hiyo mikononi mwao [watu] hao balikuyakubali matoleo yao.”

Rafiki yangu alimshuhudia kijana yule kwamba Mungu alijua kuwa yeye ametoa chake kilicho bora katika kujibu wito wa kuhudumu. Alimhakikishia kwamba Bwana amepokea matoleo yake na kwamba baraka zilizoahidiwa kwa wamisionari wote waaminifu hazitazuliwa.

Baraka za Bwana za kufidia mara nyingi huja kupitia ukarimu na huduma ya wengine ambao wanatusaidia kukamilisha kile ambacho hatuwezi kufanya sisi wenyewe. Ninakumbuka wakati ambapo, tulikuwa tukiishi mbali na binti yetu huko

helpless to assist her after a difficult delivery. That same week our ward in Utah sought help for a mother who had just given birth to twins. My wife, Valérie, volunteered to bring a meal for her, with a prayer in her heart for both this new mother and our daughter in need. Soon after, we learned that the sisters in our daughter's ward in France had organized to provide meals for her family. To us, God had answered our prayers, sending His angels to bring comfort when we couldn't.

When facing limitations and challenges, may we recognize our own blessings—our gifts, resources, and time—and use them to serve those in need. In doing so, we will not only bless others but invite healing and compensation into our own lives.

One of the most powerful ways we may contribute to God's compensating blessings is through the vicarious work we do for our ancestors in the house of the Lord. As we perform ordinances on their behalf, we actively participate in the Lord's great work of salvation, using our gifts and abilities to provide blessings to those who did not have the opportunity to receive them during their mortal lives.

The loving service we offer in holy temples reminds us that the Savior's grace extends beyond this life. In the life to come, we may be given new opportunities to accomplish what we could not do in this mortal life. Speaking to sisters who had not yet found an eternal companion, President Lorenzo Snow lovingly said: "There is no Latter-day Saint who dies after having lived a faithful life who will lose anything because of having failed to do certain things when opportunities were not furnished him or her. ... They will have all the blessings, exaltation and glory that any man or woman will have who had this opportunity."

This message of hope and comfort is for all of us, children of God. None of us can escape the challenges and limitations of mortality. After all, we are all born with an inherent incapacity to save ourselves. Yet we have a loving Savior, and "we know that it is by [His] grace that we are

Ufaransa, tulihisi kutokuweza kumsaidia baada ya uzazi mgumu. Wiki hiyo hiyo, kata yetu hapa Utah walitafuta msaada kwa ajili ya mama aliyejifungua watoto mapacha. Mke wangu, Valérie, alijitolea kumletea chakula, akiwa na sala moyoni kwa wote wawili mama huyu mzazi mpya na binti yetu aliye katika uhitaji. Muda mfupi baadaye, tulijua kwamba akina dada katika kata ya binti yetu huko Ufaransa walikuwa wamejipanga kutoa chakula kwa ajili ya familia ya binti yetu. Kwetu sisi, Mungu alikuwa amejibu sala zetu, akiwatumia malaika Zake kupeleka faraja wakati sisi tulipokuwa hatuwezi.

Wakati unapokabiliwa na mapungufu na changamoto, na tutambue baraka zetuwenyewe—zawadi zetu, rasilimali na muda—na tuvitumie kuwahudumia wale walio katika uhitaji. Katika kufanya hivyo, siyo tu tutawabariki wengine bali kualika uponyaji na fidia katika maisha yetu wenyewe.

Mojawapo ya njia zenye nguvu zaidi tunazoweza kuchangia kwenye baraka za kufidia za Mungu ni kupitia kazi ya uwakilishi tunayofanya kwa ajili ya mababu zetu katika nyumba ya Bwana. Tunapofanya ibada kwa niaba yao, kikitumia tunashiriki katika kazi kuu ya wokovu, tukitumia vipaji vyetu na uwezo ili kutoa baraka kwa wale ambao hawakupata fursa ya kuzipokea wakati wa maisha yao ya duniani.

Huduma ya upendo tunayotoa katika maelekele matakatifu hutukumbusha kwamba neema ya Mwokozi inaendelea kupita maisha haya. Katika maisha yajayo, yawezekana tukapewa fursa mpya ya kukamilisha kile ambacho hatukuweza kukamilisha katika maisha ya duniani. Nikizungumzia kuhusu akina dada ambao bado hawajawapata wenzi wa milele, Rais Lorenzo Snow kwa upendo alisema: "Hakuna Mtakatifu wa Siku za Mwisho anayekufa akiwa ameishi maisha ya uaminifu ambaye atapoteza chochote kwa sababu ya kushindwa kufanya mambo fulani wakati ambapo fursa hazikuruhusu yeye kufanya hivyo. ... Watakuwa na baraka zote, kuinuliwa na utukufu ambako mwanaume au mwanamke yeyote watakuwa navyo ambao walipata fursa hii."

Ujumbe huu wa matumaini na faraja ni kwa ajili yetu sisi sote, watoto wa Mungu. Hakuna hata mmoja wetu anayeweza kuepuka changamoto na mapungufu ya duniani. Zaidi ya yote, sisi sote tumezaliwa na mapungufu ya kurithi ya kujiokoa wenyewe. Hata hivyo tunaye Mwokozi

saved, after all we can do.”

I testify that while many circumstances in life may be beyond our control, none of us is beyond the reach of the Lord’s infinite blessings. Through His atoning sacrifice, the Savior will compensate for every inability and injustice if we offer our whole souls to Him. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

mwenye upendo, na “tunajua kwamba kwa neema [Yake] tunaokolewa, baada ya kutenda yote tunayoweza.”

Ninashuhudia kwamba hali nyingi katika maisha zinaweza kuwa nje ya udhibiti wetu, lakini hakuna yeyote kati yetu asiyeweza kufikiwa na baraka za Bwana zisizo na kikomo. Kupitia dhabihu Yake ya kulipia dhambi, Mwokozi atafidia kwa kila kukosekana kwa uwezo na kukosekana kwa haki kama tutatoa nafsi yetu yote Kwake. Katika jina la Yesu Kristo, amina.