

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

The Blessings of Paying Faithful Tithing

By Elder 'Aisake K. Tukuafu



Elder 'Aisake K.
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“There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—

“And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:20–21).

“For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing” (D&C 132:5).

Tithing is paying one-tenth of the increase we receive. The first account recorded of paying tithing was that of Abraham to Melchizedek, a righteous king, a king of peace and a priest unto the Most High.

While I was growing up, there was not much trade that involved money. It was mostly done using the barter system. Faithful members of the Church paid tithing using their crops and animals. They planted their best

seeds and took special care of them until the harvest. They did likewise raising their best animals until the day that they gave them to the branch president, as their tithing unto the Lord. These members often talked about the blessings that the prophet Malachi wrote of when he said, “[The devourer] shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts” (Malachi 3:11). Although the faithful members today pay tithing with cash from selling their crops and animals, they still witness the physical and spiritual blessings that they receive as they keep the law of tithing.

Because this commandment was very important, the resurrected Lord often taught this to the Nephites (see 3 Nephi 24). When we bring our tithing to the bishop’s storehouse, we are testing the Lord at the same time to see if He will open the doors of heaven or not, and pour out blessings for us

where there won’t be enough room to receive them.

A few years after we got married, we felt that we needed to change the way we paid our tithing. When we got paid each week, we would deposit our tithing into a bank account and pay all of it together at once when we had our tithing settlement with the bishop. At that time we had to move out of our apartment, and we had no money to pay rent—except the money that we had put aside for our tithing. Because of our lack of faith, we paid our rent instead of our tithing. Days of worry followed, and we felt that we were stealing from God. We felt inadequate at times and felt that nothing was working out for us. After praying sincerely for forgiveness, we paid back our full tithing, and we felt peace at last in our minds as well as in our spirits. This experience increased our faith and trust in the Lord, and we made promises just like Jacob did, that we would pay tithing on everything that He provides for us in the future.

I bear witness of this divine principle, together with those who have witnessed the spiritual and physical blessings from God as they keep the law of tithing, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

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Apostle to Australian Latter-day Saints: Families Need Love, Unity and Devotion to the Saviour

By Mormon Newsroom

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Elder Cook address the Saints in Australia.

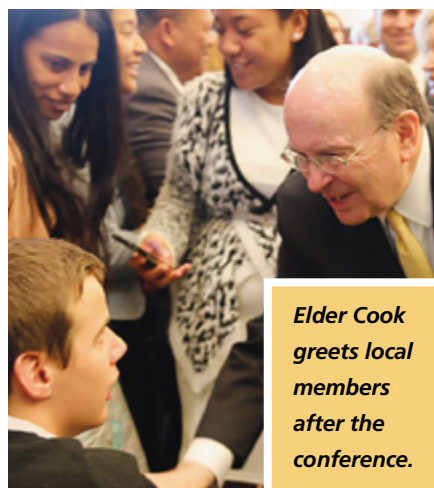
Sydney, Australia

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and his wife, Mary Cook, attended the Sydney Australia Mortdale Stake Conference in May this year.

Elder Cook told members and guests of the Church in attendance, “I love being here. I feel so comfortable here.”

The Church leader is very familiar with Australia, New Zealand and the islands of the South Pacific, as he is a former president of the Church’s Pacific Area and has visited the region on other occasions.

“I love diversity and unity,” Elder Cook said. “It’s a wonderful thing to have all this diversity committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ.”



Elder Cook greets local members after the conference.

“It is very important to Heavenly Father and to our Saviour that we reclaim the Sabbath day,” he continued. “It’s got to be more important to us. The sacrament has got to be more important to us. Can we recapture the wonderful teachings of Jesus Christ and be the kind of Christians He wants us to be?”

“We all need love, unity and devotion to the Saviour Jesus Christ, so that our children will see that commitment and learn from it. This is His Church. This is the message I want to give to the people of the Mortdale stake.”

Sister Cook also spoke to the congregation about how important it is to hold regular family home evenings. “We need to share activities and sing the songs of the gospel together. Whatever the lesson, find beautiful songs to go with it.”

“The greatest joy is what I see now,” she said (as she looked at those in attendance), “faces of righteous members of the Church who have a desire to train up their children and their families to follow Jesus Christ.”

Sister Cook engaged the children at the conference when she had them all wave to her.

She said, “Wouldn’t it be wonderful, when it is your turn to give the lesson (in a family home evening), if every person in your family could be taught the words to ‘I Know That My Saviour Loves Me?’” She then sang a few words of the song to the congregation. ■

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Asa Smibert, Abby Easthope and Katesa Weshe with some of the blankets they collected

Brisbane Youth Help Homeless

By Mormon Newsroom

Young members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Brisbane, Australia, are gathering blankets for individuals going through tough times as winter approaches.

The *Albert and Logan News* reported in May:

“When the chilly nights come and you reach for those fluffy slippers or cozy bed quilt, spare a thought for those young people who are forced to sleep rough.

“It’s with their needs in mind that the Eight Mile Plains stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is this month calling for donations of blankets and other necessities.

“Spokesman Sandy Munro said the church would collect blankets, toothbrushes, toothpaste, underwear and socks on Sundays in May between 8am and 5pm at 370 Underwood Rd, Eight Mile Plains. Goods will go to the Australian Red Cross.” ■

The 129th Latter-day Saint Stake in Pacific Area Organised in Gosford, Australia

By Mormon Newsroom

Sydney, Australia

The Gosford Australia Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was created in May.

Elder S. Gifford Nielsen, a member of the Pacific Area Presidency of the Church, presided at a special conference at Avondale College Church in Cooranbong, Lake Macquarie, and announced the change.

Australian Latter-day Saint leader Elder Johnny Leota accompanied Elder Nielsen at the conference.

Approximately 2,600 Latter-day Saints and guests of the Church attended the conference in person or via webcast to other locations in the region.

Elder Nielsen told the congregations: “This is now the 129th stake of the Church in the Pacific Area. A new stake was also formed in Auckland, New Zealand, this weekend.”

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints continues to grow and flood the earth. It’s exciting and we are all part of it,” Elder Nielsen said. “I know the Lord is hastening His work.”

Elder Leota added, “It is because of your faith and love that this (the new stake formation) is happening today. The Saviour’s will is being done today.”

As a result of the creation of the new stake, leadership changes were made, including a new stake



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The new leadership of the Gosford Australia Stake with Elder Nielsen and Elder Leota

presidency for the Gosford stake and changes in the Baulkham Hills, Hebersham and Newcastle stakes.

Conrad E. Dunn has been called as the new stake president in the Gosford Australia Stake, with Paul A. Carnovale as first counsellor and Oscar Westerlund as second counsellor.

President of the Gosford stake Conrad Dunn said, “It was a very special and historic day. The Spirit of

the Lord was present as we all came together one last time. The Newcastle stake was created on the 15 February 1980, and since then many faithful brothers and sisters have served over the years to build and grow the stake. So what we witnessed today was a collective effort of many over the years and a reminder of what is possible if we trust in the Lord and exercise faith in Him.”

“We warmly welcome the Normanhurst and Toronto Wards into the Gosford stake. Both of these congregations play an important role in the creation of the new stake. We are excited about the many new friendships that will be formed as we unite together.”

Jacob D. Whiting will remain as president of the Newcastle stake, with John Faustini and Pita M. Tupou serving as his counsellors. ■

