



In Memoriam: Henry Eyring 1901-1981

Funeral Address by Neal A. Maxwell

Henry Eyring is, in my opinion, the most distinguished Mormon scientist of this dispensation. His highest expression of scholarship was seen in his capacity to grasp the simplest but most sublime truths about God, man, and the universe. . . .

Henry knew that faith was faith, not knowledge as the world measures knowledge; but his discerning mind could also observe, with kindness, the load of incredibilia carried by nonbelievers. . . . He believed all that God has revealed but awaited with searching anticipation all that God will yet reveal. Henry could savor the adventure of unfolding discovery and hoped the Lord would not mind if, in the field of science, he did his best to hasten the impending.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, delivered the funeral sermon for Henry Eyring on 31 December 1981. "In Memoriam" is composed of selections from that sermon.

Since he felt that all truth comes from God, and since he knew that God refused to require him to believe anything that was not true, Henry had a very large view of truth, sparing him the unnecessary conflicts and contortions which some have. . . .

He respected and appreciated the abundant honors of men which came to him, but he always kept them in proper perspective. . . . His healthy relationship with Deity has made for healthy relationships with God's children. Though much of his life was spent in the midst of the ordered world of molecules, practical Henry nevertheless reminded us that, while God and His world are perfect, we are wise to make allowances in our faith for the imperfections in each other.

Henry Eyring was an illuminated individual who understood that "a candle is not lighted for itself, and neither is a man." He could accept the reality that this is but a small planet in a small solar system, which, if we moved out into space far enough, would be seen to be at the outer edge of the vast Milky Way galaxy. And the latter, were we to go even more deeply into space, would become another very bright dot among countless dots. Henry understood this, and yet he was not lonely, for God presides over and loves all His creations. But that same God has left us free to choose and has so constructed this mortal experience that it is for us, as it was for Henry, a genuine proving ground.