

# The Work of God—Authority of President Young— Keeping the Commandments of God

Wilford Woodruff

Journal of Discourses 14:31

## Section I

I believe this is the largest assembly of Saints or sinners, Jew or Gentile, that ever I saw together under one roof. There are very few of us capable of making such an assembly hear, unless it is very still; and when persons have come from twenty to two hundred and fifty miles to attend Conference, it certainly is important that we give them a chance to hear what is said.

It is true that God has set his hand in these latter days to bring to pass his act, his strange act, and to accomplish his work, his strange work—that truth should spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven; and it certainly would be strange if these things were not performed. The Supreme Ruler would not be like a God who had created a world like this and peopled it if he let it go at random, without any purpose or plan for the benefit and salvation of the children of men.

I want to say a few words on this subject. I consider that the work we now see taking place in these mountains, and which has been going on from the time this Church was organized, is but carrying out the great plan of our Father in heaven—that plan which was ordained from before the foundation of the world. In fact there is no dispensation that has been looked upon with as much interest by all the prophets of God and inspired men, from the day of Joseph Smith, as that in which we live, in which the Zion of God is being built up, and the earth is being prepared for the coming of the Son of Man.

Isaiah, in looking by prophetic vision to this day, makes use of very strong language in endeavoring to express his feelings in relation to it. In one instance he says, "Sing, O heavens; and rejoice, O earth! Break forth into singing, O ye mountains, for the Lord has comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted yet." Zion says, "The Lord has forsaken me, my God has forgotten me." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" "Yea," the Lord says, "a woman may do that," but he will not forget Zion. Says he, "Zion is engraven on the palms of my hands, her walls are continually before me."

Now this Zion of God has been before his face from before the foundation of the world, and it is no more going to fail in the latter days than any of the purposes of God are going to fail, hence I look upon this work as the work of God, and it makes no difference to the Lord Almighty, nor to his Saints, what the world may think or do about it, or what course they may pursue with regard to it; they cannot stop its progress, because it is the work of God. If it were the work of man it would not exist as it does today.

If God had no hand in this work, we should not have seen this assembly here today in this Tabernacle, nor this Territory filled with cities and towns. But being the work of God, he asks no odds of any nation, kindred, tongue or people under the whole heavens, any further than they are

willing to keep his commandments and do his will; for as the Lord God Almighty lives, so true will the work, the foundation of which has been laid in these latter days, increase and continue until its consummation is effected, and the great Zion of God is established in beauty, power and glory, and the dominion of the kingdom of our God extends over the whole earth.

Joseph Smith laid the foundation of this work; he was chosen by the Lord for that purpose, and was ordained by prophets and inspired men who formerly held the keys of the kingdom of God upon the earth. They laid their hands upon his head and ordained him to the Priesthood, and gave him power to unlock the heavens and to administer the ordinances of the house of God upon the earth. This work he performed in the face of difficulty, persecution, opposition and oppression; but the hand of God sustained him. He knew what few men or people on the whole face of the earth know—that God lives, and he also knew that the work whose foundations he laid was the work of God.

This is what has sustained President Young through all his labors. Many men have looked upon him, and, in consequence of outside pressure, have expected him to say this, that, and the other; but all the time he has taken a straightforward course, walking in the path pointed out by the God of heaven; and that same hand has sustained him and you and me and every good and virtuous man and woman on the face of the earth who has listened to the commandments of God.

Isaiah and other prophets saw in vision much concerning the building up and establishment of the latter-day Zion of God upon the earth. They saw the people gathering from the nations of the earth to the mountains of Israel; they speak of a great company coming up to Zion, the women with child and her that travailed with child together; and a great many other things in relation to the internal workings of the inhabitants of Zion in building up the kingdom of God they do not mention, whether they ever saw them or not. Isaiah has not written concerning many of these things, neither has anybody yet that we know of. Perhaps when the remainder of the plates, which were delivered to the Prophet Joseph, and which he was commanded not to translate, come forth, we may learn many more things pertaining to our labor on the earth which we do not know now. But be this as it may, all this internal work is left for the Holy Ghost to reveal to the living oracles, as they guide, lead, dictate and direct the people day by day. This is one thing I want to say to my friends and to the Saints of God, that without the Holy Ghost, without direct revelation and the inspiration of God continually, Brigham Young could not lead this people twenty-four hours. He could not lead them at all. Joseph could not have done it, neither could any man. This power is in the bosom of Almighty God, and he imparts it to his servants the prophets as they stand in need of it day by day to build up Zion.

## **Andy's Thoughts:**

Black Text = Actual Talk

Red Text = Scriptures/TPJS/Conference talks

Blue Text= My words

As this is my first official talk breakdown, I pray I will do it justice and pray that the spirit will carry my words to help at least one person. My intent is to help setup this discourse with some more clear understanding as to what Wilford Woodruff is teaching and to better understand the

next 2 sections. The black text is from the actual talk, the red text is a specific scripture, TPJS, or conference reference, and the blue text are my words.

I believe this is the largest assembly of Saints or sinners, Jew or Gentile, that ever I saw together under one roof. **There are very few of us capable of making such an assembly hear, unless it is very still;** and when persons have come from twenty to two hundred and fifty miles to attend Conference, **it certainly is important that we give them a chance to hear what is said.**

Why is it important to be still and give others a chance to hear what is being said. What does that do for us and others?

“Be still, and know that I am God” TPJS Pg 34

“Stand still and see the salvation of God” -Joseph Smith (Church History in the Fulness of Times ,148)

## **D&C 101**

**16** Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine <sup>a</sup>hands; be still and <sup>b</sup>know that I am God.

This phrase of “Be Still” has been said multiple times but what does it mean? Part of being still is being reverent, alert, attentive, submissive, patient, trusting, etc. Being still doesn’t mean we do nothing but we do need to be still to know that God is God.

This work needs to be sounded in every ear so we need to avoid distractions at all costs for ourselves and for others to allow ourselves and others to “Hear”. One great example of not distracting others is during the sacrament that we take each week.

# **The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament**

**By Elder Dallin H. Oaks**

*Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles*

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1998/10/the-aaronic-priesthood-and-the-sacrament?lang=eng>

The principle I suggest to govern those officiating in the sacrament—whether preparing, administering, or passing—is that they should **not do anything that would distract any member from his or her worship and renewal of covenants.**

All who officiate in the sacrament—in preparing, administering, or passing—should be well groomed and modestly dressed, with nothing about their personal appearance that calls special attention to themselves. In appearance as well as actions, **they should avoid distracting anyone present from full attention to the worship and covenant making that is the purpose of this sacred ordinance.**

This principle of non-distraction applies to things unseen as well as seen. If someone officiating in this sacred ordinance is unworthy to participate, and this is known to anyone present, their participation is a serious distraction to that person.

Even though this is directly talking to priesthood holders who administer the sacrament these principles can and should be applied to each and every one of us. We don't ever want to be the one who distracted somebody else as we don't know where they are at in their spiritual journey, and maybe at that moment they really needed to hear something or feel the Holy Ghost but are unable to do so because of us. We of course don't want to be a distraction to others and that includes teaching false doctrines, but we also need to avoid personal distractions.

## Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

By Elder Kevin W. Pearson

*Of the Seventy*

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2009/04/faith-in-the-lord-jesus-christ?lang=eng>

We get what we focus on consistently. Because there is an opposition in all things, there are forces that erode our faith. Some are the result of Satan's direct influence. But for others, we have no one but ourselves to blame. These stem from personal tendencies, attitudes, and habits we can learn to change. I will refer to these influences as the "Six Destructive Ds."

First is *doubt*. Doubt is not a principle of the gospel. It does not come from the Light of Christ or the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Doubt leads to *discouragement*. Discouragement comes from missed expectations.

**Discouragement leads to *distraction*, a lack of focus. Distraction eliminates the very focus the eye of faith requires. Discouragement and distraction are two of Satan's most effective tools, but they are also bad habits.**

Distraction leads to a *lack of diligence*, a reduced commitment to remain true and faithful and to carry on through despite hardship and disappointment.

**If not reversed, this path ultimately leads to *disobedience*, which undermines the very basis of faith. So often the result is disbelief, the conscious or unconscious refusal to believe.**

**The scriptures describe *disbelief* as the state of having chosen to harden one’s heart. It is to be past feeling.**

These Six Destructive Ds—*doubt, discouragement, distraction, lack of diligence, disobedience, and disbelief*—all erode and destroy our faith. We can choose to avoid and overcome them.

Often times we hear the word “distraction” and it seems relatively harmless but when you put it in its proper context it can be faith destroying if we don’t choose to avoid and overcome them as Elder Pearson taught.

It is true that God has set his hand in these latter days to bring to pass his act, **his strange act**, and to accomplish his work, **his strange work**—**that truth should spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven;**

### **Isaiah 28:21**

For the LORD shall rise up as *in* <sup>a</sup>mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as *in* the valley of <sup>b</sup>Gibeon, that he may do **his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.**

### **Doctrine and Covenants 95:4**

For the preparation wherewith I design to prepare mine apostles to prune my vineyard for the last time, that I may bring to pass my **strange act**, that I may pour out my Spirit upon all flesh—

### **Doctrine and Covenants 101:95**

That I may proceed to bring to pass **my act, my strange act, and perform my work, my strange work**, that men may discern between the righteous and the wicked, saith your God.

### **The Ancient Prophecies.**

A Discourse by Elder Orson Pratt, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, January 7, 1855

This latter-day work that we have received, is considered a very **strange work**, in the estimation of the world; but in the estimation of the Saints it does not appear strange, why? **Because it is the very thing that the Lord, by the mouth of His Prophets thousands of years ago, predicted should take place: and we are the very people that are enjoying the fulfillment of those predictions.**

### **The Vine and Fig Tree—Duties of Saints.**

A Discourse by Elder Ezra T. Benson, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, May 13, 1855.

What is said about the Spirit of the Lord that is possessed by the Saints? We read that it shall lead and guide you into all truth, and further, that it shall show (the Saints) things past, and things which are to come. **John 16:13** **But the world at large cannot see these things, and they never will until they have taken the same steps that we have taken.** Heavenly things cannot be comprehended only by the Spirit of the living God, but says Paul, **the Spirit of God discerneth all things, even the deep things of God.** **1 Cor. 2:10-11** **the natural mind cannot comprehend.**

If we are to understand God's "strange work", which is only strange to the world, then there are steps that we have to take or have already taken. What are those steps? The prophet Joseph Smith gave us the answer.

TPJS Pg 12-13

Every man lives for himself... **But except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**<sup>17</sup> **This eternal truth settles the question of all men's religion. A man may be saved, after the judgment, in the terrestrial kingdom, or in the telestial kingdom,<sup>18</sup> but he can never see the celestial kingdom of God, without being born of the water and the Spirit.<sup>19</sup> He may receive a glory like unto the moon,<sup>20</sup> [i.e., of which the light of the moon is typical], or a star,<sup>21</sup> [i.e., of which the light of the stars is typical], but he can never come unto Mount Zion,<sup>22</sup> and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn,<sup>23</sup> which are written in heaven,<sup>24</sup> and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,<sup>25</sup> and to Jesus the Mediator<sup>26</sup> of the new covenant, unless he becomes as a little child,<sup>27</sup> and is taught by the Spirit of God.<sup>28</sup> Wherefore, we again say, **search the revelations<sup>29</sup> of God; study the prophecies,<sup>30</sup> and rejoice that God grants unto the world Seers and Prophets.<sup>31</sup> They are they who saw the mysteries of godliness;<sup>32</sup> they saw the flood before it came;<sup>33</sup> they saw angels ascending and descending upon a ladder<sup>34</sup> that reached from earth to heaven; they saw the stone cut out of the mountain,<sup>1</sup> which filled the whole earth;<sup>2</sup> they saw the Son of God come<sup>3</sup> from the regions of bliss<sup>4</sup> and dwell with men on earth;<sup>5</sup> they saw the deliverer come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob;<sup>6</sup> they saw the glory of the Lord when he showed the transfiguration of the earth on the mount;<sup>7</sup> they saw every mountain laid low and every valley exalted<sup>8</sup> when the Lord was taking vengeance upon the wicked;<sup>9</sup> **they saw truth spring out of the earth,<sup>10</sup> and righteousness look down from heaven<sup>11</sup> in the last days, before the Lord came the second time<sup>12</sup> to gather His elect;<sup>13</sup> they saw the end of wickedness<sup>14</sup> on earth, and the Sabbath of creation<sup>15</sup> crowned with peace; they saw the end of the glorious thousand years,<sup>16</sup> when Satan was loosed for a little season;<sup>17</sup> they saw the day of judgment<sup>18</sup> when all men received according to their works,<sup>19</sup> and they saw the heaven and the earth flee away<sup>20</sup> to make room for the city of God, when the righteous receive an inheritance<sup>21</sup> in eternity. **And, fellow sojourners upon earth,<sup>22</sup> it is your privilege to purify yourselves<sup>23</sup> and come up to the same glory,<sup>24</sup> and see for yourselves,<sup>25</sup> and know for yourselves.** Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.<sup>26</sup>—E&MS August, 1832. DHC 1:282–284.******

**In fact there is no dispensation that has been looked upon with as much interest by all the prophets of God and inspired men, from the day of Joseph Smith, as that in which we live, in which the Zion of God is being built up, and the earth is being prepared for the coming of the Son of Man.**

### **Psalms 85**

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

### **Moses 7**

62 And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, **to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.**

I want to say a few words on this subject. I consider that the work we now see taking place in these mountains, and which has been going on from the time this Church was organized, **is but carrying out the great plan of our Father in heaven**—that plan which was ordained from before the foundation of the world.

What is the great plan of our Father in heaven? What are we preparing for? Why is Zion, or the New Jerusalem, so important?

**I look upon this work as the work of God, and it makes no difference to the Lord Almighty, nor to his Saints, what the world may think or do about it, or what course they may pursue with regard to it; they cannot stop its progress, because it is the work of God.**

### **Article of Faith 10**

We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

“The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, **and sounded in every ear**, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done”

-Joseph Smith

(History of the Church, 4:540).

### Genesis 3:30 JST

For as I, the LORD God, liveth, even so my words cannot return void, for **as they go forth out of my mouth, they must be fulfilled.**

### D&C 1:38

What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, **my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled**, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

Everything the Lord has said that is going to happen either from his own lips or his chosen servants, the prophets, will happen. That includes the return of the lost 10 tribes as a body and the building up of the New Jerusalem in Jackson County Missouri to prepare for the second coming of Jesus Christ

Joseph Smith laid the foundation of this work; he was chosen by the Lord for that purpose, and was ordained by prophets and inspired men who formerly held the keys of the kingdom of God upon the earth... **This work he performed in the face of difficulty, persecution, opposition and oppression; but the hand of God sustained him.**

## The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming

By President Russell M. Nelson

You and I get to participate in the ongoing Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is wondrous! It is not man-made!

The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do.

The greatest gift you could give to the Lord is to keep yourself unspotted from the world, worthy to attend His holy house. His gift to you will be the peace and security of knowing that you are worthy to meet Him, whenever that time comes.

Meanwhile, here and now, **we live in a time of turmoil.** Earthquakes and tsunamis wreak devastation, governments collapse, economic stresses are severe, the family is under attack, and divorce rates are rising. We have great cause for concern. But we do not need to let our fears displace our faith. **We can combat those fears by strengthening our faith.**

**Why do we need such resilient faith? Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord “shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives. How you deal with life's trials is part of the development of your faith.**



Do whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by **increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth**. Anchored in pure doctrine, you will be able to step forward with faith and dogged persistence and cheerfully do all that lies in your power to fulfill the purposes of the Lord.

You will have days when you will be discouraged. So pray for courage not to give up! Sadly, some whom you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair.

However, **I promise you** that as you follow Jesus Christ, you will find sustained peace and true joy. As you keep your covenants with increasing precision, and as you defend the Church and kingdom of God on the earth today, **the Lord will bless you with strength and wisdom to accomplish what only members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can accomplish.**

As we follow President Nelson's counsel as stated above then we too can carry on this work like Joseph Smith did in the face of difficulty, persecution, opposition and oppression as the hand of God will sustain us.

But all the time he(President Young) has taken a **straightforward course**, walking in the path pointed out by the God of heaven; and that same hand has sustained him and you and me and every good and virtuous man and woman on the face of the earth who has listened to the commandments of God.

What is the straightforward course that Brigham Young and all of his successors have taken or are taking?

### **D&C 105: 1-6,9**

1 Verily I say unto you who have assembled yourselves together that you may learn my will concerning the redemption of mine afflicted people—

2 Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed even now.

3 But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them;

4 And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom;

5 And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.

6 And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer.

9 Therefore, in consequence of the transgressions of my people, it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion

This is the straightforward course that the Prophets have been trying to guide us to but they can't do it for us. We need to, as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, take personal responsibility to learn the law of the celestial kingdom and live it to the best of our ability to be ready for the redemption of Zion. Speaking of the latter day Zion, Wilford Woodruff continues:

and a great many other things in relation to the internal workings of the inhabitants of Zion in building up the kingdom of God they do not mention, whether they ever saw them or not. Isaiah has not written concerning many of these things, neither has anybody yet that we know of. ...all this internal work is **left for the Holy Ghost to reveal to the living oracles, as they guide, lead, dictate and direct the people day by day.**

Since October 2019 the phrase "Ongoing restoration" has been used in 9 General Conference talks but hasn't been said once before then. President Nelson and the 12 apostles are reminding us that more is coming and thankfully more is coming.

### Testimony

I know that God's work is progressing and no unhallowed hand can stop it and as President Nelson has said, "Time is running out" and we need to do everything that is required to put our lives in order and align to God's will to prepare for what is coming next, the redemption of Zion. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is Christ's restored church and He is at the head. The prophet Joseph Smith is THE prophet of the restoration and all of his successors from Brigham Young to Russel M. Nelson were/are God's oracles and hold the keys of the kingdom. We would be wise to not only study what they have all taught but to follow them. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

### **Micah's Thoughts:**

There are many places that this line or doctrine is taught- that this dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness of times, was the most looked at and longed for dispensation save for that of Jesus Christ. But for some reason finding a quote that says as much when you are looking for seems to be difficult! President Wilford Woodruff provides one such quote here, which I would log away into your own personal archives.

Equally so is the doctrine that the Lord will not allow the Church to go into a state of apostasy in this last dispensation. And equally so it seems that when people teach this and are asked for a reference they can't find one! I would take the time to archive away these two quotes at the beginning here into your personal archives and adding to it overtime. It seems as though this topic will be something that keeps coming up again and again and again and those who bring the topic up come out swinging with a half dozen quotes and scriptures taken out of context which catches members off guard- members need to have these archives of scriptures tucked away readily available to combat these things more than ever before. I would personally and so would the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when doing such combatting start with the Pyramid of Truth or as the Church calls it, Lesson 1: The Restoration. If we can't on members

agree on that, the pyramid of truth, the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ through the prophet Joseph Smith then there is nothing further to discuss and no common ground can be established. Such individuals cut off from the restoration/the pyramid of truth are tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine and will never be able to, as taught in the Lectures on Faith, exercise sufficient faith unto life and salvation.

If it was obvious that this was the Lord's Church back in President Woodruff's time due to the miraculous gathering of the Saints there present, how much more of a proof is it that this work is headed by the Savior himself looking at the state of the world today and Saints from around the world gathering to discuss and share their testimonies of these same said doctrines.

I love the fact that President Woodruff mentions here the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon as not being revealed yet and thus is yet to come forth. I further love the fact that he puts forth the idea that the coming forth of said sealed portion would help prepare the Saints and teach them more fully their duty in respect to preparing Zion for the return of the Savior. Thus confirming that rending the veil of unbelief (which occurs before the sealed portion comes forth) is an event that transpires before the redemption of Zion and the completion of the New Jerusalem.

President Woodruff finishes this section teaching the pyramid of policy- how the prophet of the Lord receives revelation for the Church and without such revelation the work would be thwarted. A similar thing was taught in the New Testament:

### **Acts 5**

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;

35 And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

36 For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it. Be careful, therefore, lest ye be found even to fight against God.

What Gamaliel was teaching here is what President Woodruff was putting forth. There were many false Christs, many false religions that rose up and were eventually disbanded, discontinued, fell apart etc. The natural course of the universe is entropy- if something isn't of God it will naturally fall apart over time. For example, there was no need to constantly fight against the 7<sup>th</sup> sealers, just give it a couple years and the intelligent ones that can read the writing on the wall leave and those who remain will eventually perish. It proves itself. The doctrine of Zion the New Jerusalem, the Macro Last Day Timeline, the Pyramid of Truth, the redemption of Zion, etc. are all doctrines that through the power of Elijah will continue to grow and swell until

we have the Zion of our God. Those who have issues with it should simply go their own way and not be found fighting against God.

## Section II

I want to say to my brethren and sisters that President Young is our leader; he is our lawgiver in the Church and kingdom of God. He is called to this office; it is his prerogative to tell this people what to do, and it is our duty to obey the counsel that he has given today to the sisters and the brethren. We, as a people, should not treat lightly this counsel, for I will tell you in the name of the Lord—and I have watched it from the time I became a member of this Church—there is no man who undertakes to run counter to the counsel of the legally authorized leader of this people that ever prospers, and no such man ever will prosper. Many things I might name, if it were wisdom to do so, to prove the truth of this statement, but you may watch for yourselves, and you will find that all persons who take a stand against this counsel will never prosper.

A great deal has been said with regard to guiding this people in temporal matters. I ask you in the name of the Lord, who is called to guide the temporal affairs of this Church and kingdom, for its advantage, redemption and exaltation, as pure as a bride adorned for her husband, if it be not that man who is placed as the lawgiver and leader of Israel? There is no man on the footstool of God who has this authority but him who stands at the head; and his Counselors and the Apostles, Bishops and Elders ought to be coworkers with him, and they should work together in carrying out his counsel. And when counsel comes we should not treat it lightly, no matter to what subject it pertains, for if we do it will work evil unto us.

Cooperation, it is well known to every Saint who has his eyes and ears open, has brought much good to Israel, yet from the very commencement of it there has been more or less discontent and dissatisfaction felt and manifested towards it; but there is not an individual who has attempted to work against it but who has lost the Spirit of God unless he has repented. It is so in all things, as every one of us who has had experience in this kingdom has seen over and over again. No man has ever prospered by this course, but if he has continued it he, by and by, has gone downward instead of upward; no such man ever received and gained to himself honor by taking such a course, and no man ever will. They may try it as often as they wish; no matter whether they are insiders or outsiders, every man who undertakes to fight against this work and people will, in God's own time, receive chastisement at his hand. Many who have done so, have been cut off, and others will follow. This is true, whether it is in regard to following counsel or not. We cannot treat lightly the counsel of God without incurring his displeasure.

Does any man or woman wonder that President Young leads out, and calls upon us to follow, in directing temporal affairs? What would become of us and Zion if there were no one to give counsel in temporal matters? We could not advance if such were the case; but we have been guided so far by the servants of God and the Spirit of God. We have been dull scholars perhaps in a great many things, but I thank God that it is as well as it is with us today. The organization of this Church took place forty years ago with six members, and here is a congregation that would make two thousand branches of the Church as large as the first branch that was established, and this is only one congregation, while we have 600 miles of towns, villages and settlements in this Territory. It is progress all the time. Why? Because it is the work of God. No one can stand in the way of the work of God in safety. The Lord is not dependent upon any man

on his footstool; if one man will not do his bidding, another will. He gives his law to all men, and inasmuch as they reject it they are under condemnation.

I fear not the world. We are the only people under heaven who are one, and we are not half as much one as we ought to be; we have to improve. We are the only people in the whole Christian world who make any pretensions to oneness in building up the Zion of God on the earth. We profess to be one in the Gospel, and we have to become so in temporal matters. We have to become of one heart and mind in giving attention and obedience to the counsel of God in all things, both spiritual and temporal. Zion has got to advance; she has got to rise and shine and put on her beautiful garments. She is advancing and has been from the time of the organization of this Church, and she will continue to do so until the winding up scene.

When I look at the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, and at the blessings which we as a people enjoy; when I look at the glorious principles which God has revealed for the exaltation and glory of man, I rejoice in them, and ask who will obey them? I feel that we ought to be thankful to God day and night; we should be humble and always ready to listen to counsel. Let us go to and carry out these principles. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," says the Lord Jesus. President Young preached on that subject a few Sabbaths ago, showing that however great our professions as Saints may be, they are vain unless we keep the commandments and counsels of the Lord given unto us. What are they? We have the moral law and we have the Gospel in the Scriptures; but there are commandments and ordinances, and there is counsel which we have to observe which are not contained in the Bible, in the Book of Mormon, or in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. In fact there is very little there in regard to our work and labors here as a people.

#### **Tracy's Thoughts:**

I want to say to my brethren and sisters that President Young is our leader; he is our lawgiver in the Church and kingdom of God. He is called to this office; it is his prerogative to tell this people what to do, and it is our duty to obey the counsel that he has given today to the sisters and the brethren. We, as a people, should not treat lightly this counsel, for I will tell you in the name of the Lord—and I have watched it from the time I became a member of this Church—there is no man who undertakes to run counter to the counsel of the legally authorized leader of this people that ever prospers, and no such man ever will prosper.

Notes: I feel like this section for this group is going to be preaching to the choir, but at this time, and any time, the doctrine of Following the Prophet is so quintessential as we continue to move toward the redemption of Zion. We have to look to our prophet and follow his counsel. And if he isn't giving any counsel, then we keep producing good fruit until he tells us to jump, then we jump.

#### **D&C 58**

26 For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward.

27 Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

28 For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward.

29 But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned.

D&C 1:38

38 What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

Amos 3:7 (JST)

7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing until he revealeth the secret unto his servants, the prophets.

President N. Eldon Tanner said: “There are many scriptures which assure us that God is as interested in us today as he has been in all his children from the beginning, and thus we believe in continuous revelation from God through his prophets to guide us in these latter days.

(In Conference Report, Apr. 1975, p. 52.) Old Testament Student Manual

Many things I might name, if it were wisdom to do so, to prove the truth of this statement, but you may watch for yourselves, and you will find that **all persons who take a stand against this counsel will never prosper.**

Notes: If we stand against prophetic counsel, and we even start to criticize the prophet, or think that what he asks us to do is “too much” or has “crossed a line” then we risk cutting ourselves off.

Brigham young said:

“You cannot destroy the appointment of a prophet of God, but you can cut the thread that binds you to the prophet of God, and sink yourselves to hell” (Conference Report, May 1963, p. 81).

Joseph Smith said:

O ye Twelve! and all Saints! profit by this important Key--that in all your trials, troubles, temptations, afflictions, bonds, imprisonments and death, see to it, that you do not betray heaven; that you do not betray Jesus Christ; that you do not betray the brethren; that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man in this world or that which is to come. Yea, in all your kicking and flounderings, see to it that you do not this thing, lest innocent blood be found upon your skirts, and you go down to hell. All other sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, and proving a traitor to the brethren. (TPJS p.156)

### **1952–A:49, Delbert L. Stapley, Perfection Through Obedience**

“Every person who goes contrary to the Church and says that the brethren are fallen or are out of the way or are teaching false doctrines, unless he repents will never in this life or eternity realize the full measure of his possibilities and powers. God will not suffer his Church, established for the last time in this the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times when a restitution of all things is to be accomplished, to be led by a fallen prophet, or by someone whom he does not want.”

People want to mince words and say that the prophet didn't say "thus saith the Lord" or "here is a commandment". Don't do that. Urge, exhort, counsel, encourage, etc are all synonymous for the Lord telling us what he wants us to do, while still allowing us to use our agency. You want to "Hear Him"? Then don't ignore him when he talks....and he does that through prophets. It always has been that way from Adam to now.

And although we may face tribulation and trial to help refine us, if we keep the commandments of God, then we will be strengthened and receive his blessings and prosper.

1 Nephi 2:20-21 (see also 2 Nephi 1:20; 2 Nephi 4:4; Jarom 1:9; Mosiah 1:7; Mosiah 2:22, 31; Alma 9:13; Alma 38:1; Alma 50:20)

20 And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands.

21 And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord.

The Book of Mormon is replete with this same promise of the Lord.

A great deal has been said with regard to guiding this people in temporal matters. I ask you in the name of the Lord, who is called to guide the temporal affairs of this Church and kingdom, for its advantage, redemption and exaltation, as pure as a bride adorned for her husband, if it be not that man who is placed as the lawgiver and leader of Israel? **There is no man on the footstool of God who has this authority but him who stands at the head; and his Counselors and the Apostles, Bishops and Elders ought to be coworkers with him, and they should work together in carrying out his counsel. And when counsel comes we should not treat it lightly, no matter to what subject it pertains, for if we do it will work evil unto us.**

Notes: God's house is a "house of order...and not a house of confusion." (D&C 132:8) God the Father stands at the Head and below him is the Savior Jesus Christ. Below that is the Dispensation head, which in our case is Joseph Smith and then follows every other prophet called in the latter-days. Any other officer in the priesthood who has been called is called by those who have the keys to do so. Thus, we work together and in the correct order to obtain the work and glory of the Father.

Joseph Smith said:

"I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them; but if any person have a vision or a visitation from a heavenly messenger, it must be for his own benefit and instruction; for the fundamental principles, government, and doctrine of the Church are vested in the keys of the kingdom." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 21)

The Lord indeed encourages his children to seek for and receive personal revelation. He encourages councils and discussions. However, when those who hold the priesthood keys make

the final decision, then no manner of future counseling and discussing, murmuring or cajoling will change that...because it is the will of the Lord.

And regarding the subject matter of counsel, it doesn't matter if the prophet is an "expert" on it or not. God is an expert at everything and can reveal his will to those worthy to receive it.

D&C 101

8 In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me.

President Ezra Taft Benson in his talk "Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet" (which I encourage you to read or reread because it is so filled with Gold) said:

"The prophet is not required to have any particular earthly training or diplomas to speak on any subject or act on any matter at any time.

Sometimes there are those who feel their earthly knowledge on a certain subject is superior to the heavenly knowledge which God gives to his prophet on the same subject. They feel the prophet must have the same earthly credentials or training which they have had before they will accept anything the prophet has to say that might contradict their earthly schooling. How much earthly schooling did Joseph Smith have? Yet he gave revelations on all kinds of subjects... We encourage earthly knowledge in many areas, but remember if there is ever a conflict between earthly knowledge and the words of the prophet, you stand with the prophet and you'll be blessed and time will show you have done the right thing."

This leads to the scripture in 2 Nephi 9

28 O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish.

29 But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God.

God is the one who chooses prophets. He is the one that sends them revelation for the children of men. God doesn't change. Therefore, when a prophet speaks, we need to listen, regardless of the subject matter because really it is God speaking.

Cooperation, it is well known to every Saint who has his eyes and ears open, has brought much good to Israel, yet from the very commencement of it there has been more or less discontent and dissatisfaction felt and manifested towards it; but there is not an individual who has attempted to work against it but who has lost the Spirit of God unless he has repented.

Notes:

Joseph Smith said:

"The greatest temporal and spiritual blessings which always come from faithfulness and concerted effort, never attended individual exertion or enterprise. The history of all past ages abundantly attests this fact." (TPJS p. 183)



“Let the Saints remember that great things depend on their individual exertion, and that they are called to be co-workers with us and the Holy Spirit in accomplishing the great work of the last days; and in consideration of the extent, the blessings and glories of the same, let every selfish feeling be not only buried, but annihilated; and let love to God and man predominate, and reign triumphant in every mind, that their hearts may become like unto Enoch’s of old, and comprehend all things, present, past and future, and come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (TPJS p. 178-179)

“When we conclude to make a Zion we will make it, and this work commences in the heart of each person. When the father of a family wishes to make a Zion in his own house, he must take the lead in this good work, which it is impossible for him to do unless he himself possesses the spirit of Zion. Before he can produce the work of sanctification in his family, he must sanctify himself, and by this means God can help him to sanctify his family.”

**-Brigham Young** (DBY, 118)

Zion does indeed start in the heart of each person. But that is good only so far as it goes. Those who develop a spirit of Zion will want to find and work with others who manifest the same spirit. In Zion we have to learn how to deal with other people, set aside our minor differences and work toward the common goal.

This is one of the principle reasons why Israel must be gathered, not just spiritually, but physically. Jesus Christ will be the shepherd over one herd. It can’t be a herd if it is scattered.

1 Nephi 22

24 And the time cometh speedily that the righteous must be led up as calves of the stall, and the Holy One of Israel must reign in dominion, and might, and power, and great glory.

25 And he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth; and he numbereth his sheep, and they know him; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd; and he shall feed his sheep, and in him they shall find pasture.

26 And because of the righteousness of his people, Satan has no power; wherefore, he cannot be loosed for the space of many years; for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth.

This is the group that I want to be a part of. It starts with an individual, but cannot stay like that. We must work together to become of one heart and one mind.

It is so in all things, as every one of us who has had experience in this kingdom has seen over and over again. No man has ever prospered by this course, but if he has continued it he, by and by, has gone downward instead of upward; no such man ever received and gained to himself honor by taking such a course, and no man ever will. They may try it as often as they wish; **no matter whether they are insiders or outsiders, every man who undertakes to fight against this work and people will, in God's own time, receive chastisement at his hand.**

Notes:

Ether 12

26 the Lord spake unto me, saying: Fools mock, but they shall mourn; and my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness;

27 And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.

God will let the wheat and the tares grow together. We will allow the wolves in sheep clothing to use their agency to damn themselves. But know that at the end of the day vengeance belongs to the Lord and he will repay.

#### D&C 65

2 The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth.

There is only one ending to this entire scenario. Jesus conquers. Satan is defeated. It is our responsibility to stay on the covenant path, be loyal and true to those covenants and to do our duty.

“The Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done”  
-**Joseph Smith** (History of the Church, 4:540).

Many who have done so, have been cut off, and others will follow. This is true, whether it is in regard to following counsel or not. **We cannot treat lightly the counsel of God without incurring his displeasure.**

Notes:

#### Psalms 2

1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

#### 2 Nephi 1

21 And now that my soul might have joy in you, and that my heart might leave this world with gladness because of you, that I might not be brought down with grief and sorrow to the grave, arise from the dust, my sons, and be men, and be determined in one mind and in one heart, united in all things, that ye may not come down into captivity;

22 That ye may not be cursed with a sore cursing; and also, that ye may not incur the displeasure of a just God upon you, unto the destruction, yea, the eternal destruction of both soul and body.

23 Awake, my sons; put on the armor of righteousness. Shake off the chains with which ye are bound, and come forth out of obscurity, and arise from the dust.

24 Rebel no more against your brother, whose views have been glorious, and who hath kept the commandments from the time that we left Jerusalem; and who hath been an instrument in the hands of God, in bringing us forth into the land of promise; for were it not for him, we must have perished with hunger in the wilderness; nevertheless, ye sought to take away his life; yea, and he hath suffered much sorrow because of you.

#### Mosiah 1

17 Therefore, as they were unfaithful they did not prosper nor progress in their journey, but were driven back, and incurred the displeasure of God upon them; and therefore they were smitten with famine and sore afflictions, to stir them up in remembrance of their duty.

#### D&C 105

2 Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed even now.

3 But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them;

4 And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom;

5 And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.

6 And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer.

The Lord is the King. He is the one who commands. When we obey him, then we are blessed and he puts His trust in us. When we don't obey him, then is his anger kindled, then he sends sore chastisements to humble us. And if we will not be humbled, then we face utter destruction. And he takes no pleasure in this. His work is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. But being a perfectly just God whose presence cannot be tolerated by any unclean thing, if we are choosing to be unclean through our disobedience, what else can we expect? That God will beat us with a few stripes, send a few calamities our way and that will be that? We learn this week of the fall of King David, and per the OT institute manual:

Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, commenting on David's sin, said: "David committed a dreadful crime, and all his life afterwards sought for forgiveness. Some of the Psalms portray the anguish of his soul; **yet David is still paying for his sin**. He did not receive the resurrection at the time of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Peter declared that his body was still in the tomb, and the Prophet Joseph Smith has said, 'David sought repentance at the hand of God carefully with tears, for the murder of Uriah; but he could only get it through hell: he got a promise that his soul should not be left in hell.' Again we ask: Who wishes to spend a term in hell with the devil before being cleansed from sin?" (Answers to Gospel Questions, 1:74.)

Our day of probation is now, in the fleshy tabernacle we have been blessed with, if not, then we suffer even as Jesus Christ did. In his own words, he said:

D&C 19

16 For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

17 But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I;

18 Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

19 Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.

20 Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit.

Does any man or woman wonder that President Young leads out, and calls upon us to follow, in directing temporal affairs? **What would become of us and Zion if there were no one to give counsel in temporal matters?**

Notes:

D&C 29

34 Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created.

35 Behold, I gave unto him that he should be an agent unto himself; and I gave unto him commandment, but no temporal commandment gave I unto him, for my commandments are spiritual; they are not natural nor temporal, neither carnal nor sensual.

[b:108, Howard W. Hunter, An Everyday Religion](#)

There are some who ask why the Church is concerned with temporal affairs. The Church is interested in the welfare of each of its members. This interest therefore cannot be limited to man's spiritual needs alone but extends to every phase of his life. Social and economic needs are important to everyone. Man also has need for physical, mental, and moral guidance. Our lives cannot be one-sided, nor can we separate the spiritual from the temporal...

The Lord makes no distinction between temporal and spiritual commandments, for he has said that all of his commandments are spiritual. When we understand the plan of life and salvation, this becomes evident to us. Mortality is just one part of our eternal life.

[2020-O:42, W. Christopher Waddell, There Was Bread](#)

When considering the principle of preparedness, we can look back to Joseph in Egypt for inspiration. Knowing what would happen would not have been sufficient to carry them through the “lean” years without a degree of sacrifice during the years of abundance. Rather than

consume all that Pharaoh's subjects could produce, limits were established and followed, providing sufficient for their immediate, as well as their future, needs. It was not enough to know that challenging times would come. They had to act, and because of their effort, "there was bread."

This leads to an important question: "Therefore, what?" A good place to begin is to understand that all things are spiritual to the Lord, "and not at any time" has He given us "a law which was temporal." Everything, then, points to Jesus Christ as the foundation upon which we must build even our temporal preparedness.

Being temporally prepared and self-reliant means "believing that through the grace, or enabling power, of Jesus Christ and our own effort, we are able to obtain all the spiritual and temporal necessities of life we require for ourselves and our families."

Additional aspects of a spiritual foundation for temporal preparedness include acting "in wisdom and order," which implies a gradual buildup of food storage and savings over time, as well as embracing "small and simple" means, which is a demonstration of faith that the Lord will magnify our small but consistent efforts.

With a spiritual foundation in place, we can then successfully apply two important elements of temporal preparedness—managing finances and home storage.

Key principles to manage your finances include the payment of tithes and offerings, eliminating and avoiding debt, preparing and living within a budget, and saving for the future.

Key home storage principles include the storage of food, the storage of water, and the storage of other necessities based on individual and family needs, all because "the best storehouse" is the home, which becomes the "most accessible reserve in times of need."

As we embrace spiritual principles and seek inspiration from the Lord, we will be guided to know the Lord's will for us, individually and as families, and how best to apply the important principles of temporal preparedness.

Thus we see that the prophet will counsel us in things that seem temporal (like ask us to be vaccinated) but deep down are spiritual (do you follow the prophet or not). As we study and ponder what God asks us to do that on the surface seems temporal, I know that you will find the spiritual foundation upon which it rests, and the accompanying blessing(s) for obeying that principle.

We could not advance if such were the case; but we have been guided so far by the servants of God and the Spirit of God. **We have been dull scholars perhaps in a great many things, but I thank God that it is as well as it is with us today.**

Notes: I don't know if it is so well today as it was back in Wilford Woodruff's day if today's Prophet is calling us out....

"Your mountains will vary, and yet the answer to each of your challenges is to increase your faith. That takes work. **Lazy learners and lax disciples will always struggle to muster even a particle of faith.**

To do anything well requires effort. Becoming a true disciple of Jesus Christ is no exception. Increasing your faith and trust in Him takes effort."

-President Russell M. Nelson April 2021 (Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains)

The organization of this Church took place forty years ago with six members, and here is a congregation that would make two thousand branches of the Church as large as the first branch that was established, and this is only one congregation, while we have 600 miles of towns, villages and settlements in this Territory. It is progress all the time. Why? Because it is the work of God. **No one can stand in the way of the work of God in safety. The Lord is not dependent upon any man on his footstool; if one man will not do his bidding, another will. He gives his law to all men, and inasmuch as they reject it they are under condemnation.**

Notes: I have touched on this so much already, but there are some great examples and scriptures to add to this portion regarding each one of us being replaceable if we fall from God's grace:

Here are a few just from the last few weeks of our CFM study  
Samson, King Saul, King David, and King Solomon.

Some more modern examples:

D&C 35

17 And I have sent forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph; and in weakness have I blessed him;

18 And I have given unto him the keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming, if he abide in me, **and if not, another will I plant in his stead.**

D&C 43

2 For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations from my hand.

3 And this ye shall know assuredly—that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.

4 But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.

D&C 42

10 And again, I say unto you, that my servant Edward Partridge shall stand in the office whereunto I have appointed him. And it shall come to pass, **that if he transgress another shall be appointed in his stead.** Even so. Amen.

Wilford Woodruff:

The Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as President of this Church to lead you astray. It is not in the programme. It is not in the mind of God. If I were to attempt that, the Lord would remove me out of my place, and so He will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God and from their duty. (See OD 1)

I fear not the world. We are the only people under heaven who are one, and we are not half as much one as we ought to be; we have to improve. We are the only people in the whole Christian world who make any pretensions to oneness in building up the Zion of God on the earth. We profess to be one in the Gospel, and we have to become so in temporal matters. We have to become of one heart and mind (Moses 7:18) in giving attention and obedience to the counsel of God in all things, both spiritual and temporal. Zion has got to advance; she has got to rise and shine (Isa. 60:1) and put on her beautiful garments (Isa. 52:1). She is advancing and has been from the time of the organization of this Church, and she will continue to do so until the winding up scene.

Notes:

We are in the same predicament today, we have not improved, we haven't built the tower. We, as saints, need to rend the veil of unbelief, we need to follow the prophet, and we need to know the doctrine. Whether we do these things or not, the Lord will come, and who will be able to abide that day? Someone at some point has to do this, and why not us?

I commit all you in the sound of my voice to commit and recommit to this cause. Cast of the veil of unbelief, desert your cottage in Babylon and set your sights toward Zion and get to work. Time is running out. "We have to improve."

When I look at the blessing of the Gospel of Christ, and at the blessings which we as a people enjoy; when I look at the glorious principles which God has revealed for the exaltation and glory of man, I rejoice in them, and ask who will obey them? I feel that we ought to be thankful to God day and night; we should be humble and always ready to listen to counsel.

Notes:

Remembering and being thankful to the Lord is KEY! What do we have to boast of? How can we think ourselves better than even the dust of the earth, which is more obedient than we are?

D&C 59

7 Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things.

Proverbs 3:5-6

5 ¶ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Or to put it on the opposite end:

Helaman 13

22 Ye do not remember the Lord your God in the things with which he hath blessed you, but ye do always remember your riches, not to thank the Lord your God for them; yea, your hearts are not drawn out unto the Lord, but they do swell with great pride, unto boasting, and unto great swelling, envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions, and murders, and all manner of iniquities.

23 For this cause hath the Lord God caused that a curse should come upon the land, and also upon your riches, and this because of your iniquities.

24 Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them, and cast stones at them, and do slay them, and do all manner of iniquity unto them, even as they did of old time.

25 And now when ye talk, ye say: If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out.

26 Behold ye are worse than they; for as the Lord liveth, if a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifieth of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him, and cast him out and seek all manner of ways to destroy him; yea, you will say that he is a false prophet, and that he is a sinner, and of the devil, because he testifieth that your deeds are evil.

27 But behold, if a man shall come among you and shall say: Do this, and there is no iniquity; do that and ye shall not suffer; yea, he will say: Walk after the pride of your own hearts; yea, walk after the pride of your eyes, and do whatsoever your heart desireth—and if a man shall come among you and say this, ye will receive him, and say that he is a prophet.

28 Yea, ye will lift him up, and ye will give unto him of your substance; ye will give unto him of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel; and because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him.

29 O ye wicked and ye perverse generation; ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness rather than light?

30 Yea, behold, the anger of the Lord is already kindled against you; behold, he hath cursed the land because of your iniquity.

31 And behold, the time cometh that he curseth your riches, that they become slippery, that ye cannot hold them; and in the days of your poverty ye cannot retain them.

“There is no medication or operation that can fix the many spiritual woes and maladies that we face.

There is, however, a remedy — one that may seem surprising — because it flies in the face of our natural intuitions. Nevertheless, its effects have been validated by scientists as well as men and women of faith.

I am referring to the healing power of gratitude.

The book of Psalms is filled with admonitions to express gratitude. Here are just three of them:

“It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord.” (Psalms 92:1)

“O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good.” (Psalms 136:1)

“Come before his presence with thanksgiving.” (Psalms 95:2)

Jesus Christ frequently expressed gratitude. Before raising Lazarus from the dead, before miraculously multiplying loaves and fishes, and before passing the cup to His disciples at the Last Supper, the Savior prayed and gave thanks to God. No wonder the Apostle Paul later declared, “In everything give thanks.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)”

-President Nelson (#Give Thanks 11/20/20)

Being grateful emphasizes that we cannot do things on our own here on this earth. God even lends us the air that we breathe (Mosiah 2:21). It keeps us humble, which in turn makes us teachable.



Let us go to and carry out these principles. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," (John 14:15) says the Lord Jesus. President Young preached on that subject a few Sabbaths ago, showing that however great our professions as Saints may be, they are vain unless we keep the commandments and counsels of the Lord given unto us. What are they? We have the moral law and we have the Gospel in the Scriptures; but there are commandments and ordinances, and there is counsel which we have to observe which are not contained in the Bible, in the Book of Mormon, or in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. In fact there is very little there in regard to our work and labors here as a people.

Notes:

On another occasion, President Woodruff recounted:

“When he concluded, Brother Joseph turned to Brother Brigham Young and said, ‘Brother Brigham I want you to go to the podium and tell us your views with regard to the living oracles and the written word of God.’ Brother Brigham took the stand, and he took the Bible, and laid it down; he took the Book of Mormon, and laid it down; and he took the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and laid it down before him, and he said: ‘There is the written word of God to us, concerning the work of God from the beginning of the world, almost, to our day. And now,’ said he, ‘when compared with the living oracles those books are nothing to me; those books do not convey the word of God direct to us now, as do the words of a Prophet or a man bearing the Holy Priesthood in our day and generation. I would rather have the living oracles than all the writing in the books.’ That was the course he pursued. When he was through, Brother Joseph said to the congregation; ‘Brother Brigham has told you the word of the Lord, and he has told you the truth.’” (Conference Report, October 1897, pp. 18–19.)”

“The Bible is good... The Book of Mormon is good, and the book of Doctrine and Covenants, as land marks... Those books are good for example, precedent, and investigation, and for developing certain laws and principles; but they do not, they cannot touch every case required to be adjudicated and set in order; we require a living tree - a living fountain - living intelligence, proceeding from the living priesthood in heaven, through the living priesthood on earth. And from the time that Adam first received a communication from God, to the time that John, on the Isle of Patmos, received his communication, or Joseph Smith had the heavens opened to him, it always required new revelations, adapted to the peculiar circumstances in which the churches or individuals were placed. Adam’s revelation did not instruct Noah to build his ark; nor did Noah’s revelation tell Lot to forsake Sodom; nor did either of these speak of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt. These all had revelations for themselves, and so had Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jesus, Peter, Paul, John, and Joseph. And so must we, or we shall make a shipwreck.”  
-**John Taylor** (MS 9:323, 5/7/1847)

Orson Pratt has said, “The very moment that we set aside the living oracles we set aside the revelations of God. Why? Because the revelations of God command us plainly that we shall harken to the living oracles. Hence, if we undertake to follow the written word, and at the same time do not give heed to the living oracles of God, the written word will condemn us. ...”  
(Journal of Discourses, vol. 7, p. 373.)

Reading the scriptures is wonderful, and we need to understand them by studying them daily. However, they do not tell us all the things we should do in our current circumstances. There are some things that need to be received in the moment, in the flesh. The scriptures teach us to follow the prophet. So if we do not do that, then the very scriptures will condemn us at the last day.

Apart from that, as we draw nearer to the redemption and establishment of Zion, the Lord will reveal more and more to us. Which also includes more commandments.

D&C 59

3 Yea, blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the earth, and it shall bring forth in its strength.

4 And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above, yea, and with commandments not a few, and with revelations in their time—they that are faithful and diligent before me.

5 Wherefore, I give unto them a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him.

“We have a lot of people who will do some of the things, but the purpose of creating this earth upon which we might dwell was that the Lord would prove us to see whether we were willing to do all things whatsoever the Lord hath commanded. And in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph we are told that the Lord has given us "commandments not a few." There are some who would object to that. They would rather have one or two commandments, but the Lord never gave a commandment unto his children without a promised blessing.”

([1961-A:43](#), LeGrand Richards, “Prove Me Now Herewith...”)

So as we get closer to the New Jerusalem and becoming a Zion people we are going to get MORE commandments?! YES! This is how we know the Lord trusts us and how we can receive more of his blessings. We know what his standards are and how we have to live. He is our law giver.

Elder John A. Widtsoe said: “The most important prophet in any age is the living prophet. ... To follow the living prophet, the interpreter of the past, is the essence of wisdom. The very strength of the Church lies in the doctrine of continuous revelation through a living prophet” (Evidences and Reconciliations, 3 vols. in 1, arr. G. Homer Durham, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960, p. 352).

I bear my testimony that following the prophet and heeding his counsel will provide peace and direction in your life. As you study the scriptures, you will have the influence of the Holy Ghost in your life to guide and direct your paths. Don't cut the tie that binds you to the prophet, it will only lead down the path of darkness and misery.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

## Micah's Thoughts:

Once again, for those who haven't had the chance to watch or read my paper The Pyramid of Truth I would strongly urge you to go check it out. After a study of which one would understand that being a lawgiver is a thou shalt do- these are policies. Just like laws in your country, your state, your city etc. change over time to meet the needs and circumstances of the people, there needs to be a prophet of the Lord to be such a lawgiver.

This section contains one of the many quotes that I could have added (and still might) to the section in said paper dealing with policy vs doctrine and if one is more important than the other/if disobeying policy has any effect on your eternal or temporal salvation etc. President Woodruff here states very matter of fact that such individuals that set aside the counsel/policy/etc of a prophet never prosper and spiral spiritually.

Simply put, this talk is one of many that should be footnoted, stapled to the Pyramid of Truth.

President Woodruff says we are not half as united as we ought to be and we need to improve. How I long for the days of the return of straight shooting talk. We don't get the redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem as individuals, we only do so collectively; as Joseph Smith clearly taught:

### The Gathering of Saints (TPJS 183)

*The greatest temporal and spiritual blessings which always come from faithfulness and concerted effort, never attended individual exertion or enterprise. The history of all past ages abundantly attests this fact.* In addition to all temporal blessings, there is no other way for the Saints to be saved in these last days, [than by the gathering] as the concurrent testimony of all the holy prophets clearly proves, for it is written—"They shall come from the east, and be gathered from the west; the north shall give up, and the south shall keep not back." "The sons of God shall be gathered from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth."

It is also the concurrent testimony of all the prophets, that this gathering together of all the Saints, must take place *before the Lord comes* to "take vengeance upon the ungodly," and "to be glorified and admired by all those who obey the Gospel." The fiftieth Psalm, from the first to the fifth verse inclusive, describes the glory and majesty of that event. (Jan. 8, 1841.) DHC 4:272.

### Parting the Veil Through Perfect Faith (TPJS 8-9)

It is the privilege of every Elder to speak of the things of God; and could we all come together with one heart and one mind in perfect faith *the veil might as well be rent today as next week, or any other time*, and if we will but cleanse ourselves and covenant before God, to serve Him, it is our privilege to have an assurance that God will protect us at all times. FWR, pp. 13-14. (Oct. 25, 1831.)

President Woodruff says that we are the only people who make any pretensions to oneness in building up the Zion of God on the earth. How sad is it that many of the Latter-day Saints, if not most, instead of teaching a oneness of mind, and doctrine and unity in Christ, so as to be worthy to redeem and build the New Jerusalem, we teach a unity with Babylon, Ephraim culture, going as far as to basically preach "going hand in hand with the wicked" and that "Zion is wherever to want it to be- follow after your own gods!" We have completely neglected building the tower and are now full fledged in slothfulness.

I love President Woodruff's choice of the word "professions" when he says that it doesn't matter how great our professions are if we don't follow the counsel of the Lord, if we don't keep the commandments etc. Professions obviously can mean our vocations, our jobs, meaning it doesn't matter what callings we hold if we are bishops or stake presidents, or whether our jobs are plumbers, or doctors or lawyers- titles don't save people, obedience does. But professions the word can also mean declaration, proclamation, assertion etc., meaning it doesn't matter what you openly profess- that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph was a prophet, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true, etc.- none of that will avail you anything if you fight against and do not heed and sustain the counsel given from the keys. This counsel very much so can and does include temporal matters. I think everyone knows or can think of people who have professed a great number of things, who have borne seemingly powerful testimonies of very important gospel topics, individuals who may have served or are serving in prominent callings such as stake president, mission president etc. who took strong stances against the prophet and apostles and their counsel dealing with temporal things. According to President Woodruff their professions amount to nothing in the face of this. To make matters worse, many of these individuals are also making a buck do it so adding priestcraft to that equation not only is it availing them no spiritual blessings, they are very much in the red.

### **Do Not Betray the Brethren (TPJS 156)**

O ye Twelve! and all Saints! profit by this important Key—that in all your trials, troubles, temptations, afflictions, bonds, imprisonments and death, see to it, that you do not betray heaven; that you do not betray Jesus Christ; that you do not betray the brethren; that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in the Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man in this world or that which is to come. Yea, in all your kicking and flounderings, see to it that you do not this thing, lest innocent blood be found upon your skirts, and you go down to hell. All other sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, and proving a traitor to the brethren.

### **Matthew 18:5–10. A Warning Not to Offend Little Ones**

Though Jesus was speaking to leaders of His day when He issued a stern warning not to offend little ones, the message recorded in Matthew 18:5–10 applies to all of us (see D&C 50:40–41 for a broader definition of "little children"). We must not cause anyone seeking greater understanding of the gospel plan to stumble in their faith, nor should we do anything to block their progress toward eternal life. Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught about this warning:

"Few crimes are as gross and wicked as that of teaching false doctrine and leading souls away from God and salvation. ... If eternal joy is the reward given those who teach the truth and bring souls to salvation, shall not those who teach false doctrines and lead souls to damnation receive as their reward eternal remorse? (D. & C. 18:10–16.)

"... It is better to die and be denied the blessings of continued mortal existence than to live and lead souls from the truth, thereby gaining eternal damnation for oneself" (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:420).

### **Matthew 13**

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth *because of the word*, by and by *he is offended*.

## **Matthew 15**

11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees *were offended, after they heard this saying?*

## **Doctrine and Covenants 121**

15 And not many years hence, that they and their posterity shall be swept from under heaven, saith God, that not one of them is left to stand by the wall.

16 Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them.

17 But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves.

18 And those who swear falsely against my servants, that they might bring them into bondage and death—

19 Wo unto them; because *they have offended my little ones* they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house.

20 Their basket shall not be full, their houses and their barns shall perish, and they themselves shall be despised by those that flattered them.

21 They shall not have right to the priesthood, nor their posterity after them from generation to generation.

22 It had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and they drowned in the depth of the sea.

## **Doctrine and Covenants 1**

13 And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

14 And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

15 For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

16 They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

People should pay close attention to what is taught in those scriptures and in the Student Manual... there were those that were offended at Jesus Christ, at what he taught, at "The Word", and which fell away- was this the fault of the Savior? Will He be held to account to all those He "offended by The Word"? No... So what offense, what teaching is the Lord referring to? In all of the cases above it is clear that the context is those that "betray the brethren", those that "teach against the brethren" be that against their calling, authority, or counsel/policy/etc. If one is teaching this doctrine, that to follow the prophet, follow the voice of His servants, is paramount to our temporal and spiritual salvation and one of "offended and falls away", their blood be upon their own heads. If however you are "betraying the brethren", and "innocent blood be found upon your skirts", meaning someone by your teaching cuts the thread that binds them to the prophet- "you [shall] go down to hell", for "all others sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, and proving a traitor to the brethren.

## Section III

The Lord has put into our hands the power to build up this great Zion, which all the ancient prophets rejoiced in and prophesied about. What manner of people ought we to be who are called to carry out this work? We ought to be the Saints and children of God in very deed. Our hearts ought to be open and prepared to receive instruction, light and truth, and to carry out all principles which may be communicated unto us by the servants of the Lord. The counsels we have had today are of great value to the Latter-day Saints. By and by Babylon will fall; in a little while "no man will buy her merchandise," and the sooner we are prepared for the changes which are about to take place in our nation and in the nations of the earth the better for us.

We are all interested in the welfare of Zion. Our wives, daughters and sons are interested in the welfare of the husbands and fathers, and the children in that of the parents; and we all should be interested in each other's temporal and spiritual labors, and there should not be a selfish feeling on the part of any portion of a family—"I do not care what becomes of this, that or the other, if I can only get what I want myself." This is selfishness, it produces disunion and is inconsistent with the profession of a Saint of God. We should labor, each and every one of us to put such feelings from our hearts, and then we, in our family organizations, should strive to promote the general interest of the members thereof; but the interest of Zion and the kingdom of God should be first with us all the time, for we are all members of that kingdom and its welfare is ours.

I consider that we are in a position in which we have every chance to do a great deal of good in our day and generation, we have every chance to work with the Lord, every chance to fulfil our mission and calling here on the earth. We have every chance to build up the Zion of God. I rejoice in the faith that has been manifested by those who have charge of the affairs of the kingdom of God, in the revelations of God. By their works they have manifested their determination continually to carry out the commands of God. "Who am I," saith the Lord, "that I command and am not obeyed?" "Who am I," saith the Lord, "that I promise and do not fulfil?"

The Lord has never made a promise to the children of men but what he has fulfilled it; and all the promises that the Lord has made and all the revelations that have been given by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, will have their fulfillment, and we have nothing to fear. As President Young said a few Sabbaths ago, the only thing we need fear is that we shall not keep the commandments of the Lord. Let us keep the commandments of God and then we shall have power with him; the word of the Lord will sustain us and he will fight our battles. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," saith the Lord. We need have no fears with regard to the future. The Zion of God is before his face continually. He has laid a foundation and He will build upon it, and his Saints will build upon it; and thousands and tens of thousands of the meek of the earth will yet take hold and become co-workers in the great work of God. I feel, myself, as though we should lay these counsels that we receive to heart; we should not treat them lightly. We have been called upon by the Lord and his servants to keep the Word of Wisdom; it is time we did it. Wherein we have failed in these things in the past we should try to improve.

I rejoice in this work, I rejoice in the Gospel of Christ. I rejoice that we live in a day when we have inspiration, when we have prophets, Apostles and inspired men to lead us, and when we are made partakers of the blessings of the kingdom of God upon the earth. It is safe for us to pursue that course wherein we can walk in the light, and we need not find fault with the principles of the Gospel because any brother does that which we cannot endorse. It is for us, each of us, individually, to see to our own conduct, and never follow the errors of others. It is not difficult to find them in our own conduct. We should all bring this home to ourselves.

I do hope that the sisters, generally, and the Female Relief Societies in particular, will listen to the counsel that has been given today, and that they will go to and establish braiding schools in all their societies, where the young ladies may be taught to braid straw. President Young has called upon them to do it from time to time. It is true that he has not always commanded them, in the name of the Lord, to do thus and so, and this has been a great blessing to Israel. We have been governed by counsel instead of commandment in many things, which has been a blessing to the Saints, for "he that is commanded in all things" and obeyeth it with slothfulness and not a willing mind, is not qualified before the Lord as that man is who, having the power within him, bringeth to pass much righteousness without being commanded in all that he does.

I feel thankful for the blessings that we enjoy. The Prophet Joseph was called an idler and a gold digger. We have been called a great many things—such as lazy, indolent, and many other things discreditable. Why, every man possessing reason and judgment, who knows anything about the Territory of Utah, will at once pronounce such assertions nonsensical, for this city and every portion of the Territory bear witness to the untiring labor and industry of the Latter-day Saints, and the people, as a general thing outside, are beginning to give up the idea that we are an idle people. They formerly found a great deal of fault with Joseph Smith, because they said he was a gold digger; but since then nearly all the Christian world have turned gold diggers. Hundreds of thousands of them have run into this western country to dig gold; and, while they formerly found fault with us for digging gold they have lately found fault because we do not dig it. I hope and trust that all the accusations of wrong brought against us in the future will be as groundless as those of the past. Let us show our faith by our works, let us show to the Lord our God that we have faith and confidence in his word and works.

We have to become united as a people in all our labors—in our agriculture, manufactures, and every branch of our temporal labors. It is of great importance to the Latter-day Saints that they

should unite together on the principle of cooperation. Where this is not done we still ought to try individually to manufacture all we can. I was pleased, a few days ago, while paying a visit to Jennings's shoe factory, to see the large number of homemade boots and shoes, many of which were made with machinery which had been imported for the purpose. This should be done wherever it is possible; the people should cooperate and import labor-saving machinery, so as to be able to compete with foreign manufacturers of goods of all kinds. President Young has set an example in introducing carding machines and in establishing factories here. He has done all he could in this direction, and we should follow in the wake as far as we can. I know that God will bless the people by doing this.

I do not wish to occupy any more time. I feel to say God bless you. Lay these things to heart. Let us lay hold and build up Zion. Let us realize that we are the children of God, that he is at work with us and that we are at work with him. It has been said that the Lord and a good man are a great majority. He has got a great many good men on the earth, and he is gathering them together to build up Zion, to carry out his work and to do his will. He will also control the course of human events so as to forward his purposes. He holds the destinies of the nations in his hands. He holds Zion in his hands and he will carry out his work and do all he has promised. Those who fight against Zion fight against God, and he will break every weapon formed against his kingdom, and will bring his people triumphant over every obstacle, and finally give them eternal life, which is the greatest of all the gifts of God. May God grant that it may be bestowed upon us by our faith, works, and labors, through his mercy and goodness, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## **Daniel's Thoughts:**

Color coding legend:

Blue = Daniel's words

Black = scriptures/words of early Brethren

Red = President Woodruff

Purple = other talks]

First of all, a big thank you to Micah, Ashley, and everyone who has made this group possible. The countless firesides and videos are amazing and a great strength to me. The II YouTube channel alone now has over *300 videos!* Wow. Thank you! I'm also amused because of how consistently Micah (understandably) criticizes the notion that we drop in-person missionary work and retreat solely to posting on Facebook or putting up missionary-dancing videos on YouTube. Yes, I'm amused at the irony that although Micah knows how critical in-person missionary work is, he and many of you have taken up the Lord's call over the past few years to preach the gospel at all times, in whatever way He directs, even via a digital platform, like Discord, that sounds a lot like contention! . . . (For the sake of time, I'll resist the urge to rib or needle Micah on the subject of contention.)



Next, I want to thank Tracy for personally inviting me to participate in this fireside. I've been grappling with how I can participate and meaningfully give back to our Zion community as I've received so much from it. Thank you, Tracy, for following the counsel to "Love, share, and invite."

Finally, thank you to the brave soul who is reading my remarks!

On to my thoughts for section 3! First, and partly because I have such a tendency to gab and ramble, I want to call out Micah's latest macro timelines video and steal a quote above from section 2. Dearly beloved saints, brothers and sisters, do we realize what time it is?! President Woodruff declared above in section 2, "Zion has got to advance; she has got to rise and shine and put on her beautiful garments. She is advancing and has been from the time of the organization of this Church, and she will continue to do so until the winding up scene." Zion will continue to advance until when? Until the "winding up scene"! Seven years ago this October, President Nelson told the sisters we were already in the "winding-up scene" ([A Plea to My Sisters, October 2015](#)). As Micah referenced in the latest macro timelines video (the Parable of the Fig), only three months after telling the sisters we were already in the winding-up scene, President Nelson addressed "millennials." He told them (or for many of this group, "us") "You were taught in the spirit world to prepare you for anything and everything you would encounter during this latter part of these latter days." ([Becoming True Millennials](#)) I'm a bit of a geek or egghead when it comes to precision with language. Note that President Nelson said *this* latter part of *these* latter days. He did *not* say *the* latter part of *the* latter days. This was over six years ago. Brothers and sisters, do we have the sense of urgency Micah talks about so frequently? Because I know he likes football and disdains golf, I'll give a football analogy: We are absolutely under the "two minute" warning for the "end of the game." President Nelson said three years ago that "Time is running out." ([Come, Follow Me](#)) Brothers and sisters, we live in mortality where time is finite. I could go on and on about how close we are to the redemption of Zion and the Savior's Second Coming. I hope and expect I'm preaching to the choir, here. If so, I invite us to take the fire in our bones, this burning sense of urgency, and put it to use. I invite us to share our sense of urgency with family, friends, and neighbors. As Micah so constantly pleads, I invite us to be on the watchtower, to blow the trumpet long and loud, and to, therefore, qualify to be the Lord's "Israel"!

Back to the actual content of section 3. President Woodruff declared, "The Lord has put into our hands the power to build up this great Zion, which all the ancient prophets rejoiced in and prophesied about." This sounds to me like President Woodruff remembered well what his dearly beloved brother and Prophet Joseph Smith previously proclaimed about building up Zion in our day: "The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day; but they died without the sight; we are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to see, participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day

glory... (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith or TPJS moving forward, p. 231).” I agree with Micah who often likes to chide the idea that Zion will just “fall down out of heaven.” It will not. *In addition* to the City of Enoch, a Zion city of holiness, being brought down “from above,” the Doctrine and Covenants tells us that we will lift up our voice together and sing, “The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath (D&C 84:100).” What are we doing to build up Zion and bring it up “from beneath,” or on the earth? We say we believe in the Savior Jesus Christ, that He is our Lord, our God, and our King. To reference President Trump, “how sad” it is, then, that we have not redeemed and built His city of holiness! If we are His servants, what are we doing to build His kingdom? Why is there not a place where He may dwell among us and walk the streets with us? President Brigham Young minced no words when he pointedly asked the saints, “Do we know and understand that it is our business to build up Zion? ... Why, to have seen the conduct of the people you might have supposed they knew no more about Zion than about a city of the Chinese, or a city in France, Italy, Germany, or Asia; just as soon build up a city in Asia or Africa as anywhere else, ‘no matter whom we build for if we only get the dollar, only get our pay for our work.’ Yet the commandment of God to us is to build up Zion and her cities. I told you ... what Joseph said in this respect—what we should build and what we should not build up. [The Doctrine and Covenants] is full of it. We say we believe Joseph was a prophet, that he had the priesthood and was called of God to gather the people together and establish Zion. If we believe this, why not let our lives prove that we believe the doctrine that we profess? Can you see any of the Christians in the world who do not believe the doctrine they profess? It is a very dark picture to look upon—a sad affair that we disbelieve our own doctrines. Let us remember them and live accordingly. (February 10 1867, Journal of Discourses, 11:324)” Brothers and sisters, Brigham Young long pre-dated President Trump. How sad it is if do not believe our own doctrine. If we do believe it, then let us build “the tower.” Let us go forth as Jacob and Zenos adjured (or “urged” us) and labor with the Lord in *His* vineyard this last time. Let us build up Zion! Time is running out. But if we’re so close to the “11th hour” when the “game is over,” why even try? Though I currently lack the reference, Brigham Young taught Zion could be built up in only a year. May I be so bold as to quote the Lord in saying that “were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed even now (D&C 105:2).” What sins and transgressions do we, individually and collectively, need to put aside so we can redeem Zion? It’s not that we are waiting for the Lord to build Zion. He is waiting for *us*, brothers and sisters, and time is running out. As the Three Brothers are wont to say, the Lord will do His own work. If it’s not one of us, it will be someone. Do we desire it? Do we ask to know what we need to change or to do? Do we seek for change? “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)” Nearly 43 years ago, President Spencer W. Kimball gave some excellent remarks that capture well the task before us:

From Caleb’s example we learn very important lessons. Just as Caleb had to struggle and remain true and faithful to gain his inheritance, so we must remember that, while the Lord has promised us a place in his kingdom, we must ever strive constantly and faithfully so as to be worthy to

receive the reward. Caleb concluded his moving declaration with a request and a challenge with which my heart finds full sympathy. The Anakims, the giants, were still inhabiting the promised land, and they had to be overcome. Said Caleb, now at 85 years, "Give me this mountain" (Josh. 14:12). This is my feeling for the work at this moment. There are great challenges ahead of us, giant opportunities to be met. I welcome that exciting prospect and feel to say to the Lord, humbly, "Give me this mountain," give me these challenges. (["Give Me This Mountain", October 1979](#))

Saints of Zion, brothers and sisters, with that characteristic fire of Zion in my bones, I invite us to humbly say to the Lord, "Give me this mountain, and show me what I can do to build up and redeem Zion!"

Returning to President Woodruff's remarks, he says that in carrying out the work of building up Zion, "**We ought to be the Saints and children of God in very deed.**" A "saint" is someone who is holy or set apart. As Elder Dale G. Renlund quoted Nelson Mandela (to Micah's everlasting consternation), "a saint is a sinner who keeps on trying" ([Latter-day Saints Keep on Trying, April 2015](#)). And what do we keep on trying? Why, "Trying to be like Jesus!" As one of our Zion brothers recently shared with Micah (and Micah please remind us who if he's comfortable being recognized), "enduring to the end" is not a boring, shallow path devoid of meaning. Jesus Christ is the beginning and *the end* (Revelation 22:13). We are striving to become like Him so He can say to us, "Son, thou shalt be exalted." This means we become the children of Christ and have our calling and election made sure. To learn more about becoming children of Christ, I invite you to study this topic on the Zion or Bust Discord server (the link's in the description of this video or will be). As regards having our calling and election made sure (or having our exaltation assured), the Prophet Joseph taught

"After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost, (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, 'Son, thou shalt be exalted.' When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure, then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the Saints, as is recorded in the testimony of St. John..." Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and this is the sum and the substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such

glorious visions—Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn.” TPJS, pp. 150,151.

Have we had this unspeakable experience? If not, the promise is real - “keep on trying” until you see the salvation of God! I understand from our group that the last time this doctrine was taught or discussed in general conference was some 40 years ago. Why? Did the doctrine change? No! As the First Presidency recently reminded us, “The gospel of Jesus Christ does not change. Gospel doctrine does not change.” ([Introductory Message \[to the women’s session\], April 2022](#)) We also know very clearly from the Lectures on Faith that God does *not* change. (I highly recommend studying our community’s resources on this topic in Discord and via past Lectures on Faith fireside videos.) If the doctrine hasn’t changed and God hasn’t changed, then I can only conclude that we, as a people, have changed or at least the focus of general conference has changed. As little children, we wade and splash in the “kiddie pool.” When we get older, we graduate to the “big kids” or “adult” pool. How childish and disappointing would it be if we rejected greater challenges and opportunities to stay behind in the kiddie pool? Likewise, the Savior invites us to climb higher, not to some mythical club in the dark, but to *Him!* The gospel is all about commitments, line upon line, commitment upon commitment. If we are unwilling to grow and take on new challenges, then we will stagnate and, if we do not repent, damn ourselves. Period. (Winking at Micah.) Elder Richard G. Scott taught, “To reach a goal you have never before attained, you must do things you have never before done. ([Finding the Way Back, April 1990](#)).” Brothers and sisters, let’s do the things the Lord invites us to do! In the words of President Nelson, “What would you do if you had *more* faith? Think about it. Write about it. Then *receive more* faith by doing something that *requires more* faith.” The Lord will show us what mountains we need to climb if we ask Him and seek them.

Back to President Woodruff. He says we should be saints and children of God “**in very deed.**” In other words, it’s insufficient to show up at church on Sundays, Zoramite-like, thank the Lord that we’re better than everyone else, and never speak of Him again until the next Sunday when we rehearse how marvelous we are (see Alma 31:23). Remember that the Zoramites rejected Christ and His atoning sacrifice (see Alma 31:16-17). How much better are we than them if we *claim* to believe in Christ and don't do what He says?! His brother James exhorted us, “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” (James 1:22) He also “twisted the knife” when he chastised us, “Thou believest that there is one God [or you believe in God]; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” (James 2:19) Belief is a critical and important step, and it is only a *beginning*. Belief must be proved or accompanied by measurable action as James beautifully explained, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and

I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.” (James 2:14-17) **King Benjamin exhorted his people**, “if you believe all these things see that ye do them.” (Mosiah 4:10). **In other words, making the effort and taking action shows what we truly believe. Otherwise, our belief is mere “lip service” as Micah and this group have frequently observed:** “this people draw near unto [the Lord] with their mouth, and with their lips do honor [Him], but have removed their hearts far from [Him], and their fear towards [Him] is taught by the precepts of men.” (2 Nephi 27:25). **Amulek sums it up for us:**

And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith. (Alma 34:28)

The needy, the naked, the sick and afflicted surely include those with physical suffering, yet how much more does it apply to our brothers and sisters, and even to ourselves, who are impoverished, naked, sick, or malnourished spiritually? Will we turn them or ourselves away as we focus on gluttony or entertaining ourselves with the vain things of the world? I invite us to follow President Eyring’s pattern for blessing our Father’s children. Speaking of how others tearfully received his service in gratitude, he taught,

“That day I had prayed for such a miracle to come instead of praying for how well I might do my part. **I prayed that the people would feel the Lord’s love through my loving service. I have learned this is the key to serving and blessing others in His name.**” ([Bless in His Name, April 2021](#), emphasis added)

I know and testify with Lehi, who eagerly shared the fruit of the tree of life with all who would come, and with our beloved Prophet Joseph, “A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race.” (TPJS, pg. ?) When we are filled with the love of God, we want to help others feel and experience that love - we long to strengthen and lift them up, instead of tear them down. This ties in nicely with how President Woodruff says, “**there should not be a selfish feeling on the part of any portion of a family**” and “**the interest of Zion and the kingdom of God should be first with us all the time, for we are all members of that kingdom and its welfare is ours.**” Inherent in building up others while simultaneously building up Zion is that all are *invited* to the gospel feast, “without money and without price.” (see Isaiah 55:1-2 and 2 Nephi 9:50-51) Because all are invited to partake freely or equally, without regard to worldly socioeconomic status, the only “price” is giving the Lord our will or our heart. Moreover, the Lord, through Nephi, explicitly commanded us that we are to build up others and Zion out of charity or pure love, *not* to get gain or praise:

27 Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but he hath given it free for all men; and he hath commanded his people that they should persuade all men to repentance.

28 Behold, hath the Lord commanded any that they should not partake of his goodness? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but all men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden.

29 He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.

30 Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.

31 But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.

(2 Nephi 26)

I know that as we labor *for Zion* and to build up our brothers and sisters, the Lord will bless us and them! I invite us to ponder deeply and ask how we can build up Zion.

Thank you for your patience with my wordiness! I fear that only Matt may be left awake at this point... I'll try to be more concise from here to the end.

In contrast to the everlasting and undimmed glory of Zion, President Woodruff assures us that **“By and by Babylon will fall.”** I won't quote from it, and Revelation chapter 18 paints a beautiful picture of the fall of Babylon and the resultant rejoicing. We have often set forth in this group that Babylon and Zion are *opposites* and cannot mix. Thus, while Babylon epitomizes wickedness and will be destroyed, Zion embodies righteousness, even the “fountain of all righteousness,” Jesus Christ, Himself who “will be in the midst” (see Ether 8:26; 12:28; 3 Nephi 20:21-22; 21:23-25) so that “Zion shall dwell in safety forever.” (Moses 7:20) I know that the Savior “shall feed his [Zion] flock like a shepherd.” (Isaiah 40:11) I invite us to come out of Babylon and come unto Christ. I promise that as we do, He will feed us like a Shepherd, and we will dwell safely with Him forever!

To know how to build up Zion, President Woodruff invites us to follow prophetic counsel (which we have discussed at length in this group), be deeply united with other saints, and do much good of our own free will without being *commanded* (see D&C 58:27-28).

President Woodruff reminds us that the world, prior to ironically rushing to dig gold for itself, mocked the Prophet Joseph as a “gold digger.” The Lord foretold the Prophet Joseph, “fools shall have thee in derision, and hell shall rage against thee; While the pure in heart, and the wise, and the noble, and the virtuous, shall seek counsel, and authority, and blessings constantly from under thy hand.” (D&C 122:1-2) *Is not this a type of Christ? He was slandered as “a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners,” (Matthew 11:19) yet He is the ultimate source of counsel, authority, and blessings! President Nelson likewise forewarned us two years ago in what are now very familiar words to this group: difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord “shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives... You will have days when you will be discouraged. So pray for courage not to give up! Sadly, some who you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair. ([The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior’s Second Coming](#)) To combat this persecution, mocking, and betrayal, Elder Bedar recently counseled us simply to follow the example of Lehi and “heed not.” ([But We Heeded Them Not, April 2022](#)) President Nelson invited us to “Do whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth. Anchored in pure doctrine, you will be able to step forward with faith and dogged persistence and cheerfully do all that lies in your power to fulfill the purposes of the Lord.... I promise you that as you follow Jesus Christ, you will find sustained peace and true joy. As you keep your covenants with increasing precision, and as you defend the Church and kingdom of God on the earth today, the Lord will bless you with strength and wisdom to accomplish what only members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can accomplish.” (The Future of the Church)*

I know as we strive to build up and defend Zion, the Lord will strengthen us. I invite us to do so.

The Lord promises that He will judge us “according to [our] works, according to the desire of [our] hearts.” (D&C 137:9) As Micah has beautifully instructed us, our works *demonstrate* our desires. I had an accounting professor who taught us that we can know a great deal about what someone cares about by reviewing his bank account and credit card purchases. Likewise, how we *spend* our time shows what we desire and, ultimately, what we are and *whose* we are. If someone were to review our transactions of time or what we purchase with the finite minutes of mortality, what would he see? To slightly adapt the prophetic questions of President Nelson, “We might each ask ourselves, where is our [desire]? Is it in a team? Is it in a brand? Is it in a celebrity? Even the best teams can fail. Celebrities can fade. There is only One in whom your [desire] is always safe, and that is in the Lord Jesus Christ. And you need to let your [desire] show!” ([Let Your Faith Show, April 2014](#)). If someone were to observe our life and surroundings, would they be in harmony with building up Zion? If not, I invite us to repent. President Nelson encouraged us, “prayerfully seek to understand what stands in the way of your

repentance [and I would add building up Zion]. Identify what *stops* you from repenting. And then, change! Repent! All of us can do better and be better than ever before.” ([We Can Do Better and Be Better, April 2019](#)). I know that as we seek to bring our lives in harmony with Zion, the Lord will bless us and enable us to do it.

To (finally) conclude, I want to end with a “prayer,” which is what the Lord calls “the song of the righteous.” (D&C 25:12) I will then take a page from Micah’s book and make President Woodruff’s closing thoughts and testimony my own. As we listen to the words of this prayer, let us ponder its application to us and how each of us is striving to build up Zion:

1. Have I done any good in the world today?

Have I helped anyone in need?

Have I cheered up the sad and made someone feel glad?

If not, I have failed indeed.

Has anyone’s burden been lighter today

Because I was willing to share?

Have the sick and the weary been helped on their way?

When they needed my help was I there?

[Chorus]

Then wake up and do something more

Than dream of your mansion above.

Doing good is a pleasure, a joy beyond measure,

A blessing of duty and love.

2. There are chances for work all around just now,

Opportunities right in our way.

Do not let them pass by, saying, “Sometime I’ll try,”

But go and do something today.

’Tis noble of man to work and to give;

Love’s labor has merit alone.

Only he who does something helps others to live.



To God each good work will be known.

[Chorus]

Then wake up and do something more

Than dream of your mansion above.

Doing good is a pleasure, a joy beyond measure,

A blessing of duty and love.

(Have I Done Any Good?)

I do not wish to occupy any more time. I feel to say God bless you. Lay these things to heart. Let us lay hold and build up Zion. Let us realize that we are the children of God, that he is at work with us and that we are at work with him. It has been said that the Lord and a good man are a great majority. He has got a great many good men on the earth, and he is gathering them together to build up Zion, to carry out his work and to do his will. He will also control the course of human events so as to forward his purposes. He holds the destinies of the nations in his hands. He holds Zion in his hands and he will carry out his work and do all he has promised. Those who fight against Zion fight against God, and he will break every weapon formed against his kingdom, and will bring his people triumphant over every obstacle, and finally give them eternal life, which is the greatest of all the gifts of God. May God grant that it may be bestowed upon us by our faith, works, and labors, through his mercy and goodness, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## **Micah's Thoughts:**

The beginning of this section should terrify people, but based off of people's reactions during the COVID lockdowns as well as the series of talks at that conference dealing with temporal preparedness, food storage etc., it shows us that not only are people not terrified of this, they don't care at all. What President Benson warned of has become our reality:

“[Basking] in our comfortable complacency [we've] rationalize[d] that the ravages of war, economic disaster, famine, and earthquake cannot/[will not] happen here. Those who believe this are either not acquainted with the revelations of the Lord, or they do not believe them. Those who smugly think these calamities will not happen, that they somehow will be set aside because of the righteousness of the Saints, are deceived and will rue the day they harbored such a delusion.” (1980–O:32, Ezra Taft Benson, Prepare for the Days of Tribulation)

We know that Babylon is going to fall, we know that the Lord is bound only when we do what He says, and have we done what we have been commanded to do to qualify for that protection?

"But there are some today who complain that the home evening manual should have been issued years ago. If this is true then the Lord will hold his servants accountable, but no one can say that from the inception of the Church up to the present day the Lord through his Spirit to the individual members and through his spokesmen the prophets, has not given us the objectives and

plenty of guidelines and counsel. The fact that some of us have not done much about it even when it is spelled out in detail is not the Lord's fault.

For years we have been counseled to have on hand a year's supply of food. Yet there are some today who will not start storing until the Church comes out with a detailed monthly home storage program. Now suppose that never happens. We still cannot say we have not been told.

Should the Lord decide at this time to cleanse the Church—and the need for that cleansing seems to be increasing—a famine in this land of one year's duration could wipe out a large percentage of slothful members, including some ward and stake officers. Yet we cannot say we have not been warned."

- **President Ezra Taft Benson** (General Conference Talk – April 1965. Not Commanded in All Things and God, Family, Country pg 383)

### **Zion and Jerusalem (TPJS p.17)**

“And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, *famine*, and earthquake *will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land*, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellowmen than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled. Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant.”

(Signed) JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.

"There is one principle I would like to have the Latter-day Saints perfectly understand—that is, of blessings and cursings. For instance, we read that war, pestilence, plagues, *famine*, etc., will be visited upon the inhabitants of the earth; but if distress through the judgments of God comes upon *this people*, it will be because the majority have turned away from the Lord. Let the majority of the people turn away from the Holy Commandments which the Lord has delivered to us, and cease to hold the balance of power in the Church, and *we may expect the judgments of God to come upon us; but while six-tenths or three-fourths of this people will keep the commandments of God, the curse and judgments of the Almighty will never come upon them*, though we will have trials of various kinds, and the elements to contend with—natural and spiritual elements. While this people will strive to serve God according to the best of their abilities, they will fare better, have more to eat and to wear, have better houses to live in, better associations, and enjoy themselves better than the wicked ever do or ever will do"

- **Brigham Young** (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 10, p. 335, June 26, 1864)

### **(B-5) Geographical Designations of Zion:**

Places of Safety Ancient Jerusalem, and particularly the temple site of that city, has been referred to as Mount Zion (see 2 Samuel 5:7–9; 1 Kings 8:1; Isaiah 29:7–8), and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have used the term Zion to identify their own locations (see Talmage, Articles of Faith, p. 347), but as used in the Doctrine and Covenants, Zion most often refers either to the people and their condition of purity or to the center place of Zion in the last days—namely, Jackson County, Missouri. Though Zion is foretold in other scriptures (see 3 Nephi 21:22–25; Ether 13:2–12; Moses 7:61–64), only in the Doctrine and Covenants can be found the directives for its establishment, its laws and principles, *and its location*. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the New Jerusalem would be *the first* of Zion communities built in preparation for the Millennium. The New Jerusalem will be called “an ‘holy city’ . . . because it is a place of righteousness” (History of the Church, 2:254), and *it will be located at Independence, Jackson County, Missouri* (see D&C 45:66–67; 57:1–3). The New Jerusalem is spoken of as “the center place” (D&C 57:3), or the administrative center, or capital, for all Zion (see Dyer, Refiner’s Fire, pp. 99–104; History of the Church, 5:212). It is also spoken of as “Mount Zion” (D&C 84:2) and the “*mountain of the Lord*” (History of the Church, 6:319). From the beginnings laid in the New Jerusalem, the establishment of Zion communities will go forth throughout the world. The stakes of Zion will be the means through which the Zion societies will be prepared and strengthened (see D&C 82:14, 101:21, 133:9). Zion will first grow to include all of North and South America (see History of the Church, 6:318–319, 321) and eventually the entire earth (see Brigham Young, in Journal of Discourses, 9:138)

In his vision of the future, Enoch saw that great tribulations would make necessary a means of preserving the Lord’s people upon the earth in the last days. That means is to gather the elect in Zion (see Moses 7:61–62). The Doctrine and Covenants declares that in addition to the true “center place,” the stakes of Zion would also be “for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth” (D&C 115:6). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught the same principle when he said that “without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; because the time is near when the sun will be darkened, and the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from heaven, and the earth reel to and fro. Then, if this is the case, and *if we are not sanctified and gathered to the places God has appointed*, with all our former professions and our great love for the Bible, we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; for God will gather out His Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except *the pure in heart who are gathered.*” (History of the Church, 2:52.) On another occasion, the Prophet gave the following admonition:

“We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object. When wars come, we shall have to flee to Zion. The cry is to make haste. The last revelation says, Ye shall not have time to have gone over the earth, until these things come. . . . “. . . The time is soon coming when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes. “I saw men hunting the lives of their own sons, and brother murdering brother, women killing their own daughters, and daughters seeking the lives of their mothers. I saw armies arrayed against armies. I saw blood, desolation, fires. The Son of Man has said that the mother shall be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. These things are at our doors. They will follow the Saints of God from city to city. Satan

will rage, and the spirit of the devil is now enraged. I know not how soon these things will take place; but with a view of them, shall I cry peace? No! I will lift up my voice and testify of them. How long you will have good crops, *and the famine be kept off*, I do not know; when the fig tree leaves, know then that summer is nigh at hand.” (History of the Church, 3:390–91.)

#### - Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual Enrichment B

“But, brethren, be not discouraged when we tell you of perilous times, for they must shortly come, for the sword, *famine*, and pestilence are approaching. There shall be great destructions upon the face of this land, *for ye need not suppose that one jot or tittle of the prophecies of all the holy prophets shall fail*, and there are many that remain to be fulfilled yet. The Lord hath said that a short work will he make of it, and the righteous shall be saved if it be as by fire [see Romans 9:28; 1 Nephi 22:17].

- **Joseph Smith Jr** (Teachings of Presidents of the Church Pg 252)

<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-joseph-smith/chapter-21?lang=eng>

#### HOW ZION MAY ESCAPE THE LORD'S SCOURGE.

"Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her. But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire."

This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately, many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise. As I observe conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.”

- **President Joseph Fielding Smith** (Doctrines of Salvation, Volume 3, p.31-32)

Russell Sampson said today in Discord "We need to be ready for our escape from destruction brothers and sisters! Let us prepare ourselves for the great day of the Lord and the Redemption of Zion!" to which I add my witness, testimony, and warning- seek the Lord while he may yet be found, in the name of Jesus Christ Amen!