

**The Saints Should Prepare for Future Emergencies—Evil Spirits—Their
Power and Organization—The Chain of the Priesthood—Angels Are
Ministering Spirits**

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Section I

On account of the breeze that is playing beneath this shade, brother Brigham thought I had better put on my hat, but I never feel as though I wanted to wear my hat when he is present. I consider that the master should wear his hat, or hang it on the peg that God made for it, which is his head, of course.

I feel tolerably well as to health today, but I suffer much from bad colds, and have to be very careful, for I am often confined in my house with colds. I took a very violent cold here last Sabbath, by sitting in the draft, and I have not felt very well since, still I feel ambitious in the cause that I have espoused. The things concerning which brother Grant has this day been speaking are good, and I believe in his doctrines because they are true, especially in regard to our being one. I do know most definitively that unless we are one we are not Christ's; and I also know that if we are not one with brother Brigham, our leader, we are not one with Christ. Yes, I know this, and my feelings are and have been with brother Brigham all the time.

I have learned by experience that there is but one God that pertains to this people, and He is the God that pertains to this earth—the first man. That first man sent his own Son to redeem the world, to redeem his brethren; his life was taken, his blood shed, that our sins might be remitted. That Son called twelve men and ordained them to be Apostles, and when he departed the keys of the kingdom were deposited with three of those twelve, viz.: Peter, James, and John. Peter held the keys pertaining to that Presidency, and he was the head.

How did these keys come to us? Did not Peter, James, and John, ordain Joseph Smith our Prophet? They did. And Joseph Smith called and ordained brother Brigham, brother Heber, brother Parley, and others, enough to make twelve Apostles. Thus you see that there is always a governing principle in the Church upon the earth; there is always a Presidency, three who represent the Deity here on the earth. Just think of your position; you have heard the teachings and instructions of President Young, and his instructions are the word of God to us, and I know that every man and woman in this Church who rejects his testimony, and the testimony of those that he sends, rejects the testimony of God his Father. I know that, just as well as I know that I see your faces today.

Where will those go to that reject this Gospel? Why, in reality they will not go anywhere. [A voice from the stand: They will not go anywhere else, for they have no other place to go to.] They will remain where they are, in hell, where my spirit was for a short time, when I was in England. Where was my body during that brief period? It was in Preston, on the corner of

Wilford Street, but my spirit could see and observe those evil spirits as plainly as it ever will after I die. Legions of disembodied evil spirits came against me, organized in companies that they might have more power, but they had not power over me to any great extent, because of the power that was in and sustaining me. I had the Priesthood, and the power of it was upon me. I saw the invisible world of the condemned spirits, those who were opposed to me and to this work, and to the lifting up of the standard of Christ in that country. Did I at the same time see or have a vision of the angels of God—of His legions? No, I did not; though they were there and stood in defense of me and my brethren, and I knew it. And all this not that there was any very great virtue in me, but there was virtue in the Priesthood and Apostleship which I held, and God would and did defend; and the evil spirits were dispersed by the power of God.

Some people suppose that when they leave this state of existence they are going into the paradise of God, but if they do not overcome evil and subject themselves to the will of God and to him that is appointed to lead us here in the flesh, they will become subject to those wicked spirits. Angels will not come by legions to defend those whose faith fails them when the destroyer comes, but he will be permitted to waste the wicked. I never said that I ever saw an angel from God, though I have dreamed about them; neither did I see those evil spirits with my natural eyes, nor was I at the time asleep, but I saw them after I was laid prostrate upon the floor.

When I recovered I sat upon the bed thinking and reflecting upon what had past, and all at once my vision was opened, and the walls of the building were no obstruction to my seeing, for I saw nothing but the visions that presented themselves. Why did not the walls obstruct my view? Because my spirit could look through the walls of that house, for I looked with that spirit, element, and power, with which angels look; and as God sees all things, so were invisible things brought before me, as the Lord would bring things before Joseph in the Urim and Thummim. It was upon that principle that the Lord showed things to the Prophet Joseph.

I speak of these things because I do know that if you do not yield obedience to true principles, and bring your wills into subjection thereto, you will be overcome of evil. Jesus says, I have not come to do my will, but the will of my Father who sent me. Upon the same principle I say that I have not come to do my will, but to do the will of him that sent me, even that of brother Brigham.

This is my place and my calling, and this is my wish and the wish of brother Jedediah, of brother Amasa, of brother Parley, and of every other Apostle that God has appointed and called upon this earth, or ever will while we remain here. It is for brother Brigham to do the will of Joseph, and for Joseph to do the will of Peter, for Peter to do the will of Jesus, and for Jesus to do the will of his Father. That is the chain that reaches from heaven to earth, and do you not understand that it is so? If you will keep hold of that chain and keep your hands strongly fastened in the links, you can reach into the veil. But you must hold on firm and fast to the cable—why? Because there is an anchor at the end of the cable, and that cable is fastened to the ship so that it is made sure at both ends. That is the way it is in a ship, and it is so with the kingdom of God.

My feelings are for you to learn to follow our leader, our Prophet, our President. He will be our President in eternity, and Joseph is his President and will counsel him, and you need not trouble yourselves, but do as you are told and you will obtain salvation and go into the celestial glory. You will then dwell in the same glory with Joseph, with father Smith, with the Apostles and Saints; and by taking such a course not one of you will fall, and I know it.

You have got to be organized and disciplined by the Priesthood, and you have got to stick to that organization, for you cannot be saved with a celestial glory unless you are saved by this Priesthood. Brother Brigham says stick to it, and then we will all be saved in the kingdom of our God.

Antonia's Thoughts:

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1.

."The things concerning which brother Grant has this day been speaking are good and I believe in his doctrines because they are true, especially in regard to our being one. I do know most definitively that unless we are one we are not Christ's; and I also know that if we are not one with brother Brigham, our leader, we are not one with Christ. Yes, I know this, and my feelings are and have been with brother Brigham all the time.

I echo this statement and add that President Russel M. Nelson is our current leader and that I sustain him as such... as I studied "being one" 3 Nephi 19:23 came to mind

23 And now Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one.

Teachings of Wilford Woodruff

Chapter 23 "Of One Heart and Mind"

President Wilford Woodruff loved the fellowship of other Church members. Many of his journal entries included words of gratitude for the "spirit of union and love" that was present in Church meetings.¹ After one such meeting, he recorded that two of the speakers had to leave to meet another engagement. They had a difficult time getting to their appointment because "they could scarcely get out of the house, so many wish[ed] to shake hands with them." Of the same meeting, he wrote: "The Spirit of the Lord was with us. Love and union pervaded the congregation. I was made glad with the

scene of beholding so many Saints united in the new and everlasting covenant.”²

President Woodruff hoped to see this spirit of unity extend from Church meetings to all aspects of life. Through his public sermons and his everyday example, he encouraged the Saints to be unified in their homes, in their Church responsibilities, and in their temporal labors. Matthias F. Cowley wrote: “To his mind there was no place in the Church for contentions, misgivings, and opposition. The work was of God – that was enough. There were the properly appointed authorities. Upon them the responsibilities of the kingdom had been placed. He was not therefore concerned about what others thought was a lack of wisdom in them.”

“Wilford Woodruff always felt out of place in the midst of contention. He shunned it, and never cared for the association of those who were given to fault-finding, criticisms, and personal griefs. He never saw the necessity for them. It was never hard for him to agree with his brethren. He was never unreasonable in his demands, never had private ends to foster, and never hesitated when there was something important to be done. He was loyal to the Prophet, true to his brethren.”³

In the celestial Kingdom of God there is oneness, there is union.⁶

Who, to use a comparison, expects to have a forty-acre lot alone in the kingdom of God, or in heaven, when we get there? None need expect it, for in that kingdom, in heaven or upon earth, we shall find unity, and the Lord requires at our hands that we unite together, according to the principles of his celestial law.⁷

I realize that the Presidency of this church stand between this people and the Lord, for they are the head, and I realize that God reveals to them his will, and therefore we should look unto them for light and for information. The head may be full of light, of inspiration, revelation and of the mind and will of God, but if those officers who stand next to them, and if we ourselves are asleep in relation to our duties, and are not in a fit state to receive that light, do you not see that the river is dammed up at the head? There is no current or medium whereby the light may flow to the limbs and branches of the body.

I realize that it is the duty, not only of us who hold the priesthood but of this people generally, to present ourselves in humility and faith before the Lord

that we may obtain the blessings which are in readiness for us, and we can obtain all the light, the knowledge, the faith, the intelligence and power which is necessary for our salvation by humility, obedience and submission to the will of God. We should attend to this in order that our minds may be prepared and our bodies become fit subjects for the reception of the Holy Ghost, so that the Spirit of God may flow freely through the whole body from the head to the foot. Then when this is the case we will all see alike, feel alike, and be alike, and become one as far as the gospel and kingdom of God is concerned, as the Father and Son are one, and then this people will begin to see the position and relationship which we bear towards each other and towards God, and we shall feel the importance of attending to our duties and we will willingly step forward and improve our time, make good use of our talents and obtain the blessings that the Lord has for us to enjoy; but do you not see that if the people are asleep and slothful and not living up to their privileges, and the Spirit of God begins to flow from the head to the body that it soon becomes obstructed and dammed up?

we must not only become united and act as the heart of one man, but we must obtain the Holy Spirit of God and the mind and will of God concerning us, and be governed and controlled by it in all of our movements and acts in order to be safe and secure unto ourselves salvation.⁹

Unity brings strength.

I do not think it requires a great deal of argument to prove to us that union is strength, and that a united people have power which a divided people do not possess.¹⁰

We should be united and stand together in the midst of the opposition that we will have to meet.¹¹

It is not ordained for the wicked to have power to bring to pass evil upon us, if we are united.¹²

Babylon may divide; the inhabitants of the earth may have all the division they wish for; but they will receive the results of that disunion, and have done all the way through. City after city, nation after nation has been destroyed by the judgments of the Almighty whenever it has become ripened in iniquity, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Babylon, Nineveh, Tyre and Sidon, and a great many other ancient cities and countries. But the Saints of God cannot prosper unless they are united.¹³

As the church becomes more numerous, and the kingdom of God is becoming more fully established, the importance of union among its members is still more manifest. It is absolutely necessary that not only a

professed union, but a cementing of heart and soul should dwell with all presidents, councils, and branches of the church of Christ, in order to accomplish the designs of God in the building up of Zion, or in obtaining those blessings which it is their privilege to enjoy; for, be assured, ye Saints of the Most High, that **the heavens will be stayed over the heads of any presidency, quorum, council, or branch who are divided in heart, sentiment and feeling, and so will they remain, and the blessings be withheld until the evil is removed; for the Lord will never pour out the richest blessings of heaven, and the priesthood and gifts of the gospel, [except] upon the principle of that union which the celestial law of God requires.** ... By the united efforts, alone, of the Saints of God, in this last dispensation, the building up of Zion will be effected, and the kingdom of God on earth, be prepared for a union with the kingdom of God in heaven; and thus shall the chain which has bound together in one the hosts of heaven, extend and grasp in its circumference all who have been obedient to the mandates of God.¹⁴

We should be united in our doctrine, in our labor in God's kingdom, and in our love for one another.

Doctrine

I always rejoice in seeing my fellow men come to a knowledge of the truth by obedience to the gospel as taught by the servants of the Lord. When men have gone forth in the waters of baptism and received the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, they receive the same truth, the same light as we have received, and thus we become of one heart and one mind, and follow out the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which attend His gospel. In preaching the gospel and administering the ordinances of the Lord's house, the spirit of inspiration of Heaven accompanies those who officiate, that it will remain ever with them, if faithful, in all the duties of life.

When I hear the brethren speak of the dealings of God with the present generation, I perceive that their minds all run together; the record which they bear is one; they all agree in their testimony; they are one in stating that the work of the Lord our God will prevail over all its enemies.¹⁵

There is one particular feature connected with the preaching of the gospel: You may send out a thousand elders and they will all teach the same doctrines; they will all labor for the building up of the same Church, they will be united; for their faith, their doctrines, and the organization of the Church have all been made known unto them by the revelations of God: hence they will see eye to eye in regard to the principles of the gospel. ... Our union and oneness of sentiment constitutes one of the prominent beauties of the organization of the kingdom of God.¹⁶

Labor in God's kingdom

We have to build up this kingdom by union and faithfully following those men set to lead us, or else we will be scattered; the blessings of God will be taken from us if we take any other course.¹⁷

It is my duty to have fellowship with God, as weak an instrument as I am in the hands of God. It is my duty to have power with God. And when I have this, then my counselors should stand by me and with me. We should be of one heart and mind in all matters, temporal and spiritual, that come before us in the labor of the Church and kingdom of God. And I am thankful to say that this has been the case since I have been called to this position, or since the organization of [this] Presidency of the Church. Standing connected with us here are the Twelve Apostles. It is their duty to be of one heart and one mind. They have no right to be otherwise. They cannot be otherwise and prosper before God. They should be one with us, and we one with them. They have their rights; they have their agency. But when the Presidency of the Church say unto any of them, "This is the word of the Lord," or, "This is right," they should take hold and work with

us. The law of God requires this union at our hands. It is the duty of the seventies, also, to be united with the Twelve Apostles. The seventies are called upon by the apostles to go forth and labor in the vineyard of the Lord, and they work together. So, brethren and sisters, with every organization in this Church. There should be union. There should be no discord, no disunion. If there is, the Lord is not pleased with it, and we are hindered in our work.¹⁸

Everywhere upon the face of the earth we can see what the effect of disunion is. The more that nations, communities, families, or bodies of people in any capacity under heaven, are divided, the less power they possess to carry out any purpose or principle imaginable; and the more union they possess, whether in a legislative or any other capacity, the more power they have to accomplish what they desire. We can see that the people of the world are becoming more and more divided every day, and the evils resulting therefrom are everywhere apparent. We are called to build up Zion, and we can not build it up unless we are united; and in that union we have got to carry out the commandments of God unto us; and we have got to obey those who are set to lead and guide the affairs of the Kingdom of God. ...

... The principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ which have been revealed in our day are the power of God unto salvation to all that believe, both Jew and gentile, in this age of the world as well as any other; and inasmuch as we will be united in carrying out the counsel we have received, we can overcome every evil that lies in our path, build up the Zion of God, and place ourselves in a position that we may be saved therein.¹⁹

Love for one another

Be kind to one another. Do not find fault with one another. ... Bear one another up.²⁰

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.²¹

If our religion does not lead us to love our God and our fellow-man and to deal justly and uprightly with all men, then our profession of it is vain. The apostle says:

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” [[1 John 4:20.](#)]

We can best exemplify our love for our God by living our religion. It is vain to profess a love for God while speaking evil of or doing wrong to His children. The sacred covenants we have made with Him strictly impose upon us the duties we owe to one another; and the great office of religion is to teach us how to perform those duties so as to produce the greatest happiness for ourselves and for our fellow-beings. When the obligations of our religion are observed, no words are spoken or acts are committed that would injure a neighbor. If the Latter-day Saints lived as they should do, and as their religion teaches them to do, there would be no feeling in any breast but that of brotherly and sisterly affection and love. Backbiting and evil-speaking would have no existence among us; but peace and love and good will would reign in all our hearts and habitations and settlements. We would be the happiest people on the face of the earth, and the blessing and peace of heaven would rest upon us and upon all that belongs to us.

If there be unhappiness and heartburnings and quarrelings and hatreds among us, they exist because we do not observe the religion which we profess. They are not its fruits. Where these evils exist there is a crying necessity for repentance. ...

As Latter-day Saints, it is our general custom to partake of the sacrament once a week. If the teachings of our Lord, in remembrance of whom we observe this sacred ordinance, be regarded, no one who has trespassed can be permitted to share in it until he has made reconciliations. It is the express commandment of the Lord Jesus that no one shall be permitted to partake of His flesh and blood unworthily [see [3 Nephi 18:28–32](#)]. A more perfect system to prevent the existence of improper feelings and wrongs among brethren and sisters can not be imagined. If the Saints do their duty, difficulties do not remain unsettled beyond the Lord's day when they assemble to eat and drink in remembrance of Him.²²

I would exhort all the Saints, that we unitedly observe the sayings of our Lord as recorded in the 12th, 13th, and 14th verses of the [15th chapter] of John—if we love one another as Christ has loved us, we can easily settle all difficulties that may arise in our midst, forgive one another, and be filled with mercy, and light, love, joy, union, peace, and fellowship will be the stability of our times, which will be much better in the sight of God, angels, and men, than long pettyfogging over the faults of our brethren.²³

We should be of one heart and of one mind, and not permit anything of a temporal or spiritual nature to separate us from the love of God and man.²⁴

Being One with Christ

MARILYN S. BATEMAN

Wife of Merrill J. Bateman, President of Brigham Young University

January 5, 1999

It is my prayer, my young, valiant brothers and sisters, that we will seek to be one with our Savior, Jesus Christ, by applying the principles of the gospel in our lives and living obediently to his commandments...

My dear friends, there is no question that we live in the last days. We are witnessing the culmination of this last dispensation where the Lord is bringing his great latter-day work to its conclusion. From the beginning all the prophets from Adam to the present day have prophesied concerning the last days. They have done so because it is the time in which the families of the earth will be gathered in preparation for the Second Coming of Christ.

We are continually being tried and tested as individuals and as a church. We are engaged in a mighty conflict. We are at war. We are enlisted in the cause of Christ to fight against Lucifer and all that is carnal and evil in the world.

Our prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley, has said:

We are engaged in a great eternal struggle that concerns the very souls of the sons and daughters of God. We are not losing. We are winning. We will continue to win if we will be faithful and true. We can do it. We must do it. We will do it. There is nothing the Lord has asked of us that in faith we cannot accomplish. [“The War We Are Winning,” *Ensign*, November 1986, p. 44; emphasis in original]

This is the time and season in the Lord’s affairs that the greatest generation of young men and women have been placed on the earth. I have often heard President Hinckley refer to the young people of the Church today as being the best generation ever. As such, your work is at hand. It is a time to stand firm, to rally to the Savior’s banner, to declare with unwavering allegiance our loyalty to his great cause. All of us united together *can* do it. *We will do it!*

In [Alma 26:5–6](#), the great missionary Ammon saw our day and explained the need to gather the sons and daughters of God. In verse 6, he said:

Yea, they shall not be beaten down by the storm at the last day; yea, neither shall they be harrowed up by the whirlwinds; but . . . they shall be gathered together in their place, that the storm cannot penetrate to them; yea, neither shall they be driven with fierce winds whithersoever the enemy listeth to carry them.

The way we are gathered is through the restored gospel and its priesthood and by fully living its precepts. Its purpose is to make us one with Christ and with each other.

Unity is and will be important because of the difficult times we face and will face as the storms come. Lewis Timberlake used an analogy in nature to illustrate this concept:

While on a tour of California’s giant sequoias, the guide pointed out that the sequoia tree has roots just barely below the surface.

“That’s impossible!” I exclaimed. “I’m a country boy, and I know that if the roots don’t grow deep into the earth, strong winds will blow the trees over.”

“Not sequoia trees,” said the guide. “They grow only in groves and their roots intertwine under the surface of the earth. So, when the strong winds come, they hold each other up.”

*There’s a lesson here. In a sense, people are like the giant sequoias. Family, friends, neighbors, the church body and other groups should be havens so that when the strong winds of life blow, these people can serve as reinforcement and can strive together to hold each other up. [Lewis Timberlake, from *Timberlake Monthly*, in *Points to Ponder, Reader’s Digest*, May 1989, p. 48]*

If we become one with Christ and with each other, we will stand and not be wasted when the storms and whirlwinds and evil come down upon us. But we will achieve oneness with each other only as we seek to be one with Christ. The whole concept of becoming one with the Savior and the protection that follows is wonderfully presented in the scriptures through the story of Helaman’s stripling warriors.

Some 60 years before the birth of Christ, the Nephites were faced with the evil storm of war. The Lamanites sought their destruction. The people of Ammon had joined the Nephites, but because of their oath not to take up weapons of war, they were not in a position to defend their country. Their young sons

were exempt from this oath, however, and under the leadership of the prophet Helaman they came to the defense of the Nephite nation.

Listen to a description of these young warriors and their feelings. Alma 53 introduces them to us:

They were all young men [who] were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted.

Yea, they were men of truth and soberness, for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him. [Alma 53:20–21]

Helaman described them as “strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day; yea, they do observe to keep his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments continually; and their faith is strong in the prophecies” (Alma 58:40).

Even more telling is what these valiant young people said to Helaman: “Father, behold our God is with us, and he will not suffer that we should fall” (Alma 56:46). They knew that God would protect and deliver them. They had been taught by their mothers to have such a faith in their Savior “that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them” (Alma 56:47). What were the effects of such great faith in Christ and the oneness they had with their Redeemer? Alma recorded:

Not one soul of them . . . did perish. . . .

. . . And we do justly ascribe it to the miraculous power of God, because of their exceeding faith in that which they had been taught to believe—that there was a just God, and whosoever did not doubt, that they should be preserved by his marvelous power. [Alma 57:25–26]

In closing I would like to quote from President James E. Faust’s First Presidency message for January 1999:

It is my testimony that we are facing difficult times. We must be courageously obedient. My witness is that we will be called upon to prove our spiritual stamina, for the days ahead will be filled with affliction and difficulty. But with the assuring comfort of a personal relationship with God, we will be given a calming courage. From the Divine so near we will receive the quiet assurance:

“My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

*“And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes” (D&C 121:7–8). [James E. Faust, “That We Might Know Thee,” *Ensign*, January 1999, p. 5]*

It is my prayer, my young, valiant brothers and sisters, that we will seek to be one with our Savior, Jesus Christ, by applying the principles of the gospel in our lives and living obediently to his commandments so that as we live through these last days our united front will not be penetrated and we will stand together as true followers of Christ; “that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (Moroni 7:48). This is my hope in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Hearts Knit as One

By President Henry B. Eyring

First Counselor in the First Presidency

The Saints can accomplish any purpose of the Lord when fully united in righteousness.

My beloved brothers and sisters, it is a joy to be gathered with you on this Sabbath morning. We live in many different circumstances. We will come from every nation and many ethnic backgrounds into the kingdom of God. And that prophesied gathering will accelerate.

We see increased conflict between peoples in the world around us. Those divisions and differences could infect us. That is why my message of hope today is that a great day of unity is coming. **The Lord Jehovah will return to live with those who have become His people and will find them united, of one heart, unified with Him and with our Heavenly Father.**

You have heard that message of unity from me more than once. I may well speak of it in the future. I have heard it from every prophet of God in my lifetime. **A plea for unity was the last message I remember from President David O. McKay. The Lord's prophets have always called for unity. The need for that gift to be granted to us and the challenge to maintain it will grow greater in the days ahead, in which we will be prepared as a people for our glorious destiny.**

My message is that we are doing better. Fathers and mothers are pleading for unity in their homes, and those prayers are being answered. Families are praying together night and morning. I was invited to kneel at bedtime with a family when I was a guest in their home. The smallest child was asked to be voice. He prayed like a patriarch for every person in the family, by name. I opened my eyes for an instant to see the faces of the other children and the parents. I could tell that they were joining their faith and their hearts in that little boy's prayer.

Some Relief Society sisters recently prayed together as they prepared to visit for the first time a young widow whose husband died suddenly. They wanted to know what to do and how to work together to help prepare the home for family and friends who would come at the time of the funeral. They needed to know what words of comfort they could speak for the Lord. An answer to their prayer came. When they arrived at the house, each sister moved to complete a task. The house was ready so quickly that some sisters regretted not being able to do more. Words of comfort were spoken

which fit perfectly together. They had given the Lord's service as one, hearts knit together.

You have seen evidence, as I have, that we are moving toward becoming one. The miracle of unity is being granted to us as we pray and work for it in the Lord's way. Our hearts will be knit together in unity. God has promised that blessing to His faithful Saints whatever their differences in background and whatever conflict rages around them. He was praying for us as well as His disciples when He asked His Father that we might be one.¹

The reason that we pray and ask for that blessing is the same reason the Father is granting it. We know from experience that joy comes when we are blessed with unity. We yearn, as spirit children of our Heavenly Father, for that joy which we once had with Him in the life before this one. His desire is to grant us that sacred wish for unity out of His love for us.

He cannot grant it to us as individuals. The joy of unity He wants so much to give us is not solitary. We must seek it and qualify for it with others. It is not surprising then that God urges us to gather so that He can bless us. He wants us to gather into families. He has established classes, wards, and branches and commanded us to meet together often. In those gatherings, which God has designed for us, lies our great opportunity. We can pray and work for the unity that will bring us joy and multiply our power to serve.

To the Three Nephites, the Savior promised joy in unity with Him as their final reward after their faithful service. He said, "Ye shall have fulness of joy; and ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; yea, your joy shall be full, even as the Father hath given me fulness of joy; and ye shall be even as I am, and I am even as the Father; and the Father and I are one."²

The Lord has given us guides to know what to do to receive the blessing and joy of ever-increasing unity. The Book of Mormon recounts a time of success. It was in the days of Alma at the Waters of Mormon. What the people did in those difficult and dangerous circumstances gives us both a guide and encouragement. BOM

Everything Alma and his people were inspired to do was pointed at helping people choose to have their hearts changed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. That is the only way God can grant the blessing of being of one heart.

In Mosiah we read:

"And they were called the church of God, or the church of Christ, from that time forward. And it came to pass that whosoever was baptized by the power and authority of God was added to his church. ...

"And he commanded them that they should teach nothing save it were the things which he had taught, and which had been spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets.

“Yea, even he commanded them that they should preach nothing save it were repentance and faith on the Lord, who had redeemed his people.

“And he commanded them that there should be no contention one with another, but that they should look forward with one eye, having one faith and one baptism, having their hearts knit together in unity and in love one towards another.

“And thus he commanded them to preach. And thus they became the children of God.”³

That is why Alma commanded the people to **teach faith and repentance**. That is why my children came to expect in every lesson in family night that I would find a way to encourage someone to testify of the Savior and His mission. Sometimes the parents did it. On our best nights we found a way to encourage the children to do it, either by presenting the lesson or answering questions. When testimony about the Savior was borne, the Holy Ghost verified it. On those nights we felt our hearts being knit together.

In addition to ordinances there are principles we are following as a people which are leading to greater unity.

One of those principles is revelation. Revelation is the only way we can know how to follow the will of the Lord together. It requires light from above. The Holy Ghost will testify to our hearts, and the hearts of those gathered around with us, what He would have us do. And it is by keeping His commandments that we can have our hearts knit together as one.

A second principle to guide our progress to become one is to be humble. Pride is the great enemy of unity. You have seen and felt its terrible effects. Just days ago I watched as two people—good people—began with a mild disagreement. It started as a discussion of what was true but became a contest about who was right. Voices became gradually louder. Faces became a little more flushed. Instead of talking about the issue, people began talking about themselves, giving evidence why their view, given their great ability and background, was more likely to be right.

You would have felt alarm as I did. We have seen the life-destroying effects of such tragic conflict. You and I know people who left the fellowship of the Saints over injured pride.

Happily I am seeing **more and more skillful peacemakers** NEED who calm troubled waters before harm is done. You could be one of those peacemakers, whether you are in the conflict or an observer.

One way I have seen it done is to search for anything on which we agree. To be that peacemaker, you need to have the simple faith that as children of God, with all our

differences, it is likely that in a strong position we take, there will be elements of truth. The great peacemaker, the restorer of unity, is the one who finds a way to help people see the truth they share. That truth they share is always greater and more important to them than their differences. You can help yourself and others to see that common ground if you ask for help from God and then act. He will answer your prayer to help restore peace, as He has mine.

That same principle applies as we build unity with people who are from vastly different backgrounds. The children of God have more in common than they have differences. And even the differences can be seen as an opportunity. God will help us see a difference in someone else not as a source of irritation but as a contribution. The Lord can help you see and value what another person brings which you lack. More than once the Lord has helped me see His kindness in giving me association with someone whose difference from me was just the help I needed. That has been the Lord's way of adding something I lacked to serve Him better.

That leads to another principle of unity. It is to speak well of each other. Think of the last time you were asked what you thought about how someone else was doing in your family or in the Church. It happened to me more than once in the past week. Now, there are times we must judge others. Sometimes we are required to pronounce such judgments. But more often we can make a choice. For instance, suppose someone asks you what you think of the new bishop.

As we get better and better at forging unity, we will think of a scripture when we hear that question: "And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged."⁴

Realizing that you see others in an imperfect light will make you likely to be a little more generous in what you say. In addition to that scripture, you might remember your mother saying—mine did—"If you can't say anything good about a person, don't say anything at all."

That will help you look for what is best in the bishop's performance and character. The Savior, as your loving judge, will surely do that as He judges your performance and mine. The scripture and what you heard from your mother may well lead you to describe what is best in the bishop's performance and his good intent. I can promise you a feeling of peace and joy when you speak generously of others in the Light of Christ. You will feel, for instance, unity with that bishop and with the person who asked your opinion, not because the bishop is perfect or because the person asking you shares your generous evaluation. It will be because the Lord will let you feel His appreciation for choosing to step away from the possibility of sowing seeds of disunity.

We must follow that same principle as the Lord gathers more and more people who are not like us. What will become more obvious to us is that the Atonement brings the same changes in all of us. We become disciples who are meek, loving, easy to be entreated, and at the same time fearless and faithful in all things. We still live in different countries, but we come into the Church through a process that changes us. We become by the gifts of the Spirit what the Apostle Paul saw:

“For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”³

With the unity I see increasing, the Lord will be able to perform what the world will think as miraculous. The Saints can accomplish any purpose of the Lord when fully united in righteousness.

Presidents of countries, governors, and leaders of worldwide charitable organizations have praised us—in my hearing—with words like these: “Your church was the first on the ground to help when disaster came. Hundreds of your people arrived who brought everything with them which the survivors needed. They even brought their own tents and supplies. They were tireless and cheerful. They seemed to know where to go and when.” Then there has come a line usually something like this: “Your church knows how to organize to get things done.”

I thank them without saying that the miracle lies not in organization alone, but in the people’s hearts. The Saints came in the name of the Lord to give the succor He would give. They came listening to the direction of the Lord’s chosen leaders. Because their hearts were knit, they were magnified in their power.

I bear you my solemn witness that the unity we now experience will increase. God the Father lives. He hears and answers our prayers in love. The Savior Jesus Christ, resurrected and glorious, lives and reaches out to us in mercy. This is His true Church. President Monson is the living prophet of God. If we are united in sustaining him with all our hearts, with willing obedience to do what God would have us do, we will move together in power to go wherever God would have us go and to become what He wants us to be.

I leave you my blessing that you will enjoy unity in your homes and in the Church. And I leave you the Lord’s promise that you will have the righteous desire of your heart for that joy in unity. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Continuing with Elder Kimball

Where will those go to that reject this Gospel? Why, in reality they will not go anywhere. {A voice from the stand: They will not go anywhere else, for they have no other place to go to.} they will remain where they are in hell, where my spirit was for a short time, when I was in England. Where was my body during that brief period? It was in Preston, on the corner of Wilford Street, but my spirit could see and observe those evil spirits as plainly as it ever will after I die. Legions of disembodied evil spirits came against me, organized in companies that they might have more power, but they had not power over me to any great extent, because of the power that was in and sustaining me. I had the PRIESTHOOD, and the power of it was upon me. I saw the invisible world of the condemned spirits, those who were opposed to me and to this work, and to the lifting up of the standard of Christ in that country. Did I at the same time see or have a vision of the angels of God --- of His Legions? No, I did not; though they were there and stood in defense of me and my brethren, and I KNEW IT. And all this that there was any very great virtue in me, but there was virtue in the PRIESTHOOD AND APOSTLESHIP which I held, and God would and did defend; and the evil spirits were dispersed by the power of God.

Some people suppose that when they leave this state of existence they are going into the paradise of God, but IF THEY DO NOT OVERCOME EVIL AND SUBJECT THEMSELVES TO THE WILL OF GOD AND TO HIM THAT IS APPOINTED TO LEAD US HERE IN THE FLESH, THEY WILL BECOME SUBJECT TO THOSE WICKED SPIRITS. Angels will not come by legions to defend those whose faith fails them when the destroyer comes, but he will be permitted to WASTE the wicked.

I speak of these things because I do know that if you do not yield obedience to true principles, and bring your wills into subjection thereto, you will be overcome by evil.

7

In last weeks discourse discussion/discovery I commented on evil spirits and I/we learned

Jesus and His disciples in different ages, have commanded the unclean and wicked spirits to depart out of those of whom they had taken possession, and they have departed; but there are those spirits which are not easily dispossessed and go out only by prayer and fasting. And again, there are those spirits that will hardly go out at any price, except it is by the will of those who harbor them. And of what class are they? They are invited spirits. Invited spirits? Yes, many spirits watch their opportunity to thrust themselves into a person when and where they are not wanted, and such are much more easily cast out than those who are invited guests.

For instance, a person for some real or supposed injury or neglect from a friend, wishes to retaliate, to be revenged, and of course opens the way and invites the spirit of jealousy to take possession; and the moment jealousy enters the breast, there is a perfect hell of happiness. No scheme that hell itself can devise to torment, perplex, harass, disturb, vex, or mar the peace of friend, wife, or husband, is left untouched, or unmoved; and by that time the breast of the harbinger is opened to all the evil spirits of Pandemonium—all have free access, and oh, what a world of glory dwells there!

And how shall that jealous spirit be removed? By the laying on of hands? The Lord deliver us from such an ordinance, in such a case. Why? That spirit was invited to take up its abode there, and while the spirit is made welcome by that person, what right have we to dispossess it? It would be abridging the agency of the individual who invited the spirit for any one to cause that spirit to depart, without the person's leave; and we choose that all should exercise their own agency and responsibility, and then they are subjects of accountability.

Other spirits, not particularly invited or desired, gain an easy access to those who are careless, heedless, and but too indifferent to the statutes, ordinances, and duties of God's kingdom; who neglect their prayers, their assembling together, and doing as they would be done unto; and from these spirits arise contention, strife, evil thinking, evil speaking, evil surmising, detraction, revenge, law-suits, and a host of such perplexing annoyances, sufficient to disturb a nation; but the man who is obedient to his God in all things, who knows no will of his own, only to do the will of his Father in the heavens, is free from these spirits; the Devil has no power over him, for he resists him, and evil spirits are compelled to flee at his rebuke.

Some may ask, "How shall I know when I am operated upon by a false spirit?" There are many keys by which the door of knowledge is unlocked to the Saints in relation to spirits, as well as other things pertaining to the kingdom; but one may suffice at the present time, for we have not designed this brief notice to cover all or any considerable portion of the ground which the subject includes.

THESE ARE THE spirits that I am addressing

New Testament

Parables of Jesus:

The Parable of the Empty House

By Elder Victor D. Cave

Area Authority Seventy

True repentance is not merely eliminating the negative but replacing it with positive attitudes and actions.

As Jesus traveled through the cities and villages of Galilee performing miracles, a man who was possessed with a devil was brought to Him; the man was also blind and unable to speak. Jesus healed him, causing many to be amazed and wonder if He was the promised Messiah (see Matt. 12:22–23). When certain Pharisees heard that Jesus had done this, they said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (Matt. 12:24). Jesus dismissed their ridiculous logic and taught, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men who receive me and repent: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven unto men" (Joseph Smith Translation, Matt. 12:26).

A group of scribes challenged this teaching, saying, “Master, it is written that, Every sin shall be forgiven; but ye say, Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven. ... How can these things be?” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matt. 12:37).

Jesus then gave what has become known as the parable of the empty house:

“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none; but when a man speaketh against the Holy Ghost, then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth him empty, swept and garnished; for the good spirit leaveth him unto himself.

“Then goeth the evil spirit, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last end of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation” (Joseph Smith Translation, Matt. 12:38–39).

True Repentance

A person who commits sin without repenting does not have the protective influence of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, an evil spirit enters and dwells therein, thus leaving him “unto himself.”

The spiritual danger pointed out by this parable is real. Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) has explained: “When a man is baptized for the remission of sins ... by the power of the Holy Ghost; when he becomes clean, and pure, and spotless before the Lord; ... if he then sins against the Holy Ghost and loses the Spirit of the Lord as his companion, he is left in a fit condition to be swallowed up in every form of evil and iniquity. The house that was once swept and garnished, that was once a fit habitation for the Holy Spirit of God—that house is now vacant. The Spirit of the Lord will not dwell there longer, and the spirit of evil returns—returns to a vacant house, with a force and vigor exceeding anything of the past.”¹

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) has explained how this principle applies to the process of repentance:

“The devil knows where to tempt, where to put in his telling blows. He finds the vulnerable spot. Where one was weak before, he will be most easily tempted again.

“In abandoning sin one cannot merely wish for better conditions. He must make them. ... He must eliminate anything which would stir the old memories.

“Does this mean that the man who has quit smoking or drinking or had sex pollutions finds life empty for a time? The things which engaged him and caught his fancy and occupied his thoughts are gone, and better substitutions have not yet filled the void. This is Satan’s opportunity. The man makes a start but may find the loss of the yesterday’s habits so great that he is enticed to return to his evil ways, and his lot thus becomes infinitely worsened. ...

“Many who have discontinued bad habits have found that substitution is part of the answer, and have conquered a bad habit by replacing it with a good or harmless one.”² True repentance, then, is not merely eliminating the negative in our lives; it also must involve replacing the negative with positive attitudes and actions.

Beware of the Sharks

This reminds me of a lagoon in French Polynesia. It is one of the largest lagoons of its kind in the world. It is of beautiful turquoise color because of its white sandy floor. The water level lowers and rises ever so slightly with the ebb and flow of the ocean tides. The lagoon is peaceful and calm, but the pass through which the tides rush is treacherous and filled with sharks that await an easy meal. One day a few tourists swam too close to the pass and began to be dragged toward danger. The peacefulness of the lagoon had led them to be careless and lazy in keeping themselves from the sharks. Gradually they had floated on the soft current toward the pass. Eventually they went too far and found themselves beyond the point where their own abilities could save them. Outside help was necessary, so a speedboat was sent to rescue them.

As the swimmers in this lagoon should have done, we need to put forth a consistent, positive effort every day in order to remain in safe waters. We need to develop good habits that can replace old, bad ones. Satan desires that we become lazy and complacent. Daily scripture study and prayer, service, repentance, and following the promptings of the Holy Ghost can keep us safely in the spiritual waters of the Lord.

Many of us may already find ourselves in serious spiritual danger and in desperate need of rescue. Jesus Christ, like the operators of the speedboat, has power to save lost souls. Let us all, whether we feel we are in safe waters or not, swim to Him, our Savior and Redeemer. Then the “good spirit” will never leave but will always be with us (see [D&C 20:77](#)).

Giving Our Spirits Control over Our Bodies

By President M. Russell Ballard

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

One of the most important things we can learn in this life is how to emphasize our eternal spiritual nature and control our evil desires.

My dear brothers and sisters, as October general conference approached last year, I prepared my conference talk to highlight the 100th anniversary of the vision of the spirit world given to President Joseph F. Smith on October 3, 1918.

A few days after I had submitted my talk for translation, my beloved eternal companion, Barbara, completed her mortal probation and passed into the spirit world.

As the days have turned into weeks, then months, and now a year since Barbara's passing, I find myself more fully appreciating this scripture: "Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die."¹ Barbara and I were blessed to "live together in love" for 67 years. But I have learned in a very real way what it means to "weep for the loss" of those we love. Oh, how I love and miss her!

I suppose most of us fail to fully appreciate what others do for us until they are gone. I knew Barbara was always busy, but I did not fully understand the constant family, Church, and community demands upon her time. There were daily consecrated efforts repeated thousands of times through the years that kept our family functioning. And through it all, no one in our family ever heard her raise her voice or say an unkind word.

Floods of memories have washed over me this past year. I have thought about the physically demanding choice she made to be the mother of seven children. Being a homemaker was the only career she ever wanted, and she was in every aspect a consummate professional.

Often I have wondered how she kept track of our children and me. Meal preparation alone was a truly daunting task, not to mention activities such as doing the mountains of laundry our family generated every week and keeping shoes and appropriately sized clothing on the children. We all turned to her on a myriad of other issues that were important to us. And because they were important to us, they were also important to her. She was, in a word, magnificent—as a wife, as a mother, as a friend, as a neighbor, and as a daughter of God.

Now that she has moved on, I am happy that I chose to sit next to her when I came home from the office during the last few months of her life, to hold her hand as we watched the endings of some of her favorite musicals—over and over again because Alzheimer's would not allow her to remember that she had seen them just the afternoon before. Memories of those special hand-holding sessions are now very, very precious to me.

Brothers and sisters, please do not miss an opportunity to look into the eyes of your family members with love. Children and parents, reach out to each other and express your love and appreciation. Like me, some of you may wake up one day to discover

that the time for such important communication has passed. Live each day together with hearts filled with gratitude, good memories, service, and much love.

During this past year, I have pondered more intently than ever before about our Heavenly Father's plan. In teaching his son Corianton, Alma referred to it as "the great plan of happiness."²

The word that keeps coming to my mind now when I consider the plan is "reunion." It is a plan, designed by our loving Father in Heaven, that has at its center the grand and glorious possibilities of family reunion—of eternally reuniting husbands and wives, parents and children, generation upon generation in the household of God.

That thought brings me comfort and the assurance that I will be with Barbara again. Although she physically suffered toward the end of her life, her spirit was strong, noble, and pure. She had prepared herself in all things so that when the day comes, she can stand before "the pleasing bar of God,"³ full of confidence and peaceful assurance. But here I am, in two days 91 years old, and I'm still wondering, "Am I ready? Am I doing everything I need to do to be able to hold her hand once again?"

The most simple, basic certainty of life is this: We are all going to die. Whether we die old or young, easy or hard, wealthy or indigent, beloved or lonely, nobody escapes death.

A few years ago, President Gordon B. Hinckley said something that is particularly meaningful about this: "How sweet is the assurance, how comforting is the peace that come from the knowledge that if we marry right and live right, our relationship will continue, notwithstanding the certainty of death and the passage of time."⁴

I certainly married right. Of that there can be no doubt. But that isn't enough, according to President Hinckley. I also have to live right.⁵

Today, "living right" can be a pretty confusing concept, especially if you spend much time on social media, where any voice can declare real truths or false concepts about God and His plan for His children. Thankfully, members of the Church have eternally true gospel principles to know how to live so that we might be better prepared when we must die.

Just a few months before I was born, my Apostle grandfather, Elder Melvin J. Ballard, gave a talk that, for some people, captured the essence of what it means to live right. Titled "Struggle for the Soul," his talk focused on the ongoing battle between our physical bodies and our eternal spirits.

He said, "The greatest conflict that any man or woman will ever have ... will be the battle that is had with self," explaining that Satan, "the enemy of our souls," attacks us through "the lusts, the appetites, the ambitions of the flesh."⁶ So the primary battle is between our divine and spiritual nature and the carnal natural man. Brothers and sisters, remember, we can receive spiritual help through the influence of the Holy

Ghost that can “teach you all things.”⁷ Help can also come through the power and blessings of the priesthood. Now, I ask, how is this battle going with each one of you?

President David O. McKay said: “Man’s earthly existence is but a test as to whether he will concentrate his efforts, his mind, his soul, upon things which contribute to the comfort and gratification of his physical nature, or whether he will make as his life’s [purpose] the acquisition of spiritual qualities.”⁸

This battle between our carnal and our spiritual natures isn’t a new thing. In his final sermon to his people, King Benjamin taught that “the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.”⁹

The Apostle Paul taught that “they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”¹⁰

It seems clear to me that one of the most important things we can learn in this life is how to emphasize our eternal spiritual nature and control our evil desires. This should not be that difficult. After all, our spirit, which has been around a lot longer than our physical body, has already been successful in choosing righteousness over evil in the premortal realm. Before this earth was formed, we lived in the spirit world as sons and daughters of Heavenly Parents, who loved us and continue to love us now.

And yes, we did have to make life-changing decisions and choices in that premortal realm. Every person who has ever lived or ever will live on this planet made an essential decision to choose to accept Heavenly Father’s plan for our salvation. So we all came to earth with a proven track record of a successful spiritual nature and eternal destiny.

Think about that for a moment. This is who you and I really are and who you have always been: a son or daughter of God, with spiritual roots in eternity and a future overflowing with infinite possibilities. You are—first, foremost, and always—a spiritual being. And so when we choose to put our carnal nature ahead of our spiritual nature, we are choosing something that is contrary to our real, true, authentic spiritual selves.

Still, there’s no question that flesh and earthly impulses complicate the decision-making. With a veil of forgetfulness drawn between the premortal spirit world and this mortal world, we can lose sight of our relationship to God and our spiritual nature, and our carnal nature can give priority to *what we want right now*. Learning to choose the things of the Spirit over the things of the flesh is one of the primary reasons why this earthly experience is part of Heavenly Father’s plan. It’s also why

the plan is built upon the solid, sure foundation of the Atonement of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ so that our sins, including the errors we make when we yield to the flesh, can be overcome through constant repentance and we can live spiritually focused. Now is the time to control our bodily appetites to comply with the spiritual doctrine of Christ. That is why we must not procrastinate the day of our repentance.¹¹ Repentance, therefore, becomes an indispensable weapon in our battle over self. Just last general conference, President Russell M. Nelson referred to this battle and reminded us that “when we choose to repent, we choose to change! We allow the Savior to transform us into the best version of ourselves. We choose to grow spiritually and receive joy—the joy of redemption in Him. When we choose to repent, we choose to become more like Jesus Christ!”¹² Every night as I review my day in prayer with my Father in Heaven, I ask to be forgiven if I did anything wrong and promise to try to be better tomorrow. I believe this regular daily repentance helps my spirit remind my body who is in charge of me.

Another resource is the weekly opportunity we all have to refresh ourselves spiritually by partaking of the sacrament in remembrance of the Atonement and the perfect love that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has for us.

Brothers and sisters, I encourage you to slow down a bit and think about where you are now in subjugating your carnal nature and empowering your divine, spiritual nature so when the time comes, you may pass into the spirit world to a joyful reunion with your loved ones—for which I testify and humbly pray in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Beware of the Evil behind the Smiling Eyes

Elder Neil L. Andersen
Of the Seventy

As we increase our understanding and love for the Savior, His light will illuminate everything around us. We will then see evil for what it is.

Tonight I speak to you young men, you whom President Gordon B. Hinckley has described as “the finest generation.”¹ Across the world we see your goodness. I pray that you will feel that my words are personally for you, a son of God, working hard to do what’s right.

I’d like to tell you of an experience of a faithful Latter-day Saint who is a good friend of mine. I’ll refer to him only as “my friend” for reasons you will understand.

Working as a special agent for the FBI, my friend investigated organized crime groups transporting illegal drugs into the United States.

On one occasion, he and another agent approached an apartment where they believed a known drug dealer was distributing cocaine. My friend describes what happened:

“We knocked on the door of the drug dealer. The suspect opened the door, and upon seeing us, tried to block our view. But it was too late; we could see the cocaine on his table.

“A man and a woman who were at the table immediately began removing the cocaine. We had to prevent them from destroying the evidence, so I quickly pushed the drug suspect who was blocking the door to the side. As I pushed him, my eyes met his. Strangely, he did not appear angry or afraid. He was smiling at me.

“His eyes and disarming smile gave me the impression that he was harmless, so I quickly left him and started to move toward the table. The suspect was now behind me. At that instant, I had the distinct, powerful impression come into my mind: ‘Beware of the evil behind the smiling eyes.’

“I immediately turned back toward the suspect. His hand was in his large front pocket. Instinctively I grabbed his hand and pulled it from his pocket. Only then did I see, clutched in his hand, the semiautomatic pistol ready to fire. A flurry of activity followed, and I disarmed the man.”²

Later, in another case, the drug dealer was convicted of murder and boasted that he would have also killed my friend had he not turned around at that very moment.

I have often thought of the communication that came into his mind: “Beware of the evil behind the smiling eyes.” This is what I want to talk to you about tonight.

Let’s begin with what we know. Good comes from God; evil comes from the devil.³ They are not, however, equal forces that are fighting each other in the universe. At the head of all that is good is the Christ—He who is the Only Begotten of the Father, who created our world and numerous others. Our Redeemer is a resurrected and perfect being.⁴ I know He lives.

The devil, on the other hand, “persuadeth men to do evil.”⁵ “He [has] fallen from heaven, ... [has] become miserable forever,”⁶ and now works “that all men might be miserable like unto himself.”⁷ He is a liar and a loser.⁸

The power of the Savior and the power of the devil are not truly comparable.⁹ On this planet, however, evil has been allowed a position of influence to give us the chance to choose between good and evil. The scripture says: “God gave unto man that he should act for himself. [And] man could not act for himself ... [unless] he was enticed by ... one or the other.”¹⁰

The choice between good and evil is at the very heart of our experience on earth. In the final review of our lives, it will not really matter if we were rich or poor, if we were athletic or not, if we had friends or were often forgotten.

We can work, study, laugh and have fun, dance, sing, and enjoy many different experiences. These are a wonderful part of life, but they are not central to why we are here.¹¹ The opportunity to choose good over evil is precisely why we are here.¹² Not one of us would say, “I want to choose evil.” We all want to choose the right. However, the choice of good over evil is not always easy, because evil frequently lurks behind smiling eyes. Listen to these warnings:

“Take heed ... that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God.”¹³

“Ye must watch and pray always lest ye enter into temptation; for Satan desireth to have you.”¹⁴

“Satan hath sought to deceive you, that he might overthrow you.”¹⁵

The message is: Beware of the evil behind the smiling eyes!

I have known a few young men who began with every intention to stay firm in their loyalty to the Savior but who slipped from the path because they did not see the evil behind eyes that appeared quite harmless. They saw the fun, the pleasure, the acceptance, but they did not see the other consequences.

How, then, can we discern the evil behind something that doesn't appear evil?

You already know the answers, but here are a few thoughts:

First, talk to your parents SPOUSE . Does that sound like a revolutionary idea? We fathers know we are far from perfect, but we love you, and along with your mothers, have a deep interest in your choosing the right.

Next, **follow the prophet**. These 15 men we sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators are given divine power to see what we sometimes do not see. President Hinckley has given us clear and specific counsel about the evil behind the smiling eyes.¹⁶ And you have the inspired guidance in the booklet *For the Strength of Youth*.¹⁷ As you apply President Hinckley's counsel, the Lord has promised that He “will disperse the powers of darkness from before you.”¹⁸ You will see the evil behind the smiling eyes, and its appeal will leave you.

Very importantly, let the Holy Ghost be your guide. The Lord has promised us that as we live righteously, the still, small voice will come into our mind and into our heart.¹⁹ You have felt this influence. You know this voice.²⁰

The gift of the Holy Ghost is a spiritual gift. It is sensitive and will not be associated with unworthiness. You cannot offend or ignore it one day and expect it to strengthen you the next day. But as you heed its promptings and remain righteous, it will grow

stronger within you. The Holy Ghost warned my friend of physical danger; the Holy Ghost will also warn you of spiritual danger.

Finally, gain your own testimony of the Savior. Pray passionately. Read the Book of Mormon when no one is watching. Take time alone to think about who Jesus really is and how His life and sacrifice are important to you.

Remember the example of the young Joseph Smith. When he lit the candle at night to read the Bible, it was because he wanted to. When he went into the grove to pray, he went alone.²¹

As we increase our understanding and love for the Savior, His light will illuminate everything around us. We then will see evil for what it is.²²

I know that Jesus Christ is our Savior. Words cannot describe His greatness and glory, His majesty and magnificence. He appeared with His Father to the Prophet Joseph Smith. President Gordon B. Hinckley is the prophet of God today. Brethren, we hold His holy priesthood. As we remain worthy, we will be blessed to see the evil behind the smiling eyes. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Chapter 10

Fortifying Ourselves against Evil Influences

The gospel of Jesus Christ offers us power and protection against the evils of our day.

From the Life of Spencer W. Kimball

President Spencer W. Kimball taught that the fight against Satan and his forces “is not a little skirmish with a half-willed antagonist, but a battle royal with an enemy so powerful, entrenched, and organized that we are likely to be vanquished if we are not strong, well-trained, and watchful.”¹

As a young missionary serving in the Central States Mission, he recorded in his diary an experience illustrating his resolve to withstand temptation. He was traveling on a train to Chicago, Illinois, when a man approached him. “[He] tried to get me to read a vulgar book with obscene pictures. I told him it didn’t appeal to me. He began tempting me then to go with him in Chicago and I knew he’d lead me down to hell. I shut him up but after he was gone I could feel myself blush for an hour. I thought— ‘Oh! how hard Satan, through his imps, tries to lead young people astray.’ I thanked the Lord that I had power to overcome it.”²

Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball

Satan is real and will use any means to try to destroy us.

In these days of sophistication and error men depersonalize not only God but the devil. Under this concept Satan is a myth, useful for keeping people straight in less enlightened days but outmoded in our educated age. Nothing is further from reality. Satan is very much a personal, individual spirit being, but without a mortal body. His desires to seal each of us his are no less ardent in wickedness than our Father's are in righteousness to attract us to his own eternal kingdom.³

To know where the danger is and to be able to recognize it in all of its manifestations provides protection. The evil one is alert. He is always ready to deceive and claim as his victims every unwary one, every careless one, every rebellious one.⁴

Regardless of who is getting the adversary's special attention at any given time, he seeks to make all people "miserable like unto himself" (2 Ne. 2:27). Indeed, he seeks "the misery of all mankind" (2 Ne. 2:18). He is undeviating in his purposes and is clever and relentless in his pursuit of them.⁵

Peter cautioned us: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

And the Savior said that the very elect would be deceived by Lucifer if it were possible [see Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22]. [Lucifer] will use his logic to confuse and his rationalizations to destroy. He will shade meanings, open doors an inch at a time, and lead from purest white through all the shades of gray to the darkest black.⁶ The arch deceiver has studied every way possible to achieve his ends, using every tool, every device possible. He takes over, distorts, and changes and camouflages everything created for the good of man, ... so he may take over their minds and pervert their bodies and claim them his.

He never sleeps—he is diligent and persevering. He analyzes carefully his problem and then moves forward diligently, methodically to reach that objective. He uses all five senses and man's natural hunger and thirst to lead him away. He anticipates resistance and fortifies himself against it. He uses time and space and leisure. He is constant and persuasive and skillful. He uses such useful things as radio, television, the printed page, the airplane, and the car to distort and damage. He uses the gregariousness of man, his loneliness, his every need to lead him astray. He does his work at the most propitious time in the most impressive places with the most influential people. He overlooks nothing that will deceive and distort and prostitute. He uses money, power, force. He entices man and attacks at his weakest spot. He takes the good and creates ugliness. ... He uses every teaching art to subvert man.⁷ The adversary is subtle. He is cunning. He knows that he cannot induce good men and women to do major evils immediately, so he moves slyly, whispering half-truths until he has his intended captives following him.⁸

With the Lord's help, we can withstand evil influences.

If we would escape [the] deadly thrusts of the evil one and keep our homes and families free and solidly fortified against all destructive influences so rampant about us, we must have the help of ... the Creator himself. There is only one sure way and that is through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and being obedient to its profound and inspired teachings.⁹

In the life of everyone there comes the conflict between good and evil, between Satan and the Lord. Every person who has reached or passed the age of accountability of eight years, and who with a totally repentant heart is baptized properly, positively will receive the Holy Ghost. If heeded, this member of the Godhead will guide, inspire, and warn, and will neutralize the promptings of the evil one.¹⁰

He who has greater strength than Lucifer, he who is our fortress and our strength, can sustain us in times of great temptation. While the Lord will never forcibly take anyone out of sin or out of the arms of the tempters, he exerts his Spirit to induce the sinner to do it with divine assistance. And the man who yields to the sweet influence and pleadings of the Spirit and does all in his power to stay in a repentant attitude is guaranteed protection, power, freedom and joy.¹¹

Satan ... contended for the subservience of Moses. ...

“Moses, son of man, worship me,” the devil tempted, with promise of worlds and luxuries and power. ...

... The prophet demanded: “Get thee hence, Satan. ...” (Moses 1:16.) The liar, the tempter, the devil unwilling to give up this possible victim, now in rage and fury “cried with a loud voice, and rent upon the earth, and commanded, saying: I am the Only Begotten, worship me.” (Moses 1:19.)

Moses recognized the deception and saw the power of darkness and the “bitterness of hell.” Here was a force not easily reckoned with nor evicted. Terrified, he called upon God, then commanded with new power:

“I will not cease to call upon God ... for his glory has been upon me, wherefore I can judge between him and thee. ... In the name of the Only Begotten, depart hence, Satan.” (Moses 1:18, 21.)

Not even Lucifer, ... the arch-enemy of mankind, can withstand the power of the priesthood of God. Trembling, quaking, cursing, weeping, wailing, gnashing his teeth, he departed from the victorious Moses.¹²

We must be prepared to make a bold stand before Satan ... and against principalities and powers and the rulers of darkness. We need the whole armor of God that we may withstand. [See Ephesians 6:12–13.]¹³

“Put on the whole armour of God,” as Paul admonished [Ephesians 6:11]. With this divine influence and protection, we may be able to discern the adversary’s deceptions in whatever appealing words and rationalizations and we may be “able to withstand the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” [See Ephesians 6:13.]¹⁴

We must not yield to even the smallest temptations.

Serious sin enters into our lives as we yield first to little temptations. Seldom does one enter into deeper transgression without first yielding to lesser ones, which open the door to the greater. Giving an example of one type of sin, someone said, “An honest man doesn’t suddenly become dishonest any more than a clean field suddenly becomes weedy.”

It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the devil to enter a door that is closed. He seems to have no keys for locked doors. But if a door is slightly ajar, he gets his toe in, and soon this is followed by his foot, then by his leg and his body and his head, and finally he is in all the way.

This situation is reminiscent of the fable of the camel and his owner who were traveling across the desert sand dunes when a wind storm came up. The traveler quickly set up his tent and moved in, closing the flaps to protect himself from the cutting, grinding sands of the raging storm. The camel was of course left outside, and as the violent wind hurled the sand against his body and into his eyes and nostrils he found it unbearable and finally begged for entrance into the tent.

“There is room only for myself,” said the traveler.

“But may I just get my nose in so I can breathe air not filled with sand?” asked the camel.

“Well, perhaps you could do that,” replied the traveler, and he opened the flap ever so little and the long nose of the camel entered. How comfortable the camel was now! But soon the camel became weary of the smarting sand on his eyes and ears ... :

“The wind-driven sand is like a rasp on my head. Could I put just my head in?”

Again, the traveler rationalized that to acquiesce would do him no damage, for the camel’s head could occupy the space at the top of the tent which he himself was not using. So the camel put his head inside and the beast was satisfied again—but for a short while only.

“Just the front quarters,” he begged, and again the traveler relented and soon the camel’s front shoulders and legs were in the tent. Finally, by the same processes of pleading and of yielding, the camel’s torso, his hind quarters and all were in the tent. But now it was too crowded for the two, and the camel kicked the traveler out into the wind and storm.

Like the camel, Lucifer readily becomes the master when one succumbs to his initial blandishments. Soon then the conscience is stilled completely, the evil power has full sway, and the door to salvation is closed until a thorough repentance opens it again.

The importance of not accommodating temptation in the least degree is underlined by the Savior's example. Did not he recognize the danger when he was on the mountain with his fallen brother, Lucifer, being sorely tempted by that master tempter? He could have opened the door and flirted with danger by saying, "All right, Satan, I'll listen to your proposition. I need not succumb, I need not yield, I need not accept—but I'll listen."

Christ did not so rationalize. He positively and promptly closed the discussion, and commanded: "Get thee hence, Satan," meaning, likely, "Get out of my sight—get out of my presence—I will not listen—I will have nothing to do with you." Then, we read, "the devil leaveth him." [Matthew 4:10–11.]

This is our proper pattern, if we would prevent sin rather than be faced with the much more difficult task of curing it. As I study the story of the Redeemer and his temptations, I am certain he spent his energies fortifying himself against temptation rather than battling with it to conquer it.¹⁵

Right decisions now can help us withstand temptations later.

One of the basic tasks for each individual is the making of decisions. A dozen times a day we come to a fork in the road and must decide which way we will go. Some alternatives are long and hard, but they take us in the right direction toward our ultimate goal; others are short, wide, and pleasant, but they go off in the wrong direction. It is important to get our ultimate objectives clearly in mind so that we do not become distracted at each fork in the road by the irrelevant questions: Which is the easier or more pleasant way? or, Which way are others going?

Right decisions are easiest to make when we make them well in advance, having ultimate objectives in mind; this saves a lot of anguish at the fork, when we're tired and sorely tempted.

When I was young, I made up my mind unalterably that I would never taste tea, coffee, tobacco, or liquor. I found that this rigid determination saved me many times throughout my varied experiences. There were many occasions when I could have sipped or touched or sampled, but the unalterable determination firmly established gave me good reason and good strength to resist.

... The time to decide that we will settle for nothing less than an opportunity to live eternally with our Father is now, so that every choice we make will be affected by our determination to let nothing interfere with attaining that ultimate goal.¹⁶

Develop discipline of self so that, more and more, you do not have to decide and redecide what you will do when you are confronted with the same temptation time and time again. You only need to decide some things *once!*

How great a blessing it is to be free of agonizing over and over again regarding a temptation. To do such is time-consuming and very risky.¹⁷

We can push some things away from us once and have done with them! We can make a single decision about certain things that we will incorporate in our lives and then make them ours—without having to brood and redecide a hundred times what it is we will do and what we will not do.

Indecision and discouragement are climates in which the Adversary lives to function, for he can inflict so many casualties among mankind in those settings. ... If you have not done so yet, decide to decide!¹⁸

How wonderful it would be if we could just get every Latter-day Saint boy and girl to make up his mind or her mind during childhood to say, “I will never yield to Satan or to anybody who would want me to destroy myself.”¹⁹

The time to quit evil ways is before they start. The secret of the good life is in protection and prevention. Those who yield to evil are usually those who have placed themselves in a vulnerable position.²⁰

We resist the adversary as we acknowledge our weaknesses and strive to overcome them.

Having been reared on the farm, I know that when the pigs got out, I looked first for the holes through which they had previously escaped. When the cow was out of the field looking for greener pastures elsewhere, I knew where to look first for the place of her escape. It was most likely to be the place where she had jumped the fence before, or where the fence had been broken. Likewise the devil knows where to tempt, where to put in his telling blows. He finds the vulnerable spot. Where one was weak before, he will be most easily tempted again.²¹

It seems that evil is always about us. ... Accordingly, we must be alert constantly. We catalogue our weaknesses and move in against them to overcome them.²²

Most of us have vulnerable spots through which disaster can overtake us unless we are properly safeguarded and immunized. ...

History provides many ... examples of strength and pride, both individual and national, which succumbed to attack on the vulnerable spot. While these spots were often, on the surface at least, physical, Lucifer and his followers know the habits, weaknesses, and vulnerable spots of everyone and take advantage of them to lead us to spiritual destruction. With one person it may be thirst for liquor; another may have an insatiable hunger; another has permitted his sex urges to dominate; another loves money, and the luxuries and comforts it can buy; another craves power; and so on.²³

Let him who has evil tendencies be honest and acknowledge his weakness. I tell you the Lord places no sin in our lives. He has made no man wicked. ... Sin was permitted in the world, and Satan permitted to tempt us, but we have our free agency. We may sin or live righteously, but we cannot escape responsibility. To blame our sin upon the Lord, saying it is inherent and cannot be controlled, is cheap and cowardly. To blame our sins upon our parents and our upbringing is the way of the escapist. One's parents may have failed; our own backgrounds may have been frustrating, but as sons and

daughters of a living God we have within ourselves the power to rise above our circumstances, to change our lives.²⁴

We plead with our people everywhere, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7.) ...

There may be some who have a general feeling of uneasiness because of world conditions and lengthening shadows of evil, but the Lord said, “... if ye are prepared ye shall not fear” (D&C 38:30), and again, “Peace I leave with you. ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:27.)²⁵

As Latter-day Saints we must ever be vigilant. The way for each person and each family to guard against the slings and arrows of the Adversary and to prepare for the great day of the Lord is to hold fast to the iron rod, to exercise greater faith, to repent of our sins and shortcomings, and to be anxiously engaged in the work of His kingdom on earth, which is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Herein lies the only true happiness for all our Father’s children.²⁶

Temptations of Satan and the Natural Man

We cannot “come off conqueror,” except we first “put off” the selfish, natural man!

—Elder Neal A. Maxwell

Selected Teachings

President Brigham Young

“Many think that the Devil has rule and power over both body and spirit. Now, I want to tell you that he does not hold any power over man, only so far as the body overcomes the spirit that is in a man, through yielding to the spirit of evil. The spirit that the Lord puts into a tabernacle of flesh, is under the dictation of the Lord Almighty; but the spirit and body are united in order that the spirit may have a tabernacle, and be exalted; and the spirit is influenced by the body, and the body by the spirit.

“In the first place the spirit is pure, and under the special control and influence of the Lord, but the body is of the earth, and is subject to the power of the Devil, and is under the mighty influence of that fallen nature that is of the earth. If the spirit yields to the body, the Devil then has power to overcome the body and spirit of that man, and he loses both” (in *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 69–70),

“We are the natural sons and daughters of our natural parents, and spiritually we are the natural children of the Father of light and natural heirs to his kingdom; and when

we do an evil, we do it in opposition to the promptings of the Spirit of Truth that is within us. Man, the noblest work of God, was in his creation designed for an endless duration, for which the love of all good was incorporated in his nature. It was never designed that he should naturally do and love evil” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 9:305).

Elder Spencer W. Kimball

“Satan is very much a personal, individual spirit being, but without a mortal body. His desires to seal each of us his are no less ardent in wickedness than our Father’s are in righteousness to attract us to his own eternal kingdom” (*Miracle of Forgiveness*, 21).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

“Many things happened in the process of the Fall, including changes that came to the physical bodies of Adam and Eve. For one thing, they fell into ‘nature.’ ...

“Part of the natural world Adam and Eve entered included the addition to their bodies of blood—a corruptible ingredient—in what had been to that point an uncorrupted body of bloodless flesh and bone. But even more important than such physical changes were the temptations of and threats to the spirit. Spiritual as well as physical separation from God came with the Fall. Humankind was cut off from the immediate personal companionship with God that Adam and Eve had enjoyed in the garden of Eden. As a result, they were distanced from the Holy Spirit and became less responsive to many of the things of righteousness. ...

“Because this doctrine [of the natural man] is so basic to the plan of salvation and also because it is so susceptible to misunderstanding, we must note that these references to ‘natural’ evil emphatically do *not* mean that men and women are ‘inherently’ evil. There is a crucial difference. As spiritual sons and daughters of God, all mortal men and women are divine in origin and divine in their potential destiny. As Doctrine and Covenants 93:38–39 teaches, the spirit of every man, woman, and child ‘was innocent in the beginning.’ But it is also true that as a result of the Fall they are now in a ‘natural’ (fallen) world where the devil ‘taketh away light’ and where some elements of nature—including temporal human nature—need discipline, restraint, and refinement. It is as if men and women are given, as part of their next step in development along the path to godhood, raw physical and spiritual ingredients—‘natural’ resources, if you will. Those resources are not to run rampant but are to be harnessed and focused so that their power and potential (as is sometimes done with a ‘natural’ river or a ‘natural’ waterfall) can be channeled and thereby made even more productive and beneficial.

“Natural man, with all of his new and wonderful but as yet unbridled and unregenerated potential, must be made ‘submissive’ to the Holy Spirit, a spirit that still entices and lifts us upward. ... Our deepest desires, our premortal yearnings, are still divine in their origins, and they are still deep in our souls. The echoes of our earlier innocence still reverberate, and the light that forsakes the evil one still shines. Our hearts can—and in their purity, do—desire that which is spiritual and holy rather

than that which is ‘carnal, sensual, and devilish.’ If that were not so, we would be in a hopeless condition indeed, and the idea of real choice would be jeopardized forever. We praise God our Father that our true heritage is of him and that by yielding and submitting to his eternal influence we can overcome the enmity which separated us from him and turn those gifts from nature to our blessing rather than our cursing” (*Christ and the New Covenant*, 205–7).

Elder Merrill J. Bateman

“The scriptures state that men and women are created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:26–27, Abraham 4:27–28). Both women and men have within them the attributes of divinity, and both are blessed as they fulfill their divine callings. The apostle Peter and King Benjamin indicate that we partake of the divine nature through Christ’s atonement aided by the Holy Ghost (see 2 Peter 1:3–8, Mosiah 3:19). It is interesting to observe the similarity of the fruits of the Spirit to the divine seeds inherited from Heavenly Parents (see Galatians 5:21–22, 2 Peter 1:3–8). Since ‘light cleaveth unto light’ and Spirit to spirit, the Holy Ghost is able to quicken us by a portion of light that causes the divine seeds within to bud and to flower (D&C 88:29, 40). **The degree of light and the extent to which the attributes flourish is a function of how well women and men bridle their passions and are obedient to divine principles**” (“The Eternal Family,” 112–13).

Elder J. Richard Clarke

“Throughout the ages, evil forces have attacked the family. Why do you suppose Satan is so obsessed with its dissolution? Because it stands for everything he wants and cannot have. He cannot be a husband, a father, or a grandfather. He cannot have posterity now or ever. Satan cannot even keep those he has led away from God. He has no eternal kingdom or inheritance” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 74; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 60).

Brothers and Sisters

Challenges/questions to 1st myself and to us

Are you/we doing everything in you/our power to surrender yourself/ourselves to the will of the Father
In ALL things?

Do you/we counsel with the Lord in ALL things?

Do you/we make a habit of beginning or ending the day in reflection/repentance?

Do you/we use your/our agency to allow evil spirits to make their way into your/our life?

Are you praying for the gift of unity?

The Savior emulates the Perfect Love of the Father and where ever he is people are drawn to him. If you are ONE with the Savior who is ONE with the Father...Naturally you would have people drawn to you ...

My prayer is that we would be as :

President Woodruff felt that he was out of place in the midst of contention. He shunned it, and never cared for the association of those who were given to FAULT-FINDING, CRITICISMS, AND PERSONAL GRIEFS. He never saw the necessity for them. It was never hard for him to agree with the brethren. He was never unreasonable in his demands, never had private ends to foster, and never hesitated when there was something important to be done. He was loyal to the prophet, true to his brethren.

In the name of Jesus Christ AMEN

Micah's Thoughts:

Once again, I wish that this doctrine was taught more often as clearly and precisely as it was here at the beginning of this talk, and I wish members had such testimonies of this doctrine that was taught at the beginning of this talk. What am I referring to? That if you are not behind the prophet of God, you are not behind Christ. Those in Joseph Smith's time knew and understood this- "if you cut the thread that binds you to the prophet, you sink yourself to hell." It's as simple as that, and I wish that more members had a testimony of it. I'm with Elder Rasband when he said:

"[I have] just one piece of advice that covers almost any circumstance people may face and will help them stay true to the Lord.

"Choose to follow God's living Prophet. He is our watchman on the tower," said Elder Rasband.

"Let me say that again," he repeated. "Choose to follow God's living Prophet and you will never be distanced from the Lord Jesus Christ" (Young Adult Devotional, Jan 2022).

I too know that those who reject the words of the prophet or those sent to us in the name of the prophet i.e., the keys, they reject the Father. Which is exactly why it is so sad to hear people who think they can be at odds with the keys but yet be right with the Lord. It just isn't accurate.

Elder Heber C Kimball explains that the kingdom of God is set up as a chain, not as billions of individual threads going from each individual directly to God. Said he, "That is the chain that reaches from heaven to earth, and do you not understand that it is so?" If members didn't understand this back then, they clearly don't now. The kingdom of God isn't a democracy, it isn't a republic, it is a theocracy, most readily looking like feudalism, with a single chain from knights to lords to kings etc. If one is unwilling to hold onto that chain to make oneself part of that family, they will stay exactly where they are, which according to the brethren, is in hell.

Section II

Thousands of this world, with large herds of cattle and much substance are fleeing to California or Oregon to escape the troubles, but they will be caught in the snare. [President B. Young: They will, and they will fall. The road on the Plains is full of emigrants of that class, and there are several thousand Saints on the way here. The handcarts are rolling, and those with them can sleep at night and be up in the mornings, and the carts will jingle through the day; and as soon as we can get teams, after our wheat is harvested, we shall call on you to go back and meet them with flour and other comforts of life; what do you say? [Yes, from many voices in the congregation.] There are squally times in the east; they have got so that they cannot really stand it, without drubbing each other with canes. The world is in commotion; I have been talking about it here, and about the state of affairs in this Church, and what we have got to do, and I cannot get this subject out of my mind, no, not for one moment.

Brethren and sisters, take care of your grain; do not waste any of your grain, for you will need it all; and do not make an unwise or unsaintly disposition of it. I beg of you to attend to this counsel, for I have told it three or four times; not because I profess to be a Prophet, but because I naturally see the necessity for so doing. The people are out of grain and out of bread, and I have but little myself; and from what I see, I should think that very many had none, for if you were to go to my house and stay one day, you would see enough to craze you, for they come in crowds and are hungry, and I feel to pity them, but I cannot feed all creation.

Suppose all this people had been wise and taken counsel, would they have suffered the present destitution? No, they would not. Much of our grain has been consumed by our enemies, by those who care not for what they have to pay, for Uncle Sam pays their bills. Shall they have our grain this year? Doubtless many of this people will sell their grain to them at a low price, and thus they will be fed, while many worthy persons will see straitened circumstances through lack of food, and I see this naturally. This is a numerous people, and they have no surplus of bread, not a particle, and our crop is very light in many places; there are hundreds and thousands of men that have lost their crops entirely. I understand that brother Grant has lost a great portion of his crop, and thousands of acres have been parched up for the want of water, and there will be but little wheat, not near enough to supply the wants of this people, and bring them safely through to another harvest.

In addition to our present number, according to accounts that I see, there are five thousand Saints ready for the Plains at one place, and five thousand more at another, besides those that are casually falling into the ranks, and they have to eat as well as we, until another harvest.

I speak of these things to warn and forewarn you to take care of your grain and save it, and it will be better for you to do this, even though in so doing you have to go barefooted. And it will be better for the sisters to let fine shoes, fine dresses, fine bonnets, ribbons, veils, laces, and all other imported finery stay in the stores until they rot, than to let their grain go for such articles.

Will you take the course that you have been exhorted to take? If you do not, a few men may not suffer, but the majority will. I do firmly believe that our bread has been blest and multiplied this

season, for I know there was not enough in the Territory to sustain the people. However, the present scarcity is one of the best things that ever happened to this people, for it will teach them wisdom. This is one of the poorest countries for occupancy for Gentiles that I have ever seen, though for the same reasons it is at present the very best for the Saints, for we can get along in it better than any other people.

There are those here who will censure brother Brigham and me, notwithstanding all that we have done for them. [President B. Young: We do not care what they say about us, if they will not steal.]

There is but little left in this Territory, so far as bread is concerned. Brother Brigham and I have had to put our families on half rations, in order that we might have wherewith to feed the destitute, and they now say that they feel better than they did before; and I judge, from the testimony that they have given, that it is best to keep them on short rations, for they are fat and fair, and enjoy a good portion of the Spirit of God.

Now, as anciently, the more some are blest, the more they complain; the more the Lord pours out His blessings upon some, the more covetous they are, and a great many of such characters will go to the devil. Brother Brigham and I would rather see our families beg for a living, go poor, penniless, and afflicted, and become sanctified, become celestial beings, and enter into glory, than to see them transgress the law of God. The bodies we do not care so much about, though we intend to support them in time and eternity.

I believe that Joseph has got the Church organized in the spirit world, and that he calls and sends the Elders to preach the Gospel to the spirits in prison.

Angie's Thoughts:

Black is the text. Orange is insight. Blue is reference.

Thousands of this world, with large herds of cattle and much substance are fleeing to California or Oregon to escape the troubles, but they will be caught in the snare. [President B. Young: They will, and they will fall. The road on the Plains is full of emigrants of that class, and there are several thousand Saints on the way here. The handcarts are rolling, and those with them can sleep at night and be up in the mornings, and the carts will jingle through the day; and as soon as we can get teams, after our wheat is harvested, we shall call on you to go back and meet them with flour and other comforts of life; what do you say? [Yes, from many voices in the congregation.] There are squally times in the east; they have got so that they cannot really stand it, without drubbing each other with canes. **The world is in commotion**; I have been talking about it here, and about the state of affairs in this Church, and what we have got to do, and I cannot get this subject out of my mind, no, not for one moment.

Brethren and sisters, take care of your grain; do not waste any of your grain, for you will need it all; and do not make an unwise or unsaintly disposition of it. I beg of you to attend to this counsel, for I have told it three or four times; not because I profess to be a Prophet, but because I naturally see the necessity for so doing. The people are out of grain and out of bread, and I have but little myself; and from what I see, I should think that very many had none, for if you were to go to my house and stay one day, you would see enough to craze you, for they come in crowds and are hungry, and I feel to pity them, but I cannot feed all creation.

Suppose all this people had been wise and taken counsel, would they have suffered the present destitution? No, they would not. Much of our grain has been consumed by our enemies, by those who care not for what they have to pay, for Uncle Sam pays their bills. Shall they have our grain this year? Doubtless many of this people will sell their grain to them at a low price, and thus they will be fed, **while many worthy persons will see straitened circumstances through lack of food, and I see this naturally.** This is a numerous people, and they have no surplus of bread, not a particle, and our crop is very light in many places; there are hundreds and thousands of men that have lost their crops entirely. I understand that brother Grant has lost a great portion of his crop, and thousands of acres have been parched up for the want of water, and there will be but little wheat, not near enough to supply the wants of this people, and bring them safely through to another harvest.

Disobedience necessitates suffering. For ages modern prophets have tried to lead people in the direction that the Lord wants them to go. They refused to take counsel because they consider him as just another man. They abandoned the commandments of God, their duties and posts to look for greener pastures in Babylon. In our day we have been urged to have food storage but those words also fall on deaf ears. They don't really believe there could be a real prophet living in our days. A prophet is a prophet until he is asking people to do something they can't understand. Season of plenty in the mind of the people, will last forever. People take temporal means for granted and don't understand their blessings until it's taken away. They neglect their families in pursuit of riches, they won't heed the teaching of the prophet, and other things that God has blessed them with to acquire other riches that worth little or nothing. God will let them suffer so they can learn obedience

In addition to our present number, according to accounts that I see, there are five thousand Saints ready for the Plains at one place, and five thousand more at another, besides those that are casually falling into the ranks, and they have to eat as well as we, until another harvest. I speak of these things to warn and forewarn you to take care of your grain and save it, and it will be better for you to do this, even though in so doing you have to go barefooted. And it will be better for the sisters to let fine shoes, fine dresses, fine bonnets, ribbons, veils, laces, and all other imported finery stay in the stores until they rot, than to let their grain go for such articles. **Will you take the course that you have been exhorted to take? If you do not, a few men may not suffer, but the majority will.** I do firmly believe that our bread has been blest and multiplied this season, for I know there was not enough in the Territory to sustain the people. **However, the present scarcity is one of the best things that ever happened to this people, for it will teach them wisdom.** This is one of the poorest countries for occupancy for Gentiles that I have ever seen, though for the same reasons it is at present the very best for the Saints, for we can get along in it better than any other people.

Building Zion requires all in it to do what God calls them to do. Stubborn people always learn the hard way. Only when they are compelled, then they will obey. For that they can lose their souls as a result of being disobedient. God said that blessed are those that are not compelled to obey

There are those here who will censure brother Brigham and me, notwithstanding all that we have done for them. [President B. Young: We do not care what they say about us, if they will not steal.] There is but little left in this Territory, so far as bread is concerned. Brother Brigham and I have had to put our families on half rations, in order that we might have wherewith to feed the destitute, and they now say that they feel better than they did before; and **I judge, from the**

testimony that they have given, that it is best to keep them on short rations, for they are fat and fair, and enjoy a good portion of the Spirit of God.

The people have been humbled enough to receive more blessings and wisdom from God. As we are starting the 7 years of famine after the 7 years of plenty, we will be facing this trial as these early Saints did, as such we must have been preparing for it. Have we listened to that concert of clarity?

Now, as anciently, **the more some are blest, the more they complain; the more the Lord pours out His blessings upon some, the more covetous they are, and a great many of such characters will go to the devil. Brother Brigham and I would rather see our families beg for a living, go poor, penniless, and afflicted, and become sanctified, become celestial beings, and enter into glory, than to see them transgress the law of God. The bodies we do not care so much about, though we intend to support them in time and eternity.**

This paragraph can help us cultivate an eternal perspective. It is also a warning to overcome/avoid pride in the midst of good times.

That eternal perspective can prepare us to sacrifice our worldly pursuits and give our lives "wholly to the ministry". As the disciples of old were sent "without purse or scrip," so we take upon ourselves the burden of building up the Kingdom. Which doesn't seem like a burden when you are actively pursuing it.

I believe that Joseph has got the Church organized in the spirit world, and that he calls and sends the Elders to preach the Gospel to the spirits in prison. (Reference: D&C 138:30 "But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and **commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness**, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead.")

How do we relate this section with what's going on in our time, and what we can do from reading this?

As President Nelson is urging us, we must attend the temple as often as we can to gather Israel on both side of the veil. Our ancestors are being taught and are waiting for their work to be done.

As the lord calls us to prepare spiritually and temporarily through his prophets and through personal revelation, in what capacity are we willing to follow his council or will we be leaning unto our own understanding? If we do not heed the council, we would suffer future destitutions. A loving God has given and offered us what we need and we must use and accept the wisdom in His gospel. I know our prophets are called of God, and their counsels are directed by our Heavenly Father

Micah's Thoughts:

I know that this is going to upset people but I have to say this anyways, that meetings that this group holds are actually much more similar to old General Conferences than our general conferences today. I love the fact that in the middle of Elder Heber C Kimball's talk, President

Brigham can just start talking, ask the congregation something and the congregation can answer him! I love that and “the congregations are just much larger now” isn’t accurate at all. Back then I would say there were much larger congregations- now we break off into much smaller units and just have more total meetings. It would be awesome for the wheat to once again have meetings like that. It would be awful to have meetings like that with so many tares among the Church today.

So brothers and sisters, asking the question that Elder Kimball asks here, have we followed the course we have been exhorted to take? Have we planted orchards, gardens, and put our money in food stuffs or have we bought new bonnets, TVs, cars, etc.? The righteous “cannot feed all creation” and they won’t be expected to. Not taking the course will cause suffering.

Brother Brigham’s remarks from the stand when Elder Kimball stated that many have censured them after all they have done to help them (how judgmental and prideful! LOL) was telling and should once again bring clear parallels back to the 10 virgins. “If they don’t want to listen to us, if they want to censure us after all we’ve done to try to help save them, that’s on them but they better not think that they can steal our oil, that they can steal our place in the New Jerusalem etc.”

I can’t say how much I agree with Elder Kimball’s and President Young’s philosophy. I don’t care if me or my kids have to beg for a living, go poor, penniless, and afflicted, so long as they stay faithful in the Church and become sanctified. Far too often we have taught the complete opposite in the previous generation- that we have to go to university, get an education and make a lot of money or we can’t build up the kingdom of God. We just went over *Approaching Zion*, the book written by Hugh Nibley, and this was one of the themes in the book. What is the number one priority of heads of households? Is it providing or is it sanctification? It’s pretty easy, according to Hugh Nibley, to determine what we prioritize most- add up the time invested and compare. The end. Our understanding of this doctrine started with what Elder Kimball and President Young said here and before them, Joseph Smith, who couldn’t make a buck to save his life. In fact, when Ashley and I got to “Joseph Smith’s Proverbs” in the TPJS we burst out laughing when we read: “2nd. If a man prove himself to be honest in his deal, and an enemy come upon him wickedly, through fraud or false pretences and because he is stronger than he, maketh him his prisoner and spoil him with his goods, never say unto that man in the day of his adversity, pay me what thou owest, for if thou doest it, thou addest a deeper wound, and condemnation shall come upon thee and thy riches shall be justified in the days of thine adversity if they mock at thee.” (TPJS, p.317) This wasn’t a proverb, this was Joseph pleading with the people to go easy on him! This would be like me writing a proverb that was like “if a man has spent his week combatting the myth of the 7th seal being opened in the year 2000 and has parched his throat, blessed is the man who gives him a brew.” That’s kind of a painfully specific proverb. Anyway, our understanding of this started from this position that being a righteous man had nothing to do with making money and everything to do with missionary work, starting with his own family and over time it morphed into making money is part of the law of consecration and all you have to do is set a good example. Studying the Old Testament and seeing things in

hindsight, this will be one of those things that people will look at us and go “how did they get that so backwards and how do they rationalize it?”

Section III

Inasmuch as we do right, we shall have good times and prosper; and the majority of this people are honest and righteous, and they will be saved in the kingdom of God, for they will cleave to brother Brigham forever, and will be one family. And if I am not very much mistaken, I shall be along with brother Brigham; and if there is anything necessary for me to do, I will do it, though it takes my head off from my shoulders, for I am to be one and will be one with those who will be one with brother Brigham. I will go into the celestial kingdom with him and with Joseph, also with Peter, Paul, Adam, Noah, Job, Daniel, and all the ancient worthies, Prophets and Apostles, that ever lived in this world, and we will dwell there forever. I am on the right track; "Mormonism" is the pride of my heart, and I take no pride in anything else. If I was driven to break up my home tomorrow, I would not cry for anything which I have on this earth.

Do you suppose that I would cry at being compelled to leave my house? Do you wish to know what I would do with it? I would say, let the houses and everything else go. Just before I left Nauvoo, I had finished me a good house, and when compelled to start, I told the devil to take it and stick it in his hat, and I would go to the mountains and get rich.

Many think that they are going right into the celestial kingdom of God, in their present ignorance, to at once receive glories and powers; that they are going to be Gods, while many of them are so ignorant, that they can see or know scarcely anything. Such people talk of becoming Gods, when they do not know anything of God, or of His works; such persons have to learn repentance, and obedience to the law of God; they have got to learn to understand angels, and to comprehend and stick to the principles of this Church.

I feel to pray that the Lord may preserve you all from every evil. As for the departure from this state of existence, it is but for a little moment; and though I have not tasted death, yet I have seen in vision the invisible enemies of God, and they were organized and arranged in battle against one or two men, simply because those men were going to proclaim the Gospel to the nations, and the devil did not like it; and the devil will work against every man who goes into a new place to preach the Gospel. As to the length of that vision, after they took their departure, brother Willard Richards said that it was an hour and a half that we were in the vision, though it seemed to me not to have been a moment. One of the devils spoke, and said to brother Hyde, "I have said nothing against you."

I did not contend with them, and I assure you it was enough for me to look upon them; though I expect, after passing through the valley of death, that I shall preach to companies and nations of those spirits that are in prison. Those that were disobedient in the days of Noah? No, but to those that have been disobedient in the days of Joseph and Brigham, and that have been condemned for their sins; and we shall have many of them to contend with.

They will come by and by in legions, but we shall have power to overcome by the power of God. They will have great power in the last days, and if you do not overcome them, you will fall into

the same spirit; and you will be as liable to be deceived in that state of existence as you are in this, if you turn against God or this kingdom.

I bear testimony of this, and I wish you would listen to counsel and lay aside every sin that doth so easily beset you, and turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart.

Brother Brigham has fellow laborers here, and they are just as good men as any that ever lived upon this earth. Adam and Jesus, and all the Prophets, down to the present, have contemplated this work, and would have rejoiced to live in our day, that they might have participated while in the flesh, in the glories of the last days.

We cannot become perfect, without we are assisted by our heavenly Father. We must be faithful and of one heart, and one mind, and let every man and woman take a course to build up and not pull down. See that you save your grain, that you may save yourselves from the wicked of the world. Try to take care of everything that is good to eat, for this is the work of the Lord God Almighty, and we shall have times that will test the integrity of this people, that will test who is honest and who is not.

Ryan and Kelly's Thoughts:

Our thoughts 😊

Inasmuch as we do right, we shall have good times and prosper; and the majority of this people are honest and righteous, and they will be saved in the kingdom of God, for they will cleave to brother Brigham forever, and will be one family.

The phrase could have been written

1. Inasmuch as we do right = we shall have good times and prosper.
2. If we are honest and righteous = saved in the kingdom of God
3. Saved in the kingdom of God = cleave to brother Brigham
4. Cleave to brother Brigham = one family

President Benson (1954–A:57, Ezra Taft Benson, Trust in God and Do the Right) : I wish it were possible for all of us to place our trusts completely in God and to keep his commandments fully. I wish we had the courage, the faith, and the strength of character so that we would in very deed place our trust in our heavenly Father and keep all of his commandments and do that which is right.

Joshua 1:9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

It is a great blessing, my brethren and sisters, to have an inner peace, to have an assurance, to have a spirit of serenity, an inward calm during times of strife and struggle, during times of sorrow and reverses. It is soul-satisfying to know that God is at the helm, that he is mindful of his children, and that we can with full confidence place our trust in him. I believe that all the truly great men of the earth have been men who trusted in God and who have striven to do that which is right as they understood the right.

We live in a world of fear today. Fear seems to be almost everywhere present. But there is no place for fear among the Latter-day Saints, among men and women who keep the commandments, who place their trust in the Almighty, who are not afraid to get down on their knees and pray to our heavenly Father.

So among the Latter-day Saints, particularly, there should be no fears, even in a world where many people are concerned about atom bombs, the hydrogen bomb; where many are fearing Communism and some are talking fearfully of a depression. There need be no fear in the hearts of Latter-day Saints. People who live the gospel, who keep the commandments, who trust in God and do that which is right, need never fear because God speaks peace to the honest in heart through his Spirit. Said the Lord in the 11th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly . . . to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit.

And so my brethren and sisters, as President Richards pointed out so beautifully this morning, let us never be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us never be afraid to do what is right. Let us trust in God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

I know, and so do you who have testimonies of the divinity of this work, that without God's help we cannot succeed, but with his help we can accomplish anything he asks us to do. And we can do it with a feeling of assurance, of confidence, and with a spirit of serenity which can be a joy and blessing to all of us.

God help us to keep his commandments, to put our homes in order, to pray to God, to trust in him and do the right, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Many think that they are going right into the celestial kingdom of God, in their present ignorance, to at once receive glories and powers; that they are going to be Gods, while many of them are so ignorant, that they can see or know scarcely anything. Such people talk of becoming Gods, when they do not know anything of God, or of His works; such persons have to learn repentance, and obedience to the law of God; they have got to learn to understand angels, and to comprehend and stick to the principles of this Church.

The Character of God (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 343)

In the first place, I wish to go back to the beginning—to the morn of creation. There is the starting point for us to look to, in order to understand and be fully acquainted with the mind, purposes and decrees of the Great Elohim, who sits in yonder heavens as he did at the creation of this world. It is necessary for us to have an understanding of God himself in the beginning. **If we start right, it is easy to go right all the time; but if we start wrong, we may go wrong, and it be a hard matter to get right.**

There are but a very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God. The great majority of mankind do not comprehend anything, either that which is past, or that which is to come, as it respects their relationship to God. They do not know, neither do they understand

the nature of that relationship; and consequently they know but little above the brute beast, or more than to eat, drink and sleep. This is all man knows about God or his existence, unless it is given by the inspiration of the Almighty.

If a man learns nothing more than to eat, drink and sleep, and does not comprehend any of the designs of God, the beast comprehends the same things. It eats, drinks, sleeps, and knows nothing more about God; yet it knows as much as we, unless we are able to comprehend by the inspiration of Almighty God. **If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves.** I want to go back to the beginning, and so lift your minds into a more lofty sphere and a more exalted understanding than what the human mind generally aspires to.

They (devils) will come by and by in legions, but we shall have power to overcome by the power of God. They will have great power in the last days, and if you do not overcome them, you will fall into the same spirit; and you will be as liable to be deceived in that state of existence as you are in this, if you turn against God or this kingdom

Brigham Young (JD 3:153, Brigham Young, The Necessity of the Saints, Etc.)

What the Lord has done for this people would convince any man in the world, upon rational principles, that it is not the wisdom of man, nor his power or might, nor the power or might of this people unitedly, that has accomplished what has been done, but that it has been brought to pass by an invisible power. Still a person, unless he has the light of the Spirit within him, will attribute the work of the Lord to the wisdom of man, or necromancy, or the power of the devil. Again, a person may see the power of the devil displayed, and mistake it for the power of God, for without the light of the Spirit one cannot tell the difference between the power of the Lord and the power of the devil.

We must have the testimony of the Lord Jesus to enable us to discern between truth and error, light and darkness, him who is of God, and him who is not of God, and to know how to place everything where it belongs. That is the only way to be a scientific Christian; there is no other method or process which will actually school a person so that he can become a Saint of God, and prepare him for a celestial glory; he must have within him the testimony of the spirit of the Gospel.

I make these remarks that you may understand that my faith is not placed upon the Lord's working upon the islands of the sea, upon His bringing the people here, upon His causing a drouth in the eastern lands, and wars, bloodshed, and destruction among the people; nor upon the favors He bestows upon this people, or upon that people, neither upon whether we are blessed or not blessed, but my faith is placed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and my knowledge I have received from him.

That must be the case with every person who expects to receive a celestial glory, to be crowned in a celestial kingdom of our God. We might have a drouth here, and still, by some invisible power or hand, this whole people be sustained, even though not a mouthful of bread was raised in this whole Territory. Would that prove that our God is the God we should serve? To a person who knows anything about the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is no proof at all.

If we read right, in the last days we expect the power of the enemy to have a great influence among the people, and to succeed in deceiving very many. Matt. 24:5,11 Do you expect the eyes of the blind opened by the power of the devil? I do, and I expect to see the lame made to leap, and the ears of the deaf unstopped by that power.

Now do not let the power of the devil deceive you. You may ask, “How shall we know, brother Brigham, whether you are telling us the truth or not?” Get the spirit of revelation, then you will know, and not without. Will you take my counsel? (though you may do as you please with regard to that) if you will, I can tell you what to do, and what all the Latter-day Saints—whom I have preached to from the first of my preaching, from the first of my testimony that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, and that the Book of Mormon is true—would have done if they had followed my counsel, and that is, to seek unto the Lord your God until He opens the visions of your minds, and lets the rays of eternity shine within you.

If you would take my counsel you never would cease to plead with the Lord, until He opened the eyes of your understanding and revealed eternity to you, that you might know for yourselves how things are, and when you know and keep in that spirit, you will never be deceived, but the spirit of truth will always be with you, and if you cleave to that, it will lead you into all truth John 16:13 and holiness. Without it, you are constantly liable to be deceived, to receive evil, false reports, and false testimony, through the evil power and arts which have been upon the earth from the days of Adam until now.

Our testimony is the words of President Young are true! We all must plead with the Lord until He opens the eyes of our understanding. We must cleave unto the Lord and the power of God. Only with this power will we be able to withstand the coming events. Please take the time to stand in holy places and become sanctified so that your eyes must be opened. Your family depends on you to plead with the Lord so that you can know these eternal truths. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen

Micah's Thoughts:

The first two things that came to mind when reading this section are:

1. "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)

2. 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)

Looking at how many members of the Church pay their tithing, how many members keep food storage, how many members were planting orchards back in in Joseph Fielding Smith's time, let alone today, it is easy to see why Joseph Fielding Smith saw no way for the Church generally to escape the scourge any longer- individual members and families, absolutely, the Church generally, absolutely not.

D&C 64: 22-23

22 And after that day, I, the Lord, will not hold any guilty that shall go with an open heart up to the land of Zion; for I, the Lord, require the hearts of the children of men.

23 Behold, now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice, and a day for the tithing of my people; for he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming.

These scriptures go really well with the concepts I've already gone over, and also tie into the next thing I wanted to bring up in this section, which was "*...we shall have times that will test the integrity of this people, that will test who is honest and who is not.*"

I don't know how many times honesty has to come up in the standard works and quotes from apostles before people take it seriously. Just like how when members serve faithful missions they can't help but bring it up, seriously, talk to any member who has successfully served a mission for longer than an hour and they will bring up their mission. If you talked to a faithful member of the Church for longer than an hour and they haven't brought up their mission, they haven't served a faithful mission. Why do they do this? Because serving a faithful mission changes who you actually are and it bleeds into everything else. Being an honest individual bleeds into everything else. Many will try to fake being honest, many will try to tear down honest men and women to make themselves feel better about their inadequacies but the Spirit of Christ is shed forth unto all to judge right from wrong, the honest from those filled guile and deception etc. It is such an important thing that Joseph Smith taught that in the last days it will be imperative for us

to seek after and become acquainted with honest men, “men who like Daniel pray three times a day” (TPJS, p. 161). As Gordon B. Hinckley taught, “Where there is honesty, other virtues will follow.”

Section IV

Omitting prayer is calculated to lead the mind away from those duties which are incumbent upon us; then let us attend to our prayers and all our duties, and you will know that brother Brigham and his brethren have told you of these things.

Rejoice in all things brought forth in these last days, for the time will come when you will say that we indeed live in the last dispensation.

The trials in the last days will be numerous, but to the faithful they will be of but small moment, for they will live above these things, they will increase in power. The work of God is bound to increase, and just in that proportion will the devil's kingdom rise in power and strength, and walk up to battle against us.

The adversary is bent on having a war with this people, we shall have him right by the side of us, and you will find that he will keep you very busy, if you strive to come off victorious.

We feel the responsibility that is resting upon us, and we wish to save this people, if they will listen to our counsel, both temporal and spiritual. I have to restrain myself, many times, from speaking of things which pass through my mind. I naturally delight in truth and plainness, this is my character, hence I make use of expressions and figures which are plain and easy to be understood.

I wish to have you receive the truth and obey counsel, and become thoroughly imbued with correct principles, that you may bring forth that which is good, raise up righteous sons and daughters, and bear off this kingdom, for it is beginning to work in you.

Take the boys here, the sons of our brethren and sisters, and you may cut them into inch pieces, and they will not forsake this cause, but they will defend it to the last. Some of them may be rough, and perhaps some of them do not pray much, but send them into the vineyard, and then you will see them shew forth the power that is in them.

At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai.

There is much work to be done: God is not asleep, and He will wake up our children and they will bear off this kingdom to the nations of the earth, and will bear testimony to the truth of this work, and of the integrity and true character of Joseph, and Hyrum, and Brigham, of Heber, and Jedediah, and the Twelve, and of thousands of others.

There are trying times ahead of you, do you not begin to feel and see them? If you do not, I say you are asleep. I wish that the spirit which rests upon a few individuals could be upon you,

everyone of you, it would be one of the most joyful times that brother Brigham and I ever saw with the Saints of God upon this earth.

Let us be one; brethren, let us be of one heart and one mind; sisters, listen to counsel, and then, as I have said a hundred times, you never will want for flour and the comforts of life, from this time henceforth and forever.

Do I believe that God can increase our substance, increase our flour and our wheat, as He did those loaves and fishes with which Jesus fed 5,000 people?

Supposing that there was a tub standing here and the people perishing for want of water, could not I, were I beyond the veil, come and pour in water? Yes, and you could not see me. Unless your eyes are touched by the power of God, you cannot see an angel; it is as much as you can do to see me.

Angels are ministering spirits, and do you suppose that they will see this people want? Do you suppose that my Father will sit upon His throne, and see us starve? No, no more than He suffered His servant Elijah—to starve, He then inspired a bird to carry meat to His servant Elijah, and He can do the same now.

Did He not cause manna to come from heaven? Yes, and there is plenty more on hand.

I am telling the truths of God, and I am one with brother Brigham, and I can bear testimony to him and of him, and our testimony is as good as that of Peter, or of John.

Brother Brigham and I once started to travel with sixteen dollars and fifty cents, and in five hundred miles we paid out eighty-two dollars, and had some money left when we got to the end of our journey. Do you not suppose that we believe in angels and holy beings, having visited us on those occasions? Cannot angels furnish Saints with money? Our wants were supplied, and we are witnesses of the fact, and we still live, and shall continue to live, and bear testimony to this generation.

Do you not think that angels can bring flour? Can they not go and take it from those who have plenty, and put it in the empty bins, sacks, and barrels belonging to good men, and that too without your knowing it? It is very common for one to increase, and for another to decrease.

Prepare yourselves for the future scenes through which you may be called to pass.

May the Lord God of Israel bless you all, is my prayer. Amen.

Josline's Thoughts:

To gain Spiritual power to prepare for the Lord second coming we must pour our heart to our heavenly Father, to gain forgiveness for our sins through the atonement of Christ. Learn to what we need to do to sanctify ourselves to be able to stand before His power and majesty.

[Improving Your Personal Prayers \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://churchofjesuschrist.org) **Elder Kevin W. Pearson**

I am convinced that personal prayer is one of the most significant challenges facing members of the Church, particularly youth and young adults. And because they struggle with prayer, they struggle spiritually.

Our personal prayers are a barometer of our spiritual strength and an indicator of our spiritual well-being.

In the divine plan of our Heavenly Father, physical and spiritual separation from His presence are necessary. Prayer is an essential and enabling spiritual link between God and man. Without prayer, there is no possible return to the Father. Without prayer, sufficient faith to understand and keep the commandments is impossible. Without prayer, the necessary spiritual power to avoid temptation and overcome trials and adversity would be unavailable. Without prayer, repentance, forgiveness and the cleansing power of the Atonement are unattainable. With the power of personal prayer, all things are possible.

As members of the church we must be anxiously engaged in the work of the Lord, to do that we must deny ourselves of all ungodliness. It is not easy to do. It will be even harder without constant prayer, in order to make decisions that are righteous before him. So we don't succumb to the enticement and distraction of the world. We should all engrave in our minds the words of Heber C Kimball to not omitting prayer so we can be worthy to be one of His chosen to do His work.

Wilford Woodruff, His Testimony, Etc JD 15:7

I wish to say to the Latter-day Saints, we must not forget our position, nor the blessings that we hope for. All that we expect, we have got to inquire of the Lord for. Some of our brethren, as has been said here, have suffered a little through the spirit of bigotry and persecution that is in the world. I wonder many times there is not a great deal more of it. The Lord Almighty is going to make a short work in the earth; (Rom. 9:28) lest no flesh should be saved he will cut his work short in righteousness. Matt. 24:22 D&C 52:11 The Lord is putting his hook into the jaws of the nations. (Ezek. 29:2-6 Ezek. 38:3-4) He holds Great Babylon in his hands as well as Zion. He will control the children of men; and, as the Lord God lives, if the Latter-day Saints do their duty—live their religion and keep their covenants, Zion will arise, put on her beautiful garments, (Moro. 10:31 D&C 82:14) be clothed with the glory of God, have power in the earth, and the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (Isa. 2:3) Then let our prayers ascend into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth, (D&C 88:2) for he will hear them, that the wisdom of the wise may perish and the understanding of the prudent be hid. (Isa. 29:14) Our weapons are faith, prayer, and confidence in God, for he is our friend if we have any, and we are his if he has any on the face of the earth. The Lord will work with us, and we should work with him; therefore, brethren, let us live by faith, walk by faith, overcome by faith, so that we may enjoy the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us. All the institutions pertaining to the work of God in these latter days are going to progress, Zion is bound to arise, and to arrive at that position in our great future that the Prophets have seen by prophecy and revelation.

The enemies of this people will never get weary of their persecution against the Church, until they are overcome. I expect they will array everything against me that is in their power to control, and that we shall have a long and tremendous warfare. He that will war the true Christian warfare against the corruptions of these last days will have wicked men and angels of devils, and all the infernal powers of darkness continually arrayed against him. When wicked and corrupt men oppose, it is a criterion to judge if a man is warring the Christian warfare. ***When all men speak evil of you falsely, blessed are ye.*** Shall a man be considered bad, when men speak evil of him? No. If a man stands and opposes the world of sin, he may expect to have all wicked and corrupt spirits arrayed against him. But it will be but a little season, and all these afflictions will be turned away from us, inasmuch as we are faithful, and are not overcome by these evils.

Bruce R McConkie, Be Valiant in the Faith 1974-O:33

As members of the Church, we are engaged in a mighty conflict. We are at war. We have enlisted in the cause of Christ to fight against Lucifer and all that is lustful and carnal and evil in the world. We have sworn to fight alongside our friends and against our enemies, and we must not be confused in distinguishing friends from foes. As another of our ancient fellow apostles wrote: “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? ***whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.***”

Some scriptures reference by Heber C Kimble on this discourse show that the enemy will conquer for a while, the saints will be refined, that's why prayers are of utmost importance, so we can be strong and victorious under the power of the adversary whose main purpose is to exalt himself above God, to convince us that he is god in order to confuse us, but the Lord will not forsake us for long,

Isaiah 54:

7 For a small ^amoment have I ^bforsaken thee; but with great mercies will I ^cgather thee

Zechariah 13:9

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Daniel:

35 And *some* of them of understanding shall fall, to ^atry them, and to purge, and to make *them* white, *even* to the time of the end: because *it is* yet for a time appointed.

36 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the ^aGod of gods, and shall prosper till the ^bindignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

As we know the power of the adversary will increase and so will the work of God. The Leaders of the Church can do so much, they can urge, they can plead, but the ultimate work has to be done by us, members of the church. Fathers and mothers are responsible to raise this righteous generation, young man and middle age men are responsible to heed the voice of the Lord

through His prophet and apostles, to make themselves worthy and available to further the cause of Zion. That work cannot be done with filthiness

From Elder M. Russell Ballard, The greatest Generation of Missionaries 2002-O:46 we read

These are “perilous times.” We battle literally for the souls of men. The enemy is unforgiving and relentless. He is taking eternal prisoners at an alarming rate. And he shows no sign of letting up.

Now, fathers, you have a vital role in this preparation process. We know that the most profound influence on helping young men prepare for the Melchizedek Priesthood, marriage, and fatherhood is the family. If your sons understand the basic doctrines required to become a faithful father, they will surely be ready to serve as a full-time missionary. Unfortunately, far too many fathers abdicate this eternal responsibility. You may assume that the bishop and the seminary, Sunday School, and Young Men teachers and leaders are in a better position to motivate and inspire your sons than you are. That simply is not the case. While ecclesiastical leaders are important to your son’s priesthood and missionary preparation, the Church exists as a resource to you. It is not a substitute for your inspired teaching, guidance, and correction.

Consequently, if we are “raising the bar” for your sons to serve as missionaries, that means we are also “raising the bar” for you. If we expect more of them, that means we expect more of you and your wife as well. Remember, Helaman’s 2,000 stripling warriors were faithful because “they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him” [Alma 53:21](#) and that instruction came in their homes.

Another reference from the JoD is

Exodus 19:

16 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled.

Heber C. Kimball had hope and confidence that the Joseph boys will be endowed with the power of Heaven and that they will Roar like the Thunders of mount Sinai. How will that come to pass? From the talk of Elder Bednar:

[The Powers of Heaven \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://churchofjesuschrist.org)

President Ezra Taft Benson taught:

“It is not enough to receive the priesthood and then sit back passively and wait until someone prods us into activity. When we receive the priesthood, we have the obligation of becoming actively and anxiously engaged in promoting the cause of righteousness in the earth, because the Lord says:

“... 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 58:29](#)]” (*So Shall Ye Reap* [1960], 21).

President Spencer W. Kimball also pointedly emphasized the active nature of the priesthood: “One breaks the priesthood covenant by transgressing commandments—but also by leaving undone his duties. **Accordingly, to break this covenant one needs only to do nothing**” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 96).

As we do our best to fulfill our priesthood responsibilities, we can be blessed with priesthood power. **The power of the priesthood is God’s power operating through men and boys like us and requires personal righteousness, faithfulness, obedience, and diligence.** A boy or a man may receive priesthood authority by the laying on of hands but will have no priesthood power if he is disobedient, unworthy, or unwilling to serve.

“The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and ... the *powers* of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. “That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man” (D&C 121:36–37; emphasis added).

Brethren, for a boy or a man to receive priesthood authority but neglect to do what is necessary to qualify for priesthood power is unacceptable to the Lord. Priesthood holders young and old need both authority and power—the necessary permission and the spiritual capacity to represent God in the work of salvation.

[The Price of Priesthood Power \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://churchofjesuschrist.org) Russell M Nelson

Are you willing to worship in the temple regularly? The Lord loves to do His own teaching in His holy house. Imagine how pleased He would be if you asked Him to teach you about priesthood keys, authority, and power as you experience the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood in the holy temple. Imagine the increase in priesthood power that could be yours.

Now, if all of this sounds excessive, please consider how different our relationships with our wife, children, and associates at work would be if we were *as* concerned about gaining priesthood power as we are in progressing at work or increasing the balance in our bank account. If we will humbly present ourselves before the Lord and ask Him to teach us, He will show us how to increase *our* access to *His* power.

---Are we willing to pray, fast, study, seek, worship, and serve as men of God so we can have that kind of priesthood power?

My dear brethren, we have been given a sacred trust—the authority of God to bless others. May each one of us rise up as the man God foreordained us to be—ready to bear the priesthood of God bravely, eager to pay whatever price is required to increase his power in the priesthood. With *that* power, we can help prepare the world for the Second Coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

It is disheartening to see when I go to the temple many times how much it is void of valiant young men and not enough young women either. President Nelson has been pleading with us to go to the temple, read our scriptures, teach the gospel in our homes, to gain knowledge of the gospel,

it seems that he is taking the task upon himself and the quorum of the twelve apostle to engage the youth in so many devotional around the world. This is to show how important the work is in our days. We must heed the voice of the prophet to teach our children, Priesthood holders should not be slacking on their duties, and found to be weak to face the evil power of the adversary

Ezra Taft Benson, Prepare, Then Fear Not 1967-A:58

A man must not only stand for the right principles, but he must also fight for them. Those who fight for principle can be proud of the friends they've gained and the enemies they've earned.

We must each of us do our homework. "My people are destroyed," said Hosea, "for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6) We must be wise as serpents (Matt. 10:16) for, as the Apostle Paul said, we wrestle "against the rulers of the darkness . . .against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12)

This great work cannot be done alone we all need each other in the faith. In order to build Zion we must be of one mind and one Heart, no rich and no poor among us, there should be no distinction of class; together as a people of the same belief in doctrine, in deed and in zeal. We must dedicate ourselves to the cause. We can't do that if we can't humble ourselves and consecrate ourselves with everything that we have to the service of the Lord. The call to get up and do was made by President Nelson:

[We Can Do Better and Be Better \(excerpts\) \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://churchofjesuschrist.org) President Nelson

Brethren, we all need to repent. We need to get up off the couch, put down the remote, and wake up from our spiritual slumber. It is time to put on the full armor of God so we can engage in the most important work on earth. . . . The forces of evil have never raged more forcefully than they do today. As servants of the Lord, we cannot be asleep while this battle rages. . . .

Gratefully, the priesthood we hold is far stronger than are the wiles of the adversary. I plead with you to be the men and young men the Lord needs you to be.

Heber C. Kimball continues with the following scripture:

Moses 7:

18 And the Lord called his people ^aZION, because they were of ^bone heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.

The follow up scriptures are:

Acts 4:31–32

31 ¶ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

God commanded us to be one, if we are not one we are not His. If all are children of God and are our brothers and sisters why do we feel that we need to be above them and to have more than them? It's because we live in vanity, pride, condescension, and idolatry; we want to elevate ourselves and show that we are better than them, to be in control and exert unrighteous dominion over them. This is what Satan does, we are no better than he, when we act in such a way. We are selfish and only see ourselves and want to gather riches for ourselves. Have we tried to put ourselves in their shoes? The charity we are asked to live is pure love, to invite them, to clothes them, to lift them, to help them to become as one with them, to teach them the word of God, to know their name, to know who they are...Can we do that? We need our status to be elevated by God not Babylon. We need to say that the poor are our brothers and sisters by our actions, not by words. We must shed our selfish attitude trust in God, let Him be in control, humble ourselves, give ourselves to Him, and in return He will bless us with everything we need and more, He will imbue us with His power. No matter what we think we have earned, it's because He allows it, to see what choices we will make with it, not because He loves us more than them.

Reference from Heber C. Kimball: about Miracles in the pass, and can be perform in our lives if we are faithful

D&C 76:

88 And also the telestial receive it of the administering of angels who are appointed to minister for them, or who are appointed to be “ministering spirits for them; for they shall be “heirs of salvation.

1 King 17:

Doctrine and Covenants

19 Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.

20 But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.

Many people and prophets of this dispensation as well as times of old, experienced miracles after miracles because they trusted the Lord to deliver them from their awful situations; they also followed the teachings of the prophets of their days. Likewise we should have faith and believe that God will not let us down in our moments of needs. When He promises that He will do something He will deliver. He will unveil His powerful arms in the last days. We just have to do our part, trust God, heed the voice of His prophet, gain knowledge of the Doctrine of His church through our studies and obey His commandments, be ready to live His celestial laws; so we can be endowed with the powers of heaven.

[The Ministry of Angels \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://churchofjesuschrist.org) By Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

“Has the day of miracles ceased?

“Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved?”

“Behold I say unto you, Nay; for ... it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men. ...

“For behold, they are subject unto [Christ], to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness.”²

[Section 103, The Redemption of Zion by Power \(churchofjesuschrist.org\)](http://churchofjesuschrist.org)

There will be a pure people prepared to receive the Lord when He comes (see Moses 7:62–64; D&C 35:20–21; 100:16). Those who return to redeem Zion will live the laws of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 105:5) and thus will be prepared to be led by the presence of the Lord.

Elder Orson Pratt spoke of the need to become a sanctified people. “When we go back to Jackson County, we are to go back with power. Do you suppose that God will reveal his power among an unsanctified people, who have no regard nor respect for his laws and institutions, but who are filled with covetousness? No. When God shows forth his power among the Latter-day Saints, it will be because there is a union of feeling in regard to doctrine, and in regard to everything that God has placed in their hands; and not only a union, but a sanctification on their part, that there shall not be a spot or wrinkle as it were, but everything shall be as fair as the sun that shines in the heavens.” (In *Journal of Discourses*, 15:361.)

I Hope and pray that we are all able to sanctify ourselves to embark in the work that the Lord has entrusted us to do. When the time comes, that He will find us as a His unified, and sanctified people, that we have enough faith and trust in Him even with our own lives, so we can be numbered among His army that is ready for the final battle, and be able to live in His presence.

Micah's Thoughts:

This quote here is one of the most succinct abridgments of that doctrine I believe anywhere and that doctrine is this: that as Zion rises Satan and the forces of evil rise in the same proportion. You will find pieces of that taught in a lot of locations but few taught clearer and more precise here. We went over some of the implications of that doctrine in my Brother Hyrum Andrus video that I recently put out in which it was taught that as Zion rises in beauty, as they obtain the pillar of fire and cloud, as the redemption of Zion rolls forth etc., etc., etc., that Satan will be allowed to exercise opposing miracles and wonders proportional to what is taking place here. This is why we get the anti-Christ performing miracles, raining fire down from heaven, in the sight of all people. Understanding this doctrine would help people or rather prevent people from erroneously placing the rising of evil such as the anti-Christ taking place before the Lord's ensign is raised and proclamation gone forth. This is very important to understand because it ties directly into the redemption of Zion and the cleaning of America, which are things right on our doorstep. The warning that Kimball gives here that Satan will be right on our hip “if we are striving to be victorious.” This quote made me think of President Brigham Young when he said, “And when

the spirit of persecution, the spirit of hatred, of wrath, and malice ceases in the world against this people, it will be the time that this people have apostatized and join hands with the wicked, and never until then; which I pray may never come.” (Discourses of Brigham Young compiled by John A. Widtsoe p.112)

I feel blessed and honored to be sent here to the Earth at this time to be able to do exactly what Elder Heber C Kimball said here- “to bear testimony to the truth of this work, and of the integrity and true character of Joseph, and Hyrum, and Brigham, of Heber, and Jedediah, and the Twelve, and of thousands of others.” I know that this is the work of Christ, the Church of the Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is His Church, I know that the early brethren of the Church were not wrong, they were not racists, I know they were men of God of good character and sound minds, and I long for the day that I can stand side by side with them if I to be so worthy. For I know that “righteousness and truth will sweep the earth as with a flood” and what does that mean?

“Righteousness to Sweep the Earth (TPJS, p.83-84)

First, I shall begin by quoting from the prophecy of Enoch, speaking of the last days: “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 (this resurrection I understand to be the corporeal body); yea, and also the resurrection of all men; righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine own elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, a 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.”

The Glorious Resurrection (TPJS 84)

Now I understand by this quotation, that God clearly manifested to Enoch the redemption which He prepared, by offering the Messiah as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; and by virtue of the same, the glorious resurrection of the Savior, and the resurrection of all the human family, even a resurrection of their corporeal bodies, is brought to pass; and also righteousness and truth are to sweep the earth as with a flood. And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? I will answer. Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.”

I know that righteousness and truth will sweep the earth like a flood and it will be these angels and it will be these Joseph’s Boys. I know that the power by which this will take place is the spirit and power of Elijah which will turn our hearts to them and the promises made to them and they will look down upon us as Elder Heber C Kimball said, and they will yearn over us for they will not want us to fail or to suffer needlessly. We cannot be saved without them and them without us.

Brothers and sisters, let the Lord wake you up and let him turn you into a savior on Mount Zion and let us bear off the kingdom of our God triumphantly is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.