

Joseph Smith, a humble, unknown farm boy, as Peter was the lowly fisherman—and yet in the hands of God he became the mightiest and the greatest in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times, for he definitely reaffirmed the actual existence of the Father and His beloved Son Jesus Christ. Yes, “the weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones.” May our obedience to and compliance with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as restored through His instrument, Joseph Smith, increase our testimonies of Joseph Smith’s divine calling, I humbly ask, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

“I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, ‘Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown,’ and he replied, ‘Go out into the darkness, and put your hand in the hand of God. That shall be to you better than a light, and safer than the known way.’”

COMMENTS ON WORDS OF KING OF ENGLAND

Those words were quoted by the King of England in an Empire Broadcast shortly after Great Britain entered the present world conflict. I presume the thought that he intended to convey to his subjects was that they should humble themselves and in supplication and in faith approach their Heavenly Father for divine guidance and His protection. And it was well that they be so counseled, for our Heavenly Father is concerned about all His children and desires that they “. . . believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

THE VOICE OF THE SHEPHERD

To the Latter-day Saints in this troublous day, when the perils of the earth are round about us, it is well that we take stock as to how we may approach Him and what may be our blessings. The Savior Himself spoke of the Comforter, which He said would guide into all truth, would bring all things to our remembrance, would show us things to come, and would teach us all things whatsoever the Lord our God had commanded. But there was another thing that has been spoken of by the scriptures, another guiding light that I should like to call to the attention of the Latter-day Saints at this time. The Savior enunciated this principle in the beautiful parable in which He spoke of Himself as the shepherd, the sheepfold as His kingdom, and the sheep as His people. These were His words:

... and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and he leadeth them out.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. (John 10:3, 4)

The Apostle Paul said:

There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, . . .
Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him
that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto
me. (I Corinthians 14:10, 11)

So we may in this day distinguish among the babble of voices that
are to be heard on every side, the voice of the true shepherd, that we
be not found to be barbarians in the day of our need for direction and
guidance. The Apostle Peter declared that way when he said:

PROPHECY CONTINUES IN PRESENT GENERATION

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that
ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day
dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private
interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy
men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (II Peter 1:
19-21)

This thought agrees in substance with that declared by the Prophet
Amos, when he said:

Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto
his servants the prophets. (Amos 3:7)

Those secrets have been revealed in this day, when in our generation
the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith said:

Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon
the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun.,
and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments . . . (D.
& C. 1:17)

Just as the Prophet Joseph was called, so have been called Brigham
Young, and every one who has presided in the Presidency of this Church,
down to President Grant, President Clark, and President McKay, who
today occupy the high place as the mouthpieces of God in directing this
people.

We as a people seem to be willing to accept many of the ancient
prophecies as having been literally fulfilled but when we see prophecies
fulfilled in our own day we are prone to question and to express some
doubts. As the Master said, ". . . A prophet is not without honor, but in
his own country, . . ." (Mark 6:4) and he might have added, "Save in his
own time."

NEED FOR CHURCH WELFARE PLAN

I should like to bring to you some observations for just a few
moments. Today I am in a reflective mood because we at this conference
are celebrating the seventh anniversary of the inauguration of what has
been styled the Church Welfare program. Coming on a train from the
east last fall, I read from an editorial in the *Chicago Tribune* wherein
editors were commenting upon an article that had been written by a
prominent educator in the *School Review*, a publication of the Depart-

ment of Education of the University of Chicago. This educator's statement in that *Review* was a very doleful picture of what was to happen to us after the present World War had finished. He spoke of the loss of world markets, the difficulties in finding adjustments for the millions who had been thrown out into war industries, and for the returning millions of our boys from the armed services. He spoke of the desperation, the frustration, and the futility of many of those thus found in the toils of that readjustment period. And then he said, "The only vocational group which will not immediately suffer are the farmers; they can raise what they need." Then he suggested that we need prepare for what was in store by teaching farming as a compulsory subject, to get hold of a piece of land, that those provided with farming skill should be able thereby to keep the "wolf" from the door. And so he goes on.

That set me thinking, because the voice of the Lord was declared back in 1894, in October of that year, by that man whom we sustained then as the prophet, seer, and revelator unto this Church. He said:

So far as temporal matters are concerned we must go to work to provide for ourselves. The day will come, as we have all been told, that we shall see the necessity of making our own shoes and our own clothing, and providing our own foodstuffs, and uniting together to carry out the purposes of the Lord. We will be preserved in the mountains of Israel in the days of God's judgments. I therefore say unto you, my brethren and sisters, prepare for that which is to come. (Wilford Woodruff—Weber Stake, October 8, 1894)

The voice of the Lord was again heard in 1936, when again we were told by our leaders that there should be a production of all the things needed by those who would otherwise be unable to provide for themselves. For seven years the Church has been schooled in the methods of production and distribution. Storehouses have been established—eighty-six of them today—grain elevators have been erected and yet in the face of all that anxious, feverish activity that has been directed by the Presidency of this Church, there have been contrary voices, there have been contrary philosophies of spending ourselves into prosperity; we have had a subversive economic program; we have had subsidies and controls of every kind that seemed to work at cross purposes with that which the prophets of the Lord were guiding us to do.

The spirit of all this Welfare activity throughout the Church and the meaning of all this preparation seemed to have found expression in a dedicatory prayer offered by one of the Presidency of the Church in August of 1940 when the elevator down on Welfare Square was dedicated. Here was a statement from that beautiful and inspired dedicatory prayer:

May this be an edifice of service, a contribution of love, and as such we dedicate it to thee and ask thy blessings to attend all who may have contributed to its erection, and all who may contribute to the keeping of these bins filled with the wheat *which is considered necessary to be preserved preparatory for the judgments that await the nations of the earth.* (David O. McKay, August, 1940)

THE SAINTS INSTRUCTED TO PRODUCE AND STORE

Then came 1937. The voice of the Lord again spoke through His mouthpiece from this place to Israel. Individuals were told to go beyond Welfare production, putting storage in their own places sufficient for a needed supply. Oh, there were some who sat back in that day, just like the scornors who sat in the house of Lehi's dreams, and pointed fingers of scorn at the Latter-day Saints who heeded that call, and came to a point after the declaration of war when all such were dubbed as hoarders, and were accused of being unpatriotic to the great urge that was being made of this great American nation. But shortly after that finger of scorn was pointed and those epithets were thus hurled, we had a letter from a state consumer officer in connection with the O.P.A. office who asked the Church to stimulate its membership to produce and to store, to do the very thing that for five and six years the Church had actually been doing under the direction and by the counsel of the leadership of this Church.

Again there came counsel in 1942, a change was made.

We renew our counsel, said the leaders of the Church, and repeat our instructions: Let every Latter-day Saint that has land, produce some valuable essential foodstuff thereon and then preserve it; or if he cannot produce an essential foodstuff, let him produce some other kind and exchange it for an essential foodstuff; let them who have no land of their own, and who have knowledge of farming and gardening, try to rent some, either by themselves or with others, and produce foodstuff thereon, and preserve it. Let those who have land produce enough extra to help their less fortunate brethren. (Message of First Presidency, April, 1942)

It was as though they knew fully a year before the present rationing program was inaugurated that there had to be a change from the previous activity if we would be sustained in this time. Let me ask you leaders who are here today: In 1937 did you store in your own basements and in your own private storehouses and granaries sufficient for a year's supply? You city dwellers, did you in 1942 heed what was said from this stand? Did you go out and procure that land a year ago in preparation for that which came last fall in the way of a rationing program? If you didn't, you find yourselves now rather anxious about the present situation, because land this year is much more difficult and much more costly to obtain.

I remember something else that was said. It was declared also from this pulpit that the interpretation of the vision of Pharaoh by the boy Joseph when he saw the seven lean and the seven fat kine—or the reverse, the seven fat and the seven lean kine—coming up out of the water, was not without parallel in our own day. Of this parallel our leaders reminded us in these words: "We have had seven fat years," (and this marks the end of the seventh year since the inauguration of the Welfare plan). "We are warned that scanty days lie ahead." As I have thought of that statement of the brethren, I have wondered if we may see a shadow also in the fact that the eleven brothers who were unguided by the spirit of the Lord were forced to come to the one pro-

vident brother who listened to the word of God. I wonder if we are likewise to see that parallel in Israel today.

WISDOM SHOWN IN INSTRUCTIONS AS TO TRAVEL

Yes, there were some other things. May I just speak of one more? On January 17, 1942, a letter was sent out to all the Church urging and instructing that they discontinue stake meetings; to restrict the travel by stake board members, to cut down on other activities where otherwise they would not be able to conserve. And when you remember that all this happened from eight months to nearly a year before the tire and gas rationing took place, you may well understand if you will only take thought that here again was the voice of the Lord to this people, trying to prepare them for the conservation program that within a year was forced upon them. No one at that time could surely foresee that the countries that had been producing certain essential commodities were to be overrun and we thereby be forced into a shortage.

CALLING OUT OF MISSIONARIES

Yes, you remember when the missionaries were taken out of Europe a few years ago, there were many who sat in the scorner's seats who said: "Why, that is silly. During the last World War we did not have all the missionaries taken out." But those who thus spoke forgot that Brigham Young had voiced the word of the Lord some years ago when he said:

Do you think there is calamity abroad now among the people? . . . All we have yet heard, and all we have experienced is scarcely a preface to the sermon that is going to be preached.

Now, mark you this:

When the testimony of the Elders ceases to be given and the Lord says to them, "Come home; I will now preach my own sermons to the nations of the earth." All you now know can scarcely be called a preface to the sermon that will be preached with fire and sword, tempests, earthquake, hail, rain, thunders and lightnings, and fearful destruction.

And it is a matter of record that hardly had the last missionary been called home until all hell seemed to break loose in Europe, in veritable fulfillment of the prophecy that had been given. When likewise the missionaries were called from the island missions of the sea, we heard the same clamor, criticising these brethren because they were doing things that seemed to some members of the Church to be not necessary, and yet we see the great wisdom displayed in what already has been done.

LESSON FROM LIFE OF MOSES

I think we could learn a lesson from the story that we read in the book of Exodus (17:6-13), in the life of Moses the prophet. You will recall that Amalek had come upon Israel, and Joshua was commanded by Moses to go out with his army. He said to Joshua, "I will stand upon the

mount with the rod of the Lord in my hand, and you go fight the battles of Israel." And as long as he stood with his hands upraised Israel prevailed against the enemy, but his hands became heavy and he could not hold them up, and when he would drop his hands, the enemy prevailed over Israel. And so they sat him upon a rock upon the Mount, and Aaron and Hur stood holding his hands upraised, that Israel would prevail in that terrible day.

That also is not without its shadow today and its lesson to Israel. Here sits today on this stand the man as President of this Church who holds in his hand the rod of the Lord; he is sitting upon the mount, and as long as his hands are upheld by obedience to his direction and his counsel, Israel will prevail against her enemies. But whenever we come to a time when we allow his hands to fall, and we as the Priesthood of the living God fail to uphold his hands, just in that day we may expect our enemies to come upon us and to destroy us.

SECURITY IN FOLLOWING ADVICE OF LEADERS

I was down in Kelsey, Texas, last November, and I heard a group of anxious people asking, "Is now the day for us to come up to Zion, where we can come to the mountain of the Lord, where we can be protected from our enemies?" I pondered that question, I prayed about it. What should we say to those people who were in their anxiety? I have studied it a bit, I have learned something of what the Spirit has taught, and I know now that the place of safety in this world is not in any given place; it doesn't make so much difference where we live; but the all-important thing is how we live, and I have found that security can come to Israel only when they keep the commandments, when they live so that they can enjoy the companionship, the direction, the comfort, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit of the Lord, when they are willing to listen to these men whom God has set here to preside as His mouthpieces, and when we obey the counsels of the Church.

When a decision has been reached by the presiding councils of the Church and a majority in these councils has decided on a certain policy, and then there comes a minority voice contrary to that majority decision one may know with a surety that that minority voice is not speaking the will of the Lord. I tremble when I think of the truth of that statement. I am greatly concerned when I now sit in one of the presiding councils of the Church, and remember that in days gone by there have been those who have fallen by the way because they went out in contradiction of the majority decision of that body. And so that places before you a safe guide. Should there be those, even though in high places, who may come among you not speaking the policy of the Church as declared by these men whom we sustain as the prophets of the living God, the Church may know that those who thus speak are not speaking the mind of the Lord and the voice of the Lord and the power of God unto salvation.

God help us to follow the light. May we be guided unerringly through this day of grave uncertainty, that we may be kept upon Zion's hill and be not strangers and barbarians to the work of the Lord, but

may be ones to listen to him who is our shepherd, whose voice we know, I humbly pray, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Brethren: The 113th Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is now drawing to a close.

TEACHINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

In this Conference you men who hold responsible positions as Stake, Ward, and Quorum officers have represented the entire membership of the Church. During these six sessions the General Authorities of the Church have set forth impressively and clearly the paramount need that the Gospel of Jesus Christ permeate the hearts of men, and that the Spirit thereof direct the nations of the world. The standards and ideals of the Church have been set forth most sincerely and impressively. Earnest appeals have been made to all members, and particularly to the young men and women, that they subscribe their lives in conformity with the standards and ideals of righteousness. Impressively the Authorities have urged you men to be real guides, leaders and exemplars to the membership of the Church and to all men.

Now in conclusion, brethren, I repeat the words of the Lord to the Priesthood of His Church: "Wherefore now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed in all diligence. He that is slothful and will not learn his duty shall not be worthy to stand, and he that shows himself not approved, shall not be counted worthy to stand."

BLESSINGS INVOKED

God bless you, brethren. God bless the membership of the Church throughout the world. May His peace be with our brethren and sisters over in the war-torn countries; be with them in the islands of the sea, and our brethren who are there presiding, that the Spirit of the Almighty might be with them under all conditions to comfort them and guide them.

God bless our boys who are at the front, fighting for freedom, offering their lives that this world may again have peace. May the Lord's comforting influence be with the parents whose boys have already made the supreme sacrifice. May these parents and loved ones know that no bomb can end the life of one who thus offers himself; it may silence his heart beats, but he lives because man is immortal. May our soldier boys so live that no matter what comes to them, they may have in their hearts the eternal truth that "he that liveth and believeth in Christ shall never die."

SYLVESTER Q. CANNON ABSENT BECAUSE OF ILLNESS

You have noticed that one of the Twelve has been absent from this