

**President David O. McKay**

Elder Orval W. Adams, Chairman of the Church Auditing Committee, will now read the report of the Church Auditors, after whom Elder Marion G. Romney, of the Assistants to the Twelve, will speak to us.

**REPORT OF CHURCH AUDITING COMMITTEE**

Elder Orval W. Adams read the following report:

President David O. McKay and Council of the Twelve  
47 East South Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Brethren:

The Church Auditing Committee has reviewed the annual financial report of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the year ending December 31, 1950.

The accounting system and records were found to be adequate, and are meticulously maintained. Disbursement of Church funds is controlled through a comprehensive budget system, which properly safeguards expenditures. The funds are being carefully conserved.

The Church is in strong financial position and free from debt.

Respectfully submitted,

Orval W. Adams  
Albert E. Bowen  
George S. Spencer  
Harold H. Bennett

*Church Auditing Committee*

**ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY**

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

If I can enjoy the Spirit of the Lord, for which I earnestly pray, I desire to give you a message of hope and courage. I am prompted to this desire by the fact that in my recent travels among the people, I have sensed a growing spirit of uneasiness and foreboding.

**SPIRIT OF UNEASINESS**

Following a welfare meeting held a few months ago on the Pacific Coast, in which we had counseled the people to obtain permanent welfare production projects that they might produce the necessities to carry on our welfare work without calling upon the Saints year after year for cash contributions, a sister told me she was comforted by our advice, that she felt it would not have been

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given if the people were not to stay there permanently. She had been disturbed and worried by talk that bombs might be dropped in that area, necessitating their moving inland.

This brought to my mind the experiences of youth, when in the colonies of Old Mexico we were agitated over whether the troubles incident to the Madero Revolution would necessitate our leaving the country. At the peak of the disturbances, our stake president who was my uncle, Junius Romney—planted an orchard of young apple trees. I well remember how my mind was relieved by hearing people say that if we were facing expulsion, the stake president would not be planting trees which would take years to mature. Notwithstanding the comfort I got out of that assurance, we did have to leave.

#### NEED FOR HOPE AND COURAGE

I was, of course, unable to advise the good sister whether bombs would be dropped, nor did I know whether the city would have to be evacuated, but I did have a great desire to give her some comfort and courage which would ease her mind.

I remembered that President Joseph F. Smith had said that leaders in the Church "should be men not easily discouraged, not without hope, and not given to foreboding of all sorts of evils to come," that if they "sometimes feel the weight and anxiety of momentous times, they should be all the firmer and all the more resolute in those convictions which come from a God-fearing conscience and pure lives. It is a matter of the greatest importance," he concluded, "that the people be educated to appreciate and cultivate the bright side of life rather than to permit its darkness and shadows to hover over them." (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 193.)

#### CALAMITIES AHEAD

I could not give her, nor can I extend to you, much hope and courage based upon an expectation that we are about to enter upon a period of world peace and security. I do not expect any such happy circumstances to prevail in the immediate future. As I read the signs of the times, in light of the revealed word of God, we are in line for something quite different.

A long time ago the Lord raised the curtain on the scene of destruction awaiting the inhabitants of the earth if they followed to the end the course they were then pursuing. More than a hundred years ago, he said that a desolating scourge should go forth among the inhabitants of the earth, and if they repented not, it should continue from time to time until the earth was empty and the inhabitants thereof utterly destroyed.

For all flesh is corrupted before me; and the powers of darkness prevail upon the earth, among the children of men.

. . . all eternity is pained, and the angels are waiting the great command to reap down the earth, to gather the tares that they may be burned. (D. & C. 38:11-12.)

I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of men have chosen to continue down the path they were then following. I can discern no change in their course sufficient to justify in me a hope that the calamities which the Lord said he knew would come upon the inhabitants of the earth will be turned aside.

#### COURAGE OF FAITH

But we Latter-day Saints must not let ourselves be so engulfed with forebodings that we fail to obtain and enjoy such hope and courage as is within our reach—the hope and courage born of faith in the power of righteousness to ultimately triumph. I have boundless confidence in that power. I am persuaded beyond all doubt that the destiny of men and nations is in the hands of the Almighty, who has respect for righteousness, and not in the hands of conniving politicians whose wisdom has perished, whose understanding has come to naught, and who have no respect for righteousness. If it were not so, I should be in utter despair. I believe that the record and the word of God justify us in so placing our hope.

#### CHARGE TO JOSHUA

I cite your attention to the calling of Joshua, the successor to Moses, whose mission it was to lead Israel over Jordan and divide among them the promised land which was then inhabited by an armed and hostile people. It was a difficult and arduous assignment. To strengthen him for it, the Lord gave Joshua a great promise and a great charge. This is the promise:

There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

And this is the charge:

Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous. . . .

Now note with care how Joshua was directed to show his strength and courage, and also that prosperity was to follow his performance.

. . . that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

Moses had been the living prophet during the days of Joshua.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and then thou shalt have good success.

The book of the law was the standard church work of that day.

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. (Joshua 1:5-9.)

As I read this scripture, I felt that Joshua's obedience to the teachings of Moses and to the contents of the book of the law was the test of his strength and courage. The extent to which he was to prosper, be unafraid and undismayed, and have the Lord with him, depended upon his rating in that test.

We can demonstrate our strength and courage in the same way, and be unafraid and undismayed and have the Lord with us whithersoever we go, by observing the teachings of the living prophets and observing to do according to all that is written in the standard works of the Church.

#### TEACHINGS OF WILFORD WOODRUFF

During the last years of President Woodruff's life, his mind dwelt much upon the calamities which were coming upon the earth, and he gave many warnings of them. But he did not leave his hearers in despair. Always he held out to them hope and courage, conditioned on their righteousness. Here is a sample of his teachings:

Over the millions of people on this earth, there hangs a cloud of darkness almost entirely upon their shoulders. Can you tell me where the people are who will be shielded and protected from these great calamities and judgments which are even now at our doors? I'll tell you. The priesthood of God who honor their priesthood, and who are worthy of their blessings, are the only ones who shall have their safety and protection. They are the only mortal beings. No other people have a right to be shielded from these judgments. They are at our very doors; not even this people will escape them entirely. They will come down like the judgments of Sodom and Gomorrah. And none but the priesthood will be safe from their fury.

But he concluded with this note of assurance:

If you do your duty, and I do my duty, we shall have protection, and shall pass through the afflictions in peace and in safety. (*The Improvement Era*, Vol. 17, pp. 1164-1165.)

On another occasion he had this to say:

I will say to the Latter-day Saints, if they will be faithful, and do what they should do, and listen to the counsel given to them, they need not have any fears about anything, for the whole work is in the hands of God, the destinies of nations lie there. It is better for a people to be wise, to get righteousness, to be the friends of God, than to occupy any other positions in life. (*J. D.* 2, p. 199, February 25, 1855, *Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, p. 6.)

#### PROTECTION OF RIGHTEOUS

Nephi, speaking of our day which by the power of God he had seen in vision, said the Lord would not suffer the wicked to destroy the righteous, but that he would "preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear." (1 Nephi 22:16-17.)

The Lord renewed this same promise of protection to the righteous in 1831 when he said he was angry with the wicked, that he was withholding his Spirit from the inhabitants of the earth, that he had decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and that the wicked should destroy the wicked.

And the saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire. (*D. & C. 63:33-34.*)

Two or three months later, he continued:

. . . the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion.

And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst. (*Ibid., 1:35-36.*)

I am persuaded that a complete surrender to the principles of righteousness would lift God's people out of the turmoil of this present world. Such has been the record in the past, as witness the experiences of Enoch and his people and the record of the Nephites following their visit from the risen Redeemer.

#### ZION A PLACE OF SAFETY

I believe a similar performance by us in our day would bring the same results. I not only believe, but I know it would, and that it will yet be done. I don't know just how soon, but I am looking forward with certainty to the fulfilment of the words spoken by the Lord to the Church in its infancy, when he directed the Saints to gather together their riches to purchase an inheritance in Zion, which he said was to be a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the Saints of the most high God. There the glory of the Lord is to be a terror to the wicked and a comfort to the righteous. Zion's inhabitants are to be the only people that shall not be at war one with another, and every man that will not take up his sword against his neighbour must flee unto it for safety.

And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy. (*Ibid., 45:71.*)

#### HOPE IN THE FUTURE

Now, I know, my brothers and sisters, that we will have our souls tested before we reach these glories of the future, but if we have them in view and live righteously, we shall thereby be sustained for the trials we must endure. Paul said it was the glory set before Jesus for which he endured the cross, and President Young said it was the vision of Zion as it shall be which sustained the Saints as they pulled their covered wagons from ruts and mudholes and trudged across the plains. Therefore, with hope in the future, let

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us lift up our hearts and rejoice, and with strength and courage let us gird up our loins and take upon us the whole armour of righteousness, that we may be able to withstand these evil days, that having done all, we may be able to stand.

And as we journey through these anxious times,

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:

The Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee:

The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. (*Num.* 6-24-26.)

This I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Combined Choruses of the Brigham Young University joined with the congregation in singing "High on the Mountain Top," conducted by Elder J. Spencer Cornwall.

### ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

*Patriarch to the Church*

My brothers and sisters, I wish to express my feelings along with others in this conference regarding the passing of our late President, George Albert Smith. I, for one, have lost a great friend. I don't think anyone has been more able to take the place of my earthly father than President George Albert Smith has done.

I think he emulated in his life all of the principles of the gospel, and no matter what subject is selected during this conference by the General Authorities or any of those who speak here, it will be a subject of which President George Albert Smith was an excellent example.

#### KEY TO HAPPINESS

And I pray the Lord will be with me as I express today what thought I have had in mind on the principles of the gospel and the foundation upon which we may have happiness in this life and happiness in the life to come; for no happiness comes without success, or without growth and progress.

Reading from the Doctrine and Covenants, Section twenty-nine, verses 36 to 40,

And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil—for, behold, the devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of the heaven turned he away from me because of their agency;

And they were thrust down, and thus came the devil and his angels;

And, behold, there is a place prepared for them from the beginning, which place is hell.

And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet—

Wherefore, it came to pass that the devil tempted Adam, and he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the devil, because he yielded unto temptation.