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he performed one of the greatest miracles that ever happened. The Arabs suddenly threw down their arms and surrendered. When their delegation appeared with the white flag, they asked, "Where are the three men that led you, and where are all the troops we saw?" The Jews told them that they did not know anything of the three men, for this group was their entire force. The Arabs said that they saw three persons, with long beards and flowing white robes who warned them not to fight any longer, otherwise they would all be killed. They became so frightened that they decided to give up. What an encouragement this was for the Jews to realize that God was fighting for them."

And then he told about another case when one man with a white robe and a long beard appeared, and they all saw him, and they gave up their arms. Now I do not know, but the Lord said that he would do something for the Jews in the latter days, and when he permitted the Three Nephites to tarry upon this land, he said:

And behold they will be among the Gentiles, and the Gentiles shall know them not.

They will also be among the Jews, and the Jews shall know them not.

And it shall come to pass, when the Lord seeth fit in his wisdom that they shall minister unto all the scattered tribes of Israel, and unto all nations, kindreds,

tongues and people, and shall bring out of them unto Jesus many souls, that their desire may be fulfilled, and also because of the convincing power of God which is in them. (3 Ne. 28:27-29.)

Whoever these persons were, they seemed to have "convincing power" sufficient to cause a whole army to surrender.

In permitting these Three Nephites to tarry upon the earth until he, Jesus, should come in his glory, he must have had in mind some great things for them to accomplish in bringing about a fulfillment of his promises. Whether it was they who convinced the army of the Arabs to surrender, I do not know, but this I do know: That what is going on in the Holy Land should convince one that the Lord is moving rapidly toward restoring the Jews to the land of their fathers and is giving them that land and redeeming it from its waste condition, as the prophets have foretold.

In closing, I give you the words of Isaiah. I believe the words of the prophets with all my heart.

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever. (Isa. 40:8.)

To me prophecy is one of the great evidences that there is really a God and that he is directing his work and will do so to its ultimate decreed destiny, and I bear you this witness in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER EZRA TAFT BENSON

#### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

**M**Y BELOVED brethren and sisters and friends: Humbly I acknowledge the great honor, privilege, and responsibility which is mine, as I look into your faces. I am grateful for this conference—thankful to the Lord that I am able to be here, to mingle with you, partake of this sweet spirit, and grateful to him that he has seen fit to call these general

conferences of the Church and the quarterly conferences in the stakes of Zion.

I have in mind a desire to offer just a word of hope and encouragement and admonition this afternoon. I owe a great deal, as all of us who are gathered here do, to this great Church and kingdom of which we are a part. Throughout my life, I have felt very keenly my obligation to this, the Church and king-

dom of God, and my gratitude to my heavenly Father that my lot has been cast with this people.

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.

Many years ago, when I was a boy in my teens, a particular course of study in the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association made a deep and lasting impression upon my life. It was a series of lessons on the development of character. I have often wished that that course might be repeated. The first in the series was a group of lessons on courage. There is a rather interesting sidelight which I recall. In those days in our manuals, it was not uncommon to carry advertising, and I remember that on the lower front cover was an advertisement which read as follows: "Oldest, largest, best. LDS Business College. Day Sessions, \$7.00 a month; Night Sessions, \$4.00 a month."

It is not about the advertisement that I wish to speak, but on the flyleaf of that excellent course of study there appeared a few stanzas from a "Selected" poem under the caption, "Trust in God and Do the Right."

Courage, brother, do not stumble,  
Though thy path is dark as night;  
There's a star to guide the humble—  
Trust in God and do the right.

Let the road be long and dreary,  
And its ending out of sight,  
Foot it bravely—strong or weary,  
Trust in God and do the right.

Perish "policy" and cunning,  
Perish all that fears the light;  
Whether losing, whether winning,  
Trust in God and do the right.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,  
Some will flatter, some will slight,  
Turn from man, and look above thee,  
Trust in God and do the right.

Simple rule and safest guiding,  
Inward peace and inward light,  
Star upon our path abiding,  
Trust in God and do the right.

At the head of that first chapter appeared those reassuring words of Joshua, later used as a theme in MIA:

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 1:9.)

And then the Psalmist:

Be still, and know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10.)

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.

I have often read the words of Abraham Lincoln when he said,

God rules this world, . . . I am a full believer that God knows what He wants a man to do—that which pleases him. It is never well with that man who heeds it not . . . without the assistance of that Divine Being, I cannot succeed, with that assistance I cannot fail.

And he offered similar admonition for the nations of the earth, as have other great Americans and great spiritual leaders. Said Lincoln:

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow . . . and to recognize the sublime truth that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

I thrilled, as I am sure you did, as our chief executive, newly elected, stood

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on that solemn occasion, at the time of his inauguration, and offered a humble prayer to the Almighty. In majestic simplicity President Dwight D. Eisenhower petitioned on that occasion:

. . . Give us, we pray, the power to discern clearly right from wrong, and allow all our works and actions to be governed thereby and by the laws of this land . . . so that all may work for the good of our beloved country and for Thy glory. Amen.

It is reassuring to see men in high places, in church, in government, in business—in all of the walks of life—who are not afraid to acknowledge their dependence upon God—who are not afraid to trust him—not afraid to try to do that which is right.

Yes, God is at the helm, my brothers and sisters. I know it, and you know it. Surely no group of people in all the world has greater evidence of that fact than do the Latter-day Saints. Even during the days of persecution and hardship, the Lord has continually encouraged us to trust in him, to keep his commandments, to do that which is right and then be unafraid.

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.

I remember an incident in the life of the Prophet Joseph. God bless his memory! He had been persecuted with his people, driven, and at this particular time he was in Liberty Jail, incarcerated upon trumped-up charges. Finally, when it seemed as though he could stand it no longer, he cried out in the anguish of his soul, as recorded in the 121st section:

O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place?

How long shall thy hand be stayed, and thine eye, yea thy pure eye, behold from the eternal heavens the wrongs of thy people and of thy servants, and thine ear

be penetrated with their cries? (D. & C. 121:1-2.)

And you will recall, the word came back to him:

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 thy foes. (*Ibid.*, 121:7-8.)

Then the Lord pointed out to this great man, this prophet of God, that all these things had been given for the purpose of gaining experience, of helping to build him for the great responsibilities that lay ahead of him. How sweet and reassuring are the words of the Lord on that memorable occasion as he counseled:

. . . know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.

. . . therefore, fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever. (*Ibid.*, 122:7, 9.)

The Lord, speaking to his sons of this dispensation and the membership of his Church, gave the following admonition in another revelation:

Fear not to do good, my sons, for whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also reap; therefore, if ye sow good ye shall also reap good for your reward.

Therefore, fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail.

. . . perform with soberness the work which I have commanded you.

Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not. (*Ibid.*, 6:33-36.)

You will also recall the admonition he gave to the early disciples of this dispensation, recorded in the Lord's preface to the Book of Commandments, the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them. (*Ibid.*, 1:5.)

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. (*Ibid.*, 11:12.)

On another occasion the Lord declared:

The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, *neither trust in the arm of flesh.* (*Ibid.*, 1:19; italics added.)

Our heavenly Father is continually mindful of us. It is his "work and glory" to make the exaltation of man possible. The course which he has outlined is simple, yet able to make men's stature reflect confident living free from fear. Hear his words:

Let him trust in me and he shall not be confounded. . . . (*Ibid.*, 84:116.)

So, my brethren and sisters, there may come persecution; there may come opposition; there may come reverses; there may come criticism and misrepresentation. Your motives may be questioned. You may be attacked. But if we place our trust in the Almighty and do that which is right, there will come an inner assurance, an inner calm, a peace that will bring joy and happiness to our souls.

In my office in Washington, in the Department of Agriculture, established by President Abraham Lincoln, I have in a small frame these words of the great Emancipator:

If I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how—the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.

And that is the spirit which should characterize the lives of the Latter-day Saints. "Do what is right, let the consequence follow," goes one of our favorite hymns. Shrink not from duty where it is made known. Keep the commandments. Trust in God and do the right.

In the early days of the Church, you may recall, the Lord frequently praised the elders for certain things they did, but oftentimes he would chastise as well, and in the 60th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, after giving a few words of praise, he said:

But with some I am not well pleased, for they will not open their mouths, but they hide the talent which I have given unto them, because of the fear of man. Wo unto such, for mine anger is kindled against them. (D. & C. 60:2.)

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.