

"And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments." (D & C 59:5-21.)

Now, my good brethren and sisters, when you go home from this conference, you cannot go home and say, "The Brethren have praised us for our well-doing; they have commended us because we have come into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." We cannot say this when we remember our shortcomings in regard to the keeping of some of these commandments which the Lord has given us, and which pertain to his celestial kingdom.

We must stop violating the Sabbath day. We must stop the violation of other commandments, should we be violating them, and I promise you that if you will observe the Sabbath day,

you who are opening your stores on the Sabbath day, if you will close them and tend to the duties that the Lord has given to you, and keep his commandments, that you will prosper and he will bless you more abundantly, for he has made that promise, than you will be blessed by showing your contempt for the commandments which he has given unto us.

May the Lord bless you one and all, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President David O. McKay:

President Joseph Fielding Smith, President of the Council of the Twelve, has just concluded speaking. Elder El Ray L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Antoine R. Ivins.

### ELDER EL RAY L. CHRISTIANSEN

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

**I** PRAY HUMBLY that the few things that I might say will be acceptable to my Heavenly Father and that they might be helpful to someone.

We live in a wonderful world, a wonderful era, and I can say in a wonderful area. In this world there are lovely things, and things much to be desired, but along with the desirable there are also those things which are not to be desired. While I would much rather speak of the things which are desirable, I feel impelled to speak of some things that we would rather not recognize as existing.

We are living in a day when prophecy is being fulfilled among the nations of the earth—a time when many things which have long been stable are no longer to be depended upon—a time when the integrity of men and of nations (at least some of the leaders of some of the nations) is too often questioned.

It is as if the words of the Savior (through his prophets) are being fulfilled: Luke speaks of the time when there should be upon the earth "... distress of nations, with perplexity; . . ."

(Luke 21:25.) And through the Prophet Joseph Smith the Lord speaks of a time when there shall be

... wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth.

And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound. (D & C 45:26-27.)

Rumors of wars and uprisings are a daily diet to the reader and the listener of news. Severe crises the world over are arising one after another, and they come to no satisfactory conclusion. (And, for peculiar reasons, our great nation becomes involved in most of them.)

While tensions and uprisings continue throughout the world there is in our own country, it seems to me, an ever-increasing trend toward lawlessness, and, on the part of some, a seeming disregard and even contempt for the law.

There are many, too, while holding places of trust, who are suspected of collusion or bribery or of making "deals." A constant flow of reports comes of investigations of misconduct

of those who are given places of trust throughout the nation. The veracity of sworn witnesses before great tribunals is often questioned, and contempt for the courts of justice is frequently manifested.

In this day of enlightenment, in this day when we have seen almost unbelievable progress and achievement in science and invention, one wonders why so much contention and corruption and evil doings, sin, should exist and, if my judgment is correct, be on the increase. We ask ourselves: "Why cannot these things, these 'cold wars' be brought to a satisfactory conclusion? Why are confusion and uncertainty perpetuated? Why this seeming increased trend toward lawlessness?"

Is not the answer found in the Book of Mormon where we are told:

... there are also secret combinations, [and he was looking into this time, I think, as well] even as in the times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the foundation of all these things; yea, the foundation of murder, and works of darkness; yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever. (2 Nephi 26:22.)

According to the Doctrine and Covenants, ". . . he goeth up and down, to and fro in the earth, seeking to destroy the souls of men." (D & C 10:27.) And, as Lehi said to his son Jacob, ". . . he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself." (2 Nephi 2:27.) "Eat, drink, and be merry" is the theme that he plays through his agents.

This enemy of God and of man dwells in the earth! But I fear that too many of us refuse to recognize his actual existence along with those who follow him and those in the flesh who have become enticed and blinded by him, perhaps not with their own knowledge, nevertheless having become his agents. He is a personage of great power. He has knowledge and power sufficient to influence the minds of mortals who "will not hearken unto the counsels of the Lord."

He seeks to darken and mislead the minds of men. He seeks to minimize the seriousness of wrongdoing. Deception and falsehood are his tools. He is a skilful imitator. While he is sub-

ject to the will of God and can never overthrow nor overcome God, he continually and relentlessly keeps his forces at work with individuals and with groups, causing them to pursue selfish ends and to stir up among them trouble and dissension and persuading them to disobey the decrees of the Lord. This is substantiated in the Book of Mormon, where we read:

Wherefore, all things which are good cometh of God; and that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually. (Moroni 7:12.)

Now this condition is not new. It is history repeated and in this wonderful land of ours, America. Speaking of the iniquity amongst the Nephite civilization, the record relates this:

Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority and riches, and the vain things of the world.

Now they did not sin ignorantly, for they knew the will of God concerning them, for it had been taught unto them; therefore they did wilfully rebel against God. (3 Nephi 6:15, 18.)

I hope, my brothers and sisters that we will not repeat the performance of that former civilization.

Woodrow Wilson, at one critical period, said to his secretary:

... civilization will destroy itself by its own sinfulness, unless decent people rise up and demand that people and nations live by the Golden Rule.

Now, knowing that there is in the world this force of evil organized by Satan, what can be done?

It seems to me that we must first recognize this adversary and his followers for what they are—advocates of sin and wrongdoing, advocates of disobedience.

We must recognize that it is their determination through their agencies to overthrow freedom and liberty, and if it were possible, to thwart the purposes of God.

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But we are told that "The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, . . ." that only the work of men shall come to naught. (D & C 3:1.)

We must continually seek men for public office whose desire to do good supersedes all things else.

We must sanctify our own individual lives by keeping the commandments of the Lord—as one person prayed, "Oh, Lord, reform the world—beginning with me." We must sanctify our homes and teach our children loyalty, obedience, honesty, respect for law, respect for others, and a love of the Lord.

We must help others to accept Jesus as the Redeemer, the Savior, the God of this world.

To the degree that men acquire these virtues, their strength increases and their power to resist evil becomes greater. Note this promise that has been given in regard to this wonderful land of America.

Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound cursed shall be the land for their sakes, but unto the righteous it shall be blessed forever. (2 Nephi 1:7.)

There, my brothers and sisters, is the prescription for peace and security, nationality and individuality.

. . . behold, I say, if the day shall come that they will reject the Holy One of Israel, the true Messiah, their Redeemer and their God, behold, the judgments of him that is just shall rest upon them. (*Ibid.*, 1:10.)

Let us remember that even though God had a foreknowledge of what "would be" under certain conditions, it

is not his will nor his desire that vice, injustice, and crime, disobedience and intolerance and bloodshed and war exist in the world. His purposes are to provide a way where men may find happiness and joy, peace, now and forever. Nevertheless, he will not interfere with the agency of men! But fortunately, according to Mormon's teaching: ". . . the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil;" and have a "perfect knowledge," whether it is of God or of the devil. (See Moroni 7:16.)

Let each of us build upon the sure foundation recommended by Helaman in the days of the Nephites:

And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall. (Helaman 5:12.)

May we always choose the right. May we always defend the right, at home and throughout the land, and seek for peace and serenity and tranquility on the foundation for peace that was laid down by the Lord Jesus Christ, the God of this land, I pray humbly in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just listened to Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve. Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy will now address us. Elder Ivins will be followed by Bishop Thorpe B. Isaacson.

### ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

**P**RESIDENT MCKAY, and brethren and sisters, I stand before you this afternoon a very blessed man. I wish to bear testimony to the mercies of our Heavenly Father and the blessings that

I have received from him. When next month arrives, I will have lived seventy-six years in this troubled world of ours with only one serious case of sickness, hardly ever having been deprived of the