

paused to meditate on our Lord's ministry of nearly 1,000 years over the early inhabitants of this continent, and he expressed his reflections in an "editorial" which he inserted in his abridgment. He wrote:

"And thus we can behold how false, and also the unsteadiness of the hearts of the children of men; yea, we can see that the Lord in his great infinite goodness doth bless and prosper those who put their trust in him.

"Yea, and we may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people, yea, in the increase of their fields, their flocks and their herds, and in gold, and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art; sparing their lives, and delivering them out of the hands of their enemies; softening the hearts of their enemies that they should not declare wars against them; yea, and in fine, doing all things for the welfare and happiness of his people; yea, then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One—yea, and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity.

"And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit

them with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence, they will not remember him." (Helaman 12:1-3.)

God loves us. He doesn't always love the things we do.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: . . ." (Rev. 3:19.)

"Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you whom I love, and whom I love I also chasten that their sins may be forgiven, for with chastisement I prepare a way for their deliverance in all things. . . ." (D&C 95:1.)

Perhaps, the elements may be a little kindlier next year if we remember him.

Perhaps we'll be a little more deserving next year if we remember him. I so hope. I so pray. I leave you my testimony: God lives and loves us. He answers prayers, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He who has just spoken is Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., Assistant to the Twelve. Our next speaker will be Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters, I welcome wholeheartedly into the councils of the Church the brethren who have been called to service this day. With equal feeling, I express my appreciation for the services of those who are retiring.

I would like to say a further word or two to Brother Buehner and Bishop Wirthlin. I first came to know Brother Buehner in the early days of the welfare program. He was then president of Granite Stake. He rose immediately to meet the challenges of that program. While some others were dragging their feet, he did a tremendous work in it, and he has been carrying on ever since. He knows how we love him.

More than thirty-five years ago, Bish-

op Wirthlin and I served together in a seventies quorum. We loved him then. We loved him later when he became bishop of the ward in which we lived. Our love increased when he became president of Bonneville Stake. I apologize for the bad time I gave him while I was a bishop, and he was president of the stake. We loved him when he came into the Presiding Bishopric, and we still do. Joseph, we love you now more than we ever did. The Lord loves you. May his peace be with you.

While President McKay was talking yesterday, these lines, written by William Cowper, came to mind. In them I have substituted "faithful" for "fearful":

Saturday, September 30

Second Day

"Ye 'faithful' Saints, fresh courage take;

The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

Since he spoke, I have been thinking about the great challenge of peace and hope which the President gave us at the close of his opening address. It is my opinion that the Latter-day Saints, because of the knowledge they have received in the revelations, are better prepared to meet the perplexities of our times than any other people. We know more about the difficulties which are coming, and we have the key to their solution.

I suppose that most people have a tendency to interpret their own experiences and world affairs in the light of certain standards which have become fixed in their thinking. The fact that the Lord Almighty will take care of his people during these latter days of stress and trial became fixed in my mind very early.

As a child I lived in a land torn by a devastating revolution. As the contending forces pursued each other back and forth through the country, I became greatly disturbed and agitated. Well do I remember when word came that the rebels were marching on Chihuahua City from Ciudad Juarez to the north and that the Federals were marching on the same city from Torreon on the south. My distress turned to fright—in fact, to terror—when they met at Casas Grandes, just ten miles away, and the shooting began. Some of our more adventuresome young men climbed to the top of the Montezuma Mountain where, through field glasses, they could watch the fighting.

Through those stirring and never-forgotten childhood experiences it was difficult for me to understand this doctrine of peace in one's heart while there was war in the land. But even then, my fears were tempered somewhat as I saw and listened to my sainted mother

lull her babies to sleep. The words of the songs she sang comforted me. Some of them have been ringing in my mind through all the years of the intervening half century—these, for example, from

"Guide Us, O Thou Great Jehovah":
"When the earth begins to tremble,
Bid our fearful thoughts be still;
When thy judgments spread destruction,
Keep us safe on Zion's hill."

And these from Parley P. Pratt:

"Come, O thou King of kings!
We've waited long for thee,
With healing in thy wings
To set thy people free;

"Come, make an end to sin
And cleanse the earth by fire."

And from W. W. Phelps:

"In faith we'll rely on the arm of
Jehovah

To guide through these last days of
trouble and gloom;

And after the scourges and harvest are
over,

We'll rise with the just when the
Savior doth come."

As the years passed and I became acquainted a little with the scriptures, I learned that the brethren who had written these beautiful lines of hope and courage had learned from the revelations that the Lord would take care of his Saints through the calamities which he foresaw and foretold. Nephi, speaking of our days, said:

"For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.

"Wherefore, he will 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; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire." (1 Nephi 22:16-17.)

When the Lord gave by revelation the preface to the Doctrine and Cove-

nants, he said that he was willing to make the things he had revealed known unto all flesh;

"For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh; 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, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world." (D&C 1:34-36.)

Jesus himself previewed our times and the days to follow. As he stood before his disciples on the Mount of Olives, they asked him concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the signs of his second coming. Replying, he told them that this people (the generation among whom he lived) shall be destroyed and scattered among all nations . . .

"But they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

"And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, . . .

"And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound.

"And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel;

"But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.

"And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

"And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

"*But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.*

"And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one

another." (*Ibid.*, 45:25-33; Italics added.)

I am convinced that if we have the peace in our hearts the brethren have been talking about, we must learn how to preserve it in our hearts in the midst of trouble and trial. I know that if we lived the gospel, we would not have war. We would have peace if enough people lived the gospel, but for my single self I do not expect them to do so. I do not expect enough people to repent to spare the world from serious trouble, and I think the scriptures sustain this conclusion. But I return to the Savior's words. When he had made the above quoted statement to his disciples, he saw that they were troubled, and he said to them:

". . . Be not troubled, for, when all these things shall come to pass, ye may know that the promises which have been made unto you shall be fulfilled . . .

"And it shall come to pass that he that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man.

"And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in heavens above, and in the earth beneath.

"And they shall behold blood, and fire, and vapors of smoke.

"And before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood, and the stars fall from heaven.

"And the remnant shall be gathered unto this place [Jerusalem];

"And then they shall look for me, and, behold, I will come; and they shall see me in the clouds of heaven, clothed with power and great glory; with all the holy angels; and he that watches not for me shall be cut off . . ."

And here is the key.

"And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.

"For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived . . . shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall

Saturday, September 30

abide the day." (*Ibid.*, 45:35, 39-44, 56-57.)

"They that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived." I think we are not safe because we say we intend to do what's right. I think the people who are safe are those who have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide and have not been deceived. These are they who shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

"The earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance." This earth isn't going to be inherited by our enemies.

"The earth shall be given unto them [who have 'taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived'] for an inheritance; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation.

"For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver." (*Ibid.*, 45:58-59.)

Now I think the Savior was talking about the Holy Ghost when he said, "those who have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide." (*Idem.*) The Holy Ghost is the spirit of truth. To have the Holy Spirit with us as he speaks of it here, and as I have now said what I think it means, is to be guided by revelation from heaven. I know that such guidance can be had.

When the Prophet Joseph Smith went to Washington—I believe it was in 1839—with Elias Higbee, he had conferences with many of the statesmen there—and many of the politicians also. He had conferences with the President of the United States. In one of them Mr. Van Buren asked:

". . . wherein we differed in our religion from the other religions of the day. Brother Joseph said we differed in mode of baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. We considered that all other considerations were contained in the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . ." (*History of the Church*, vol. IV, p. 42.)

Now, we have the Holy Ghost. Every one of us who are members of

the Church has had hands laid upon our heads, and we have been given, as far as ordinance can give it, the gift of the Holy Ghost. But, as I remember, when I was confirmed, the Holy Ghost was not directed to come to me; I was directed to "Receive the Holy Ghost." If I receive the Holy Ghost and follow his guidance, I will be among those who are protected and carried through these troubled times. And so will you, and so will every other soul who lives under his direction.

Now, my brothers and sisters, we need to seek that Spirit. We need to realize that it is a real guide. The Lord has given us several tests by which we may know when we have that Spirit.

By revelation through the Prophet Joseph, the Lord revealed to Oliver Cowdery a very simple test. Oliver was complaining because the Lord had withdrawn from him the gift to translate the Book of Mormon records. The Lord said to him:

"Do not murmur, my son, for it is wisdom in me that I have dealt with you after this manner.

"Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

"But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

"But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought. . . ." (D&C 9:6-9.)

Now, I tell you that you can make every decision in your life correctly if you can learn to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This you can do if you will discipline yourself to yield your own feelings to the promptings of the Spirit. Study your problems and prayerfully make a decision. Then take that decision and say to him, in a simple, honest supplication, "Father, I want to make the right decision. I want to do the right thing. This is what I think I should do; let me know if it is the right course." Doing this, you can get the burning in your bosom, if your decision is right. If you do not get the

burning, then change your decision and submit a new one. When you learn to walk by the Spirit, you never need to make a mistake. I know what it is to have this burning witness. I know also that there are other manifestations of guidance by the Spirit.

I know, for example, what Enos was talking about when he said, ". . . the voice of the Lord came into my mind again, . . ." He did not say it came into his ear, but that it "came into my mind again, saying: . . ." He had been asking the Lord to bless his brethren, the Nephites, as everyone who gets the Spirit asks the Lord to bless his brethren and his fellow men. ". . . the voice of the Lord came into my mind again, saying:"—and what the voice said is most important—"I will visit thy brethren according to their diligence in keeping my commandments." (See Enos 10.)

I must terminate these remarks. But I know what that voice is like, because I have had it come into my mind and give me names when I have had to select stake presidents. There is nothing mysterious about it to people who learn to be guided by the Spirit. The voice of the Lord has come into my mind, in sentences, in answer to prayer.

Now I know, brothers and sisters, that we can be guided by the Spirit. I counsel you to seek more diligently through earnest prayer the guidance of the Spirit. Learn to live your lives by the guidance of the Spirit.

I think every Latter-day Saint ought to go on his knees night and morning in secret prayer. This is in addition to family prayer, which we should also have night and morning. I grew up in a home where we had family prayers every night and morning. A good time to have the morning family prayer is just before the morning meal. And a good time for the evening prayer is just before the evening meal. That is the way it was done in my father's home.

In my wife's father's home prayer was had just before the morning meal and just before the family went to bed.

When my wife and I were married, we decided that I would make all the major decisions and she would make all the minor decisions. I think that the only major decision we've had to make was when to have evening family prayer. We have had it just before the evening meal.

But what I am talking about now is secret prayer. I have always been thrilled with the statement of the Savior to his disciples that when they prayed, they were not to

". . . do as the hypocrites, for they love to pray, standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." (3 Nephi 13:5-6.)

Oh, that's the way to pray to reach the Lord—all alone, where you are not fashioning prayers for the ears of any mortal person. In secret prayer you can kneel down and in the sincerity of your heart pour out your soul to God alone.

The path from man to God is prayer. Do as the Book of Mormon prophets advise: "Pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart." (Moroni 7:48.) The answer to such prayer is the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The key to happiness is to get the Spirit and keep it. The right to get it we were given when we were confirmed members of this Church. Walk by it back into the presence of God. So doing we will not need to be put to flight by our troubles.

God bless you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve has just concluded speaking. Bishop Thorpe B. Isaacson will be our next speaker.