

The spiritual power line conveys revelation. Revelation is given to the President for the Church, and to leaders and teachers in their respective callings. Personal revelation is provided for the glorification of individual members and families in the Church. These lines are well insulated, and they are not scrambled! Our Father is a God of order! No one else receives revelation to govern the Church; that will be delivered only to the President of the Church. The father in the home next door will not receive revelation for his neighbor's family.

### Protect spiritual power line

It is possible to disregard or even misuse spiritual power. Some have misused the power of prayer by making that sacred communication trivial. Some well-meaning Saints even do the right things for the wrong reasons, if they narrowly center on the *percentages* they report rather than on the precious *people* they serve.

Like cutting the cord with clippers, it is possible to use spiritual power so carelessly as to destroy one's very connection to that power. I know a husband who dominates his wife as though she were his possession. He seems to regard her about as he does his automobile or his suitcase, which he uses for his own purposes. And I know a wife who dominates her husband to the point that he has lost all feelings of worth.

Remember, "The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and . . . the

powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled *only* upon the principles of righteousness" (D&C 121:36; italics added).

The unrighteous use of priesthood authority surely severs the connection to the Source of that authority. (See D&C 121:37.)

Worship strengthens our power line to deity. *There can be no true worship without sacrifice, and there can be no true sacrifice without a cause.* The cause that earns our love and priority is the cause of Jesus Christ.

Speaking of his own atonement, the Savior proclaimed, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world" (John 18:37). His example of worship, sacrifice, and commitment to cause becomes ours! His is the ultimate source of all our power to do good.

As we carefully and prayerfully protect the spiritual power line that links us to the Savior, we become more like him!

Of his sacred name and mission I solemnly bear special witness. Of his divine sonship I proclaim sacred testimony. That this is his church I fervently declare, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Benson

Elder Russell M. Nelson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just addressed us.

We will now hear from Elder Howard W. Hunter, also a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, who will be our concluding speaker.

## Elder Howard W. Hunter

### Sea of Galilee

North of Jerusalem about eighty miles or so lies a beautiful body of water known earlier in biblical times as the Sea of Chinneroth and the Lake of

Gennesaret, but known best to us today as the Sea of Galilee. It is a freshwater inland lake a little over twelve miles long and seven miles wide. The River Jordan flows through it, from north to

south, on its journey toward the Dead Sea.

This was the lake Jesus knew as a child and as a young man, its western shores lying just twelve or fifteen miles from his boyhood home of Nazareth. It was to this lake and the neighboring Galilean hills that Jesus returned so often during those demanding years of his public ministry.

On one journey to Galilee, the Savior taught the multitudes crowded near the water's edge. With the people pressing ever closer, Jesus sought a better teaching circumstance by stepping into a boat and pushing out a few yards into the sea. There, a short distance from the eager crowd, he could be seen and heard by those straining for sight and words of the Master.

#### **"Have ye no faith?"**

Following his discourse, the Savior invited his disciples to join him, and they set out together for the other side of the lake. The Sea of Galilee is quite low, about 680 feet below sea level, and the heat becomes quite great. The hills surrounding the water rise up very sharply and to considerable height. The cold air rushing down from the hills meets the warm air rising from the lake in such a way that sudden and temporarily violent storms can occur on the surface of that inland sea. It was just such a storm as this that Jesus and his disciples found as they crossed the lake at evening time. This is the way Mark described it:

"And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

"And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

"And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be

still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

"And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:36-41).

#### **He can calm troubled waters in our lives**

All of us have seen some sudden storms in our lives. A few of them, though temporary like these on the Sea of Galilee, can be violent and frightening and potentially destructive. As individuals, as families, as communities, as nations, even as a church, we have had sudden squalls arise which have made us ask one way or another, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" And one way or another we always hear in the stillness after the storm, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?"

None of us would like to think we have *no* faith, but I suppose the Lord's gentle rebuke here is largely deserved. This great Jehovah, in whom we say we trust and whose name we have taken upon us, is he who said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters" (Genesis 1:6). And he is also the one who said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear" (Genesis 1:9). Furthermore, it was he who parted the Red Sea, allowing the Israelites to pass through on dry ground. (See Exodus 14:21-22.) Certainly it should be no surprise that he could command a few elements acting up on the Sea of Galilee. And our faith should remind us that he can calm the troubled waters of our lives.

#### **Story of Mary Ann Baker**

Let me recall for you the story of Mary Ann Baker. Her beloved and only brother suffered from the same respira-

tory disease that had taken their parents' lives, and he left their home in Chicago to find a warmer climate in the southern part of the United States.

For a time he seemed to be improving, but then a sudden turn in his health came and he died almost immediately. Mary Ann and her sister were heartbroken. It only added to their deep grief that neither their own health nor their personal finances allowed them to claim their brother's body or to finance its return to Chicago for burial.

The Baker family had been raised as faithful Christians, but Mary's trust in a loving God broke under the strain of her brother's death and her own diminished circumstances. "God does not care for me or mine," said Mary Ann. "This particular manifestation of what they call 'divine providence' is unworthy of a God of love." Does that sound at all familiar?

"I have always tried to believe on Christ and give the Master a consecrated life," she said, "but this is more than I can bear. What have I done to deserve this? What have I left undone that God should wreak His vengeance upon me in this way?" (Ernest K. Emurian, *Living Stories of Famous Hymns* [Boston: W. A. Widdle Co., 1955, pp. 83-85].

### "Master, the tempest is raging!"

I suppose we have all had occasion, individually or collectively, to cry out on some stormy sea, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" And so cried Mary Ann Baker.

But as the days and the weeks went by, the God of life and love began to calm the winds and the waves of what this sweet young woman called "her unsanctified heart." Her faith not only returned but it flourished, and like Job of old, she learned new things, things "too wonderful" to have known before her despair. On the Sea of Galilee, the stirring of the disciples' faith was ultimately more important than the stilling of the sea, and so it was with her.

Later, as something of a personal testimonial and caring very much for the faith of others who would be tried by personal despair, she wrote the words of the hymn we have all sung, "Master, the Tempest Is Raging." May I share it with you?

Master, the tempest is raging!  
The billows are tossing high!  
The sky is o'ershadowed with  
blackness.  
No shelter or help is nigh.

Carest thou not that we perish?  
How canst thou lie asleep  
When each moment so madly is  
threatening  
A grave in the angry deep?

Master, with anguish of spirit  
I bow in my grief today.  
The depths of my sad heart are  
troubled.

Oh, waken and save, I pray!

Torrents of sin and of anguish  
Sweep o'er my sinking soul,  
And I perish! I perish! dear  
Master.

Oh, hasten and take control!

Then this beautiful, moving refrain:

The winds and the waves shall  
obey my will;  
Peace, be still! Peace, be still!  
Whether the wrath of the  
storm-tossed sea  
Or demons or men or whatever it  
be,  
No waters can swallow the ship  
where lies  
The Master of ocean and earth and  
skies.

They all shall sweetly obey my  
will.  
Peace, be still! Peace, be still!  
They all shall sweetly obey my  
will.  
Peace, peace, be still!

Too often, I fear, both in the living of life and in the singing of this hymn,

we fail to emphasize the sweet peace of this concluding verse:

Master, the terror is over.  
The elements sweetly rest.  
Earth's sun in the calm lake is  
mirrored,  
And heaven's within my breast.

Linger, Oh, blessed Redeemer!  
Leave me alone no more,  
And with joy I shall make the  
blest harbor  
And rest on the blissful shore.  
(*Hymns*, no. 106.)

### "Be of good cheer"

We will all have some adversity in our lives. I think we can be reasonably sure of that. Some of it will have the potential to be violent and damaging and destructive. Some of it may even strain our faith in a loving God who has the power to administer relief in our behalf.

To those anxieties I think the Father of us all would say, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" And of course that has to be faith for the whole journey, the entire experience, the fulness of our life, not simply around the bits and pieces and tempestuous moments. At the end of the journey, an end none of us can see now, we will say, "Master, the terror is over. . . . Linger, Oh, blessed Redeemer! Leave me alone no more."

Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). On the same occasion, he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14:27). Throughout his life and ministry he spoke of peace, and when he came forth from the tomb and appeared unto his disciples, his first greeting was, "Peace be unto you" (John 20:19).

### Peace on lips and in heart of Savior

But Jesus was not spared grief and pain and anguish and buffeting. No tongue can speak the unutterable burden he carried, nor have we the wisdom to understand the prophet Isaiah's description of him as "a man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3). His ship was tossed most of his life, and, at least to mortal eyes, it crashed fatally on the rocky coast of Calvary. We are asked not to look on life with mortal eyes; with spiritual vision we know something quite different was happening upon the cross.

Peace was on the lips and in the heart of the Savior no matter how fiercely the tempest was raging. May it so be with us—in our own hearts, in our own homes, in our nations of the world, and even in the buffetings faced from time to time by the Church. We should not expect to get through life individually or collectively without some opposition.

One of the wisest of the ancient Romans once spoke a great gospel truth and probably never realized he had done so. Speaking of Roman naval power and the absolute imperative to control the oceans, Cicero said to a military aide, "He who commands the sea has command of everything." (See W. Gurney Benham, *Putnam's Complete Book of Quotations* [New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926], p. 505.) Of that I so testify.

"Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea or demons or men or whatever it be, no waters can swallow the ship were lies the Master of ocean and earth and skies. They all shall sweetly obey [his] will. Peace, be still!" In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

---

The chorus sang "Nearer, My God to Thee" without announcement.

---