

16. Doctrine and Covenants 68:25; italics added.
17. "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
18. Doctrine and Covenants 93:40-44.
19. See Doctrine and Covenants 93:47.
20. That letter, dated February 11, 1999, and signed by Presidents Gordon B. Hinckley, Thomas S. Monson, and James E. Faust, also described what parents might do:
 "We counsel parents and children to give highest priority to family prayer, family home evening, gospel study and instruction, and wholesome family activities. However worthy and appropriate other demands or activities may be, they must not be permitted to displace the divinely appointed duties that only parents and families can adequately perform" (also in "Policies, Announcements, and Appointments," *Ensign*, June 1999, 80).
21. See Moroni 8:10; Doctrine and Covenants 19:31; 68:25-34; 138:33; Articles of Faith 1:4.
22. See Moses 6:58-62.
23. See Leviticus 10:11; Deuteronomy 6:7; Mosiah 4:14.
24. See 2 Nephi 2:26; Mosiah 1:3; 5:8; Doctrine and Covenants 98:8.
25. See Mosiah 4:21-26; 18:27; Alma 1:27.
26. See Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:38.
27. Doctrine and Covenants 23:3.
28. See Moroni 7:12-19.
29. See Moses 1:39.
30. 1 Thessalonians 5:21.
31. See 2 Nephi 2:17-18, 27.
32. 1 Corinthians 15:19.
33. Doctrine and Covenants 132:19.

The choir sang "Did You Think to Pray?"

President Hinckley

"Don't forget to pray." As you leave the conference this morning, we ask you to obey traffic rules and to be careful.

We express our appreciation to the choir for the beautiful music.

Following my remarks, the session will conclude with the choir singing "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty." The benediction will then be offered by Elder R. Conrad Schultz of the Seventy. The concluding session of this conference will begin at 2:00 this afternoon.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

The perilous times in which we live

My beloved brethren and sisters, I accept this opportunity in humility. I pray that I may be guided by the Spirit of the Lord in that which I say.

I have just been handed a note that says that a U.S. missile attack is under way. I need not remind you that we live in perilous times. I desire to speak concerning these times and our circumstances as members of this Church.

You are acutely aware of the events of September 11, less than a month ago. Out of that vicious and ugly attack we are plunged into a state of war. It is the first

war of the 21st century. The last century has been described as the most wartorn in human history. Now we are off on another dangerous undertaking, the unfolding of which and the end thereof we do not know. For the first time since we became a nation, the United States has been seriously attacked on its mainland soil. But this was not an attack on the United States alone. It was an attack on men and nations of goodwill everywhere. It was well planned, boldly executed, and the results were disastrous. It is estimated that more than 5,000 innocent people died. Among these were many from other na-

tions. It was cruel and cunning, an act of consummate evil.

Recently, in company with a few national religious leaders, I was invited to the White House to meet with the president. In talking to us he was frank and straightforward.

That same evening he spoke to the Congress and the nation in unmistakable language concerning the resolve of America and its friends to hunt down the terrorists who were responsible for the planning of this terrible thing and any who harbored such.

Now we are at war. Great forces have been mobilized and will continue to be. Political alliances are being forged. We do not know how long this conflict will last. We do not know what it will cost in lives and treasure. We do not know the manner in which it will be carried out. It could impact the work of the Church in various ways.

Our national economy has been made to suffer. It was already in trouble, and this has compounded the problem. Many are losing their employment. Among our own people, this could affect welfare needs and also the tithing of the Church. It could affect our missionary program.

We are now a global organization. We have members in more than 150 nations. Administering this vast worldwide program could conceivably become more difficult.

Forces of evil must be brought down

Those of us who are American citizens stand solidly with the president of our nation. The terrible forces of evil must be confronted and held accountable for their actions. This is not a matter of Christian against Muslim. I am pleased that food is being dropped to the hungry people of a targeted nation. We value our Muslim neighbors across the world and hope that those who live by the tenets of their faith will not suffer. I ask particularly that our own people do not become

a party in any way to the persecution of the innocent. Rather, let us be friendly and helpful, protective and supportive. It is the terrorist organizations that must be ferreted out and brought down.

We of this Church know something of such groups. The Book of Mormon speaks of the Gadianton robbers, a vicious, oath-bound, and secret organization bent on evil and destruction. In their day they did all in their power, by whatever means available, to bring down the Church, to woo the people with sophistry, and to take control of the society. We see the same thing in the present situation.

We are people of peace. We are followers of the Christ, who was and is the Prince of Peace. But there are times when we must stand up for right and decency, for freedom and civilization, just as Moroni rallied his people in his day to the defense of their wives, their children, and the cause of liberty (see Alma 48:10).

On the Larry King television broadcast the other night, I was asked what I think of those who, in the name of their religion, carry out such infamous activities. I replied:

“Religion offers no shield for wickedness, for evil, for those kinds of things. The God in whom I believe does not foster this kind of action. He is a God of mercy. He is a God of love. He is a God of peace and reassurance, and I look to Him in times such as this as a comfort and a source of strength.”

Members of the Church in this and other nations are now involved with many others in a great international undertaking. On television we see those of the military leaving their loved ones, knowing not whether they will return. It is affecting the homes of our people. Unitedly, as a Church, we must get on our knees and invoke the powers of the Almighty in behalf of those who will carry the burdens of this campaign.

No one knows how long it will last. No one knows precisely where it will be

fought. No one knows what it may entail before it is over. We have launched an undertaking the size and nature of which we cannot see at this time.

Get free from debt and be prepared

Occasions of this kind pull us up sharply to a realization that life is fragile, peace is fragile, civilization itself is fragile. The economy is particularly vulnerable. We have been counseled again and again concerning self-reliance, concerning debt, concerning thrift. So many of our people are heavily in debt for things that are not entirely necessary. When I was a young man, my father counseled me to build a modest home, sufficient for the needs of my family, and to make it beautiful and attractive and pleasant and secure. He counseled me to pay off the mortgage as quickly as I could so that, come what may, there would be a roof over the heads of my wife and children. I was reared on that kind of doctrine. I urge you as members of this Church to get free of debt where possible and to have a little laid aside against a rainy day.

We cannot provide against every contingency. But we can provide against many contingencies. Let the present situation remind us that this we should do.

As we have been continuously counseled for more than 60 years, let us have some food set aside that would sustain us for a time in case of need. But let us not panic or go to extremes. Let us be prudent in every respect. And, above all, my brothers and sisters, let us move forward with faith in the Living God and His Beloved Son.

Optimism despite grim warnings

Great are the promises concerning this land of America. We are told unequivocally that it "is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land,

who is Jesus Christ" (Ether 2:12). This is the crux of the entire matter—obedience to the commandments of God.

The Constitution under which we live, and which has not only blessed us but has become a model for other constitutions, is our God-inspired national safeguard ensuring freedom and liberty, justice and equality before the law.

I do not know what the future holds. I do not wish to sound negative, but I wish to remind you of the warnings of scripture and the teachings of the prophets which we have had constantly before us.

I cannot forget the great lesson of Pharaoh's dream of the fat and lean kine and of the full and withered stalks of corn.

I cannot dismiss from my mind the grim warnings of the Lord as set forth in the 24th chapter of Matthew.

I am familiar, as are you, with the declarations of modern revelation that the time will come when the earth will be cleansed and there will be indescribable distress, with weeping and mourning and lamentation (see D&C 112:24).

Now, I do not wish to be an alarmist. I do not wish to be a prophet of doom. I am optimistic. I do not believe the time is here when an all-consuming calamity will overtake us. I earnestly pray that it may not. There is so much of the Lord's work yet to be done. We, and our children after us, must do it.

Church resources managed prudently

I can assure you that we who are responsible for the management of the affairs of the Church will be prudent and careful as we have tried to be in the past. The tithes of the Church are sacred. They are appropriated in the manner set forth by the Lord Himself. We have become a very large and complex organization. We carry on many extensive and costly programs. But I can assure you that we will not exceed our income. We will not place the Church in debt. We will tailor what we do to the resources that are available.

How grateful I am for the law of tithing. It is the Lord's law of finance. It is set forth in a few words in the 119th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. It comes of His wisdom. To every man and woman, to every boy and girl, to every child in this Church who pays an honest tithing, be it large or small, I express gratitude for the faith that is in your hearts. I remind you, and those who do not pay tithing but who should, that the Lord has promised marvelous blessings (see Malachi 3:10-12). He has also promised that "he that is tithed shall not be burned at his coming" (D&C 64:23).

I express appreciation to those who pay a fast offering. This costs the giver nothing other than going without two meals a month. It becomes the backbone of our welfare program, designed to assist those in distress.

Conflict began in the War in Heaven

Now, all of us know that war, contention, hatred, suffering of the worst kind are not new. The conflict we see today is but another expression of the conflict that began with the War in Heaven. I quote from the book of Revelation:

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

"And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ" (Revelation 12:7-10).

That must have been a terrible conflict. The forces of evil were pitted against the forces of good. The great deceiver, the son of the morning, was defeated and

banished, and took with him a third of the hosts of heaven.

The book of Moses and the book of Abraham shed further light concerning this great contest. Satan would have taken from man his agency and taken unto himself all credit and honor and glory. Opposed to this was the plan of the Father, which the Son said He would fulfill, under which He came to earth and gave His life to atone for the sins of mankind.

From the day of Cain to the present, the adversary has been the great mastermind of the terrible conflicts that have brought so much suffering.

Treachery and terrorism began with him. And they will continue until the Son of God returns to rule and reign with peace and righteousness among the sons and daughters of God.

Death is not the end

Through centuries of time, men and women, so very, very many, have lived and died. Some may die in the conflict that lies ahead. To us, and we bear solemn testimony of this, death will not be the end. There is life beyond this as surely as there is life here. Through the great plan which became the very essence of the War in Heaven, men shall go on living.

Job asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). He replied:

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

"Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another" (Job 19:25-27).

We can feel peace, not fear

Now, brothers and sisters, we must do our duty, whatever that duty might be. Peace may be denied for a season. Some of our liberties may be curtailed. We may

be inconvenienced. We may even be called on to suffer in one way or another. But God our Eternal Father will watch over this nation and all of the civilized world who look to Him. He has declared, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12). Our safety lies in repentance. Our strength comes of obedience to the commandments of God.

Let us be prayerful. Let us pray for righteousness. Let us pray for the forces of good. Let us reach out to help men and women of goodwill, whatever their religious persuasion and wherever they live. Let us stand firm against evil, both at home and abroad. Let us live worthy of the blessings of heaven, reforming our lives where necessary and looking to Him, the Father of us all. He has said, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

Are these perilous times? They are. But there is no need to fear. We can have peace in our hearts and peace in our homes. We can be an influence for good in this world, every one of us.

May the God of heaven, the Almighty, bless us, help us, as we walk our various ways in the uncertain days that lie ahead. May we look to Him with unflinching faith. May we worthily place our reliance on His Beloved Son, who is our great Redeemer, whether it be in life or in death, is my prayer in His holy name, even the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty."

Elder R. Conrad Schultz offered the benediction.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The fifth session of the 171st Semi-annual General Conference convened in the Conference Center at 2:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 7, 2001. This session was conducted by President James E. Faust.

The Tabernacle Choir provided the music for this session. Craig Jessop and Barlow Bradford directed the choir, and Bonnie Goodliffe was the organist.

President Faust made the following remarks as the meeting began.

President James E. Faust

We welcome you this afternoon to the fifth and concluding session of the 171st Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. President Gordon B. Hinckley, who presides at this conference, has asked that I, Brother Faust, conduct this session.

We extend our greetings and blessings to members of the Church and many friends everywhere who are participating

in these proceedings by radio, television, cable, the Internet, or satellite transmission.

The music for this session will be provided by the Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of Craig Jessop and Barlow Bradford, with Bonnie Goodliffe at the organ.

The choir will open these services by singing "High on the Mountain Top." After the singing, the invocation will be offered by Elder F. Melvin Hammond of the Seventy.

The choir sang "High on the Mountain Top."

Elder F. Melvin Hammond offered the invocation.

President Faust

The choir will now sing "Nearer, My God, to Thee." Following the singing, El-