

# Be Not Troubled

## October 2018 General Conference

By Elder Ronald A. Rasband  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Take heart, brothers and sisters. Yes, we live in perilous times, but as we stay on the covenant path, we need not fear.

I add my witness to the messages of President Russell M. Nelson and Elder Quentin L. Cook given moments ago of the harmony and unanimity of the Council of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. I know these revelatory announcements are the mind and the will of the Lord and will bless and strengthen individuals, families, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for generations to come.

Some years ago, one of our young married daughters and her husband asked Sister Rasband and me a very important, life-influencing question: “Is it still safe and wise to bring children into this seemingly wicked and frightening world we live in?”

Now, that was an important question for a mom and dad to consider with their dear married children. We could hear the fear in their voices and feel the fear in their hearts. Our answer to them was a firm “Yes, it’s more than OK,” as we shared fundamental gospel teachings and our own heartfelt impressions and life experiences.

Fear is not new. The disciples of Jesus Christ, out on the Sea of Galilee, feared the “wind, and the waves” in the dark of the night.<sup>1</sup> As His disciples today, we too have fears. Our single adults fear making commitments such as getting married. Young marrieds, like our children, can fear bringing children into an increasingly wicked world. Missionaries fear lots of things, especially approaching strangers. Widows fear going forward alone. Teenagers fear not being accepted; grade schoolers fear the first day of school; university students fear getting back a test. We fear failure, rejection, disappointment, and the unknown. We fear hurricanes, earthquakes, and fires that ravage the land and our lives. We fear not being chosen, and on the flip side, we fear being chosen. We fear not being good enough; we fear that the Lord has no blessings for us. We fear change, and our fears can escalate to terror. Have I included just about everyone?

Since ancient times, fear has limited the perspective of God’s children. I have always loved the account of Elisha in 2 Kings. The king of Syria had sent a legion that “came by night, and compassed the city about.”<sup>2</sup> Their intent was to capture and kill the prophet Elisha. We read:

“And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?”<sup>3</sup>

That was fear speaking.

“And [Elisha] answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”<sup>4</sup>

But he didn't stop there.

"Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."<sup>5</sup>

We may or may not have chariots of fire sent to dispel our fears and conquer our demons, but the lesson is clear. The Lord is with us, mindful of us and blessing us in ways only He can do. Prayer can call down the strength and the revelation that we need to center our thoughts on Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice. The Lord knew that at times we would feel fear. I have been there and so have you, which is why the scriptures are replete with the Lord's counsel:

"Be of good cheer, and do not fear."<sup>6</sup>

"Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not."<sup>7</sup>

"Fear not, little flock."<sup>8</sup> I love the tenderness of "little flock." In this Church we may be few in number by the way the world counts influence, but when we open our spiritual eyes, "they that be with us are more than they that be with them."<sup>9</sup> Our loving Shepherd, Jesus Christ, then continues, "Let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail."<sup>10</sup>

How is fear dispelled? For the young lad, he was standing right next to Elisha, a prophet of God. We have that same promise. When we listen to President Russell M. Nelson, when we hearken to his counsel, we are standing with a prophet of God. Remember the words of Joseph Smith: "And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!"<sup>11</sup> Jesus Christ lives. Our love for Him and His gospel dispels fear.

Our desire to "always have his Spirit"<sup>12</sup> with us will push fear aside for a more eternal view of our mortal lives. President Nelson has cautioned, "In coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost."<sup>13</sup>

The Lord said, regarding the scourges that would cover the land and would harden the hearts of many, "My disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved."<sup>14</sup>

And then this divine counsel: "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."<sup>15</sup>

Stand in holy places—be not troubled—and promises shall be fulfilled. Let's look at each one of these in relation to our fears.

First, stand in holy places. When we stand in holy places—our righteous homes, our dedicated chapels, the consecrated temples—we feel the Spirit of the Lord with us. We find answers to questions that trouble us or the peace to simply set them aside. That is the Spirit in action. These sacred places in the kingdom of God on earth call for our reverence, our respect for others, our best selves in living the gospel, and our hopes to lay aside our fears and seek the healing power of Jesus Christ through His Atonement.

There is no room for fear in these holy places of God or in the hearts of His children. Why? Because of love. God loves us—always—and we love Him. Our love of God counters all fears, and His love abounds in holy places. Think about it. When we are tentative in our commitments to the Lord, when we stray from His path leading to life eternal, when we question or doubt our significance in His divine design, when we allow fear to open the door to all its companions—discouragement, anger, frustration, disappointment—the Spirit leaves us, and we are without the Lord. If you know what that is like, you know it is not a good place to be. In contrast, when we stand in holy places, we can feel God’s love, and “perfect love casteth out all fear.”<sup>16</sup>

The next promise is “Be not troubled.”<sup>17</sup> No matter how much wickedness and chaos fill the earth, we are promised by our daily faithfulness in Jesus Christ the “peace of God, which passeth all understanding.”<sup>18</sup> And when Christ comes in all power and glory, evil, rebellion, and injustice will end.

Long ago the Apostle Paul prophesied of our times, saying to the young Timothy:

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

“For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ...

“... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”<sup>19</sup>

Remember, “they that be with us” on both sides of the veil, those who love the Lord with all their heart, might, mind, and strength, “are more than they that be with them.”<sup>20</sup> If we actively trust in the Lord and His ways, if we are engaged in His work, we will not fear the trends of the world or be troubled by them. I plead with you to set aside worldly influences and pressures and seek spirituality in your daily life. Love what the Lord loves—which includes His commandments, His holy houses, our sacred covenants with Him, the sacrament each Sabbath day, our communication through prayer—and you will not be troubled.

The last point: trust the Lord and His promises. I know that all His promises will be fulfilled. I know it as firmly as I stand here before you in this sacred meeting.

The Lord has revealed: “For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.”<sup>21</sup>

This is why we should not be troubled by the turmoil of today, by those in the great and spacious building, by those who scoff at honest effort and dedicated service to the Lord Jesus Christ. Optimism, courage, even charity come from a heart not burdened by troubles or turmoil. President Nelson, who is “optimistic about the future,” has reminded us, “If we are to have any hope of sifting through the myriad of voices and the philosophies of men that attack truth, we must learn to receive revelation.”<sup>22</sup>

To receive personal revelation, we must place priority on living the gospel and encouraging faithfulness and spirituality in others as well as ourselves.

Spencer W. Kimball was one of the prophets of my youth. These past few years, after being called as an Apostle, I have found peace in his first message at general conference in October 1943. He was overwhelmed by his call; I know what that feels like. Elder Kimball said: “I did a

great deal of thinking and praying, and fasting and praying. There were conflicting thoughts that surged through my mind—seeming voices saying: ‘You can’t do the work. You are not worthy. You have not the ability’—and always finally came the triumphant thought: ‘You must do the work assigned—you must make yourself able, worthy and qualified.’ And the battle raged on.”<sup>23</sup>

I take heart from that purehearted testimony of this Apostle who would become the 12th President of this mighty Church. He recognized he had to put behind him his fears to “do the work assigned” and that he had to rely on the Lord for the strength to make himself “able, worthy and qualified.” We can too. The battles will rage on, but we will face them with the Spirit of the Lord. We will “be not troubled” because when we stand with the Lord and stand for His principles and His eternal plan, we are standing on holy ground.

Now, what about that daughter and son-in-law who asked the very heartfelt and probing, fear-based question years ago? They seriously considered our conversation that night; they prayed and fasted and came to their own conclusions. Happily and joyfully for them and for us, the grandparents, they have now been blessed with seven beautiful children as they go forward in faith and love.

Take heart, brothers and sisters. Yes, we live in perilous times, but as we stay on the covenant path, we need not fear. I bless you that as you do so, you will not be troubled by the times in which we live or the troubles that come your way. I bless you to choose to stand in holy places and be not moved. I bless you to believe in the promises of Jesus Christ, that He lives and that He is watching over us, caring for us and standing by us. In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.