

are filled with soldiers, united, bold, and strong, who follow their Commander and sing their joyful song: Victory, victory, thru him that redeemed us! Victory, victory, thru Jesus Christ, our Lord!”<sup>12</sup> He is there, He wants us to be with Him, He leads us, and our victory is in Him, I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

#### NOTES

1. “Behold! A Royal Army,” *Hymns*, no. 251.

2. Luke 18:22.
3. See “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 2–11.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 46:11.
5. Alma 34:32.
6. Alma 37:35.
7. Genesis 49:3–4.
8. See Alma 53.
9. Doctrine and Covenants 6:33.
10. Doctrine and Covenants 50:24.
11. *Hymns*, no. 323.
12. *Hymns*, no. 251.

## Bishop Keith B. McMullin

### You are in charge of your world

My dear brethren, how blessed we are to be assembled together with the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles. Each priesthood bearer present, be he 12 or 112, can, because of our Savior Jesus Christ, inherit the celestial order of life “by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.”<sup>1</sup> This is wonderful to contemplate, and I know it is true. You are in charge of your world!

With this prospect before us, consider the following story. A young man, full of ambition and energy, enrolled in a fine university. At the time, he was a priest in the Aaronic Priesthood. His goal was lofty—he wanted to become a doctor. His aim was ambitious—he wanted to be rich. He wanted to play football, so he sought out the coaches and eventually made the team. Now he could have the recognition and bragging rights unique in the world of university sports. Such were the notions in his head.

But he had given little thought to something that would ultimately dismantle his lofty and vain ambitions—he had failed to lay up in store. He had overlooked the importance of adequate preparation, the requirements of regular attendance and disciplined study, and the college chem-

istry class. The consequence was swift and merciless. It took less than 90 days. It happened this way:

The day he found his 5-foot 8-inch, 170-pound body on the line of scrimmage opposite a mammoth lineman from the varsity squad, he knew he was in the wrong sport.

Unaccustomed to rigorous study, his eyes and mind refused to function after a brief time in the books.

The capstone of defeat was the final chemistry exam. Suffice it to say that his random answers to multiple-choice questions did not even approximate the law of averages. He failed miserably.

Hard work, a mission that awakened in him a correct vision of life’s purposes, and unrelenting preparation eventually overcame the consequence of this brief period of foolishness. Even today, however, I still have nightmares about that chemistry class.

Fortunately, the Lord has shown us how to avoid similar foolishness. He said:

“Hearken, O ye people of my church. . . . Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together. . . .

“Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh.”<sup>2</sup>

### “If ye are prepared ye shall not fear”

The doctrine of the Second Coming of the Messiah provides one of the great incentives to prepare and live right. Heavenly Father knows that promised rewards encourage His children to do works of righteousness and promised penalties create a dread of doing evil. Such are the revelations pertaining to the Second Coming of our Lord.<sup>3</sup>

These revelations speak of signs and wonders on earth and in the heavens. They point to troublesome times and pending events vast in scope and duration. And most important, we receive these supernal promises:

“The Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst.”<sup>4</sup>

“Through my providence, notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, . . . the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world.”<sup>5</sup>

And “if ye are prepared ye shall not fear.”<sup>6</sup>

Priesthood bearers are led by these promises to prepare themselves and their families for the Lord’s appearing.<sup>7</sup> There is no need to be anxious about events leading up to the Second Coming. Let us instead be filled with gratitude for our understanding of what lies ahead. Let us appreciate that we are in charge of our own world, being the Lord’s agents over that which He has entrusted to us.<sup>8</sup> The formula is simple: Be faithful. Unencumber your life. Lay up in store.

*Be faithful.* As priesthood bearers, we cultivate a gentle touch and kindly word. We are men who pray, who keep the Sabbath day holy, and who know the word of God. We tithe, fast, and give a generous fast offering. We keep our covenants and consecrate our lives to the building up of God’s kingdom.

And, brethren, we *lay up in store!* As we do these things, “the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in [our] midst.”<sup>9</sup>

*Unencumber your life.* As men of God, we turn from excess to that which edifies, for “that which doth not edify is not of God.”<sup>10</sup> If dealings or involvements or pursuits or schedules detract from putting God first, we must pare back and unencumber our lives.<sup>11</sup> If we have debts, we pay them and live debt free to the extent possible.

And, brethren, we *lay up in store!* Then, “through [the Lord’s] providence, notwithstanding the tribulation . . . the church [and its people will] stand independent.”<sup>12</sup>

*Lay up in store.* Wives are instrumental in this work, but they need husbands who lead out in family preparedness. Children need parents who instill in them this righteous tradition. They will then do likewise with their children, and their stores will not fail.

A cardinal principle of the gospel is to prepare for the day of scarcity. Work, industry, frugality are part of the royal order of life. Remember these words from Paul: “If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”<sup>13</sup>

### Counsel from the First Presidency

Seated before us are the three presiding high priests who constitute the First Presidency of the Church.

From President James E. Faust, Second Counselor, we hear: “Every father and mother are the family’s storekeepers. They should store whatever their own family would like to have in the case of an emergency . . . [and] God will sustain us through our trials.”<sup>14</sup>

From President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor, we hear: “Many more people could ride out the storm-tossed waves in their economic lives if they had their year’s supply of food . . . and were debt-free. Today we find that many have followed this counsel in reverse: they have

at least a year's supply of debt and are food-free."<sup>15</sup>

From President Gordon B. Hinckley, the Lord's prophet, we hear:

"The best place to have some food set aside is within our homes. . . .

"We can begin ever so modestly. We can begin with a one week's food supply and gradually build it to a month and then to three months. . . . I fear that so many feel that a long-term food supply is so far beyond their reach that they make no effort at all.

"Begin in a small way . . . and gradually build toward a reasonable objective."<sup>16</sup>

### Members should begin to store and save

Inspired preparation rests on the foundation of faith in Jesus Christ, obedience, and a provident lifestyle. Members should not go to extremes, but they should begin.

We call upon priesthood bearers to store sufficient so that you and your family can weather the vicissitudes of life. Please see to it that those entrusted to your watchcare receive these two pamphlets entitled *All Is Safely Gathered In*. Exhort them to prepare now for rainy days ahead.

Priesthood leaders, enlist the Relief Society in promoting family preparedness and homemaking. The women of the Church need your backing and will respond to your leadership.

Encourage our members to regularly put into their home storage a few wholesome, basic food items and some water that is safe to drink. They should save some money, if only a few coins each week. This modest approach will soon enable them to have several months' reserve. Over time they can expand these modest efforts into a longer-term supply by adding such essentials as grains, legumes, and other staples that will keep them alive in case they do not have anything else to eat.<sup>17</sup>

As we do our very best, we can be confident that "the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail."<sup>18</sup>

We shall enjoy greater wisdom, security, peace of mind, and personal well-being. We shall be prepared, and because we are prepared, we "shall not fear."<sup>19</sup>

### One family's preparation

In closing, I introduce to you the Luca and Patrizia Vaccarone family. They live in a small town near Rome, Italy. In a recent letter, they wrote:

"We decided after some experience that it is important to store the items we use. Sometimes we have to modify our habits in eating certain kinds of foods. . . .

"The feeling of peace and the desire to be faithful to the commandment given by the Lord through the modern prophet helps us feel the Holy Spirit, . . . to not be afraid, and to see that the signs of the time for the Second Coming of the Lord is a blessing and not something to fear. We rejoice in it. . . . It gives us the motivation to be faithful and endure to the end and to be saved and obtain eternal life."

As a final thought, Brother Vaccarone writes: "I'm sorry for my English. I hope you understand what I tried to explain to you."<sup>20</sup>

Brother and Sister Vaccarone, we understand, for it is written in scripture: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."<sup>21</sup> In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### NOTES

1. Articles of Faith 1:3.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 1:1, 12.
3. See Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. (1966–73), 1:677–78.
4. Doctrine and Covenants 1:36.
5. Doctrine and Covenants 78:14.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 38:30.
7. See 2 Timothy 4:8; Doctrine and Covenants 133:50, 52.
8. See Doctrine and Covenants 104:13–17.
9. Doctrine and Covenants 1:36.

10. Doctrine and Covenants 50:23.
11. See *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:675–76; Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:38.
12. Doctrine and Covenants 78:14.
13. 1 Timothy 5:8; see also 1 Timothy 6:19; Doctrine and Covenants 29:34; “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102; Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, Oct. 1900, 46; Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. (1979–81), 2:155.
14. In Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 26; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 22.
15. “That Noble Gift—Love at Home,” *Church News*, May 12, 2001, 7.
16. In Conference Report, Oct. 2002, 65; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 58.
17. See *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1996), 314.
18. 1 Kings 17:14; see also vv. 8–16.
19. Doctrine and Covenants 38:30.
20. Letter dated Mar. 3, 2007.
21. Proverbs 3:5–6.

### President Monson

Thank you, brethren. The choir and congregation will now sing “Now Let Us Rejoice.” President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will then address us, and following his remarks, it will be my privilege to speak to you.

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The choir and congregation sang  
“Now Let Us Rejoice.”

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## President James E. Faust

### A message for young priesthood holders

Brethren, tonight I would like to talk to you as I would to my grandsons. I hope that what I have to say will apply to all young priesthood holders everywhere. As I think of this large congregation and also the many thousands more who have joined us by satellite, I am reminded that the great blessing of holding the priesthood of God is one that is reserved for the relatively few, considering the billions of people in the world. To hold the priesthood is a signal honor; yet any worthy man or boy over the age of 12 in the Church may receive it.

Priesthood is the authority delegated to man to minister in the name of God. It is a power that no one can assume on his own initiative. As Paul said, “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”<sup>1</sup> It is an authority beyond all human power to create.

### The reality of priesthood power

Peter, a young priest, wrote of an experience that taught him that priesthood

power is very real. A young convert in his ward in Ontario, Canada, was sustained as a teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood, and Peter was asked to be the “voice” in the ordination. Peter wrote: “I had never laid my hands on anybody’s head before, and I felt so inadequate. But then the Spirit reassured me that it would be fine for me to do it. . . .

“The young man to be ordained sat down in the chair, and I stood directly behind him. [Our Young Men president] guided me through the ordinance prayer and I repeated every word he said. After we had finished the ordination and said, ‘. . . and we wish to pronounce a blessing on your head at this time . . .’ [the Young Men president] looked at me and indicated that I was on my own.

“At that point, the priesthood entirely changed its meaning for me. It was no longer just a title, but the actual authority to act in God’s name, and I was giving that authority to someone else. I paused and waited for the Spirit to whisper to me what I was to say. It is difficult for me to