





By Elder
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Of the Seventy

Let Us Not Fail to Feel

*There is a force more powerful than earthquakes, ferocious winds, or raging fires.
But it is still and small, and we must pay attention if we want it to guide us.*

On February 27, 2010, at 3:34 a.m., an earthquake of magnitude 8.8 on the moment magnitude scale violently shook much of Chile, causing panic, fear, and concern in millions of people.

A few days later, I was assigned to preside over a stake conference at a location close to the epicenter of this great quake. I wondered if the earthquake and the continuing aftershocks would affect attendance at the conference. I was surprised when attendance at each session of the conference was greater than it had ever been at previous conferences.

Apparently, the earthquake reminded stake members, at least temporarily, about the importance of getting close to God, sanctifying the Sabbath, and attending meetings. Several weeks later I telephoned the stake president. I asked if attendance at Church meetings was still high. He replied that as the number and magnitude of the aftershocks declined, so did attendance at church.

Similar behavior followed the sad events that destroyed the World Trade Center in New York, USA, in September 2001. Thousands of people turned to their churches in search of peace of mind and comfort they badly needed. But as time passed, this search lessened and things returned to normal. It is not earthquakes, storms, or

disasters and tragedies, whether natural or man-made, that develop faith, testimony, and lasting conversion.

Elijah and the Still, Small Voice

In the days of the prophet Elijah, Ahab was the king of Israel. Ahab married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess. She introduced the Israelites to the ways of the Phoenicians, including idolatrous worship. After Elijah challenged and overcame the priests of Baal who abounded in the court of King Ahab, Jezebel threatened the prophet's life and he escaped into the wilderness. (See 1 Kings 18:4, 13, 19, 21–40; 19:1–4.)

After being fed by an angel in the wilderness, Elijah walked 40 days and 40 nights to Mount Horeb (see 1 Kings 19:5–8). In the wilderness, the word of the Lord came to Elijah. He was told to come out of the cave where he had spent the night. As he stood upon the mount before the Lord, “a great and strong wind” arose, so powerful that it broke the rocks and the mountains, “but the Lord was not in the wind.” Then came an earthquake, “but the Lord was not in the earthquake.” Then came a fire, “but the Lord was not in the fire” (1 Kings 19:11–12). Despite the fierceness of the wind, earthquake, and fire, they were not manifestations of the Lord's voice to the prophet.

After these powerful expressions of the forces of nature, “a still small voice” came to Elijah, and he heard it (see 1 Kings 19:12–13). The soothing voice of the Lord told him whom to anoint as the next king of Syria, whom to anoint as the next king of Israel, and that he should anoint Elisha as the prophet who would succeed him.

Finding the Voice

The same voice that came to Elijah—the voice that told him what to do in a difficult time in his life and ministry—is still available to every child of God who sincerely wants to do the will of the Father. But in the midst of the many loud, worldly voices inviting us to travel dark and confusing paths, where can we find the still, small voice that will tell us what to do, what to say, and what God wants us to become?

Nephi counsels us to “feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:3).

And where do we find the words of Christ so that we can feast on them? We can look to the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon, which was written and preserved in its purity for us, the inhabitants of this generation. We also hearken to the words of modern prophets, who tell us the desires of our Eternal Father and our Savior Jesus Christ today.

The words of living prophets guide us when we face new and complex challenges. In recent years, for example, while the prevailing confusion of the world and its philosophies have sought to permanently alter the concept of marriage and family, the words of the prophets have firmly, courageously, and lovingly emphasized the sacred nature of the family, declaring that “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.”¹



Today’s prophets and apostles have also stressed the importance of observing the Sabbath at home and at church and achieving the salvation of our ancestors through family history and temple work. At every general conference, they provide additional spiritual guidance for the Church.

The Holy Ghost Will Guide You

Nephi further teaches, “If ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5). So, having reinforced the importance of seeking the words of Christ, now Nephi instructs us regarding the direct, personal communication we must have with the Holy Ghost, the third member of the Godhead.

Nephi knew exactly what he was talking about. Some 30 or 40 years earlier, while his family was still in the desert and he was building a ship that would take them to the promised land, Nephi rebuked his older brothers



for committing iniquities, even after hearing the voice of an angel.

Nephi said to them, “Ye are swift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord your God. Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past feeling, that ye could not feel his words; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder, which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder” (1 Nephi 17:45).

Let Us Not Stop Feeling

God’s communication with His children usually comes through the Holy Ghost, who most often communicates with us in a voice that enters our minds and hearts, “the still small voice, which whispereth through and pierceth all things” (D&C 85:6). Let us listen to that gentle voice and not wait until someone must speak to us with a voice of thunder! Remember, Elijah learned that the voice of the

Lord was not in wind, earthquake, or fire. The Lord spoke to him through the Holy Ghost, a still, small voice.

“The voice of the Spirit comes as a *feeling* rather than a sound,” said President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “You will learn, as I have learned, to ‘listen’ for that voice that is *felt* rather than *heard*. . . .

“ . . . It is a spiritual voice that comes into the mind as a thought or a feeling put into your heart.”²

We *feel* the words from the Holy Spirit, more than those we *hear* with our ears, in our minds and hearts. Let us not fail to feel those promptings! May we open our minds and hearts to receive the words of the prophets. May we allow the Holy Ghost to continue to teach us through the still, small voice. Teaching His disciples about the Holy Spirit, which would be sent unto them after His departure, the Savior told them, “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance” (John 14:26).

Each faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has the right and the blessing of receiving personal guidance, inspiration, and personal revelation from heaven through the Holy Ghost.

President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) said: “Be influenced by that still, small voice. Remember that one with authority placed his hands on your head at the time of your confirmation and said, ‘Receive the Holy Ghost.’ Open your hearts, even your very souls, to the sound of that special voice which testifies of truth. As the prophet Isaiah promised, ‘Thine ears shall hear a word . . . saying, This is the way, walk ye in it’ [Isaiah 30:21].”³ ■

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, May 2017, 145.
2. Boyd K. Packer, “Counsel to Youth,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 17–18.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “Believe, Obey, and Endure,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 129.