



BRIEF REMARKS

by

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MINISTER OF EDUCATION

on the occasion of:

*The 150th Session of The Bahamas Annual Conference of
The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church*

at

**Shaw Temple A.M.E. Zion Church
Baillou Hill Road
Nassau, The Bahamas
7:30 p.m.**

20th January, 2010

Salutations:

1. **Bishop George Battle Jr-** (Presiding Prelate)
2. **Mrs. Iris Battle-** (Missionary Supervisor)
3. **Reverend Kendal Mackey** (Host Pastor of Shaw Temple AME Zion Church)
4. **Reverend Darin Moore-** (Presiding Elder)
5. **Mrs. Jennifer Carey-** (Welcome Committee Director)
6. Other **Pastors, Ministers** and **Special Guests**
7. **Ladies & Gentlemen**

Good Evening!

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

I am privileged to have been invited to join **The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church** in celebration of **150 Years of Ecumenical Servitude** to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. I extend greetings and heartfelt congratulations to you on behalf of the Rt. Honourable Hubert Alexander Ingraham, Prime Minister of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, and Mrs. Deloris Ingraham on this wonderful occasion.

Indeed, you have much to be proud of, to acknowledge and to commemorate as your unwavering dedication in the spiritual development of our families and the social and educational contributions to our country and to our youth have improved all of our lives. I am reminded of the words of Unitarian Minister and writer, Edward Everett Hale when he said, ***“I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”*** The A.M.E. Zion family encourages all of us to give more and to do more so that we ourselves might receive more.

Your theme: ***“Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God”*** (*Mathew 6:33*), is a reminder to each of us that there should be no greater need than to serve God, and when this is done all of our needs will be met. Serving God should be our primary focus and it is important to note that this can also be done through service to our fellowman. This must have been the vision of the late Reverend Alpheus Clarke Rolle under whose leadership the first African Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in The Bahamas in 1959,s and many more were later established. It is important that we continue his good works of service especially now with the global economic downturn, and with the most recent tragedy that is now being experienced by our brothers and sisters in the country of Haiti as a result of an earthquake. In times like these, we are called upon to unite, take comfort in our faith, and seek to assist our fellowman. Let us each do our part in providing service to humanity

The AME church which was founded in 1860 has a great history overall, having been born in protest against slavery, and the dehumanization of the African people who were brought to the United States of America. So too is the history of the churches in The Bahamas unique, having

undergone great challenges in the beginning to emerge today with five houses of worship which include:

- *Shaw Temple AME Zion Church*
- *Smith's Chapel AME Zion Church*
- *Varick Memorial AME Zion Church*
- *Holy Trinity AME Zion Church and*
- *Christ Chapel AME Zion Church*

Not only has the church survived, but it continues to thrive under the capable Reverends and Elders from the various communities whose focus is service to the Bahamian people. The late Civil Rights Leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. told us that ***“Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”***

I have no doubt that this conference which will host approximately one hundred (100) delegates will nurture your spirits, enlighten your minds, and challenge you to go the extra mile in the way forward. Be sure to spread the light and the joy by sharing what you have gained here today with your brothers and sisters who were not fortunate enough to

have been here this evening. We look forward to many more contributions from you in the spiritual development of our citizens and of our country. Once again, congratulations and best wishes for a successful conference.

Thank you and may God continue to bless each of you.