

# If Ye Are Prepared...

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EDGEMONT NORTH STAKE

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# Sound Familiar?

- “I speak of doubt—especially self-doubt—of discouragement, and of despair.
- “In doing so I don’t wish to suggest that there aren’t plenty of things in the world to be troubled by. In our lives, individually and collectively, there surely are serious threats to our happiness. I watch an early morning news broadcast while I shave and then read a daily newspaper. That is enough to ruin anyone’s day and by then it’s only 6:30 in the morning. Iran, Afghanistan, inflation, energy, jogging, mass murders, kidnapping, unemployment, floods. With all of this waiting for us we are tempted, as W. C. Fields once said, to “smile first thing in the morning and get it over with.”
- Reference: “For Times of Trouble,” *BYU Speeches*, 18 March 1980; [For Times of Trouble—Holland](#).



BYU President Jeffrey R.  
Holland

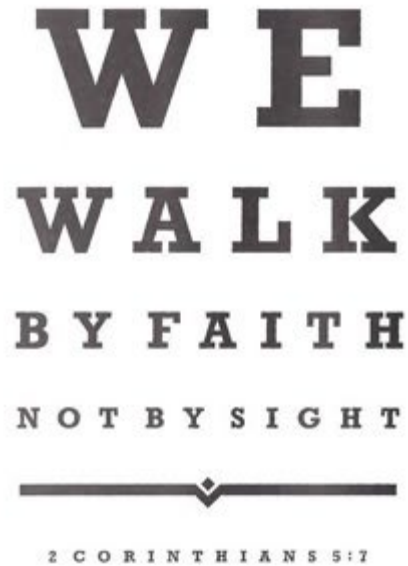
# Are These The Last Days?

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- Indeed, sometime not long after 9-11, I had a missionary ask me in all honesty and full of faith, **“Elder Holland, are these the last days?”** I saw the earnestness in his face and some of the fear in his eyes, and I wanted to be reassuring.
- **“I thought perhaps an arm around him and some humor could relieve his anxiety a little. Giving him a hug, I said, “Elder, I may not be the brightest person alive, but even I know the name of the Church.”**
- **“We then talked about being *Latter-day* Saints. I said, “Yes, Elder, we are in the last days, but there is really nothing new about that. The promised Second Coming of the Savior began with the First Vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1820.**
- **“So we already have about 184 years of experience seeing the Second Coming and the last days unfold. We can be certain that we are in the last days—years and years of them,”** I said, and gave him a friendly shake of the hand and sent him on his way” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Terror, Triumph, and a Wedding Feast,” BYU Speeches, 12 September 2004; [Terror Triumph Wedding Feast--Holland](#)).

# Faith Vs. Fear

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- “First, we must *never*, in *any* age or circumstance, **let fear and the father of fear (Satan himself) divert us from our faith and faithful living.**
- “There have *always* been questions about the future. Every young person or every young couple in every era has had to walk by faith into what has *always* been some **uncertainty**—starting with Adam and Eve in those first tremulous steps out of the Garden of Eden.
- “But that is all right. This is the plan. It will be okay. Just be faithful. **God is in charge. He knows your name and He knows your need**” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Terror, Triumph, and a Wedding Feast,” BYU Speeches, 12 September 2004; [Terror Triumph Wedding Feast--Holland](#)).

# Embrace and Shape the Future

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- “God expects you to have enough faith and determination and enough trust in Him to keep moving, keep living, keep rejoicing. In fact, **He expects you not simply to *face* the future (that sounds pretty grim and stoic); He expects you to embrace and *shape* the future—to love it and rejoice in it and delight in your opportunities....**
- “But tonight I issue a call to each of you to concentrate on the “Saint” portion of that phrase. That is the element in our Church title that should be demanding our attention. Think of the blessings we enjoy. Think of the remarkable age in which we live. Think of the economic and educational, scientific and spiritual blessings we have that *no other* era or people in the history of the world have ever had, and then consider the responsibility we have to live worthily in our moment in time” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “Terror, Triumph, and a Wedding Feast,” BYU Speeches, 12 September 2004; [Terror Triumph Wedding Feast--Holland](#)).



# Reservoirs of Strength

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“There are in our lives reservoirs of many kinds. Some reservoirs are to store water. Some are to store food, as we do in our family welfare program and as Joseph did in the land of Egypt during the seven years of plenty.

“There should also be **reservoirs of knowledge** to meet the future needs; **reservoirs of courage** to overcome the floods of fear that put uncertainty in lives; **reservoirs of physical strength** to help us meet the frequent burdens of work and illness; **reservoirs of goodness, reservoirs of stamina; reservoirs of faith.**



President Spencer W. Kimball

# Reservoirs of Strength

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**“Yes, especially reservoirs of faith so that when the world presses in upon us, we stand firm and strong; when the temptations of a decaying world about us draw on our energies, sap our spiritual vitality, and seek to pull us down, we need a storage of faith that can carry youth and later adults over the dull, the difficult, the terrifying moments, disappointments, disillusionments, and years of adversity, want, confusion, and frustration”** (Spencer W.

Kimball, Faith Precedes the Miracle, *“Reservoirs of Righteousness*, 110-111.)

# Who Will Be Able to Stand?

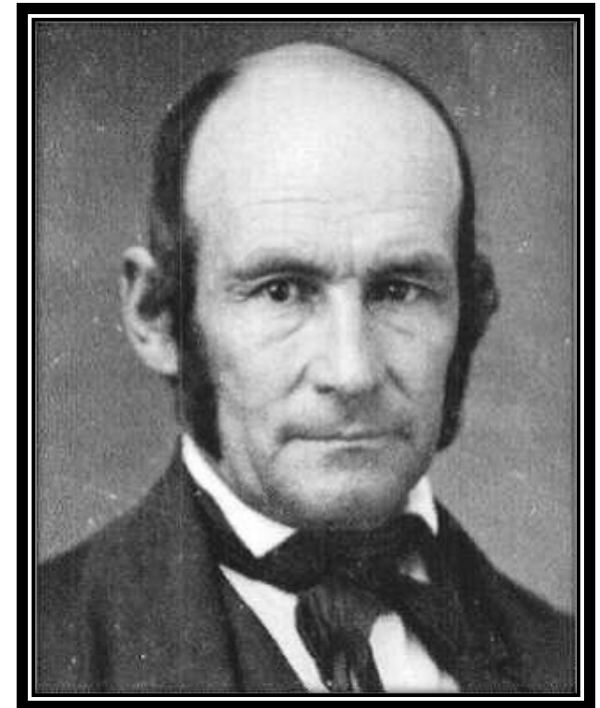
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- “...we think we are secure here in the chambers of the everlasting hills, where we can close those few doors of the canyons against the mobs and persecutors, the wicked and the vile, who have always beset us with violence and robbery, but I want to say to you, **my brethren, the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to the extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God.**
- “Then brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a **TEST**, a **TEST** coming, and who will be able to stand? (Heber C. Kimball, Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 446.)

# Who Will Be Able to Stand?

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- Who will be able to stand?
- Brother Heber answered his own question when he later stated that **“The time will come when no man nor woman will be able to endure on borrowed light. Each will have to be guided by the light within himself. If you do not have it, how can you stand?”** (*Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 449-450.)
- If we want to survive temporally and spiritually in these last days, we are going to need some extra gas in our tanks, or to be more scriptural, oil in our lamps.
- We will not be able to rely on our neighbor’s reserve supply—we will have to have our own surplus of faith, testimony, courage, and fortitude.



Heber C. Kimball

# Oil in Our Lamps

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**Matthew 25:1-13: The Parable of the 10 Virgins**

“...I expect that the Savior was about right when he said, in reference to the members of the Church, **that five of them were wise and five were foolish; for when the Lord of heaven comes in power and great glory ..., if he finds one-half of those professing to be members of his Church prepared for salvation, it will be as many as can be expected, judging by the course that many are pursuing**” (President Wilford Woodruff, as cited in Rulon T. Burton, *We Believe: Doctrines and Principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 1994, 942-943).

# Oil in Our Lamps

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- “And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins” ([D&C 45:56](#)).
- “Given in the 25th chapter of Matthew, this parable contrasts the circumstances of the **five foolish and the five wise virgins**. **All ten were invited to the wedding feast, but only half of them were prepared with oil in their lamps when the bridegroom came.**
- “The arithmetic of this parable is chilling. The ten virgins obviously represent members of Christ’s Church, for all were invited to the wedding feast and all knew what was required to be admitted when the **bridegroom came**. But only half were ready when he came” (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “**Preparation** for the Second Coming,” *Ensign*, May 2004; [Second Coming—Oaks](#)).



# Oil in Our Lamps

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- “The Lord gives us, each one, a lamp to carry, but whether or not we shall have oil in our lamps depends solely upon each one of us.
- “Whether or not we keep the commandments and supply the needed oil to light our way and to guide us on our way depends upon each of us *individually*.
- “We cannot borrow from our Church Membership. We cannot borrow from an illustrious ancestry.
- “Whether or not we have oil in our lamps, **I repeat, *depends solely upon each one of us***, it is determined by our **faithfulness in keeping the commandments of the living God**” (Harold B. Lee, Ed. Clyde J. Williams, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, 1996, pp. 145-146, emphasis added.)



# Oil in Our Lamps

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- “Were the five wise virgins selfish and unwilling to share?... Can the spiritual strength that results from consistent obedience to the commandments be given to another person?”
- “Can the **knowledge obtained through diligent study and pondering of the scriptures** be conveyed to one who is in need?”
- “Can the **peace the gospel brings** to a faithful Latter-day Saint **be transferred to an individual experiencing adversity** or great challenge?”
- “The clear answer to each of these questions is ***no***” (Elder David A. Bednar, “Converted Unto the Lord,” *Ensign*, November 2012, 109; emphasis added).

# Oil in Our Lamps

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“In our lives the oil of preparedness is accumulated drop by drop in righteous living. Attendance at sacrament meetings adds oil to our lamps, drop by drop over the years.

“Fasting, family prayer, home teaching, control of bodily appetites, preaching the gospel, studying the scriptures— **each act of dedication and obedience is a drop added to our store.**

“Deeds of kindness, payment of offerings and tithes, chaste thoughts and actions, marriage in the covenant for eternity—**these, too, contribute importantly to the oil with which we can at midnight refuel our exhausted lamps**” (President Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, “The Ten Virgins,” 1972, 256).

# Why Not Now?

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- “What if the day of His coming were tomorrow? If we knew that we would meet the Lord tomorrow—through our premature death or through His unexpected coming—what would we do today? What confessions would we make? What practices would we discontinue? What accounts would we settle? What forgivenesses would we extend? What testimonies would we bear?
- “If we would do those things then, why not now? Why not seek peace while peace can be obtained? If our lamps of preparation are drawn down, let us start immediately to replenish them” (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “Preparation for the Second Coming,” *Ensign*, May 2004; [Second Coming—Oaks](#)).

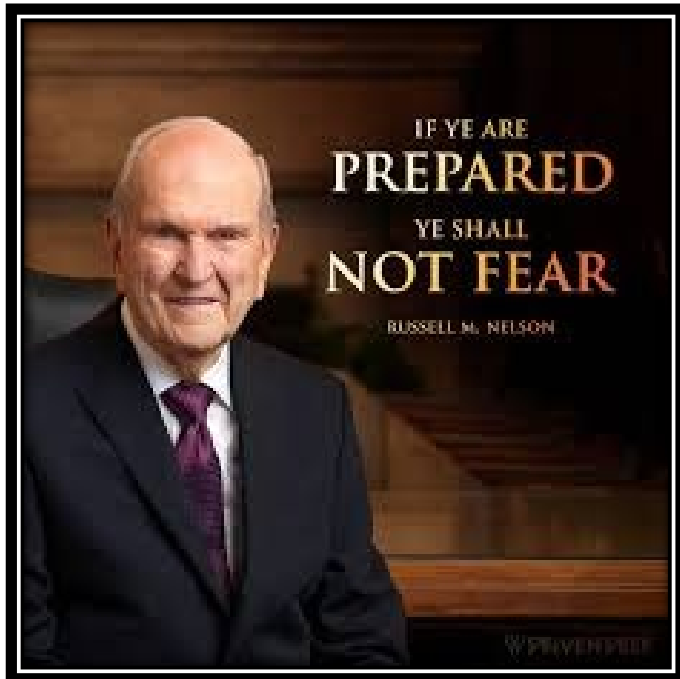
We increase the Savior's  
POWER in our lives when we  
make SACRED COVENANTS  
and KEEP those covenants  
with PRECISION. Our  
covenants BIND US TO HIM  
and give us GODLY POWER.

—RUSSELL M. NELSON

Today's Scripture  
SCRIPTURE OF THE DAY

# Why Not Now?

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- “We need to make both temporal and spiritual preparation for the events prophesied at the time of the Second Coming. And the preparation most likely to be neglected is the one less visible and more difficult—the spiritual.
- “A 72-hour kit of temporal supplies may prove valuable for earthly challenges, but, as the foolish virgins learned to their sorrow, **a 24-hour kit of spiritual preparation is of greater and more enduring value**” (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “Preparation for the Second Coming,” *Ensign*, May 2004; [Second Coming—Oaks](#)).

# Cracker Barrel Wisdom

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- As with any other germ, a little preventive medicine ought to be practiced in terms of those things that get us down. There is a line from Dante that says, **“The arrow seen before cometh less rudely”** (*Divine Comedy*).
- President John F. Kennedy put the same thought into one of his state of the union messages this way: **“The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining.”**
- The Boy Scouts say it best of all: **“Be prepared.” That isn’t just cracker-barrel wisdom with us; it is theology.** “And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice . . . Prepare ye, prepare ye” ([D&C 88:92](#)). “But if ye are prepared ye shall not fear” ([D&C 38:30](#)).
- **“And fear is part of what I wish to oppose this morning. The scriptures teach that preparation—prevention if you will—is perhaps the major weapon in your arsenal against discouragement and self-defeat”** (Jeffrey R. Holland, “For Times of Trouble,” *BYU Speeches*, 18 March 1980; [For Times of Trouble—Holland](#)).

# Preparing for a Glorious Return

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1. **Watch for the Signs of the Savior's Second Coming** (Doctrine and Covenants 61:38).
  2. **Stand in Holy Places** (D&C 45:32). “We can stand fast “in holy places” even though in the world “all things shall be in commotion.” (D&C 45:32; D&C 88:91)” (Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “Behold, the Enemy Is Combined,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 79).
  3. **Take The Holy Spirit As Our Guide** (D&C 45:57).
  4. **Follow the Prophet—He Knows the Way** (D&C 21:4-6).
- **“How do you prepare for the Second Coming? Well, you just do not worry about it. You live the kind of life that if the second coming were to be tomorrow you would be ready. Nobody knows when it is going to happen.... Our responsibility is to prepare ourselves, to live worthy of the association of the Savior, to deport ourselves in such a way that we would not be embarrassed if He were to come among us. That is a challenge in this day and age”** (President Gordon B. Hinckley, Church News 2 January 1999, 2; emphasis added).

# From President Russell M. Nelson

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- **“Brothers and sisters, now is the time for you and for me to prepare for the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Now is the time for us to make our discipleship our highest priority.** In a world filled with dizzying distractions, how can we do this?
- **“Regular worship in the temple will help us. In the house of the Lord, we focus on Jesus Christ. We learn of Him. We make covenants to follow Him. We come to know Him. As we keep our temple covenants, we gain greater access to the Lord’s strengthening power.**
- **“In the temple, we receive protection from the buffetings of the world. We experience the pure love of Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father in great abundance! We feel peace and spiritual reassurance, in contrast to the turbulence of the world.**

# From President Nelson

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- ***“Here is my promise to you: Every sincere seeker of Jesus Christ will find Him in the temple.*** You will feel His mercy. You will find answers to your most vexing questions. You will better comprehend the joy of His gospel....
- **“My dear brothers and sisters, in a coming day, Jesus Christ will return to the earth as the millennial Messiah. So today I call upon you to rededicate your lives to Jesus Christ.** I call upon you to help gather scattered Israel and to prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord. **I call upon you to talk of Christ, testify of Christ, have faith in Christ, and rejoice in Christ!...**
- **“The best is yet to come, my dear brothers and sisters, because the Savior is coming again!** The best is yet to come because the Lord is hastening His work. The best is yet to come as we fully turn our hearts and our lives to Jesus Christ” (President Russell M. Nelson, “The Lord Jesus Christ Will Come Again,” *Liahona*, November 2024; [Christ Comes Again—Nelson](#)).

