

## **There Was Bread**

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*As we seek to become temporally prepared, we can face the trials of life with increased confidence.*

I always like to add commentary or my thoughts going into the paper based off of the synopsis given by the author at the beginning, and once again this synopsis is powerful, accurate, and when understood will almost assuredly ruffle people's feathers. If becoming temporally prepared enables us to face tribulations with increased confidence (in the Lord) as confidence should never be centered on ourselves, our own abilities etc, but in the Lord's power. Now, if this is a true principle, which I can testify that it is, the opposite is always true. If keeping the commandments makes one happy, the opposite has to be true, "wicked never was happiness"- this applies to every universal truth, ergo, one cannot have confidence in the Lord to "rain manna down from heaven" when one is not temporally prepared.

I have read this and included this in a million talks and papers but it is still not getting through to the Saints and so I will include it here at the beginning of the talk as we all knew I was going to include it somewhere in this talk anyway:

In the Old Testament Student Manual for Isaiah 52 we read of a statement issued by the presiding elders in Missouri in July of 1833:

*"For the disciples to suppose that they can come to this land without ought to eat, or to drink, or to wear, or anything to purchase these necessaries with, is a vain thought. For them to suppose that the Lord will open the windows of heaven, and rain down angel's food for them by the way, when their whole journey lies through a fertile country, stored with the blessings of life from His own hand for them to subsist upon, is also vain. For them to suppose that their clothes and shoes will not wear out upon the journey, when the whole of it lies through a country where there are thousands of sheep from which wool in abundance can be procured to make them garments, and cattle upon a thousand hills, to afford leather for shoes, is just as vain. ... Do not conclude from these remarks, brethren, that we doubt in the least, that the Lord will provide for His Saints in these last days; or think that we would extend our hands to steady the ark; for this is not the case. We know that the Saints have the unchangeable word of God that they shall be provided for; yet we know, if any are imprudent, or lavish, or negligent, or indolent, in taking that proper care, and making that proper use of what the Lord has made them stewards over, they are not counted wise; for a strict account of every one's stewardship is required, not only in time, but will be in eternity. Neither do we apprehend that we shall be considered putting out our hands to steady the ark of God by giving advice to our brethren upon important points relative to their coming to Zion, when the experience of almost two years' gathering, has taught us to revere that sacred word from heaven, 'Let not your flight be in haste, but let all things be prepared before you.'" (History of the Church, 1:382-83.)*

Prior to travel restrictions caused by the current pandemic, I was returning home from an international assignment which, due to scheduling issues, created a Sunday layover. I had time between flights to attend a local sacrament meeting, where I was also able to share a brief message. Following the meeting, an enthusiastic deacon approached me and asked if I knew President Nelson and if I had ever had a chance to shake his hand. I answered that I did know him, that I had shaken his hand, and that, as a member of the Presiding Bishopric, I had the opportunity to meet with President Nelson and his counselors a couple of times each week.

The young deacon then sat down on a chair, threw his hands in the air, and shouted, "This is the greatest day of my life!" Brothers and sisters, I may not throw my hands in the air and shout, but I am eternally grateful for a living prophet and for the direction we receive from prophets, seers, and revelators, especially during these times of challenge.

From the beginning of time, the Lord has provided direction to help His people prepare spiritually and temporally against the calamities and trials that He knows will come as part of this mortal experience. These calamities may be personal or general in nature, but the Lord's guidance will provide protection and support to the extent that we heed and act upon His counsel.

President Ezra Taft Benson: "The Lord in His mercy has provided a way of escape [from the tribulation to come]. The voice of warning is to all people by the mouths of His servants. If this voice is not heeded, the angels of destruction will increasingly go forth and the chastening hand of the Almighty God will be felt upon the nations as decreed, until the full end thereof will be the result... Wars, devastations and untold sufferings will be our lot except we turn unto the Lord in humble repentance. Destruction even more terrible and far-reaching than attended the last great War will come with certainty, unless rulers and people alike repent and cease their evil and godless ways... My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion. It is essentially the sin of pride that kept us from establishing Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was the same sin of pride that brought consecration to an end among the Nephites. Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. I repeat, pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. We must cleanse the inner vessel by conquering pride. We must yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit..."

The First Presidency released the following statement about the importance of vaccinations and immunization against preventable diseases:

*"In word and deed, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has supported vaccinations for generations. As a prominent component of our humanitarian efforts, the Church has funded, distributed and administered life-saving vaccines throughout the world. Vaccinations have helped curb or eliminate devastating communicable diseases, such as polio, diphtheria, tetanus, smallpox and measles. Vaccinations administered by competent medical professionals protect health and preserve life.*

*As this pandemic spread across the world, the Church immediately canceled meetings, closed temples, and restricted other activities because of our desire to be good global citizens and do our part to fight the pandemic.*

*Now, COVID-19 vaccines that many have worked, prayed, and fasted for are being developed, and some are being provided. Under the guidelines issued by local health officials, vaccinations were first offered to health care workers, first responders, and other high-priority recipients. Because of their age, Senior Church leaders over 70 now welcome the opportunity to be vaccinated.*

*As appropriate opportunities become available, the Church urges its members, employees and missionaries to be good global citizens and help quell the pandemic by safeguarding themselves and others through immunization. Individuals are responsible to make their own decisions about vaccination. In making that determination, we recommend that, where possible, they counsel with a competent medical professional about their personal circumstances and needs.”*

I would recommend for people to take the time to read/watch my paper *Look and Live*.

A wonderful example is provided in an account from the book of Genesis, where we learn of Joseph in Egypt and his inspired interpretation of Pharaoh’s dream.

We learn of the importance of this story specifically in Ether Chapter 13 where we are told that this is a type of how things will play out surrounding the building of New Jerusalem. This **WILL** see another fulfilment in our day. Watch or read Blake from *Defending Zion’s Joseph of Egypt and the Gathering to Zion*.

“And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, ... God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do. ...

“Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

“And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt.”

Pharaoh listened to Joseph, responded to what God had showed him in a dream, and immediately set about preparing for what was to come. The scriptures then record:

“And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.

“And he gathered up all the food of the seven years. ...

“And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, ... until he left numbering; for it was without number.”

In 2014 President Monson stated, “now is the time to prepare”, about 3.5 years later the Church introduced an updated Self Reliance course and the Spirit whispered to me “could this be the seven years of plenty?” and I received my answer in 2019 when President Nelson said “time [to prepare] is running out.” I’m not being an alarmist, I’m being a realist with a testimony. I know that Joseph in Egypt is a type of things to come, I know a prophet of God told us “now is the time to prepare” and I know another prophet of God said, “time is running out.”

In 2019 the USA’s economy was the strongest it has ever been. There were those who had stored “corn as the sand of the sea.”

Once the seven years of plenty had passed, we are told that “seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.”

Dearth is an interesting word as it means “a scarcity of something that makes it valuable”- it is interesting to note how with this definition it would obviously include famine of food, but it would also include famine of water, famine of social interactions, famine of temple worship etc.

Today we are blessed to be led by prophets who understand the need for us to prepare against the calamities “which should come” and who also recognize the limitations or restrictions that we may encounter in striving to follow their counsel.

I can't understate just how many times it says in the Doctrine and Covenants “should come” or “will come” or “for not many days hence” etc etc. There are those who have said these things had their fulfilment in the year 1300 AD but the voice of the Lord on this matter is crystal clear, these events will transpire in our future. And my testimony and understanding of the scriptures leads me to proclaim as President Nelson “time is running out”; this is in our near future.

There is a clear understanding that the effects of COVID-19, as well as devastating natural disasters, are no respecter of persons and cross ethnic, social, and religious boundaries on every continent. Jobs have been lost and incomes reduced as the opportunity to work has been affected by layoffs and the ability to work has been impacted by health and legal challenges.

To all who have been affected, we express understanding and concern for your situation, as well as a firm conviction that better days are ahead.

This is a clear reference to New Jerusalem- there is not a single prophecy, a single prophecy, that states that things will get better before New Jerusalem. Every prophecy and every scripture is that things will get worse and worse like birthing pains until New Jerusalem is birthed-then you will have your euphoria, then these better days will begin.

You have been blessed with bishops and branch presidents who seek out members of their congregations with temporal needs and who have access to tools and resources that can help you reestablish your lives and place you on the path to self-reliance as you apply principles of preparedness.

It's important to note that there is a difference between surviving and being crowned. You might qualify for temporal salvation in the form of “temporal charity” but that does not equate to taking part in the building of New Jerusalem, let alone equate to exaltation in the highest degree of the Celestial kingdom. Likewise, just because somebody “has been asked to tarry” and does not take part in the building of New Jerusalem or who perish in the calamities leading up to New Jerusalem, that does not mean that they can not obtain exaltation.

Joseph Smith taught, *“I explained concerning the coming of the Son of Man; also that it is a false idea that the Saints will escape all the judgments, whilst the wicked suffer; for all flesh is subject to suffer, and “the righteous shall hardly escape;” still many of the Saints will escape, for the just shall live by faith; yet many of the righteous shall fall a prey to disease, to pestilence, etc., by*

*reason of the weakness of the flesh, and yet be saved in the Kingdom of God. So that it is an unhallowed principle to say that such and such have transgressed because they have been prayed upon by disease or death, for all flesh is subject to death; and the Savior has said, "Judge not, lest ye be judged."* (TPJS, p.162)

In today's environment, with a pandemic that has devastated whole economies as well as individual lives, it would be inconsistent with a compassionate Savior to ignore the reality that many are struggling and ask them to begin building a reserve of food and money for the future. However, that does not mean that we should permanently ignore principles of preparation—only that these principles should be applied “in wisdom and order” so that in the future we might say, as did Joseph in Egypt, “There was bread.”

First of all, I find it somewhat counterintuitive to say *in* a “dearth” the Lord doesn't expect you to save, the whole purpose was to save *before* the dearth. There won't always be “more time”, there will be eventually a group in Egypt that “had no bread.” We were asked by the Lord to prepare for moments like this, we were not asked by the Lord to prepare *in* times like this. As President Monson taught “when the time for decision arrives, the time for preparation has passed.” We still have time to prepare until the bow in heaven has departed.

Joseph Smith taught, “*I have asked of the Lord concerning His coming; and while asking the Lord, He gave a sign and said, "In the days of Noah I set a bow in the heavens as a sign and token that in any year that the bow should be seen the Lord would not come; but there should be seed time and harvest during that year; but whenever you see the bow withdrawn, it shall be a token that there shall be famine, pestilence, and great distress among the nations, and that the coming of the Messiah is not far distant."* (TPJS, pp. 340-41)

The second thing I would say about this section by Bishop Waddell is that he is saying there will be a famine in the future. Once again it is laid out.

The Lord does not expect us to do more than we can do, but He does expect us to do what we can do, when we can do it. As President Nelson reminded us in our last general conference, “The Lord loves effort.”

A lot of my papers are geared towards the West just because I have a better idea of what the laws are and what the cost of items are. So, when going through my papers such as Temporal Salvation: Food and Water, take that into consideration. That being said, I showed how much it would cost per day for somebody in the West to store a year supply of food and water- it costs between \$1-2/day/person. Remember the quote given above by the presiding elders, these people had no money, no money, and yet the Lord expected them to stop, work, refuel so to speak and then move forward. I understand, and so does the Lord understand, if people are barely making it paycheck to paycheck and they are living completely in their means- but don't be fooled for one second, not one second, for we qualify for the Lord's grace *after all we can do*. Do you have a Netflix subscription? You better have a year's supply of food and water because you no longer qualify for grace. Did you buy a new Playstation 4, the new iphone, a new truck, etc? Then you better make sure you have at least a year supply of food and water because you no longer qualify for grace. Did you and your family go out to a movie, go out for ice cream, go out to eat at a

fancy restaurant, buy fancy dresses and photographers for weddings, etc? Then you better make sure you have at least a year supply of food and water because you no longer qualify for grace. If you are choosing to have “a summer cabin in Babylon” (Elder Neal A. Maxell) don’t expect grace in the Lord’s kingdom. The Lord describes such groups in Isaiah who got fat living off of the enemy’s hill and then once that hill became barren they tried to jump hills to the Lord’s. And the Lord’s response was basically “you gave the neighbor all the best years of your milk and you think you can just hop into my good graces when you are in trouble?” The Lord is a merciful and loving God who gives us more than we deserve, He makes up the difference in grace. The Lord does not simply love effort, he requires it. Believing in effort does not rob one of their belief in a loving and gracious Heavenly Father, while believing in a loving Heavenly Father that requires no effort robs one of a belief of an intelligent Father. You make God a fool. Is it any wonder then that the Lord’s constant admonition to these people, the people who believe that the Lord will save them without any effort is that “the Lord will not be mocked.” To believe in a God that does not require effort is to believe in Nehor, is to believe that “if you are guilty God will beat us with a few stripes, but don’t worry, we will still be saved in the kingdom of God.” It is to come out and openly mock the Godhead. Once we do everything we can the Lord said of such servants, “ye are still unprofitable servants” that is when the overwhelming love, mercy and compassion of our Lord kicks in, but not a moment sooner. These people who mock God will find themselves completing the Lord’s prophecy of such in D&C 58:

### **D&C 58:30-33**

30 Who am I that made man, saith the Lord, that will hold him guiltless that obeys not my commandments?

31 Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and have not fulfilled?

32 I command and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing.

33 Then they say in their hearts: This is not the work of the Lord, for his promises are not fulfilled. But wo unto such, for their reward lurketh beneath, and not from above.

Church leaders have often encouraged Latter-day Saints “to prepare for adversity in life by having a basic supply of food and water and some money in savings.” At the same time, we are encouraged to “be wise” and “not go to extremes” in our efforts to establish a home storage supply and a financial reserve.

This is part of the Parable of the Ten Virgins, this is part of understanding Joseph in Egypt as a type, etc. There are no last-minute preparations or extremes, the Egyptians had seven years to store 20% per year to help them get through the famine for seven years. The virgins likewise had their entire lives to accumulate that oil and there were those who rushed to the market to buy last minute but who couldn’t do it in time. This was designed to be a commandment that took considerable and sustained effort to accomplish. It is not something that can easily be done overnight, that is why it is such an indicator of those who lived wise lives and those who were unprepared and lived foolish lives. It is a reflection showcasing years of one’s devotion. If you have just joined the Church, start now. But as President Nelson said in 2019 to those then

investigating the Church and those less active in the Church, “time [for you] is running out.” If time was running out for those individuals in 2019, time for members who have been active their whole lives, might already be over, ie. “the period of grace” for them might be over because they have been given enough time to prove themselves.

A resource entitled Personal Finances for Self-Reliance, published in 2017 and currently available on the Church website in 36 languages, begins with a message from the First Presidency, which states:

“The Lord has declared, ‘It is my purpose to provide for my saints’ [Doctrine and Covenants 104:15]. This revelation is a promise from the Lord that He will provide temporal blessings and open the door of self-reliance. ...

“... Accepting and living these principles will better enable you to receive the temporal blessings promised by the Lord.

“We invite you to diligently study and apply these principles and teach them to your family members. As you do so, your life will be blessed ... [because] you are a child of our Father in Heaven. He loves you and will never forsake you. He knows you and is ready to extend to you the spiritual and temporal blessings of self-reliance.”

This resource includes chapters devoted to creating and living within a budget, protecting your family against hardship, managing a financial crisis, investing for the future, and many more and is available for everyone on the Church website or through your local leaders.

My wife and I had the chance to teach this course in our branch the year before COVID struck with our last classes happening just before the lockdowns. We had seven members from our branch show up weekly to our house, I would cook free meals for them and then Ashley would teach the lesson while I took care of the kids. It was a very worthwhile course and a lot of people’s questions that they ask me are answered very clearly in that manual. If you have questions regarding your temporal salvation, debt, things you can do now etc, I would highly recommend finding your answers in that course/manual while there is still time.

When considering the principle of preparedness, we can look back to Joseph in Egypt for inspiration. Knowing what would happen would not have been sufficient to carry them through the “lean” years without a degree of sacrifice during the years of abundance. Rather than consume all that Pharaoh’s subjects could produce, limits were established and followed, providing sufficient for their immediate, as well as their future, needs. It was not enough to know that challenging times would come. They had to act, and because of their effort, “there was bread.”

This is one of the most important concepts that members of the Church of Jesus of Christ of Latter-day Saints should grasp- the majority of the Church is Ephraim with now Manasseh blossoming as a rose. Ergo, Joseph. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is primarily Joseph. We are the literal or adopted seed of Joseph. We learn in the stick of Joseph ie. the Book of Mormon (Ezekiel 37) that Joseph being sold into Egypt was the type for how things will play out in the last days surrounding the building of New Jerusalem. Ergo, seven years of plenty,

seven years of famine, two years into the famine the ten lost tribes return and join Joseph in a foreign land, ie. Zion. The Parable of the Ten Virgins deal with exactly the same time period, ergo, the difference between the virgins who prepared and were ready versus the virgins who were unready and unprepared should be painfully obvious. “It [is] not enough to know that challenging times [will come]. [We have] to act, and because of [our] effort, there will be [oil].” Those that “sacrificed during the years of abundance” to get their oil will join the procession, while those that clung to their iphones, Netflix, trucks, 4-wheelers, clothes, and almost certainly debt, will be asking the other virgins for some of their oil and will be denied, thus saith the Lord in the Parable of the Ten Virgins.

But wait! I thought the oil represented something of a spiritual nature, not something as insignificant as something on a temporal level?!

This leads to an important question: “Therefore, what?” A good place to begin is to understand that all things are spiritual to the Lord, “and not at any time” has He given us “a law which was temporal.” Everything, then, points to Jesus Christ as the foundation upon which we must build even our temporal preparedness.

Being temporally prepared and self-reliant means “believing that through the grace, or enabling power, of Jesus Christ and our own effort, we are able to obtain all the spiritual and temporal necessities of life we require for ourselves and our families.”

Additional aspects of a spiritual foundation for temporal preparedness include acting “in wisdom and order,” which implies a gradual buildup of food storage and savings over time, as well as embracing “small and simple” means, which is a demonstration of faith that the Lord will magnify our small but consistent efforts.

Bishop Waddell answers this question perfectly. This is also gone over in my papers *The Prepared Need Not Fear; Temporal Salvation: Food and Water*, in Elder McConkie’s talk “Stand Independent above All Other Creatures”, among others.

This also provides a wonderful summary of the entire thought process or thesis of the talk.

With a spiritual foundation in place, we can then successfully apply two important elements of temporal preparedness—managing finances and home storage.

Key principles to manage your finances include the payment of tithes and offerings, eliminating and avoiding debt, preparing and living within a budget, and saving for the future.

People ask me this question all the time, here it is laid out plainly and distinctly (from the Self Reliance Personal Finances manual):

1. Pay tithing and fast offerings
2. Eliminating and avoiding debt (once again, there are no exceptions listed here)
3. Living within a budget
4. Saving for the future



The list of importance is also provided here- you don't go into debt to save for the future and you don't quit paying tithing to eliminate your debt etc.

Key home storage principles include the storage of food, the storage of water, and the storage of other necessities based on individual and family needs, all because "the best storehouse" is the home, which becomes the "most accessible reserve in times of need."

He then hones in specifically on point four above, saving for the future, and says that the most important things in step 4 are not your 401K but your storage of food, water and other necessities. Retirement is step 5.

As we embrace spiritual principles and seek inspiration from the Lord, we will be guided to know the Lord's will for us, individually and as families, and how best to apply the important principles of temporal preparedness. The most important step of all is to begin.

There are two crucial points to understand here:

1. These are "spiritual principles of temporal preparedness"
2. The most important step of all is to begin

These are not temporal matters, these are spiritual matters related directly to our spiritual salvation. The second thing I get asked all the time is "if there isn't much time left, should I start?" And the answer to that is simple, "the most important step is to begin." We don't know how much time is actually left but we do know we are commanded to act. If you don't act, you are damned. Period. There is no grace for those who do not act. The command is to "do all we can", if we haven't even begun obviously we are damned and the arms of the Lord's merciful atonement and forgiveness cannot be applied to us. Brothers and sisters, we must act for we know that not only are we saved after all we can do, we are saved only by our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and:

Elder David A. Bednar taught this principle when he said: "Taking action is the exercise of faith. ... True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to action."

Ergo, if we haven't begun, if we haven't started, if we haven't acted, we have proven we have no faith in Jesus Christ, for faith is action. People worry that there isn't enough time and therefore why begin, why even try? In this lies the answer. We don't know when the end will come, there might be time, but if one never starts, never begins, it is a moot point because the individual is damned regardless. If one begins with true repentance, a contrite spirit and a broken heart, with the intent and plan, and there is not enough time (ie. cataclysms begin before your preparations are complete) Jesus will judge you the same way He judges everyone, "all those who would have received [had they been given enough time] will be heirs of exaltation." If you never began, if you never started, having been taught the gospel truth we *know* how one will be judged; if you begin, you start, and you make a plan with the intent to fulfill that plan at all hazards and "time is cut short" we *know* once again how one will be judged. There is no gray area here. The doctrine on this has been brutally clear since Father Adam.

As always, I will end the talk with the testimony and closing remarks by the speaker and make them my own.

Brothers and sisters, in an ever-changing world, we must prepare for uncertainties. Even with better days ahead, we know that the temporal peaks and valleys of mortality will continue. As we seek to become temporally prepared, we can face the trials of life with increased confidence, peace in our hearts, and like Joseph in Egypt, we will be able to say, even in stressful circumstances, “There was bread.” In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.