

**1** Follow the Savior's teachings. His instructions are neither mysterious nor complex. When we follow them, we do not need to fear or be anxious.

**2** When President Nelson speaks about the Second Coming, it is always with joyful optimism. However, a girl in Primary recently told me that she becomes anxious whenever the Second Coming is mentioned. She said, "I'm scared because bad things are going to happen before Jesus comes again."

**3** Toward the end of His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ was asked when He would come again. In answering, He taught three parables, recorded in Matthew 25, about how to prepare to meet Him—whether at His Second Coming or whenever we leave this world. These teachings are crucial because personal preparation to meet Him is central to life's purpose.

**4** The essential lesson of this parable of the ten virgins is that we are wise when we accept the gospel, seek to have the Holy Ghost with us, and avoid deception. The five wise virgins could not help those without oil; no one can accept the gospel, take the Holy Ghost as a guide, and avoid deception on our behalf. We have to do this for ourselves.

## A Temple worship is personal preparation

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 buffeting 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.

*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.*

**President Russell M. Nelson** *The Lord Jesus Christ Will Come Again*

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2024/10/57nelson>

## B The Son of Man will come suddenly and unexpectedly

**[B1]** "As it was in the days which were before the flood," it will be business as usual right up until the end, which shall come suddenly and unexpectedly—"they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be" (JS-M 1:42-43).

**[B2]** Again an interesting comparison occurs when the Lord likens himself to a thief in the night; there are no criminal connotations, but the metaphor is used purely to describe the *manner* of his coming—it will be a complete surprise. How does one prepare for it, then? One does not. Jesus makes it very clear that the only preparation is to live every day as if the Lord were coming on that day. ...

**[B3]** "then shall be fulfilled that which is written, that in the last days, two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left; two shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left" (JS-M 1:44-45), which means that there is no point in devising ingenious schemes for survival. There is but one real course to escape. What you should do is to watch yourself at all times (see JS-M 1:46); to be found doing good all the time (see JS-M 1:49); to not act as if it were going to be business as usual indefinitely, as if the great event belonged to a vague and indefinite future (see JS-M 1:51). The one thing you can be sure of is that it will be "in such an hour as ye think not" (JS-M 1:48). So the only preparation is to do what? To abstain from taking advantage of others, oppressing the poor, and living in luxury (see JS-M 1:52). ...

**[B4]** What we are plainly told is that the phrase *End of the World* refers expressly to the destruction of the wicked. So who are the "wicked," and how are they to be "destroyed"? The Book of Mormon is the complete handbook on the subject. Twenty times it tells us of the great overburn and each time assures us that while the wicked shall burn as stubble the righteous need not fear. The question that concerns us, then, is not how such a miracle can be arranged—that is quite beyond our imagination at present—but who are the righteous and who are the wicked? We may think we have an easy answer to that one, but it is not the answer that the scriptures give us.

**[B5]** The righteous are whoever are *repenting*, and the wicked whoever are not repenting. "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee" who gave thanks to God that he was not a crook or a lecher, that he fasted twice a week, paid a full tithe, and was very strict in his religious observances. All this was perfectly true. The other man was a tax collector and rather ashamed of some of things he had done, and instead of thanking God by way of boasting, he only asked God to be merciful to him, a sinner (see Luke 18:10-13). The surprise is that the sinner was the righteous one—because he was repenting; the other one who "exalteth himself shall be abased"—because he was not repenting (Luke 18:14). None but the truly penitent are saved, and that is who the righteous are (see Alma 42:22-24).

**[B6]** What do you repent of and how do you repent? It is all a matter of *seeking*: when you repent you turn from seeking some things to seeking others. What you seek are the desires of your heart, as Alma says, and by them alone you will be judged (see Alma 41:3).

**[B7]** "Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world" (3 Ne. 6:15). The condition is first laid out by Nephi and often repeated throughout the Book of Mormon: all who seek "to get gain, and all who are built up to get power over the flesh, (Continue Next Page)

**5** To one servant he gave five talents, to another he gave two, and to a third he gave one. Over time, the first two servants doubled what they had received. But the third servant simply buried his single talent. To both servants who had doubled their talents, the man said, "Well done, ... good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." The man then chided the servant who had buried his talent for being "wicked and slothful." This servant's talent was taken away, and he was banished. Yet, had this servant doubled his talent, he would have received the same commendation and reward as the other servants.

**6** Finally, the Savior told the parable of the sheep and goats. When He returns in His glory, "before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Those on His right became heirs in His kingdom, and those on His left received no inheritance. The distinguishing characteristic was whether they fed Him when He was hungry, gave Him drink when He was thirsty, housed Him when He was a stranger, clothed Him when He was naked, and visited Him when He was sick or imprisoned. ...

The message of the parable is clear: when we serve others, we serve God; when we don't, we disappoint. He expects us to use our gifts, talents, and abilities to bless the lives of Heavenly Father's children.

**[B7 cont.]** and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet" (1 Ne. 22:23).

**[B8]** The first commandment given to the restored Church was "seek not for riches but for wisdom" (D&C 6:7, 11:7), the Lord well knowing what most people are prone to seek.

**[B9]** "This is the word which I declare unto you, that many of you have begun to search for gold"; they have not been opposed in this, he tells them, for God means the riches of the promised land to be enjoyed (Jacob 2:12). But what he does not like is the invidious comparison of a competitive economy: "Because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts. . . . Ye suppose that ye are better than they" (Jacob 2:13; emphasis added). It is inequality that the prophets deplore throughout the Book of Mormon; pride stands at the head of every one of those many lists of crimes that beset the society.

**[B10]** Strictly speaking, there are no good guys: "All men that are in a state of nature, or I would say, in a carnal state, are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity; they are without God in the world" (Alma 41:11). Hence, "this is my doctrine . . . that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me" (3 Ne. 11:32). It is as pointless, then, to ask who are the good guys and who are the bad guys as it is to ask who should repent. The answer is always the same: I am the sinner, and I must repent. How much? Until, like the Son of Man, I am "full of grace and truth" (2 Ne. 2:6). When will that be? Not in this life! Here, all one can hope for is a passing grade.

(JS-M = Joseph Smith–Matthew <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/pgp/js-m/1>)

**Hugh W. Nibley** *Scriptural Perspectives on How to Survive the Calamities of the Last Days*

<https://byustudies.byu.edu/article/scriptural-perspectives-on-how-to-survive-the-calamities-of-the-last-days/>

## C Service and Words

**[C1]** The principle that as we serve others we also serve God was taught by King Benjamin as well: "And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17). King Benjamin further explained that in spite of all the service we might render God, we will ever be indebted to him for all that he has given us and will yet give us upon conditions of continued service and obedience.

**[C2]** The Savior instructed Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:32). Speaking of this commandment, President Gordon B. Hinckley explained, "I believe, my brethren, that that great admonition applies to the men of the priesthood of the Church of Christ: ' . . . when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.' When thou art converted, go thou and convert thy brethren. This is our responsibility."

**[C3]** The doctrine that those who have received the gospel should teach it to others is found throughout the Gospels. While the Gospels teach us that we should share Christ's teachings with others, the Book of Mormon explains that how well we do so may be considered at the judgment. The prophet Jacob's testimony illustrates the point well. Because he had been consecrated to be a teacher, Jacob was especially anxious to adequately warn his brothers and sisters, thereby exonerating himself from accountability for their sins: "And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day" (Jacob 1:19). Again, those who were taught the gospel will be judged by how well they accepted or rejected the message.

**[C4]** Alma's teachings at Ammonihah are more inclusive in regard to the kinds of words for which we might be judged. He simply stated, "For our words will condemn us" (Alma 12:14). While discussing the importance of controlling our speech, Elder Bruce R. McConkie listed some of the kinds of words Alma may have had in mind for which one might be condemned: "The tongue is the mirror of the soul. Spoken words reveal the intents, desires, and feelings of the heart. We shall give an account before the judgment bar for every spoken word, and shall be condemned for our idle, intemperate, profane, and false words (Matt. 12:34–37; Alma 12:14). Implicit in this principle of judgment is the fact that we can control what we say. And what better test can there be of a godly self-control than the ability to tame the tongue!"

**Terry B. Ball** *The Final Judgment*

<https://rsc.byu.edu/book-mormon-message-four-gospels/final-judgment>