Christmas Countdown

24 more names of Christ

to learn about and consider this holiday season

Put together by Katie Morgan, Fox Pointe Ward, Haight Creek Stake, Kaysville Utah, November 2026

Creator

"And also that ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and that ye might know of the signs of his coming, to the intent that ye might believe on his name." (Helaman 14:12)

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Related names:
The Father of heaven and of earth (Helaman 14:12)
The Creator of all things from the beginning (Mosiah 3:8)
Him who laid the foundation of the earth (Doctrine and Covenants 45:1)

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References:
Colossians 1:16-17
3 Nephi 9:15
Jacob 4:9-10

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From James E. Talmage in "Jesus the Christ," Chapter 4: The Antemortal Godship of Christ:

…the Father operated in the work of creation through the Son, who thus became the executive through whom the will, commandment, or word of the Father was put into effect. It is with incisive appropriateness therefore, that the Son, Jesus Christ, is designated by the apostle John as the Word; or as declared by the Father "the word of my power."

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From Bishop Gérald Caussé, "Our Earthly Stewardship," October 2022 General Conference:

While visiting our native country of France, my wife and I recently had the pleasure of taking a few of our grandchildren to explore a magnificent garden situated in the little town of Giverny. We enjoyed wandering along its paths to admire the beautiful flower beds, the elegant water lilies, and the light playing on the ponds.

This amazing place is the result of the creative passion of one man: the great painter Claude Monet, who, for 40 years, tenderly shaped and cultivated his garden to make it his painting workspace. Monet immersed himself in nature's splendor; then, with his paintbrush, he conveyed the impressions he felt with strokes of

color and light. Over the years, he created an extraordinary collection of hundreds of paintings, directly inspired by his garden.

Brothers and sisters, our interactions with the beauties of nature around us can produce some of the most inspiring and delightful experiences in life. The emotions we feel kindle within us a deep sense of gratitude for our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, who created this magnificent earth—with its mountains and streams, plants and animals—and our first parents, Adam and Eve.

The work of creation is not an end in itself. It is an integral part of God's plan for His children. Its purpose is to provide the setting in which men and women may be tested, exercise their agency, find joy, and learn and progress so that they may one day return to the presence of their Creator and inherit eternal life.

These wonderful creations were prepared entirely for our benefit and are living proof of the love the Creator has for His children. The Lord declared, "Yea, all things which come of the earth … are made for the benefit and the use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart."

…The divine process of creation is not yet complete. Every day, God's creations continue to grow, expand, and multiply. A most wonderful thing is that our Heavenly Father extends to us an invitation to participate in His creative work.

We participate in the work of creation whenever we cultivate the earth or add our own constructions to this world—as long as we show respect for God's creations. Our contributions may be expressed through the creation of works of art, architecture, music, literature, and culture, which embellish our planet, quicken our senses, and brighten our lives. We also contribute through scientific and medical discoveries that preserve the earth and life upon it. President Thomas S. Monson summarized this concept with these beautiful words: "God left the world unfinished for man to work his skill upon … that man might know the joys and glories of creation."

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Refuge

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

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Related names:
Sanctuary (Isaiah 8:14)
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References:
Psalm 62:8-9
Psalm 57:1
Psalm 118:8
Isaiah 4:6
Proverbs 18:10
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From Google:

A refuge is defined as a safe place, shelter, or source of protection from danger, trouble, or distress.

The most common Old Testament word translated as refuge is "machaseh," which means a place of trust, shelter, or high security. It comes from the verb "chasah," meaning to actively flee to or put one's trust in someone for protection.

Biblical refuge is not a passive waiting spot; it involves actively running toward God when you face fear, trouble, or trials, much like the ancient Cities of Refuge (see Numbers 35:9-15) set up in Israel where people could sprint for safety.

Over and over, scripture defines refuge not as a physical fortress, wealth, or human alliance, but as the character, presence, and power of God.

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From Elder Ricardo P. Giménez, "Finding Refuge from the Storms of Life," April 2020 General Conference:

…although our lives may at times be relatively smooth, the time will come for each of us when we will face unexpected challenges and storms that will push the limits of our ability to endure. Physical, mental, family, and employment challenges; natural disasters; and other matters of life or death are but some of the examples of the storms that we will face in this life.

When faced with these storms, we often experience feelings of despair or fear. President Russell M. Nelson said, 'Faith is the antidote for fear'—faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. As I have seen the storms that affect people's lives, I have concluded that no matter what kind of storm is battering us—regardless of whether there is a solution to it or whether there is an end in sight—there is only one refuge, and it is the same for all types of storms. This single refuge provided by our Heavenly Father is our Lord Jesus Christ and His Atonement.

…Of course, it is easier to say these things when we are not in the midst of a storm than to live and apply them during the storm. But as your brother, I hope you can feel that I sincerely want to share with you how valuable it is to know that Jesus Christ and His Atonement are the refuge that we all need, regardless of the storms that are battering our lives.

I know that we are all children of God, that He loves us, and that we are not alone. I invite you to come and see that He can lighten your burdens and be the refuge you are seeking. Come and help others find the refuge that they so yearn for. Come and stay with us in this refuge, which will help you resist the storms of life. There is no doubt in my heart that if you come, you will see, you will help, and you will stay.

…As we face the storms of life, I know that if we make our best effort and rely upon Jesus Christ and His Atonement as our refuge, we will be blessed with the relief, comfort, strength, temperance, and peace that we are seeking, with certainty in our hearts that at the end of our time here on earth, we will hear the words of the Master: 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant: … enter thou into the joy of thy lord' (Matthew 25:21).

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The Tapestry Maker

"Can scientists, whose discipline brings the discovery of the interweavings in the tapestry of truth, instruct the Tapestry Maker?" (Neal A. Maxwell, "O, Divine Redeemer," October 1981 General Conference)

Related Names:
The Weaver (Neal A. Maxwell, "Premortality, a Glorious Reality," October 1985 General Conference
The Master Weaver (Marilyn S. Bateman, "Tapestry of Life," BYU Speeches 19 Sep 2000)

A tapestry is made by weaving together different colors of thread or yarn to make a design or picture. The final picture isn't usually distinguished until the tapestry is finished. The front of the tapestry is smooth and shows clearly the beautiful picture, design, detail and artistry. The back does not. It is covered in knots, loose strings and lacks the clarity and detail of the front. We are not meant to look at the back of a tapestry. They are displayed so we see the beautiful image on the front. The backside can be compared to the human perspective. We cannot see the big picture and often do not understand why we have to go through certain experiences. The front side can be compared to God's perspective. He knows the plan and can see the big picture. All of life's experiences have a purpose and will "work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28).

A poem quoted by Elder Neal A. Maxwell in "Premortality, a Glorious Reality," October 1985 General Conference:

My life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me;
I cannot choose the colors
He worketh steadily.

Ofttimes He weaveth sorrow
And I in foolish pride,
Forget that He seeth the upper,
And I the under side.

Not till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly,
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skillful hand,
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.

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From Marilyn S. Bateman, "Tapestry of Life," BYU Speeches 19 Sep 2000:

The threads woven into the fabric of our lives are beginning to create a beautiful tapestry. Golden threads of eternal truths are interwoven throughout the fabric. The gospel of Jesus Christ has given us a pattern to follow, a pattern that has been provided for the benefit and growth of all God's children. "Come, follow me" is the declaration of the Master Weaver—our Savior Jesus Christ (Luke 18:22). If we continue to follow the intricate design of His pattern, we will add depth, meaning, and splendor to the fabric of our lives. Each of us, though, must be the weavers of our own tapestry. We must pull the yarn, tie the knots, and cut the strands—row by row—until our life here on earth is finished.

If we make Christ the center of our lives, our tapestries will be rich in color and beautiful in design. I hope that as you continue to work on your life's tapestry you will be able to see the big picture. I hope you will see that what you weave now will influence the texture and pattern of the rest of your life. It is a glorious life. Trials will come, but you will be prepared to deal with them if you take the time now to pattern your life's tapestry after Christ's.

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The Gentle Carpenter, The Master Finisher

Related Names:
Carpenter (Mark 6:3)
Carpenter of Nazareth (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, "Broken Things to Mend," April 2006 General Conference)

Excerpts from President Kyle S. McKay's talk, "It is Finished," Haight Creek Stake Conference April 2006:

…I have been moved recently as I have pondered Jesus' words: "It is finished." They bring such hope and joy into my heart and swell my soul with gratitude. Here is why: they are evidence of the fact that whatever Jesus undertakes, he finishes. And he has undertaken to save me. To Moses, he said, "[T]his is my work and my glory-to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. That work is not finished. President Joseph F. Smith declared, "Jesus had not finished his work when his body was slain, neither did he finish it after his resurrection from the dead; although he had accomplished the purpose for which he then came to the earth, he had not fulfilled all his work. And when will he? Not until he has redeemed and saved every son and daughter of our father Adam that have been or ever will be born upon this earth to the end of time, except the sons of perdition. That is his mission.

Christ's atonement did two things. It brought about "the resurrection and the redemption of mankind from the fall"; and it also made possible redemption "from individual sins on conditions of repentance." Elder Maxwell and others have taught that the atonement is infinite and eternal, but also intimate and individual. As I understand it, Jesus' work in universally redeeming mankind from the fall of Adam is finished, or at least substantially finished. The resurrection has been secured for all, and all will return to God's presence, there to be judged. But the great work of redeeming each of us from our personal falls continues. Thus, one by one, one on one, Jesus works with each of us until he has finished each of us.

In the world of carpentry, finish work is the "minute detail, careful elaboration [and] finer work required for the completion of a building, especially of the interior." It is "that [work] which finishes or perfects." The

gentle carpenter from Nazareth is a master finisher. He is able to finish us, especially our interiors, and fit us for God's Kingdom. His promise is sure, "I am able to make you holy." But remember, this finish work, this redemption, is conditioned on repentance. We must "come unto Christ ... and deny [ourselves] of all ungodliness ... and offer [our] whole souls as an offering unto him." This is no small thing. C.S. Lewis said:

> Christ says "Give me All. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You .... Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked - the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead ... Make no mistake ... if you let me, I will make you perfect. The moment you put yourself in My hands, that is what you are in for .... You have free will, and if you choose, you can push Me away. But if you do not push Me away, understand that I am going to see this job through .... I will never rest, nor let you rest, until you are literally perfect - until my Father can say without reservation that He is well pleased with you, as He said He was well pleased with me. This I can do and will do."

...Now, if we would truly turn ourselves over to Christ, we would also recognize that the fallen condition from which we must be redeemed is not one of merely being burdened or slowed by innocuous-sounding things like shortcomings, imperfections or weaknesses. Rather, we are damned and dead because of ugly sins we have committed, and "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Therefore, the finish work Christ engages in with us might be more extensive than we anticipate. However, the finished product will be far greater than we can conceive. Again, from C.S. Lewis:

> Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you know that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of - throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace.

Brothers and sisters, I bear witness that Jesus Christ has descended below all things, including the lowest thing you have ever done. He did so that he might finish his work, which is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. I testify that he is the author and finisher of our faith and our redemption. It is a fact that, whatever Jesus undertakes, he finishes. That is comforting doctrine, because he has undertaken to save us. My greatest hope and fondest dream is that one day, after he has shaped and tutored and cleansed me, he will look upon me with satisfaction and approval as he declares: "It is finished! Father, into thy hands I commend his spirit." May it be so for all of us, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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Redeemer

"But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children."
(Isaiah 49:25)

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References:
2 Nephi 2:6
Alma 7:7-13
Alma 11:40
Helaman 5:9
Helaman 14:16-17

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"Redeem" and "Redeemer" in Guide to the Scriptures:

Redeem means to deliver, to purchase, or to ransom, such as to free a person from bondage by payment. Redemption refers to the Atonement of Jesus Christ and to deliverance from sin. Jesus' Atonement redeems all mankind from physical death. Through His Atonement, those who have faith in Him and who repent are also redeemed from spiritual death.

Jesus Christ is the great Redeemer of mankind because He, through His Atonement, paid the price for the sins of mankind and made possible the resurrection of all people.

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Excerpts from Elder Bruce D. Porter's talk "Redeemer of Israel," October 1995 General Conference:

The parable of the prodigal son is a parable of us all. It reminds us that we are, in some measure, prodigal sons and daughters of our Father in Heaven. For, as the Apostle Paul wrote, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Like the errant son of the Savior's parable, we have come to "a far country" (Luke 15:13) separated from our premortal home. Like the prodigal, we share in a divine inheritance, but by our sins we squander a portion thereof and experience a "mighty famine" (Luke 15:14) of spirit. Like him, we learn through painful

experience that worldly pleasures and pursuits are of no more worth than the husks of corn that swine eat. We yearn to be reconciled with our Father and return to His home.

…In the parable of the prodigal son, only the eldest son remains true to his father; in his own words, "Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment" (Luke 15:29). Similarly, in the plan of salvation the Firstborn of the Father is sinless and without spot. Yet there is a vital difference. In the parable, the eldest son is jealous of the attention paid to the returning prodigal. In the plan of salvation, however, the Eldest Son makes possible the return of the prodigals.

The Father sends Him forth to redeem His sons and daughters from bondage. The Eldest is filled with compassion. "I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them" (Ezek. 37:23). He journeys the long distance to find and bring home the prodigal ones. And there He finds us weary, hungry, and downtrodden. He feeds us and gives us drink. He lives among us and shares our burdens. Then, in a final act of supreme love, the Eldest Son takes of His own wealth and, one by one, He ransoms us. In order to pay the fulness of our debt, He is compelled to sacrifice His own fortune, yea, all that He has, every whit.

There are those who refuse the proffered ransom. Chained by pride, they prefer bondage to repentance. But those who accept of His offering and forsake their errant ways receive healing at His hands and liberty as His gift. These He leads back to the Father with songs of everlasting joy.

I testify that the Eldest Son of our Father in Heaven did redeem us from the bondage of sin. We are a purchased people. In the words of Paul, "Ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 7:23). In the Garden of Gethsemane, the Firstborn of the Father "descended below all things" (D&C 88:6); He bore "our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isa. 53:4). At Golgotha, at the hands of men for whose very sins He had atoned, He "poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12), freely relinquishing His life as He overcame the world.

In the premortal realm, He had been the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Creator of the earth, the great I AM. From these exalted heights, He descended, coming to earth in the most humble of circumstances that He might be no stranger to our sorrows. Instead of worldly station, He chose to be born in a lowly stable and live the simple life of a carpenter. He grew up in an obscure village in a despised precinct of Palestine. He made himself of no reputation, and was "a root out of a dry ground," having "no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa. 53:2).

He might have had political power and honor; He chose instead to be a healer and a teacher. He might have won the favor of His people by freeing them from Roman oppression; instead, He saved them from their sins and was rejected by His own. He sacrificed the glory of Galilee to experience the humiliation and trial of Jerusalem. Then, in a most literal way, the Lord Jesus Christ paid the utmost demands of our ransom as He bore "the pain of all men" (D&C 18:11).

"And the world, because of their iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of naught; wherefore they scourge him, and he suffereth it; and they smite him, and he suffereth it. Yea, they spit upon him, and he suffereth it, because of his loving kindness and his long-suffering towards the children of men" (1 Ne. 19:9).

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The parable of the bicycle, told by Stephen E. Robinson, BYU Speeches "Believing Christ: A Practical Approach to the Atonement," May 1990

After I had come home…one day, I was sitting in a chair reading the newspaper. My daughter Sarah, who was seven years old, came in and said, "Dad, can I have a bike? I'm the only kid on the block who doesn't have a bike."

Well, I didn't have enough money to buy her a bike, so I stalled her and said, "Sure, Sarah."

She said, "How? When?"

I said, "You save all your pennies, and pretty soon you'll have enough for a bike." And she went away.

A couple of weeks later as I was sitting in the same chair, I was aware of Sarah doing something for her mother and getting paid. She went into the other room and I heard "clink, clink." I asked, "Sarah, what are you doing?"

She came out and she had a little jar all cleaned up with a slit cut in the lid and a bunch of pennies in the bottom. She looked at me and said, "You promised me that if I saved all my pennies, pretty soon I'd have enough for a bike. And, Daddy, I've saved every single one of them."

She's my daughter, and I love her. My heart melted. She was doing everything in her power to follow my instructions. I hadn't actually lied to her. If she saved all of her pennies she would eventually have enough for a bike, but by then she would want a car. But her needs weren't being met. Because I love her, I said, "Let's go downtown and look at bikes."

We went to every store in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Finally we found it—the perfect bicycle, the one she knew in the premortal existence. She got up on that bike; she was thrilled. She then saw the price tag, reached down, and turned it over. When she saw how much it cost, her face fell and she started to cry. She said, "Oh Dad, I'll never have enough for a bicycle."

So I said, "Sarah, how much do you have?"

She answered, "Sixty-one cents."

"I'll tell you what. You give me everything you've got and a hug and a kiss, and the bike is yours." Well, she's never been stupid. She gave me a hug and a kiss. She gave me the sixty-one cents. Then I had to drive home

very slowly because she wouldn't get off the bike. She rode home on the sidewalk, and as I drove along slowly beside her it occurred to me that this was a parable for the Atonement of Christ.

We all want something desperately—it isn't a bicycle. We want the celestial kingdom. We want to be with our Father in Heaven. And no matter how hard we try, we come up short. At some point we realize, "I can't do this!" That was the point my wife had reached. It is at that point that the sweetness of the gospel covenant comes to our taste as the Savior proposes, "I'll tell you what. All right, you're not perfect. How much do you have? What can you do? Where are you now? Give me all you've got, and I'll pay the rest. Give me a hug and a kiss; enter into a personal relationship with me, and I will do what remains undone."

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The Gardener

"The Currant Bush"
by Elder Hugh B. Brown
(Published in the March 2002 Liahona, originally published in the 1973 New Era)

You sometimes wonder whether the Lord really knows what He ought to do with you. You sometimes wonder if you know better than He does about what you ought to do and ought to become. I am wondering if I may tell you a story. It has to do with an incident in my life when God showed me that He knew best.

I was living up in Canada. I had purchased a farm. It was run-down. I went out one morning and saw a currant bush. It had grown up over six feet (two meters) high. It was going all to wood. There were no blossoms and no currants. I was raised on a fruit farm in Salt Lake before we went to Canada, and I knew what ought to happen to that currant bush. So I got some pruning shears and clipped it back until there was nothing left but stumps. It was just coming daylight, and I thought I saw on top of each of these little stumps what appeared to be a tear, and I thought the currant bush was crying. I was kind of simpleminded (and I haven't entirely gotten over it), and I looked at it and smiled and said, "What are you crying about?" You know, I thought I heard that currant bush say this:

"How could you do this to me? I was making such wonderful growth. I was almost as big as the shade tree and the fruit tree that are inside the fence, and now you have cut me down. Every plant in the garden will look down on me because I didn't make what I should have made. How could you do this to me? I thought you were the gardener here."

That's what I thought I heard the currant bush say, and I thought it so much that I answered. I said, "Look, little currant bush, I am the gardener here, and I know what I want you to be. I didn't intend you to be a fruit tree or a shade tree. I want you to be a currant bush, and someday, little currant bush, when you are laden with fruit, you are going to say, 'Thank you, Mr. Gardener, for loving me enough to cut me down. Thank you, Mr. Gardener.'"

Years passed, and I found myself in England. I was in command of a cavalry unit in the Canadian army. I held the rank of field officer in the British Canadian army. I was proud of my position. And there was an opportunity for me to become a general. I had taken all the examinations. I had the seniority. The one man between me and the office of general in the British army became a casualty, and I received a telegram from London. It said: "Be in my office tomorrow morning at 10:00," signed by General Turner.

I went up to London. I walked smartly into the office of the general, and I saluted him smartly, and he gave me the same kind of a salute a senior officer usually gives—a sort of "Get out of the way, worm!" He said, "Sit down, Brown." Then he said, "I'm sorry I cannot make the appointment. You are entitled to it. You have passed all the examinations. You have the seniority. You've been a good officer, but I can't make the appointment. You are to return to Canada and become a training officer and a transport officer." That for which I had been hoping and praying for 10 years suddenly slipped out of my fingers.

Then he went into the other room to answer the telephone, and on his desk, I saw my personal history sheet. Right across the bottom of it was written, "THIS MAN IS A MORMON." We were not very well liked in those days. When I saw that, I knew why I had not been appointed. He came back and said, "That's all, Brown." I saluted him again, but not quite as smartly, and went out.

I got on the train and started back to my town, 120 miles (190 kilometers) away, with a broken heart, with bitterness in my soul. And every click of the wheels on the rails seemed to say, "You are a failure." When I got to my tent, I was so bitter that I threw my cap on the cot. I clenched my fists, and I shook them at heaven. I said, "How could you do this to me, God? I have done everything I could do to measure up. There is nothing that I could have done—that I should have done—that I haven't done. How could you do this to me?" I was as bitter as gall.

And then I heard a voice, and I recognized the tone of this voice. It was my own voice, and the voice said, "I am the gardener here. I know what I want you to do." The bitterness went out of my soul, and I fell on my knees by the cot to ask forgiveness for my ungratefulness and my bitterness. While kneeling there I heard a song being sung in an adjoining tent. A number of Mormon boys met regularly every Tuesday night. I usually met with them. We would sit on the floor and have Mutual. As I was kneeling there, praying for forgiveness, I heard their singing:

But if, by a still, small voice he calls
To paths that I do not know,
I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in thine:
I'll go where you want me to go.
(Hymns, number 270)

I arose from my knees a humble man. And now, almost 50 years later, I look up to Him and say, "Thank you, Mr. Gardener, for cutting me down, for loving me enough to hurt me." I see now that it was wise that I should not become a general at that time, because if I had I would have been senior officer of all western Canada, with a lifelong, handsome salary, a place to live, and a pension, but I would have raised my six daughters and two sons in army barracks. They would no doubt have married out of the Church, and I think I would not have amounted to anything. I haven't amounted to very much as it is, but I have done better than I would have done if the Lord had let me go the way I wanted to go.

Many of you are going to have very difficult experiences: disappointment, heartbreak, bereavement, defeat. You are going to be tested and tried. I just want you to know that if you don't get what you think you ought to get, remember, God is the gardener here. He knows what He wants you to be. Submit yourselves to His will. Be worthy of His blessings, and you will get His blessings.

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The Resurrection

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25)

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Related Names:
The Life (John 11:25)
He Who Liveth (Doctrine and Covenants 110:4)
The first begotten of the dead (Revelation 1:5)
The First Fruits of them that sleep

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References:
Mark 16:1-6
Alma 11:42-45
Mosiah 16:7-9
1 Corinthians 15:20-22
2 Nephi 2:8

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Excerpts from Elder Russell M. Nelson's talk, "The Doors of Death," April 1992 General Conference:

Death separates "the spirit and the body [which] are the soul of man" (D&C 88:15). That separation evokes pangs of sorrow and shock among those left behind. The hurt is real…The only length of life that seems to satisfy the longings of the human heart is life everlasting.

Irrespective of age, we mourn for those loved and lost. Mourning is one of the deepest expressions of pure love. It is a natural response in complete accord with divine commandment: "Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die" (D&C 42:45).

Moreover, we can't fully appreciate joyful reunions later without tearful separations now. The only way to take sorrow out of death is to take love out of life.

…Life does not begin with birth, nor does it end with death. Prior to our birth, we dwelled as spirit children with our Father in Heaven. There we eagerly anticipated the possibility of coming to earth and obtaining a physical body. Knowingly we wanted the risks of mortality, which would allow the exercise of agency and accountability. "This life [was to become] a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God" (Alma

12:24). But we regarded the returning home as the best part of that long-awaited trip, just as we do now. Before embarking on any journey, we like to have some assurance of a round-trip ticket. Returning from earth to life in our heavenly home requires passage through—and not around—the doors of death. We were born to die, and we die to live (see 2 Cor. 6:9). As seedlings of God, we barely blossom on earth; we fully flower in heaven.

…Some facetiously state that nothing is as permanent as death. Not so! The grip of physical death is temporary. It began with the fall of Adam; it ended with the atonement of Jesus the Christ. The waiting period in paradise is temporary too. It ends with the Resurrection. From the Book of Mormon we learn that the "paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls" (2 Ne. 9:13).

A few years ago, our stake president and his wife had a wonderful son taken in his youthful prime because of an automobile accident. We are consoled by the knowledge that the very laws that could not allow his broken body to survive here are the same eternal laws which the Lord will employ at the time of the Resurrection, when that body "shall be restored to [its] proper and perfect frame" (Alma 40:23; see also Alma 11:42–45).

The Lord who created us in the first place surely has power to do it again. The same necessary elements now in our bodies will still be available—at His command. The same unique genetic code now embedded in each of our living cells will still be available to format new ones then. The miracle of the Resurrection, wondrous as it will be, is marvelously matched by the miracle of our creation in the first place.

Our resurrection will not be an end but a new beginning.

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The Solution

"The Lord Jesus Christ is the solution to even our most difficult problems." (Milton Camargo)

Excerpts from Milton Camargo's talk, "Focus on Jesus Christ," April 2023 General Conference:

My father used to tell me, "Don't focus so intensely on your problems that you can't see the solution."

I testify that the Lord Jesus Christ is the solution to even our most difficult problems. Specifically, He has overcome four problems that every one of us faces and that not one of us can solve on our own:

The first problem is physical death. We can try to delay it or ignore it, but we can't overcome it on our own. Jesus Christ, however, overcame death for us, and as a consequence, we will all be resurrected one day.

The second problem includes the tribulations, difficult experiences, sadness, pain, and unfairness of this world. Jesus Christ overcame all of this. For those who strive to follow Him, He will one day "wipe away all tears" and make things right again. In the meantime, He can strengthen us to pass through our trials with confidence, good cheer, and peace.

The third problem is spiritual death arising from sin. Jesus Christ overcame this problem by taking upon Himself "the chastisement of our peace." Because of His atoning sacrifice, we can be freed from the consequences of our sins if we have faith in the Savior, sincerely repent, accept the covenant the Father offers us through essential ordinances such as baptism, and endure to the end.

The fourth problem is our limited, imperfect natures. Jesus Christ has the solution to this problem too. He doesn't just erase our errors and make us innocent again. He can work "a mighty change in … our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually." We can be perfected by the grace of Christ and one day become like Him.

Unfortunately, too often we concentrate so much on our own problems that we lose focus on the solution, our Savior, Jesus Christ. How do we avoid that mistake? I believe the answer lies in the covenants we are invited to make with Him and our Father in Heaven.

…Covenant keeping leads us to seek after whatever invites the influence of the Spirit and reject whatever drives it away—"for we know that if we can be worthy of the presence of the Holy Ghost, we can also be

worthy to live in the presence of Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ." This may mean that we have to change our vocabulary, using kinder words. It could mean replacing spiritually unhealthy habits with new habits that strengthen our relationship with the Lord, such as daily prayer and scripture study, individually and with our family.

President Russell M. Nelson said that "each person who makes covenants in baptismal fonts and in temples—and keeps them—has increased access to the power of Jesus Christ. …

"The reward for keeping covenants with God is heavenly power—power that strengthens us to withstand our trials, temptations, and heartaches better."

…The Lord Jesus Christ lives today. He can be an active, daily presence in our lives. He is the solution to our problems, but we must lift our eyes and raise our sights to see Him. He has said, "Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not."

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The Law/The Lawgiver

"Behold, I am the law, and the light. Look unto me, and endure to the end, and ye shall live; for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life." (3 Nephi 15:9)

"Wherefore, hear my voice and follow me, and you shall be a free people, and ye shall have no laws but my laws when I come, for I am your lawgiver, and what can stay my hand?" (Doctrine and Covenants 38:22)

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References:
Isaiah 33:22
James 4:12
3 Nephi 12:17-20

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(All of the quotes below are from The Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual, Enrichment G: "The Nature and Purpose of Law" (https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/doctrine-and-covenants-student-manual/enrichment-g-the-nature-and-purpose-of-law?lang=eng):

President John Taylor said: "God is unchangeable, so are also his laws, in all their forms, and in all their applications, and being Himself the essence of law, the giver of law, the sustainer of law, all of those laws are eternal in all their operations, in all bodies and matter, and throughout all space. It would be impossible for Him to violate law, because in so doing He would strike at His own dignity, power, principles, glory, exaltation and existence." (Mediation and Atonement, p. 168.)

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Christ, as the Firstborn, was preeminent among the members of the Father's family. He created this earth under the direction of the Father (see Moses 1:27–32) and was given authority to be God over it. Acting through the power and authority given Him by His Father, the Savior controls, directs, and governs the affairs of this earth. As God over this earth, Christ ordained laws, according to the will of the Father, for the benefit and progression of the whole human family. He is our lawgiver (see D&C 38:22; 64:13). Christ taught the Nephites, saying, "I am the law" (3 Nephi 15:9), meaning that He is the embodiment and the source of all law to mankind. He is not only the source of law and commandments given to mankind, but He provides the law, or organizing power, for the whole universe…He declared to His disciples that He was "the way, the

truth, and the life" (John 14:6)…A careful study of Doctrine and Covenants 88:6–13 yields the following insights about Christ as the source of law and light and life:

Christ is the source of an infinite, radiant stream of energy called "the light of Christ" (v. 7) which comes "from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space" (v. 12).

Christ is the light and power that fills the sun, moon, stars, and earth (see vv. 7–10).

This light of Christ is not only in all things but is the source of life for all things (see v. 13).

Somehow, this energy source which emanates from God and is named after Jesus Christ is also "the law by which all things are governed" (v. 13).

In other words, if somehow the light of Christ were to be extinguished, there would be no law, no order, no organization, and no life in the universe. Everything would collapse into universal chaos. According to the book of Hebrews, Christ "uphold[s] all things by the word of his power" (1:3). For this reason we look to Him for guidance: He is not only the source of law, He is the law.

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Although God's laws are exact and immovable, they are revealed and given to mankind for one purpose—to bring to pass their ultimate joy. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that "the Great Parent of the universe looks upon the whole of the human family with a fatherly care and paternal regard" (Teachings, p. 218), and that He "never will institute an ordinance or give a commandment to His people that is not calculated in its nature to promote that happiness which He has designed, and which will not end in the greatest amount of good and glory to those who become the recipients of his law and ordinances" (Teachings, pp. 256–57). The Prophet also said, "Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire" (Teachings, p. 256).

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President Brigham Young…said, "Great peace have they who love the law of the Lord and abide in his commandments" (Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 223).

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The psalmist wrote, "O how love I thy law!" (Psalm 119:97). Is that a feeling you share, or do you sometimes feel resentful toward the laws of God? One of Satan's most successful lies is that the commandments of God are restrictive and limiting. "If you would really be free," he urges, "cut yourself loose from such restraints. Be free! Be independent!" The deception lies in denying the eternal principle that only obedience to law secures the blessings guaranteed by law (see D&C 130:20–21). Disobedience to law necessitates penalties,

which are ordained by a loving Father to purge the souls of His children of what hinders their progression. When individuals are so purged, they can obtain as much happiness as they are willing to live for, according to the law they become capable of living (see D&C 88:21–24).

God's word is law, and, like the rod of iron in Lehi's dream (1 Nephi 8:4–35; 11:25), it is an anchor in a world of darkness. By clinging to it we are saved from misery and woe and can obtain all good things, the greatest of which is eternal life. Jesus taught, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31–32).

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The Potter

"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter;
and we all are the work of thy hand." (Isaiah 64:8)

Related Names:
The Divine Potter (Jeffrey R. Holland, "Like a Broken Vessel")

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References:
Jeremiah 18:2-6

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A hymn called "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," as quoted by Neil F. Marriott in her talk, "Yielding Our Hearts to God," given in October 2015 General ConferenceHave Thine own way, Lord!

Have Thine own way!
Thou art the Potter;
I am the clay.
Mould me and make me
After Thy will,
While I am waiting,
Yielded and still.

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Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, "Like a Broken Vessel," October 2013 General Conference:

Though we may feel we are "like a broken vessel," as the Psalmist says, we must remember, that vessel is in the hands of the divine potter.

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Elder Bruce D. Porter, "A Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit," October 2007 General Conference:

As in all things, the Savior's life offers us the perfect example: though Jesus of Nazareth was utterly without sin, He walked through life with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, as manifested by His submission to the will of the Father. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). To His disciples He said, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:29). And when the time came to pay the ultimate sacrifice entailed in the Atonement, Christ shrank not to partake of the bitter cup but submitted completely to His Father's will.

The Savior's perfect submission to the Eternal Father is the very essence of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Christ's example teaches us that a broken heart is an eternal attribute of godliness. When our hearts are broken, we are completely open to the Spirit of God and recognize our dependence on Him for all that we have and all that we are. The sacrifice so entailed is a sacrifice of pride in all its forms. Like malleable clay in the hands of a skilled potter, the brokenhearted can be molded and shaped in the hands of the Master.

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Master

"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am." (John 13:13)

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Related Names:
Master in heaven (Colossians 4:1)

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Additional References:
Matthew 23:8

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"Master, the Tempest is Raging"
by Howard W. Hunter
October 1984 General Conference:

North of Jerusalem about eighty miles or so lies a beautiful body of water known earlier in biblical times as the Sea of Chinneroth and the Lake of Gennesaret, but known best to us today as the Sea of Galilee. It is a freshwater inland lake a little over twelve miles long and seven miles wide. The River Jordan flows through it, from north to south, on its journey toward the Dead Sea.

This was the lake Jesus knew as a child and as a young man, its western shores lying just twelve or fifteen miles from his boyhood home of Nazareth. It was to this lake and the neighboring Galilean hills that Jesus returned so often during those demanding years of his public ministry.

On one journey to Galilee, the Savior taught the multitudes crowded near the water's edge. With the people pressing ever closer, Jesus sought a better teaching circumstance by stepping into a boat and pushing out a few yards into the sea. There, a short distance from the eager crowd, he could be seen and heard by those straining for sight and words of the Master.

Following his discourse, the Savior invited his disciples to join him, and they set out together for the other side of the lake. The Sea of Galilee is quite low, about 680 feet below sea level, and the heat becomes quite great. The hills surrounding the water rise up very sharply and to considerable height. The cold air rushing down from the hills meets the warm air rising from the lake in such a way that sudden and temporarily violent storms can occur on the surface of that inland sea. It was just such a storm as this that Jesus and his disciples found as they crossed the lake at evening time. This is the way Mark described it:

"And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

"And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

"And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

"And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (Mark 4:36–41.)

All of us have seen some sudden storms in our lives. A few of them, though temporary like these on the Sea of Galilee, can be violent and frightening and potentially destructive. As individuals, as families, as communities, as nations, even as a church, we have had sudden squalls arise which have made us ask one way or another, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" And one way or another we always hear in the stillness after the storm, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?"

None of us would like to think we have no faith, but I suppose the Lord's gentle rebuke here is largely deserved. This great Jehovah, in whom we say we trust and whose name we have taken upon us, is he who said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." (Gen. 1:6.) And he is also the one who said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear." (Gen. 1:9.) Furthermore, it was he who parted the Red Sea, allowing the Israelites to pass through on dry ground. (See Ex. 14:21–22.) Certainly it should be no surprise that he could command a few elements acting up on the Sea of Galilee. And our faith should remind us that he can calm the troubled waters of our lives.

Let me recall for you the story of Mary Ann Baker. Her beloved and only brother suffered from the same respiratory disease that had taken their parents' lives, and he left their home in Chicago to find a warmer climate in the southern part of the United States.

For a time he seemed to be improving, but then a sudden turn in his health came and he died almost immediately. Mary Ann and her sister were heartbroken. It only added to their deep grief that neither their own health nor their personal finances allowed them to claim their brother's body or to finance its return to Chicago for burial.

The Baker family had been raised as faithful Christians, but Mary's trust in a loving God broke under the strain of her brother's death and her own diminished circumstances. "God does not care for me or mine," said Mary Ann. "This particular manifestation of what they call 'divine providence' is unworthy of a God of love." Does that sound at all familiar?

"I have always tried to believe on Christ and give the Master a consecrated life," she said, "but this is more than I can bear. What have I done to deserve this? What have I left undone that God should wreak His vengeance upon me in this way?" (Ernest K. Emurian, Living Stories of Famous Hymns, Boston: W. A Widdle Co., 1955, pp. 83–85.)

I suppose we have all had occasion, individually or collectively, to cry out on some stormy sea, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" And so cried Mary Ann Baker.

But as the days and the weeks went by, the God of life and love began to calm the winds and the waves of what this sweet young woman called "her unsanctified heart." Her faith not only returned but it flourished, and like Job of old, she learned new things, things "too wonderful" to have known before her despair. On the Sea of Galilee, the stirring of the disciples' faith was ultimately more important than the stilling of the sea, and so it was with her.

Later, as something of a personal testimonial and caring very much for the faith of others who would be tried by personal despair, she wrote the words of the hymn we have all sung, "Master, the Tempest Is Raging." May I share it with you?

Master, the tempest is raging!
The billows are tossing high!
The sky is o'ershadowed with blackness.
No shelter or help is nigh.
Carest thou not that we perish?
How canst thou lie asleep
When each moment so madly is threatening
A grave in the angry deep?
Master, with anguish of spirit
I bow in my grief today.
The depths of my sad heart are troubled.
Oh, waken and save, I pray!
Torrents of sin and of anguish
Sweep o'er my sinking soul,
And I perish! I perish! dear Master.
Oh, hasten and take control!

Then this beautiful, moving refrain:

The winds and the waves shall obey my will;
Peace, be still! Peace, be still!
Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea
Or demons or men or whatever it be,
No waters can swallow the ship where lies
The Master of ocean and earth and skies.
They all shall sweetly obey my will.
Peace, be still! Peace, be still!
They all shall sweetly obey my will.
Peace, peace, be still!

Too often, I fear, both in the living of life and in the singing of this hymn, we fail to emphasize the sweet peace of this concluding verse:

Master, the terror is over.
The elements sweetly rest.
Earth's sun in the calm lake is mirrored,
And heaven's within my breast.
Linger, Oh, blessed Redeemer!
Leave me alone no more,
And with joy I shall make the blest harbor
And rest on the blissful shore.
(Hymns, no. 106.)

We will all have some adversity in our lives. I think we can be reasonably sure of that. Some of it will have the potential to be violent and damaging and destructive. Some of it may even strain our faith in a loving God who has the power to administer relief in our behalf.

To those anxieties I think the Father of us all would say, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" And of course that has to be faith for the whole journey, the entire experience, the fulness of our life, not simply around the bits and pieces and tempestuous moments. At the end of the journey, an end none of us can see now, we will say, "Master, the terror is over. … Linger, Oh, blessed Redeemer! Leave me alone no more."

Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33.) On the same occasion, he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." (John 14:27.) Throughout his life and ministry he spoke of peace, and when he came forth from the tomb and appeared unto his disciples, his first greeting was, "Peace be unto you." (John 20:19.)

But Jesus was not spared grief and pain and anguish and buffeting. No tongue can speak the unutterable burden he carried, nor have we the wisdom to understand the prophet Isaiah's description of him as "a man of sorrows." (Isa. 53:3.) His ship was tossed most of his life, and, at least to mortal eyes, it crashed fatally on the rocky coast of Calvary. We are asked not to look on life with mortal eyes; with spiritual vision we know something quite different was happening upon the cross.

Peace was on the lips and in the heart of the Savior no matter how fiercely the tempest was raging. May it so be with us—in our own hearts, in our own homes, in our nations of the world, and even in the buffetings faced from time to time by the Church. We should not expect to get through life individually or collectively without some opposition.

One of the wisest of the ancient Romans once spoke a great gospel truth and probably never realized he had done so. Speaking of Roman naval power and the absolute imperative to control the oceans, Cicero said to a military aide, "He who commands the sea has command of everything." (See W. Gurney Benham, Putnam's Complete Book of Quotations, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926, p. 505.) Of that I so testify.

"Whether the wrath of the storm-tossed sea or demons or men or whatever it be, no waters can swallow the ship where lies the Master of ocean and earth and skies. They all shall sweetly obey [his] will. Peace, be still!" In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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Man of Sorrows

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:3-5)

Elder Robert L. Backman, "Jesus the Christ," October 1991 General Conference"

As a youth the Lord "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). During this growth process, he suffered "temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer" (Mosiah 3:7). He experienced all of these things "that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities" (Alma 7:12). There is nothing we experience—no heartache or joy—that he has not experienced more intensely; and his response to such experiences was perfect. He thus established a pattern for our own lives.

Elder David A. Bednar, "Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease," April 2014 General Conference:

There is no physical pain, no spiritual wound, no anguish of soul or heartache, no infirmity or weakness you or I ever confront in mortality that the Savior did not experience first. In a moment of weakness we may cry out, "No one knows what it is like. No one understands." But the Son of God perfectly knows and understands, for He has felt and borne our individual burdens. And because of His infinite and eternal sacrifice (see Alma 34:14), He has perfect empathy and can extend to us His arm of mercy. He can reach out, touch, succor, heal, and strengthen us to be more than we could ever be and help us to do that which we could never do relying only upon our own power.

Elder Ulisses Soares, "Jesus Christ: The Caregiver of Our Soul," April 2021 General Conference:

The Savior offers us relief and comfort as we face our afflictions, temptations, and weaknesses of mortal life. …

I can assure you that Christ is ever aware of the adversities we experience in mortality. He understands all of the bitterness, agony, and physical pain as well as the emotional and spiritual challenges we face. The Savior's bowels are filled with mercy, and He is always ready to succor us. This is possible because He personally experienced and took upon Himself in the flesh the pain of our weakness and infirmities.

With meekness and humility of heart, He descended below all things and accepted being despised, rejected, and humiliated by men, having been wounded for our transgressions and iniquities. He suffered these things for all, taking upon Himself the sins of the world. …

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Michelle D. Craig, "Wholehearted," October 2022 General Conference:

When your faith, your family, or your future are challenged—when you wonder why life is so hard when you are doing your best to live the gospel—remember that the Lord told us to expect troubles. Troubles are part of the plan and do not mean you've been abandoned; they are part of what it means to be His. He was, after all, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3).

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Conqueror

"And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." (Revelation 6:2)

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Howard W. Hunter, "An Apostle's Witness of the Resurrection," April 1986 General Conference:

Alexander the Great, king of Macedon, pupil of Aristotle, conqueror of most of the known world in his time, was one of the world's great young leaders. After years of exercising military pomp and prowess and after extending his kingdom from Macedonia to Egypt and from Cyprus to India, he wept when there seemed to be no more world to conquer. Then, as evidence of just how ephemeral such power is, Alexander caught a fever and died at thirty-three years of age. The vast kingdom he had gained virtually died with him.
Quite a different young leader also died at what seems such an untimely age of thirty-three. He likewise was a king, a pupil, and a conqueror. Yet he received no honors from man, achieved no territorial conquests, rose to no political station. So far as we know, he never held a sword nor wore even a single piece of armor. But the kingdom he established still flourishes some two thousand years later. His power was not of this world. The differences between Alexander and this equally young Nazarene are many. But the greatest difference is in their ultimate victories. Alexander conquered lands, peoples, principalities, and earthly kingdoms. But he who is called the Perfect Leader, he who was and is the Light and Life of the world —Jesus Christ the Son of God —conquered what neither Alexander nor any other could defeat or overcome: Jesus of Nazareth conquered death. Against the medals and monuments of centuries of men's fleeting victories stands the only monument necessary to mark the eternal triumph —an empty garden tomb.

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Lyrics to the Hymn, That Easter Morn:

That Easter morn, a grave that burst
Proclaimed to man that "Last and First"
Had ris'n again
And conquered pain.
This morn renews for us that day
When Jesus cast the bonds away,

Took living breath
And conquered death.
Thus we in gratitude recall
And give our love and pledge our all,
Shed grateful tear
And conquer fear.

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Deliverer

"But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying." (Psalm 70:5)

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Related Names:
Great Deliverer

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Additional References:
Romans 11:26
Doctrine and Covenants 138:23

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From the "Come, Follow Me Old Testament Manual," October 5-11, 2026:

Throughout his ministry, Isaiah spoke of a mighty deliverer. These prophecies would have been especially precious to the Israelites centuries later when they were in captivity in Babylon. Someone who could tear down the walls of Babylon would be a mighty conqueror indeed. But that isn't the kind of Messiah that Isaiah described in chapters 52–53: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him. … We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (Isaiah 53:3–4).

By sending such an unexpected deliverer, God taught us about true deliverance. To save us from oppression and affliction, God sent One who Himself "was oppressed, and … afflicted." Where some expected a lion, He sent a lamb (see Isaiah 53:7). Surely, God's ways are not our ways (see Isaiah 55:8–9). Jesus Christ frees us not by just opening the prison but by taking our place there. He relieves us from our chains of grief and sorrow by bearing them Himself (see Isaiah 53:4–5, 12). He does not save us from a distance. He suffers with us, in acts of "everlasting kindness" that "shall not depart from thee" (Isaiah 54:8, 10).

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From Elder Kevin J. Hathaway, "Jesus Christ Is the Great Deliverer!" October 2026 General Conference:

Jesus Christ descended below all things and suffered "pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind"; therefore, He comprehends our suffering, is filled with mercy, and knows how to succor us according to our infirmities. With perfect understanding and infinite power, He can deliver the righteous from all things,

forever. His deliverance is certain; the question for most righteous followers is not if He will deliver but how and when He will do so.

…As we wait upon the Lord and exercise faith in Him, needed growth and spiritual stretching come, and the Savior delivers us from our afflictions and consecrates them for our gain. He does this in His time and way.

To…all who wait for divine deliverance, I testify that the Lord is not delayed, distracted, or derelict in His deliverance. He has not forgotten you. He does not take joy in your suffering. However, He knows that lessons learned while waiting can bring converting growth that an earlier rescue might not produce.

But what of moments when the hour seems too late, the loss too final, and deliverance appears impossible? Surely, Jairus must have felt the time had passed and deliverance was impossible when he received news that his daughter had died. But Jesus said, "Be not afraid, only believe." Holding on to that assurance, Jairus watched the Savior deliver his daughter from death, showing that no mortal timeline can place us beyond Christ's power to deliver.

When deliverance feels impossible, remember Elder Patrick Kearon's witness: "Jesus specializes in the seemingly impossible. He came here to make the impossible possible, the irredeemable redeemable, to heal the unhealable, to right the unrightable, to promise the unpromisable. And He's really good at it. In fact, He's perfect at it."

To all who continue to face the pain, fear, and loneliness of life, I echo the Savior's words: "Be not afraid, only believe." In His time and way, Jesus Christ will deliver you. Some miracles are immediate, some come after long waiting, and some await the Resurrection.

May we hear, believe, and act on our "great Deliv'rer's" reassuring voice when He says, "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick." I testify that Jesus Christ is the Great Deliverer, now and forever.

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From Elder Kyle S. McKay, "The Immediate Goodness of God," April 2019 General Conference:

When Alma and his people were captured by the Lamanites, they prayed for deliverance. They were not immediately delivered, but while they patiently waited for deliverance, the Lord showed forth His goodness with certain immediate blessings. He immediately softened the hearts of the Lamanites so they wouldn't slay them. He also strengthened Alma's people and eased their burdens. When they finally were delivered, they traveled to Zarahemla, where they recounted their experience to an amazed audience. The people of Zarahemla marveled, and "when they thought of the immediate goodness of God, and his power in delivering Alma and his brethren out of … bondage, they did raise their voices and give thanks to God."

The immediate goodness of God comes to all who call upon Him with real intent and full purpose of heart. This includes those who cry out in earnest desperation, when deliverance seems so distant and suffering seems prolonged, even intensified.

So it was with a young prophet who suffered to the brink in the dank of a dungeon before finally crying out: "O God, where art thou? … How long shall thy hand be stayed … ? Yea, O Lord, how long … ?" In response, the Lord did not immediately deliver Joseph, but He did immediately pronounce peace.

God also gives immediate hope for eventual deliverance. No matter what, no matter where, in Christ and through Christ there is always hope smiling brightly before us. Immediately before us.

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The God of Love

"Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (2 Corinthians 13:11)

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Related Names:
Love of God (1 John 3:16)

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Additional References:
2 Nephi 26:24

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From Elder Ronald A. Rasband, "Love Like Jesus," October 2026 General Conference:

Jesus Christ is the perfect embodiment of love. Love is the centerpiece of His gospel and the essence of being like Him.

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From President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "The Love of God," October 2009 General Conference:

Think of the purest, most all-consuming love you can imagine. Now multiply that love by an infinite amount—that is the measure of God's love for you.

God does not look on the outward appearance. I believe that He doesn't care one bit if we live in a castle or a cottage, if we are handsome or homely, if we are famous or forgotten. Though we are incomplete, God loves us completely. Though we are imperfect, He loves us perfectly. Though we may feel lost and without compass, God's love encompasses us completely.

He loves us because He is filled with an infinite measure of holy, pure, and indescribable love. We are important to God not because of our résumé but because we are His children. He loves every one of us, even those who are flawed, rejected, awkward, sorrowful, or broken. God's love is so great that He loves even the proud, the selfish, the arrogant, and the wicked.

What this means is that, regardless of our current state, there is hope for us. No matter our distress, no matter our sorrow, no matter our mistakes, our infinitely compassionate Heavenly Father desires that we draw near to Him so that He can draw near to us.

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From Elder D. Todd Christofferson, "The Love of God," October 2021 General Conference:

The love of the Father and the Son is freely given but also includes hopes and expectations…Quoting President Nelson, "God's laws are motivated entirely by His infinite love for us and His desire for us to become all we can become."

Because They love you, They do not want to leave you "just as you are." Because They love you, They want you to have joy and success. Because They love you, They want you to repent because that is the path to happiness. But it is your choice—They honor your agency. You must choose to love Them, to serve Them, to keep Their commandments. Then They can more abundantly bless you as well as love you.

Their principal expectation of us is that we also love. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." As John wrote, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

In acknowledging that God loves us perfectly, we each might ask, "How well do I love God? Can He rely on my love as I rely on His?" Would it not be a worthy aspiration to live so that God can love us not just in spite of our failings but also because of what we are becoming? Oh, that He could say of you and me as He said of Hyrum Smith, for example, "I, the Lord, love him because of the integrity of his heart." Let us remember John's kind admonition: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

Indeed, His commandments are not grievous—just the opposite. They mark the path of healing, happiness, peace, and joy. Our Father and our Redeemer have blessed us with commandments, and in obeying Their commandments, we feel Their perfect love more fully and more profoundly.

Here is the solution for our incessantly quarrelsome times—the love of God. In the golden age of Book of Mormon history following the Savior's ministry, it is reported that "there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people." As we strive toward Zion, remember the promise in Revelation: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the [holy] city."

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Nazarene

"And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (Matthew 2:23)

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Related Names:
Jesus of Nazareth
The Divine Branch (Jeremiah 23:5)
Branch of Righteousness (Jeremiah 33:15)

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From Elder Russell M. Nelson, "Why This Holy Land," December 1989 Ensign:

As a child, the Savior was brought to the village of Nazareth. Why Nazareth? …to fulfill prophecy. Jeremiah foretold:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper." (Jer. 23:5.)

I am intrigued with the symbolic significance of the fact that some scholars suggest that the word Nazareth is derived from the Hebrew word neser, which means "branch." Jesus, the divine Branch, was to be reared in the place with the name meaning "branch." Jeremiah further prophesied that the Lord would "cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." (Jer. 33:15.)

We read in the Book of Mormon of another interesting connection between "branch" and "Nazareth." Do you remember the reply after Nephi had asked the Lord the meaning of the tree of life? The Lord then revealed to him a glimpse of the city of Nazareth, where Nephi beheld in vision "a virgin, most beautiful and fair." She was destined to become the mother of the Son of God. (See 1 Ne. 11:8–18.) Isn't it interesting that the little town of Nazareth, which name signifies "branch," was shown to Nephi in vision after his inquiry about the tree of life?

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Great Provider

"The Great Provider declared Himself to be the 'bread of life.' (Russell M. Nelson, see John 6:38)

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Related Names:
Providence (which means divine guidance and care)
The Giver of Every Good Gift (This name can be a title for both Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ because "all of our Father's gifts flow from and are activated by the [Savior]" -Elder Kearon, "Receive His Gift," April 2025 General Conference)

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Additional references:
1 Nephi 17:3 (God will provide a means whereby we can accomplish all he commands)
Doctrine and Covenants 104:15 (God will provide for His saints)

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Discuss together the things that God provides for us.

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David Butler in "Don't Miss This in the Book of Mormon," discussing 3 Nephi 28:1:

It has been a long time since I have made a Christmas wish list. As a kid, I loved doing that. All of the catalogs and magazines filled with pictures of toys would come in the mail in November and December, and my siblings and I would sit around the kitchen table looking through them page by page and handpicking what we hoped for and wanted most for Christmas. For most kids, Christmas and birthdays seem like the only chance you have during the year to get a gift. With no job or source of income, the more unobtainable a gift is, the better it is, and for a kid, most everything feels unobtainable.

Perhaps this is why adults sometimes lose the magic of Christmas. Everything is obtain-able. They can just go buy it.

But what if someone were offering you something you couldn't buy on your own?

What if that someone were Jesus, and, just like He did with His disciples, what if He came to you, one-on-one, and asked you the question, "What is it that ye desire?" What do you want or need from me? Ask and it shall be given. I believe this is a question He would and does ask each of us if we are listening. What do you

desire? What is your heart yearning for? It reminds me of one of His best titles, The Giver of Every Good Gift.

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The ultimate provision made on our behalf was for a Savior. Genesis 22:7-8 says, "And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together."

Elder Renlund expounded on this in his October 2026 General Conference talk, "How Long Will It Be Ere They Believe Me":

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that Jesus Christ "knows the situation of both the living and the dead, and has made ample provision for their redemption, according to their several circumstances, and the laws of the kingdom of God, whether in this world, or in the world to come."

"Ample provision" means that all human circumstances are within the Savior's redemptive reach. The Atonement of Jesus Christ permitted our Heavenly Father to give the Savior all power "in heaven and in earth." The power of the Messiah to save and exalt is profoundly intimate and infinite beyond human comprehension; there is more than enough to cover any breach, need, or deficit for all of us, for each of us.

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Words to the Hymn, "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need"
1. My Shepherd will supply my need;
Jehovah is His name.
In pastures fresh He makes me feed
Beside the living stream.
He brings my wand'ring spirit back
When I forsake His ways
And leads me for His mercy's sake
In paths of truth and grace.

2. When I walk through the shades of death,
Thy presence is my stay;
One word of Thy supporting breath
Drives all my fears away.
Thy hand, in sight of all my foes,
Doth still my table spread.
My cup with blessings overflows;

Thine oil anoints my head.

3. The sure provisions of my God
Attend me all my days.
O may Thy house be mine abode
And all my work be praise!
There would I find a settled rest
While others go and come—
No more a stranger nor a guest,
But like a child at home.

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The Gift

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting lift." (John 3:16)

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Related Names:
The Greatest of All the Father's Gifts, Through Which All Others Flow (Elder Kearon, "Receive His Gift," April 2025 General Conference)

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From President Thomas S. Monson, "Gifts," April 1993 General Conference:

Our Heavenly Father's plan contains the ultimate expressions of true love. All that we hold dear—even our families, our friends, our joy, our knowledge, our testimonies—would vanish were it not for our Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Among the most cherished thoughts and writings in this world is the divine statement of truth: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

This precious Son, our Lord and Savior, atoned for our sins and the sins of all. That memorable night in Gethsemane His suffering was so great, His anguish so consuming that He pleaded, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Later, on the cruel cross, He died that we might live, and live everlastingly. Resurrection morning was preceded by pain, by suffering in accordance with the divine plan of God. Before Easter there had to be a cross. The world has witnessed no greater gift, nor has it known more lasting love.

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From Elder Kearon, "Receive His Gift," April 2025 General Conference:

Gift giving is a social custom that spans all cultures, civilisations, and millennia. Throughout time, people have given gifts to each other to strengthen relationships, express love and gratitude, and mark important events like weddings, birthdays, and holidays. And humans are not the only ones of God's creations to give gifts to each other! Among many other examples we could point to, penguins are known to give shiny pebbles to their prospective mates, and bonobos (cousins of the chimpanzee) give fruit to expand their circle of friendship.

What gifts have you given? Think of a time when you found—or made—the perfect gift for someone you love. You just knew the gift was exactly what this loved one wanted and something they would treasure. What was the gift? Was it for your mother? a friend? your child? a teacher? your grandfather? How did you feel when you found this gift? How did you feel when you thought about this person you love opening the gift? Similarly, when did someone give you the perfect gift, and what was it like to receive it?

When I was about seven years old, living with my parents in Arabia, a children's film called Chitty Chitty Bang Bang was released. The film is about a magical car that can drive itself, float on water, and even fly! I knew that back home in England they made a miniature toy car just like Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, and oh, how I wanted one! You could pull a lever, and the toy car's wings would pop out! My father went on a business trip to England and asked if I wanted him to bring anything back for me, and I told him how very much I would like to have one of those Chitty Chitty Bang Bang cars.

He came back from his trip, and no car appeared. I was very sad and thought he must have forgotten. But about 10 days later was my birthday, and a little package, beautifully wrapped, was waiting for me. With great anticipation, and hardly daring to hope too much, I opened the gift and found my car. I was so happy that I cried. I pulled the lever, and the wings popped out, just like the car in the film! How I thanked my father for this most treasured gift. I played with that car for years and kept it for many more. I think my dad loved giving me that car at least as much as I loved receiving it.

We can think of gift giving as having three parts to it:

1. The giving of the gift, where the giver selects, makes, or prepares the gift and presents it to the loved one. This involves thoughtful intention on the part of the giver to give something meaningful.

2. The accepting and opening of the gift, when the recipient accepts the gift from the giver—often with expressions of surprise, gratitude, and excitement—before opening it, sometimes untying a bow and unwrapping the package to discover what the gift is.

3. And then there is perhaps the most important part, the receiving of the gift. To receive a gift sincerely given is so much more than accepting and then opening it. It is more, even, than recognising the worth of the gift and expressing gratitude to the giver. To truly receive a gift, we come to value it for ourselves, put it to full use in our lives, and then remember with thankfulness the giver.

Receiving a gift is not passive but an intentional and meaningful process that goes far beyond merely opening a package. To receive is to appreciate and connect with both the gift and the heart of the giver in a way that strengthens the bonds between the giver and receiver. Thinking of that toy car brings back a host of golden memories, as I feel once again my father's deep love and care for me, represented by that gift and countless other generous acts.

Our Heavenly Father has innumerable gifts of light and truth prepared to shower down on each of us, His treasured children. They flow from our Bounteous Giver like a wellspring in the wilderness from His benevolent heart. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." In our covenant bond with the Father, He is ever the Giver and we the humble recipient.

But we could receive nothing without the greatest of all the Father's gifts, His beloved Lamb, His Son, Jesus Christ. All of our Father's gifts flow from and are activated by the Saviour's willing offering in Gethsemane and on the cross and His triumphant Resurrection. Jesus Christ, our merciful Redeemer, is the supreme gift from our Father of lights. "In the gift of his Son hath God prepared [for us] a more excellent way."

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Christ or Messiah

"…we have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." (John 1:41)

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Related Names:
Anointed One

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Additional References:
John 4:25
2 Nephi 10:3

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From "The Messianic Hope in Ancient Israel," Old Testament Student Manual Kings - Malachi:

The English word Messiah comes from the Hebrew Meshiach, meaning "anointed." The Greek equivalent is Christos. Both words carry the idea of one who is anointed of God. The Hebrew word Yeshua (Jesus in Greek) means "Savior" or "deliverer." The two words combined denote one anointed of God to save or deliver His people.

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From James E. Talmage in "Jesus the Christ," Chapter 4: The Antemortal Godship of Christ:

Christ is a sacred title, and not an ordinary appellation or common name; it is of Greek derivation, and in meaning is identical with its Hebrew equivalent Messiah or Messias, signifying the Anointed One.

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"Anointed One" in Guide to the Scriptures:

Jesus is called the Christ (a Greek word) or the Messiah (an Aramaic word). Both words mean "the anointed." He is the one anointed of the Father to be the Father's personal representative in all things pertaining to the salvation of mankind.

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The Way

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life:
no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)

"Jesus Christ Is the Way"
Elder Brian J. Holmes
April 2026 General Conference

Last year, my wife, Maggie, and I ran the Jungfrau-Marathon in Switzerland. Set in the heart of the Swiss Alps, it is considered one of the most difficult marathons in the world. From start to finish, the course climbs over 6,400 feet, or 1,900 meters, as it winds through beautiful alpine villages and rugged, high-mountain terrain. The views carry you through the early miles, but the final stretch turns steep and narrow, forcing runners to hike the rocky path in single file. The last ascent demands careful attention to every step. In this race you are not just crossing a finish line; you are conquering a mountain.

So imagine our surprise when we learned that one of the runners who finished this race was blind. This courageous man ran tethered to a guide. For most of the race, they ran side by side, but as the course turned steeper and more demanding, the guide moved ahead, calling out every obstacle and directing each step. Because he was bound to a guide, the blind runner accomplished what would otherwise be impossible alone.

Like that marathon, our journey through life has moments of beauty and joy but is no walk in the park. We all want to cross the heavenly finish line and gain eternal life. Yet the course is often steep and difficult to navigate. We all face trials. Without a power greater than our own, no one successfully finishes this race.

At some point, we are all like the blind runner. We all need a guide.

Our Father in Heaven, in His perfect love, has provided us with many helps to guide our journey. As President Dallin H. Oaks taught, the strongest help God has given us is a Savior, Jesus Christ.

Through His Atonement, Jesus Christ "has done everything that is essential for our journey through mortality toward the destiny outlined in the plan of our Heavenly Father." Because He lived a perfect life, because He bore every sin and every sorrow, because He broke the bands of death, Jesus Christ alone can

stand before the world and declare, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

In that simple declaration, the Savior taught that He is not only our guide; He is the path. His way is the only path that leads to eternal life.

Our Savior invites us to walk with Him. His way is the covenant path, the one path that leads to our celestial finish line. We choose to walk the covenant path by exercising faith in Jesus Christ unto repentance, receiving the ordinances of His gospel, and enduring to the end. These ordinances are essential. As Jesus taught Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Just as the band tethered the blind runner to his guide, covenants bind us to our guide—Jesus Christ. Elder David A. Bednar taught, "The covenant connection we have with our Heavenly Father and His resurrected and living Son is the supernal source of perspective, hope, power, peace, and enduring joy."

Once we bind ourselves to our Savior through covenant, only we can sever the tie. Jesus never will. As we remain tightly bound to Him, He is bound to us. We can expect His power to bless us with strength and joy even when we are experiencing a steep stretch of life. But if we turn away, we have no such promise. Covenant blessings flow from ongoing faithfulness, not merely from past participation.

When our path gets hard—and it will—we can remember the Apostle Peter. When the road of discipleship became steep and many "walked no more" with Jesus, He turned to the Twelve and asked, "Will ye also go away?" It was a searching question, one that reaches through time to each of us.

Peter answered:

"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

When we have doubts, when discipleship feels demanding, when others turn back, that is the moment to stay bound to Christ just as Peter did. There is nowhere else to go; only Christ has the words of eternal life.

As we walk with our Savior along the covenant path, we come to know an essential truth: To walk with Jesus is to follow His prophet. The Savior Himself calls prophets, speaks through them, and governs His Church by them.

Think about it: None of us could know the true and living Christ without prophetic witness. From Adam to Noah, Moses to Peter, and Joseph Smith to our day, God has chosen to reveal His Son to His children through a prophet.

Some say, "I don't need a prophet or a church to follow Jesus."

But Jesus Himself said to His chosen Apostles, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me."

To knowingly reject His prophets is, by His own definition, to reject Him.

The Lord warned of a time when "every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god." Without apostles and prophets, our perception of Christ gradually becomes whatever we want Him to be. Our understanding of doctrine shifts. Our commitment to standards erodes. Unity dissolves.

That is why Paul taught that the Church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." Not so that we would be controlled but so that we would be established, "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine."

Our Savior promised, "If my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, … they shall not be moved out of their place."

Brothers and sisters, our Father in Heaven desires all His children to come home. His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, is the only way back. I testify that because Jesus Christ climbed the steepest mountain of all as He bore the weight of our salvation, we never have to face our mountains alone. As we bind ourselves to Him through covenant and follow His living prophet, we walk the one path that leads us safely home. I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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Lord of Hosts

"The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle." (Isaiah 13:4)

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Related Names (based on the Hebrew translation):
Lord of an Army
Lord of War

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Additional References:
Isaiah 14:22-24
Haggai 1:5

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From the book "Hebrew Delights," page 121:

One of the Savior's many titles is Lord of Hosts, or in Hebrew, the "Lord of Sabaoth." Sabaoth is the Hebrew way to say "hosts" and refers to "army, warfare, and war." It stems from the Hebrew root word tsaba, which means "to wager war, to serve." Throughout Isaiah 13-14 this name for the Savior is used often.

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Dr Kerry Muhlestein, professor of ancient scripture, as quoted in the book "Hebrew Delights" on page 122:

Christ cannot be our Redeemer if He's not capable of conquering. If He is not a Divine Warrior, He does not conquer death and hell, and you and I are in a whole pile of trouble, right? If Christ is not a conqueror, He cannot deliver us; if He's not a warrior, He cannot conquer Death and Hell. And that's what we need Him to do, but not just Death and Hell; we want Him to go to battle for us against depression, against anxiety, against the wounds that we have suffered at the hands of others, against physical ailments, against everything. And the Old Testament, one of the messages it paints again and again is that Christ comes out, or Jehovah comes out as a warrior against oppressors when they oppress His people.

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President Nelson's invitation for the youth to join the Lord's Battalion (From the Youth Devotional, "Hope of Israel," June 2018):

So, now I am inviting every young woman and every young man between the ages of 12 and 18 in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to enlist in the youth battalion of the Lord to help gather Israel.

What will help you? As you continue to read daily from the Book of Mormon, you will learn the doctrine of the gathering, truths about Jesus Christ, His Atonement, and the fulness of His gospel not found in the Bible. The Book of Mormon is central to the gathering of Israel. In fact, if there were no Book of Mormon, the promised gathering of Israel would not occur.

And now I invite you to prepare yourself by doing five more things—five things that will change you and help you change the world.

First, disengage from a constant reliance on social media, in order to decrease its worldly influence upon you.

…My second invitation is to make a weekly sacrifice of time to the Lord.

…My third invitation is for you to do a thorough life assessment with the Lord, and perhaps with your parents and your bishop, to ensure that your feet are firmly planted on the covenant path. If you have wandered off, or if there are some things you need to let go of to help your mind and heart be more pure, today is the perfect time to change.

…My fourth invitation is for you to pray daily that all of God's children might receive the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

…My fifth invitation is for you to stand out; be different from the world. You and I know that you are to be a light to the world. Therefore, the Lord needs you to look like, sound like, act like, and dress like a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Yes, you are living in the world, but you have very different standards from the world to help you avoid the stain of the world.

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Balm of Gilead

"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" (Jeremiah 8:22)

Related Names:
Physician (Matthew 9:12. Luke 4:23)
Great Physician

From Elder Brent H. Nielson, "Is There No Balm in Gilead?" October 2021 General Conference:

The Old Testament teaches of an aromatic spice or ointment used for healing wounds that was made from a bush grown in Gilead. In Old Testament times, the ointment came to be known as the "balm of Gilead." The prophet Jeremiah lamented over the calamities that he observed among his people and hoped for healing. Jeremiah questioned, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there?" Through literature, music, and art, the Savior Jesus Christ has often been referred to as the Balm of Gilead because of His remarkable healing power.

…In Mark chapter 2 of the New Testament, we find the Savior in Capernaum. Word of the Savior's healing power had spread throughout the land, and many people traveled to Capernaum to be healed by the Savior. There were so many gathered around the house where the Savior was located that there was no room for Him to receive them all. Four men carried a man sick of the palsy to be healed by the Savior. They were unable to make their way through the crowd, and so they uncovered the roof of the house and lowered the man down to meet the Savior.

As I read this account, I was surprised by what the Savior said as He met this man: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." I thought that if I had been one of the four men who had carried this man, I might have said to the Savior, "We actually brought him here to be healed." I think the Savior might have replied, "I did heal him." Was it possible that I had not fully understood—that the Savior's healing power was not just His ability to heal our bodies but, perhaps even more important, His ability to heal our hearts and the broken hearts of [our] famil[ies]?

The Savior taught an important lesson through this experience as He eventually physically healed the man. It became clear to me that His message was that He could touch the eyes of those who were blind, and they could see. He could touch the ears of those who were deaf, and they could hear. He could touch the legs of

those who could not walk, and they could walk. He can heal our eyes and our ears and our legs, but most important of all, He can heal our hearts as He cleanses us from sin and lifts us through difficult trials.

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From Elder Kent F. Richards, "The Atonement Covers All Pain," April 2011 General Conference:

…during His mortal life Christ chose to experience pains and afflictions in order to understand us. Perhaps we also need to experience the depths of mortality in order to understand Him and our eternal purposes.

President Henry B. Eyring taught: "It will comfort us when we must wait in distress for the Savior's promised relief that He knows, from experience, how to heal and help us. … And faith in that power will give us patience as we pray and work and wait for help. He could have known how to succor us simply by revelation, but He chose to learn by His own personal experience."

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Lion of the Tribe of Judah

"And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." (Revelation 5:5)

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Related Names:
Lion of Judah
King of the Jews (Luke 23:3)
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(These thoughts come from biblestudytools.com, "4 Powerful Reasons to Understand and Know Jesus as the Lion of Judah," by Clarence L. Haynes Jr.):

Jesus is often referred to as the Lamb of God (John 1:29). This name brings thoughts of gentleness, meekness and submissiveness. There is another description of Jesus in the scriptures that is the complete opposite of him as a lamb. That's the description of him as the Lion of Judah. This name brings to mind thoughts of strength, leadership, royalty, boldness and courage. It's important to understand Jesus as both the lamb and the lion.

Judah was one of the 12 sons of Israel. Jesus descended from Judah. A reference to the tribe of Judah is a reference to the mortal lineage of Jesus. At the time Jesus was born, Jerusalem was ruled by the Romans and therefore the rightful king was not on the throne. If the Jews had been an independent nation, Joseph, and then Jesus, would have been the king of the Jews. Lions are known as the king of the animal kingdom. A reference to Christ as the Lion of Judah is a reference to him as the King of the Jews.

There are two places in the scriptures where "lion" and "Judah" are mentioned together. One is in the book of Revelation mentioned above. The other is Genesis 49:8-12, which contains Jacob's blessing to his son Judah:

"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his

garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."

How is Jesus the lion of Judah in these verses?

"Thou are he whom thy brethren shall praise" - eventually every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:9-11).

"Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies" - ultimately Jesus will destroy all enemies, including sin and death, which He conquered on our behalf" (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah" - He will rule and reign forever (Revelation 11:15).

"He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes" - we are redeemed with his blood (1 Peter 1:18-19). As important as it is to know God as the lion, that wouldn't have mattered much unless he became the lamb. What makes Jesus all the more impressive is that his road to conquering - his road to being the lion - came through suffering. He didn't redeem us by keeping his status as a lion. He redeemed us by becoming humble as a lamb.

The verse in Revelation that mentions Jesus as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah is immediately followed by a verse which mentions him as the lamb:

Revelation 5:6:
And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

He is the lion that fights for us and comes to our rescue. But he became the lamb so he could win back our salvation. It was his suffering as a lamb that paved the way for him to the be the true Lion of the tribe of Judah.

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The Polar Star

From President Gordon B. Hinkley, "Let Love Be the Lodestar of Your Life," April 1989 General Conference:

When I was a boy, we lived on a farm in the summer. It was in the country, where the nights were dark. There were no streetlights or anything of the kind. My brother and I slept out-of-doors. On clear nights—and most of those nights were clear and the air was clean—we would lie on our backs and look at the myriads of stars in the heavens. We could identify some of the constellations and other stars as they were illustrated in our encyclopedia. Each night we would trace the Big Dipper, the handle and the cup, to find the North Star.

We came to know of the constancy of that star. As the earth turned, the others appeared to move through the night. But the North Star held its position in line with the axis of the earth. And so it had come to be known as the Polar Star, or the Polestar, or the Lodestar. Through centuries of time, mariners had used it to guide them in their journeys. They had reckoned their bearings by its constancy, thereby avoiding traveling in circles or in the wrong direction, as they moved across the wide, unmarked seas.

Because of those boyhood musings, the Polar Star came to mean something to me. I recognized it as a constant in the midst of change. It was something that could always be counted on, something that was dependable, an anchor in what otherwise appeared to be a moving and unstable firmament.

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From President Gordon B. Hinkley, "We Look to Christ," April 2002 General Conference:

We know not what lies ahead of us. We know not what the coming days will bring. We live in a world of uncertainty. For some, there will be great accomplishment. For others, disappointment. For some, much of rejoicing and gladness, good health, and gracious living. For others, perhaps sickness and a measure of sorrow. We do not know. But one thing we do know. Like the polar star in the heavens, regardless of what the future holds, there stands the Redeemer of the world, the Son of God, certain and sure as the anchor of our immortal lives. He is the rock of our salvation, our strength, our comfort, the very focus of our faith.

In sunshine and in shadow we look to Him, and He is there to assure and smile upon us.

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Polaris, or the North Star, sits at the center of this image, which captures the movement of stars around the north celestial pole over several hours. (https://science.nasa.gov/solar-system/what-is-the-north-star-and-how-do-you-find-it/)

