

## HOW DID THEY KNOW?

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, gave a message to the Relief Society sisters during the 2011 general Relief Society meeting that touched my heart and gave me peace. He spoke about the tiny forget-me-not flower and how its five petals represent five things we should always remember.<sup>1</sup>

After the meeting my daughter Alyssa told me a story about her friend Jessie, who has a small catering business. Jessie was asked by her stake Relief Society leaders to make a dessert to serve after the general Relief Society meeting. Jessie told Alyssa she knew immediately what

she should make—250 cupcakes. Alyssa volunteered to help transport the cupcakes to the stake center.

The day of the meeting arrived, and when Alyssa went to help, she found Jessie nearly in tears. The cupcakes were ready, but Jessie had sent a picture of them to a relative who said they were not fancy enough for the meeting.

Jessie began to doubt herself. She concluded that the stake Relief Society leaders would be expecting something more elaborate than her simple cupcakes. She was frantically trying to figure out a way to redecorate the cupcakes, but there wasn't time. She and Alyssa took the cupcakes as they

were, with Jessie feeling that she had let the sisters down—until President Uchtdorf spoke.

As he spoke about the tiny forget-me-not flower, a picture of the little blue flower appeared on the screen. It was such a simple flower but so beautiful with its delicately veined petals. President Uchtdorf's message touched everyone's heart as he pleaded with us not to become so distracted with the large exotic blooms around us that we forget the five simple but important truths he was teaching us.

After the closing prayer, the sisters made their way to the cultural hall. When Alyssa and Jessie walked in, they found everyone surrounding the dessert table and asking, "How did they know?"

Each cupcake was frosted in plain white frosting and decorated with one simple, beautiful, delicate, five-petaled forget-me-not flower. ■

Gale Ashcroft, Arizona, USA

### NOTE

1. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Forget Me Not," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 120.

The cupcakes were ready, but Jessie had sent a picture of them to a relative who said they were not fancy enough for the Relief Society meeting.



## THE PROMISE GAVE ME HOPE

Soon after my husband and I were married, we were blessed with a son. When I saw his smile and looked into his eyes, I felt indebted to Heavenly Father. Our son seemed perfect to me. My husband and I thanked the Lord daily for such a precious gift.

On February 19, 2009, I packed in preparation to return to school for my final year of classes. My husband and I didn't know that the next day our beloved son would contract a fever and leave this mortal life.

It was a difficult experience for me to bear. The members of our ward came to our home to console us with scriptures and hymns and to pray with us. I cherished their compassionate condolences, but my grief for my son persisted. Whenever I thought of him, my eyes became heavy with tears.

Four days after his death, I was inspired to study *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*. As I held the book, it fell open in my hands to the chapter titled “Words of Hope and Consolation at the Time of Death.” I began to read and was deeply affected by the tragic losses Joseph and Emma had suffered as they started their family. When I reached an excerpt from a speech the Prophet gave at the funeral of a two-year-old girl, I felt as if cold water had been poured on my head, cooling my grief-ridden thoughts.

I called to my husband. Together we read: “I have . . . asked the question, why it is that infants, innocent children,

are taken away from us. . . . The Lord takes many away, even in infancy, that they may escape . . . the sorrows and evils of this present world; they were too pure, too lovely, to live on earth; therefore, if rightly considered, instead of mourning we have reason to rejoice as they are delivered from evil, and we shall soon have them again.”

The Prophet added: “A question may be asked—‘Will mothers have their children in eternity?’ Yes! Yes! Mothers, you shall have your children; for they shall have eternal life, for their debt is paid.”<sup>1</sup>

Since we read those beautiful words, our family's prayers have been full of thanksgiving for the promise

that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ we will be with our son again.

Today we have three wonderful children, siblings to our departed son. We are teaching them the true and everlasting gospel, which will guide them back to their Heavenly Father and to their Savior, Jesus Christ.

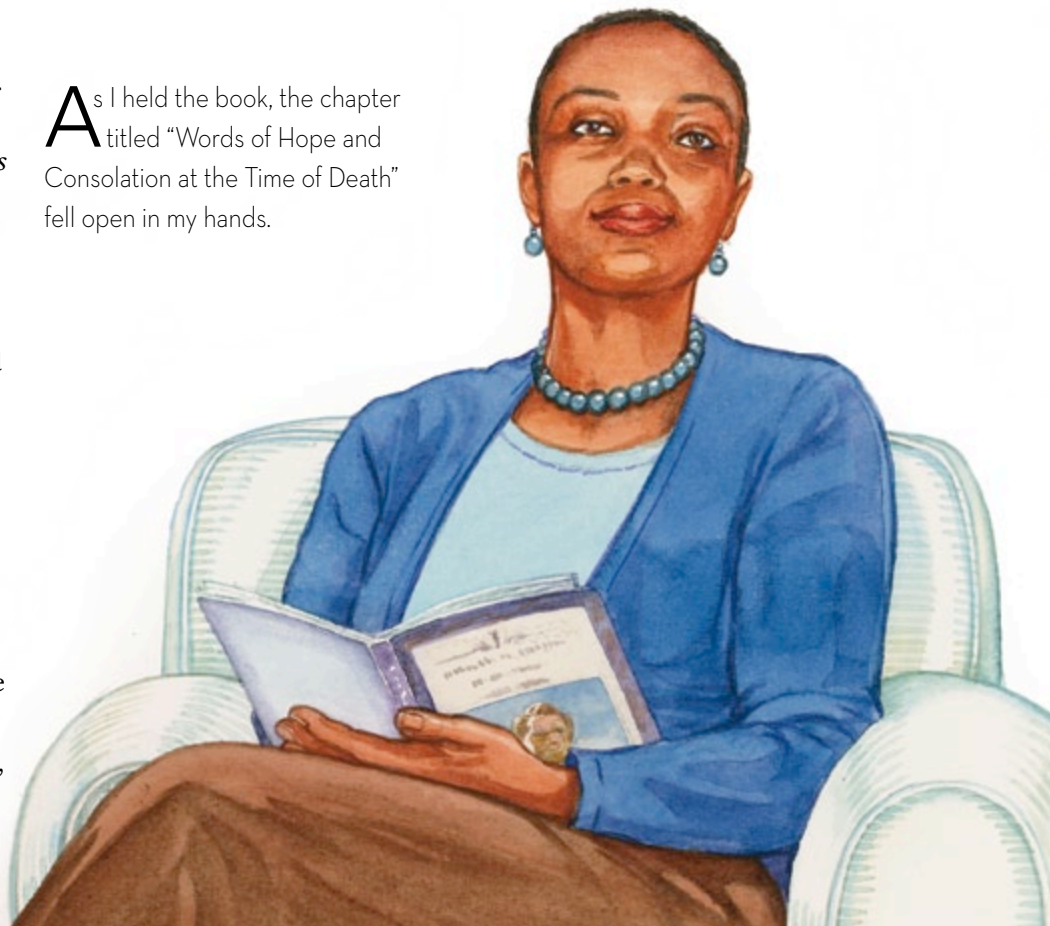
I know that the Prophet Joseph Smith's message of life after death is true. I will be grateful forever for the hope, peace, joy, and happiness it brings to our family—on both sides of the veil. ■

Juliana Fayahun, Lagos, Nigeria

### NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 176, 177.

As I held the book, the chapter titled “Words of Hope and Consolation at the Time of Death” fell open in my hands.



## I HAD PLENTY TO SHARE

I had always thought of emergency preparedness in terms of taking care of my family and myself. But I learned to view preparation differently one Sunday morning in southern Florida in 1992. Hurricane Andrew, one of the most destructive and costly hurricanes to hit the United States, disrupted a beautiful summer in Miami, Florida.

I was temporarily living alone in a beach apartment, attending a three-month orientation program for my job. When the hurricane warning came and I learned we would need to evacuate our apartment complex by noon, an associate reserved hotel rooms in an inland region for our co-workers and me. I boarded my windows and stored my personal belongings.

In anticipation of a weeklong visit from my wife and children, I had

previously purchased enough food and water for my family of six. I was comforted knowing I had a safe place to go and enough food to take with me to last several weeks.

As I prepared to leave at 10:30 a.m., I felt good—all was in order. I knelt in prayer, thanking Heavenly Father for my blessings and asking for His help during the coming storm. As I ended my prayer, the Spirit prompted me to say, “If there is anyone in need of help, please help me find him or her.”

Within a few minutes, a widow in her 80s knocked at my door. “I’m sorry,” she said. “I have the wrong room. I’m looking for a friend.”

She looked frazzled. When I asked if I could help, she became distraught and said she didn’t know what to do or where to go. I asked her where she

lived, and together we walked to her apartment, assessed her situation, and went over her options.

I told her that my company might have space in one of our hotel rooms, and I invited her to stay with our group. She sighed in relief. We quickly packed and secured her apartment and belongings, and I arranged for an associate to drive her car to the hotel.

As I prepared to leave, two more widows asked for assistance. I helped them calm down so they could think clearly and figure out where to find refuge. When I picked up luggage from one of my work associates, another elderly widow asked for help. We placed her fragile items in safe areas and helped her prepare to leave.

In the meantime, other co-workers invited two college students who had been living on an island to stay with our group at the inland hotel. The only food they had was a handful of snacks and a quart (.95 L) of mineral water. Fortunately, I had plenty to share, not only with them but with everyone else as well.

What a blessing it was to be prepared and guided by the Lord. This allowed me to provide a calming influence during a time of alarm and to spend almost all my time helping others without worrying about myself. I gained a new level of appreciation for the counsel from our priesthood leaders to be prepared. ■

Brent Fisher, California, USA

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## WAITING FOR THE SUNRISE

Shadows wrapped the room in darkness as I lay awake listening to my husband breathe, trying to determine whether he was sleeping. It had been only two days since our 12-year-old daughter had passed away from a sudden traumatic accident. I closed my eyes again, but sleep evaded me. My heart yearned for my daughter. All the knowledge of the plan of salvation couldn't ease the ache of missing her.

As dawn neared, I felt a sudden, intense longing. The sun would be rising soon, and in my mind I saw the sky bathed in soft pink light. Our daughter loved the color pink. A pink sunrise would be just the thing I needed to feel close to her again.

"Let's go watch the sunrise," I whispered to my drowsy husband.

We stood in the driveway, faced east, and waited . . . and waited. Though the sky lightened, the sun did not push through the low-lying clouds.

I leaned my head on my husband's shoulder and sighed, trying to pretend it didn't matter. But I wanted more. I needed more. Surely Heavenly Father could have granted me this desire after taking our sweet girl home to Him.

As my husband turned to go inside, looking behind us toward the west, he said, "Look!"

I turned. Behind us the clouds were bathed in a delicate blush, golden light surrounding them. My breath caught, and tears crept to my eyes. It was more beautiful than I could have imagined.

It felt like a hug from our daughter. I knew Heavenly Father was aware of my aching heart and was sending a promise of hope for the future—a gentle reminder of eternal families and all the beautiful moments yet to come.

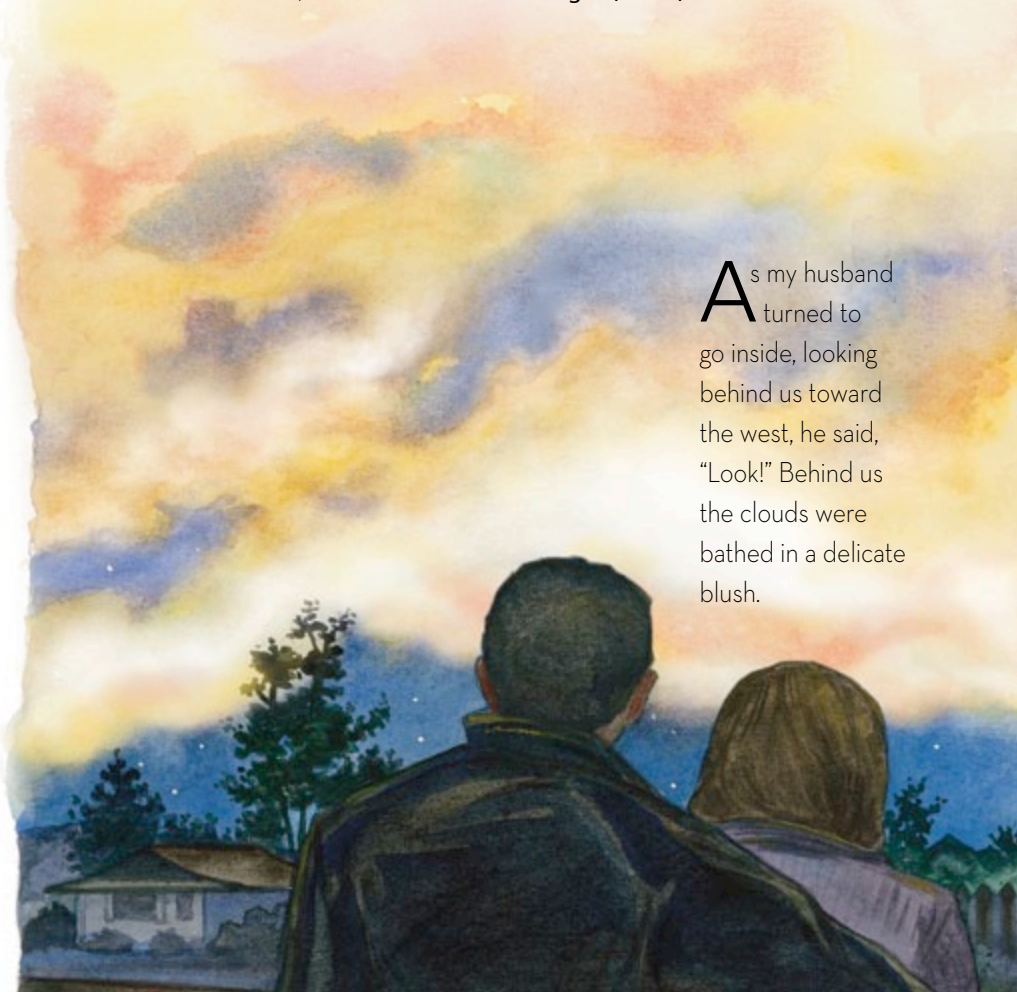
I have thought often on that beautiful moment and the new perspective it gave me. Who looks for a sunrise in the west? And yet that is where my miracle was waiting. How many blessings and miracles do I miss because they come from unexpected places? How many times do I focus on what I think should be and miss the glory of what is?

We had prayed relentlessly for a miracle that was denied, but as I

looked around with my new perspective, I saw the miracle of the four lives bettered through our daughter's organ donations, the miracle of family love and ward unity, and the miracle of service. I have felt deep sorrow, but I have also felt powerful hope fill my soul with each blushing sunrise, each rosy sunset, and each pink flower that crosses my path.

Now as the sun rises, I look east and then turn to look west. I smile with the realization that there are always miracles and blessings to be found—and that the sun will always rise on our sorrows if we let it. ■

Julia Wagner, Ohio, USA



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