He had run away from home as a teenager, and someone had placed a Book of Mormon in a box he carried with him in his search for more happiness.

Years passed. He moved from place to place across the world. He was alone and unhappy one day when he saw the box. The box was filled with things he had carried with him. At the bottom of the box, he found the Book of Mormon. He read the promise in it and tested it. He knew it was true. That witness changed his life. He found happiness beyond his fondest dreams.

Your copy of the Book of Mormon may be hidden from your view by cares and attention to all you have accumulated in your journey. I plead with you to drink deeply and often from its pages. It has in it the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the only way home to God.

I leave you my sure witness that God lives and will answer your prayers. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. The Book of Mormon is a true and sure witness that He lives, that He is our resurrected and living Savior.

The Book of Mormon is a precious witness. I now leave with you my witness in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES
3. Moroni 7:47.

To watch the video of President Eyring’s address, scan this image with a QR-enabled smartphone.

By Elder Robert D. Hales
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Waiting upon the Lord: Thy Will Be Done

The purpose of our life on earth is to grow, develop, and be strengthened through our own experiences.

On this Sabbath morning, we give thanks for and testify of the living reality of our Savior. His gospel has been restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Book of Mormon is true. We are led by a living prophet today, President Thomas S. Monson. Above all, we bear solemn witness of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the eternal blessings that flow from it.

During the past few months, I have had the opportunity to study and learn more about the Savior’s atoning sacrifice and how He prepared Himself to make that eternal offering for each one of us.

His preparation began in the premortal life as He waited upon His Father, saying, “Thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.” Beginning in that moment and continuing today, He exercises His agency to accept and carry out our Heavenly Father’s plan. The scriptures teach us that through His youth, He went “about [His] Father’s business” and “waited upon the Lord for the time of his ministry to come.”

At the age of 30, He suffered sore temptation yet chose to resist, saying, “Get thee behind me, Satan.”

In Gethsemane, He trusted His Father, declaring, “Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done,” and then He exercised His agency to suffer for our sins. Through the humiliation of a public trial and the agony of crucifixion, He waited upon His Father, willing to be “wounded for our transgressions . . . [and] bruised for our iniquities.”

Even as He cried out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” He waited upon His Father—exercising His agency to forgive His enemies, see that His mother was watched over, and endure to the end until His life and mortal mission were finished.

I have often pondered, Why is it that the Son of God and His holy prophets and all the faithful Saints have trials and tribulations, even when they are trying to do Heavenly Father’s will? Why is it so hard, especially for them?

I think about Joseph Smith, who suffered illness as a boy and persecution throughout his life. Like the Savior, he cried out, “O God, where art thou?” Yet even when he was seemingly alone, he exercised his agency to wait upon the Lord and carry out His Heavenly Father’s will.

I think of our pioneer forebears,
driven from Nauvoo and crossing the plains, exercising their agency to follow a prophet even as they suffered sickness, privation, and some even death. Why such terrible tribulation? To what end? For what purpose?

As we ask these questions, we realize that the purpose of our life on earth is to grow, develop, and be strengthened through our own experiences. How do we do this? The scriptures give us an answer in one simple phrase: we "wait upon the Lord." 12

Tests and trials are given to all of us. These mortal challenges allow us and our Heavenly Father to see whether we will exercise our agency to follow His Son. He already knows, and we have the opportunity to learn, that no matter how difficult our circumstances, "all these things shall [be for our] experience, and . . . [our] good." 13

Does this mean we will always understand our challenges? Won’t all of us, sometime, have reason to ask, "O God, where art thou?" 14 Yes! When a spouse dies, a companion will wonder. When financial hardship befalls a family, a father will ask. When children wander from the path, a mother and father will cry out in sorrow. Yes, "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." 15 Then, in the dawn of our increased faith and understanding, we arise and choose to wait upon the Lord, saying, "Thy will be done." 16

What, then, does it mean to wait upon the Lord? In the scriptures, the word wait means to hope, to anticipate, and to trust. To hope and trust in the Lord requires faith, patience, humility, meekness, long-suffering, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end.

To wait upon the Lord means planting the seed of faith and nourishing it "with great diligence, and . . . patience." 17

It means praying as the Savior did—to God, our Heavenly Father—saying: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done." 18 It is a prayer we offer with our whole souls in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Waiting upon the Lord means pondering in our hearts and "receiving the Holy Ghost" so that we can know "all things what [we] should do." 19

As we follow the promptings of the Spirit, we discover that "tribulation worketh patience" 20 and we learn to "continue in patience until [we] are perfected." 21

Waiting upon the Lord means to "stand fast" 22 and "press forward" in faith, "having a perfect brightness of hope." 23

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Waiting upon the Lord means to "stand fast" 22 and "press forward" in faith, "having a perfect brightness of hope." 23

It means "relying alone upon the merits of Christ" 24 and "with [His] grace assisting us, saying: Thy will be done, O Lord, and not ours." 25

As we wait upon the Lord, we are "immovable in keeping the commandments," 26 knowing that we will "one day rest from all [our] afflictions." 27

And we "cast not away . . . [our] confidence" 28 that "all things where-with [we] have been afflicted shall work together for [our] good." 29

Those afflictions will come in all shapes and sizes. Job’s experience reminds us what we may be called upon to endure. Job lost all his possessions, including his land, house, and animals; his family members; his reputation; his physical health; and even his mental well-being. Yet he waited upon the Lord and bore a powerful personal testimony. He said:
“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter
day upon the earth:

“And though . . . worms destroy
this body, yet in my flesh shall I see
God.”

“Though he slay me, yet will I trust
in him.”

Even with the shining examples
of Job, the prophets, and the Savior,
we will still find it challenging to wait
upon the Lord, especially when we
cannot fully understand His plan and
purposes for us. That understanding is
most often given “line upon line, [and]
precept upon precept.”

In my life I have learned that some-
times I do not receive an answer to a
prayer because the Lord knows I am
not ready. When He does answer, it is
often “here a little and there a little” because that is all that I can bear or
all I am willing to do.

Too often we pray to have
patience, but we want it right now!
As a young man, President David O.
 McKay prayed for a witness of the
truthfulness of the gospel. Many years
later, while he was serving his mission
in Scotland, that witness finally came.
Later he wrote, “It was an assurance
to me that sincere prayer is answered
‘sometime, somewhere.’”

We may not know when or how
the Lord’s answers will be given, but
in His time and His way, I testify,
His answers will come. For some
answers we may have to wait until the
hereafter. This may be true for some
promises in our patriarchal blessings
and for some blessings for family
members. Let us not give up on the
Lord. His blessings are eternal, not
temporary.

Waiting upon the Lord gives us a
priceless opportunity to discover that
there are many who wait upon us.
Our children wait upon us to show
patience, love, and understanding
toward them. Our parents wait upon
us to show gratitude and compassion.
Our brothers and sisters wait upon us
to be tolerant, merciful, and forgiving.
Our spouses wait upon us to love
them as the Savior has loved each
one of us.

As we endure physical suffering,
we are increasingly aware of how
many wait upon each of us. To all
the Marys and Marthas, to all of
the good Samaritans who minister
to the sick, succor the weak, and
care for the mentally and physically
infirm, I feel the gratitude of a loving
Heavenly Father and His Beloved
Son. In your daily Christlike minis-
try, you are waiting upon the Lord
and doing your Heavenly Father’s
will. His assurance to you is clear:
“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto
one of the least of these my breth-
ren, ye have done it unto me.”

He knows your sacrifices and your
sorrows. He hears your prayers. His
peace and rest will be yours as you
continue to wait upon Him in faith.

Every one of us is more beloved to
the Lord than we can possibly under-
stand or imagine. Let us therefore
be kinder to one another and kinder
toward ourselves. Let us remember
that as we wait upon the Lord, we are
becoming “saint[s] through [His] atone-
ment, . . . submissive, meek, humble,
patient, full of love, willing to submit
to all things which the Lord seeth fit to
inflict upon [us], even as a child doth
submit to his father.”

Such was the submission of our
Savior to His Father in the Garden
of Gethsemane. He implored His
disciples, “Watch with me,” yet three
times He returned to them to find their
eyes heavy with sleep. Without the
companionship of these disciples and
ultimately without the presence of His
Father, the Savior chose to suffer our
“pains and afflictions and temptations
of every kind.” With an angel sent
to strengthen Him, He “shrank not
to drink the bitter cup.” He waited
upon His Father, saying, “Thy will
be done,” and He humbly trod the
winepress alone. Now, as one of His
Twelve Apostles in these latter days, I
pray that we will be strengthened to
watch with Him and wait upon Him
through all our days.

On this Sabbath morning, I express
gratitude that “in my Gethsemane” and
yours, we are not alone. He that
watches over us “shall neither slum-
ber nor sleep.” His angels here and
beyond the veil are “round about [us],
to bear [us] up.” I bear my special wit-
ness that our Savior’s promise is true,
for He says, “They that wait upon the
Lord shall renew their strength; they
shall mount up with wings as eagles;
they shall run, and not be weary; and
they shall walk, and not faint.”

May we wait upon Him by pressing forward
in faith, that we may say in our prayers, “Thy will be done,” and return to Him with honor. In the holy name of our Savior and Redeemer, even Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES
6. Isaiah 53:5; Mosiah 14:5.
7. Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.
10. See John 19:30.
15. Psalm 30:5.
19. 2 Nephi 32:5.
20. Romans 5:3.
23. 2 Nephi 31:20.
25. Doctrine and Covenants 109:44.
27. Alma 34:11.
29. Doctrine and Covenants 98:3.
32. 2 Nephi 28:30.
33. 2 Nephi 28:30.
34. Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay (2003), xviii.
35. Matthew 25:40.
37. Matthew 26:38; see also verses 39–45.
38. Alma 7:11.
40. “In Memory of the Crucified,” Hymns, no. 190; see also 3 Nephi 11:11; Doctrine and Covenants 19:18–19.
41. Matthew 26:42.
42. See Doctrine and Covenants 76:107; 88:106; 133:50.
43. “Where Can I Turn for Peace?” Hymns, no. 129.
44. Psalm 121:4.
45. Doctrine and Covenants 84:88.
47. Matthew 26:42.

Years ago my great-great-grandfather picked up a copy of the Book of Mormon for the first time. He opened it to the center and read a few pages. He then declared, “That book was either written by God or the devil, and I am going to find out who wrote it.” He read it through twice in the next 10 days and then declared, “The devil could not have written it—it must be from God.”

That is the genius of the Book of Mormon—there is no middle ground. It is either the word of God as professed, or it is a total fraud. This book does not merely claim to be a moral treatise or theological commentary or collection of insightful writings. It claims to be the word of God—every sentence, every verse, every page. Joseph Smith declared that an angel of God directed him to gold plates, which contained the writings of prophets in ancient America, and that he translated those plates by divine powers. If that story is true, then the Book of Mormon is holy scripture, just as it professes to be; if not, it is a sophisticated but, nonetheless, diabolical hoax.

C. S. Lewis spoke of a similar dilemma faced by someone who must choose whether to accept or reject the Savior's divinity—where there is likewise no middle ground: “I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. . . You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. . . But let us not come with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

Likewise, we must make a simple choice with the Book of Mormon: it is either of God or the devil. There is no other option. For a moment I invite you to take a test that will help you determine the true nature of this book. Ask yourself if the following scriptures from the Book of Mormon draw you...