Speaking of these times, Elder Dallin H. Oaks said: “We need to make both temporal and spiritual preparation. . . . And the preparation most likely to be neglected is the one less visible and more difficult—the spiritual” (“Preparation for the Second Coming,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2004, 9). In other words, don’t neglect to look up.

Given the urgent need for spiritual preparation in a time of such peril, I want to extend a word of warning about one very strong sign of the times. My professional life put me on the forefront of technology, so I recognize the value it has, especially in communication. So much information of man is now at our fingertips. But the Internet is also full of much that is filthy and misleading. Technology has augmented our freedom of speech, but it also gives an unqualified blogger false credibility based on the number of viewers. This is why now, more than ever, we must remember this eternal principle: “By their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20).

In particular, I caution you not to view filthy images or give your attention to the false accusers of Christ and the Prophet Joseph Smith. Both actions create the same effect: the loss of the Holy Ghost and His protecting, sustaining power. Vice and unhappiness always follow.

My dear brothers and sisters, if you ever come across anything that causes you to question your testimony of the gospel, I plead with you to look up. Look to the Source of all wisdom and truth. Nourish your faith and testimony with the word of God. There are those in the world who seek to undermine your faith by mixing lies with half-truths. This is why it is absolutely critical that you remain constantly worthy of the Spirit. The
companionship of the Holy Ghost is not just a pleasant convenience—it is essential to your spiritual survival. If you will not treasure up the words of Christ and listen closely to the promptings of the Spirit, you will be deceived (see Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:37). We must do these things.

Jesus Christ, who was perfect, and Joseph Smith, who admitted that he himself was not, were both killed by false accusers who would not accept their testimony. How can we know that their testimony is true—that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Joseph Smith is a true prophet?

"By their fruits ye shall know them." Can good fruit grow from a bad tree? I know for myself that my Redeemer has forgiven my sins and freed me of my personal yoke, bringing me to a state of happiness that I did not know existed. And I know for myself that Joseph Smith was a prophet because I have applied the simple promise in the Book of Mormon: “Ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ” (Moroni 10:4). In simple words, look up.

There are some who might suggest that you must have physical evidence in order to believe in the Resurrection of Christ or the veracity of His restored gospel. To them I quote the words of Alma to Korihor, who was trying to persuade others not to believe: “Thou hast had signs enough; will ye tempt your God? Will ye say, Show unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these thy brethren, and also all the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee” (Alma 30:44).

You and I are living evidence of the redeeming power of the Savior. We are living evidence of the ministry of the Prophet Joseph and the faithfulness of those early Saints who remained strong in their testimony. The Church of Jesus Christ has now expanded all over the world and is growing like never before—embraced, as in the times of Christ, by humble people who do not need to see and touch to believe.

No one knows when the Lord will come again. But the perilous times are now upon us. Today is the time to look to the Source of truth and ensure that our testimonies are strong.

Returning to my account, my cousins and I woke in the morning to a bright sun and beautiful sky. A man knocked on the door looking for the three lost boys. He put us on horses, and we started back home through the same prairie. I will never forget what we saw on our way home—a multitude of people who had been searching for us throughout the night, their tractors and trucks stuck in the mud. They had found a saddle here and a horse there, and when they saw us returning home, I could feel their relief and their love. At the entrance to town, many people were waiting for us, and in front of them all were my loving grandmother and my uncle and aunt. They embraced us and cried, overjoyed that they had found their lost children. What a great reminder this is to me that our loving Heavenly Father is mindful of us. He is anxiously awaiting our return home.

Yes, there are signs of storms forming all around us. Let us look up and prepare ourselves. There is safety in a strong testimony. Let us cherish and strengthen our testimonies every day.

I know we can live together as families for eternity, that our loving Heavenly Father is waiting for us, His children, with His arms extended. I know that Jesus Christ, our Rescuer, lives. As with Peter, no flesh and blood has revealed it to me, but my Father who is in heaven (see Matthew 16:15–19). In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. ◼