


YE SHALL NOT
FEAR

*When disaster strikes,
the principles that saved
these families could
save you too.*



By Breanna Olaveson,
Melissa Hayes, and
Leah Welker

Charles and Rosemary Harvey had some money saved for a rainy day, but the floodwater came faster and higher than they anticipated. More than 5,000 homes would feel the impact of the flood that hit Cedar Rapids, Iowa, USA, that spring. As the water level rose outside their home, the Harveys found that they had over four feet (1 m) of water in their living room.

Despite this, Brother and Sister Harvey weren't afraid. "The prophets have counseled us to save some for a rainy day," Brother Harvey says. "That's just what we did."

As the Harveys came to know, sometimes it doesn't just rain—it pours. The scriptures teach us that in the latter days "there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places" (Matthew 24:7). But when Church members heed the counsel of the prophets to be prepared temporally, mentally, and spiritually, they "shall not fear" (D&C 38:30).

Temporal Preparedness

Temporal preparedness is a way of life for Harold and Dorothy Maughan. Where they live in New Hampshire, winters are difficult nearly every year, and sometimes the area is struck by dangerous ice storms.

"You get two inches [5 cm] of rain—only the rain freezes when it hits the ground," Harold explains. "So you can have anywhere between a quarter inch and two inches of ice on the road. It's like a skating rink. The ice also gets on the branches of the trees. Even the big oak trees will split and the branches will fall off."

PHOTOGRAPH OF STORM BY FRDRIC LAHME/EYEEM/GETTY IMAGES PLUS; PHOTOGRAPH OF SIGN BY CRAIG MCCAUSLAND/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS



Not only do fallen branches and icy roads make travel difficult, but the icy rain can take out any power lines that are aboveground and even disable transformers for underground wires. That can leave their area without power for days.

Preparations for these winter storms are just part of the Maughans' routine every year.

During the summer, Harold ensures that there is plenty of wood for the family's wood-burning stove, stacking two tarp-covered piles against the side of their house. He keeps enough not only for the upcoming winter but also for the next. When the power goes out, the wood-burning stove is essential for cooking, heating, and lighting.

To take care of the fallen branches, the Maughans keep a chain saw full of gas. Back when the children were younger and still living at home, they helped clear and stack the wood while Harold cut it.

"It's been a family project, with the whole family helping to do that, as well as shovel snow," Dorothy explains. Then she laughingly recalls, "One year when the ward went over to help clear snow at the church, our daughter came home disgusted because the boys that showed up had never shoveled snow before. So she had to teach them how to do it."

Harold quips, "The first gift I gave my wife when I got married was a snow shovel."

Now they also have a snowblower with extra fuel, but they keep plenty of shovels around, just in case.

When asked how family members have kept their spirits up in the face of discouraging circumstances, Harold immediately says, "There's too much to do to get discouraged."

Dorothy adds, "And we could always sing a funny song, and we could get right on going again."

One of their greatest needs during the winter actually is water. All the houses on their road get their water from wells with electric pumps. When the power is out, there's no water. The Maughans keep plenty of potable water with their food storage, but they also have a pond in their front yard that overflows in a little waterfall. Because the water is flowing, the overflow stays liquid all winter; the Maughans fill up gallon jugs at the pond and take the water to their neighbors to take care of basic necessities like flushing toilets.

The Maughans strongly believe in helping their neighbors. Harold says, "The neighbors know that if they need something, they can come here to get it."

Not only do the Maughans share freely of their food storage, but they pitch in to help whoever needs labor as well. One neighbor had a sick son who required heart monitors and a controlled environment in his house.

Left: The children of Harold and Dorothy Maughan of New Hampshire, USA, helped with the family's preparedness work, such as chopping wood for their wood-burning stove.



Once, after an ice storm took out the power, everyone worked hard to clear the neighbor's driveway for emergency vehicles to come in. The Maughans brought the family water, helped keep them warm, and even cooked some food for the son on their wood stove. At least partly due to everyone's efforts, the son pulled through.

Harold says, "It's just the kind of thing we do."

Mental Preparedness

Physical preparedness is important in situations where access to life's necessities—like food, water, and shelter—is limited. But mental preparedness can be just as essential to emotional and physical survival.

The Gulf of Mexico region is often impacted by hurricanes, and when they hit, many people are forced to evacuate their homes. Eric Petersen was president of the Beaumont Texas Stake when his stake's area was affected by several hurricanes within months of each other. Mental preparedness helped him have peace of mind while members of his stake were evacuating. As one of their leaders, he worried about the people and their well-being as they traveled, but the stake's preparation and plan for keeping track of members helped ease his mind.

"Making sure everybody was safe was my biggest concern," President Petersen says. Stake leaders sent out a questionnaire asking stake members to identify where they would go in the event of a hurricane and to

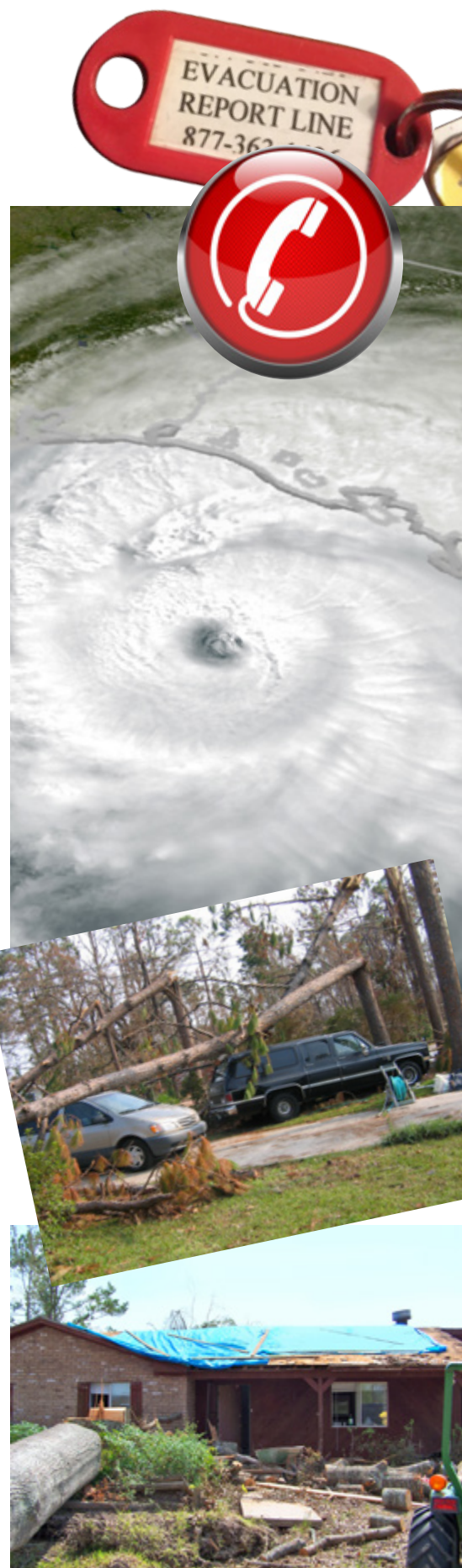
provide emergency contact information. Unfortunately, when Hurricane Rita affected the region, stake leaders weren't able to make contact with the members of the stake to find out if they were traveling or if they had arrived safely.

"That experience led us to create a hotline," President Petersen says. "We have a toll-free number that members call when they leave their homes and call again to confirm they have arrived at their destination."

When he was able to know which of his stake members were safe and which didn't arrive safely, President Petersen could more effectively seek out those members to help them. This preparation helped leaders deal with disasters quickly and efficiently.

Mental preparedness can also complement physical preparedness. The Maughans carefully taught their children everything they needed to do to prepare for and survive the harsh New Hampshire winters. They grew a large garden during the summer, and Dorothy compiled the family's favorite recipes and taught the children how to cook.

Right: After Hurricane Rita caused death and destruction along the U.S. Gulf Coast, leaders of the Beaumont Texas Stake created a toll-free number members could call to report whether they had evacuated safely. Watch the stake president describe that season's recovery efforts at youtube.com/watch?v=6giBfS5VyeM.





Harold says, “We taught the kids how to do everything we had to do, so even in an emergency situation, I didn’t have to spend time telling them, ‘This is what we need to do.’ I just said, ‘Look, go do this and go do that.’ And they knew what to do. Even the neighbors commented. The kids knew what had to be done, and they did it.”

Spiritual Preparedness

Temporal preparedness brings peace of mind, but some disasters destroy even the best-laid preparations. In these cases, Helaman’s message to his sons feels especially pertinent: “When the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down . . . because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation” (Helaman 5:12).

After losing many of their physical possessions, the Ashton family of California, USA, testified that spiritual preparedness ultimately sustained them through their hardships.

The Ashton children were sitting in sacrament meeting when the bishop announced the meeting was canceled. A fire in Southern California

was sweeping toward ward members’ homes, and they needed to make sure their homes were all right. With the Ashton parents, Tom and Sheila, and some of the other children out of town, it was up to the teenage siblings to take charge and keep the younger ones safe.

Once they saw the smoke and realized their home was in imminent danger, they decided they would stay at their aunt’s house in a neighboring city. After taking their younger sisters there, two of the brothers went home to gather what they could before the house was destroyed.

Their goal was to get in, grab what they could, and get out. They took a deep breath and ran into the smoky house, taking their pets, insurance papers, and photo albums with them. They returned to their sisters but couldn’t call their parents because the phone lines were closed. The next morning, they learned that their home and eight-acre avocado orchard had both been destroyed by the fire. Once phone lines reopened, one son called his parents to tell them about the damage.

When they heard the news, Tom and Sheila were both calm and accepting. They trusted in the Lord, and the family actually grew closer during that difficult time. Tom says, “It was a very edifying time because of the help, the love, and the people that rallied around us. We were very touched by all the Christlike love that people showed. It was an experience that I wouldn’t want to replace.”

Left: The Ashtons’ California home (bottom) was destroyed by fire (top), a trial that ultimately brought the family closer together.

Ward members helped by providing the Ashton family places to stay, and one family—not members of the Church and strangers to the Ashtons—repeatedly brought them much-needed clothes and supplies. Tom says, “It was a very humbling thing to accept. It seems it’s always easier to give than to receive in a lot of cases, and that was something that I had to learn.”

The Ashtons had been prepared for nearly any natural disaster. The house was built to remain stable in an earthquake, and they had plenty of food storage to sustain them during an emergency. They had backpacks ready to go in case they needed to evacuate. But all those things were lost in the fire, and the Ashtons were left only with their faith.

“You have things that you spend hours making and taking care of. Then you lose it and you wonder what its value was,” Tom says. “It makes you realize that what’s really important are eternal blessings.”

That understanding changed their outlook, as it did for Charles and Rosemary Harvey, the Iowa couple whose home was flooded. They continued to serve, even during their time of trial. They relied heavily on the gospel of Jesus Christ and their faith in Him to see them through. The water levels were still rising when it came time for them to serve as ordinance workers in the Nauvoo Illinois Temple, but they knew the temple was where they needed to be.



PREPARE EVERY NEEDFUL THING

“We [as a church] have built grain storage and storehouses and stocked them with the necessities of life in the event of a disaster. But the best storehouse is the family storeroom. In words of revelation the Lord has said, ‘Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing’ (D&C 109:8).

“Our people for three-quarters of a century have been counseled and encouraged to make such preparation as will assure survival should a calamity come.

“We can set aside some water, basic food, medicine, and clothing to keep us warm. We ought to have a little money laid aside in case of a rainy day.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), “If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 62.

Below: The Harveys in their flood-damaged basement in Iowa. (Sister Harvey has since passed away.)



“The strength of the covenants that we make in the temple is what prepared us,” Brother Harvey says. “We need to have trials. It’s how we react to them that really shows how much faith we have in our Heavenly Father.”

This reliance on God and eternal perspective gave the Harveys the same outlook the Ashtons had: that material possessions are not as important as we sometimes think.

“There is too much emphasis on the worldly things instead of the spiritual things,” Brother Harvey says. “Things of the world are just small and immediate gratifications—what we think we need. But spiritual strength comes from Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.”

The sure foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ prepares Church members for the storms of life. Because physical storms come, those who are prepared for a disaster can find peace of mind in good times and can be self-reliant in difficult times.¹ As these families learned, when we are prepared, we indeed shall not fear. ■

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NOTE

1. “Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 6.1.1).

For help in developing a ward or stake emergency preparedness plan, see preparedness.lds.org.