

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

With all the difficulty in the world, I often find myself feeling anxious and worried. How can I find peace during troubled times?

A number of years ago some friends and I were driving home to Utah at night, after a vacation in Missouri. About an hour into my driving shift, a thick fog settled over the interstate. Visibility lessened to a mere few feet, and I began to panic. I turned to my friends for support only to realize they were asleep. The fog was so thick that I didn't know whether I could continue driving, but there seemed to be no safe place to pull over.

Then I received an impression to continue driving and to hold to the lane line. As I looked down, I noticed that the line was clearly illuminated by our car's headlights. By holding the car closely to the lane line I

was able to safely navigate my way through the thick fog.

In the Book of Mormon, Lehi described his vision of the multitudes who were seeking for the peace and joy of the tree of life. He said, "And they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth . . . and partook of the fruit of the tree" (1 Nephi 8:30). Nephi interpreted the rod of iron to be the word of God (see 1 Nephi 11:25). As I continually hold fast to the word of God, even in the midst of dark and troubled times, the assurance of glorious days ahead fills my soul with peace. Holding to the lane line brought peace to me

one foggy night on the interstate. Daily study of the word of God can bring peace to our souls wherever we are.

Scott A. Walker, Utah

When I start feeling overwhelmed by the conditions of the world, I realize it is time to take stock of my priorities and regain an eternal perspective. I review how my husband and I are managing the spirituality of our home by asking these questions:

One day as I was reflecting upon the challenges surrounding me, I noticed my scriptures on the table and felt an overpowering desire to read them. I knew that in them I would find truth.

Periodic feelings of anxiety are normal. As mentioned in this article, the gospel provides many important tools for dealing with these feelings. However, if anxiety is prolonged and interferes with daily functioning, it may be helpful to consult with one's ecclesiastical leader and possibly a therapist with LDS Family Services. To find an LDS Family Services office near you, or to seek more information, visit www.ldsfamilyservices.org or call 1-800-453-3860 ext. 21711.

- Are we having quality family home evenings each week?
- Are we having family prayer daily?
- Are we reading the scriptures as a family each day?
- Are we looking for opportunities to share the gospel?
- Are we attending the temple regularly?
- Are we being reverent and thoughtful during the sacrament and emphasizing the importance of our baptismal covenants?

Although these are basic things to do, I always feel reassured that when we are doing them, the Lord will be with us. I feel at peace when I know we are doing everything we can to draw close to the Savior as a family.
Hazel Wilsher, England

I enjoy following politics and current affairs but every once in a while find myself becoming concerned about what I see happening around the world. I sometimes feel as Nephi, the son of Helaman, and wish that I had lived in the days of my fathers when people were “easy to be entreated, firm to keep the commandments of God, and slow to be led to do iniquity” (Helaman 7:7). But, like Nephi, I also “am consigned that these are my days” (Helaman 7:9).

One day as I was reflecting upon the challenges surrounding me, I noticed my scriptures on the table and felt an overpowering desire to read them. I knew that in them I would find truth. They were not written with



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE

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a political agenda, and they would not lie to me or distort the truth. I could trust them and follow them, and their contents would give me peace in this troubled world. Also, knowing that we have a prophet and other leaders who receive revelation to guide us comforts me and gives me peace. This knowledge allows me to let go of my fear and appreciate these exciting times.

Jacklyn Larsen, Texas

We certainly live in troubled times. The prophet Ether also lived in troubled times. His counsel can help us in our quest to find peace in this hectic world: “Wherefore, whoso believeth in God might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope

cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men” (Ether 12:4). True peace comes from being firmly anchored during a trying storm. We must be able to develop our faith and hope until we really believe that no matter what happens in this life, we can find the better world that Ether promises and we can have the peace that our Savior promised.

Real peace and comfort come from knowing that we are doing what the Lord expects us to do and fully relying on Him to give us the support we need.

Kason Andrew Twitchell, New Mexico

Whenever I am struck by the difficulties we face in the world and find myself worried, I recall the words

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PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINA SMITH

Stay anxiously engaged in good causes. If you want the world to be less difficult, be willing to offer a helping hand.

given to the Prophet Joseph in 1833: “Be still and *know* that I am God” (D&C 101:16; emphasis added). Our Heavenly Father is our God, and He is watching over us in all things. With my testimony of this truth as the foundation of my life, I cannot but follow this admonition to “be still.”

Jay McCarthy, Massachusetts

I have faith in Heavenly Father’s plan, and I know that all things are in His hands. But sometimes the suffering and wickedness in the world weigh on my mind and soul and I become discouraged. When this happened a few months ago, a scripture I found during my personal study took on new meaning.

Alma 31 tells of Alma and his brethren going to reclaim the

apostate Zoramites. When they arrived, they found conditions to be worse than they had supposed, for the people had fallen deep into iniquity. Before the missionaries began their efforts, Alma offered a prayer. He told the Lord about the wickedness of the Zoramites and asked for help. “O Lord, wilt thou give me strength, that I may bear with mine infirmities. For I am infirm, and such wickedness among this people doth pain my soul” (Alma 31:30).

This gave me a new perspective. If a prophet needed to ask God for the strength to bear the wickedness of the world, then I could find peace of mind in the same way. The best source of comfort always comes from our Heavenly Father.

Sometimes all we need to do is ask.
Gabrielle Cheney, Utah

One thing I have learned is that peace does not mean an absence of trouble, noise, or hard work. Peace is to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart. Priesthood blessings can bring that calm; faith, prayer, and scripture study will help maintain it.

Meghan Hinkson, Japan

I am a young father with four daughters under the age of eight. I used to worry about raising children in a wicked, violent world, but after the birth of my first daughter, that changed. A friend reminded me that the Lord is in charge and that faith in His protecting hand is our best defense. Since that time I have concentrated on teaching our daughters about the Savior and looking with excitement to His Second Coming.

Looking into the eyes of our girls, I see hope in the future. As we read in 2 Nephi 2:25, “Men are, that they might have joy.” My wife and I can teach our children to learn through their trials and to ultimately experience true joy (see D&C 122:5–8).

Lyndon Grunewald, Canada

The following ideas have helped me cope with difficulty in the world. They may also help you:

- Surround yourself with spiritually supportive friends.
- Live in a clean, orderly environment. If your home emanates peace, so will your life.
- Continually strive to live

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righteously. The people in Lehi's vision might have let go of the iron rod when visibility was clear, because they could see where they were going. However, sudden mists of darkness would have been deadly (see 1 Nephi 8:23–24). By continually holding to the iron rod, even when seemingly unnecessary, we endure the difficult spells.

- Stay anxiously engaged in good causes (see D&C 58:27). How desolate this world would seem if you were unable to help someone smile or to say thank you. If you want the world to be less difficult, be willing to offer a helping hand.

- Get out of the world as frequently as possible. Attending the temple, accompanying the missionaries, attending Church functions, and fulfilling our callings help raise us to a holier sphere.

Perhaps we can't take the evil out of the world. We can, however, surround ourselves with "the peaceable things of the kingdom" (D&C 36:2; 39:6).

Peter Bontorno, New York

I am a convert of seven years. The reason I joined the Church was the peace I felt when I read the Book of Mormon. I continue to rely upon daily scripture study to bring peace and comfort into my life. The scriptures remind me that I'm not alone in this chaotic world. The Holy Ghost speaks peace, and I feel God's love when I read His words and strive to keep His commandments.

Vanessa Jackson, California

I looked outside the mission office window in Riga, Latvia, and noted with mild interest that it was snowing—again. My calm reaction surprised me. After all, I was raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. The coldest place I had ever lived was St. George, Utah, where my husband and I had retired six years earlier. I love sunshine, and I love heat. So why, I wondered, didn't the snow bother me? The answer came in a flash: I knew this was temporary. In another year, I'd be returning to my beloved desert. In the meantime, the snow and cold were merely an experience of our mission. After all our efforts to prepare for "facing the elements" after our call to the Baltic Mission, we would have been disappointed if we hadn't experienced at least some brutal weather.

In another flash I understood what the prophets have said about our time on earth. My mission in Latvia related to my regular life in the same way that this mortal life relates to the eternities: it is temporary, and everything we go through here is merely an experience of our mortal mission. Before we left our heavenly home, we had at least a general idea of the trials we would endure. When we return home, we'll be disappointed if we have missed any of that for which we had prepared. The Lord will never allow us to be tempted above what we can bear (see 1 Corinthians 10:13).

The insight I received that winter of my mission has instilled in me a peace and a serenity that I'd never



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE

Attending the temple helps raise us to a holier sphere.

before known was possible. Our Heavenly Father is in charge, and no matter what we face in this life, it will be OK. Righteousness will triumph, troubles will pass, and for all eternity we will appreciate the lessons we learned here. ■

Dana Tischer, Utah

SHARE YOUR IDEAS

An upcoming Q&A feature will focus on the following topic:

The best marriage advice I ever received was . . .

If you would like to share advice you received, please label your submission "marriage advice" and follow the guidelines under "Do You Have a Story to Tell?" in the contents pages at the beginning of the magazine. Please limit responses to 250 words and submit them by July 13.