



TRUSTING IN THE Assurances OF THE LORD

We may not always be delivered from our trials, but as we seek the assurances of the Lord, we can know that all is well even in trying times.

By Mindy Anne Leavitt
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I sat in the celestial room of the temple, contemplating the direction my life was taking—certainly off course from what I'd planned. As with many other young adults, worries monopolized my mind: How could I balance good grades and

a social life? Should I quit my job? find a second one? How could I save money when I didn't have any? Why wasn't I married yet? The list went agonizingly on and on. I had gone to the temple seeking comfort, praying for the assurance that my life was in Heavenly Father's hands. "Is everything going to be all right in my life?" I questioned. The answer came swiftly and surely to my mind: "All is well."

In that moment, I understood that even though my life wasn't going as I had planned, it was still going according to *His* plan and He was in control. That sweet assurance that He is aware of and taking care of me, even if He doesn't always take away my trials, has carried me through many hardships. As we come to understand, seek, and wait for these assurances, we can know that the Lord supports us through the burdens placed upon us.

Assurance over Deliverance

Clearly, immediate delivery from our trials is not always the Lord's answer to our pleadings. Instead, He may bless us with invaluable moments of assurance through personal revelation—assurance that He is guiding our lives and will deliver us from our trials. These assurances might not deliver us from our trials but perhaps will give us the strength we need to deliver ourselves, even if that deliverance is simply the comfort of the Holy Ghost. I've noticed many examples in the scriptures of how the Lord often sends assurances before deliverance.

While Helaman was leading his 2,060 stripling warriors and other Nephite forces, they experienced an assurance of the Lord. After waiting many months for provisions and reinforcements, they were on the brink of starvation when food arrived with a small band of men. Fearing that this meager addition to their numbers

was not enough, they finally turned to the Lord and “did pour out [their] souls in prayer to God, that he would strengthen [them] and deliver [them].” After they prayed, Helaman recounts, “the Lord our God did visit us with assurances that he would deliver us; yea, insomuch that he did speak peace to our souls, and did grant unto us great faith, and did cause us that we should hope for our deliverance in him” (Alma 58:10–11). These assurances gave Helaman and his warriors strength to persevere and triumph over their enemies.

Joseph Smith also received an assurance of the Lord while imprisoned in Liberty Jail. As he prayed fervently, he was told:

“My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

“And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes” (D&C 121:7–8).

This assurance gave Joseph the courage and fortitude to carry on through near-incapacitating hardships.

In these and many other examples (see, for instance, Mosiah 24:8–16), the Lord didn’t just deliver the faithful from their trials right away. Rather, He visited them with the *assurance* that He *would* deliver them in His own time. These assurances, to borrow the words of Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, are



THE ASSURANCE OF HIS POWER

“We all must deal with adversity. . . . It will comfort us

when we must wait in distress for the Savior’s promised relief that He knows, from experience, how to heal and help us. The Book of Mormon gives us the certain assurance of His power to comfort. And faith in that power will give us patience as we pray and work and wait for help.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Adversity,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 24.

like “packets of spiritual sunlight” that Heavenly Father places in our path “to brighten [our] way.”¹ Sometimes that assurance is all we need to persevere through trials, knowing that there will be an ultimate deliverance.

Seeking Assurances

Life is hard. There are times when we question, when we lack confidence in ourselves and in our abilities to triumph over adversity, when we lose hope. Often it can feel like our trials will never end. And although

some assurances come through no effort on our part, more often than not we need to seek out those assurances that tell us there will be reprieve from our trials.

The assurances of the Lord often come through the voice of His servants: local leaders, institute and Sunday School teachers, and especially His prophets and apostles. Carol F. McConkie, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency, reminded us that “in their words we hear the voice of the Lord and we feel the Savior’s love.”²

These assurances also come through the voice of the Spirit as we sincerely commune with Heavenly Father through fervent prayer, as we read and ponder the scriptures, as we attend the temple and our Church meetings, as we serve others and try to do what’s right. In short, the assurances of the Lord come when we “seek him with all [our] heart and with all [our] soul” (Deuteronomy 4:29) and obey His commandments.

Helaman and his armies received an assurance after many sincere prayers; Joseph Smith received an assurance after praying and pondering. In both situations, the Lord tested their patience and faith before giving an assurance—a good reminder that during trials we should hold on to our faith and practice patience.

Waiting for Assurances

As with any other test of patience, the Lord's assurances might not come how or when we expect. We may need to pray to have "eyes to see" (Ezekiel 12:2) the hand of the Lord and His assurances in our lives. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke about how the tender mercies of the Lord can include these assurances and said that they "do not occur randomly or merely by coincidence. Faithfulness and obedience enable us to receive these important gifts and, frequently, the Lord's timing helps us to recognize them."³

Often, waiting for either deliverance or an assurance of deliverance takes more patience than we think we possess. We may have to face serious trials before receiving any kind of assurance. As Elder Scott explained, the "packets of spiritual sunlight" the Lord provides "often come after the trial has been the greatest, as evidence of the compassion and love of an all-knowing Father. They point the way

to greater happiness, more understanding, and strengthen [our] determination to accept and be obedient to His will."⁴ As we remain faithful and obedient through our trials, the assurances of the Lord will come to help us continue to be so.

Our Greatest Assurance

Ultimately, no matter how many assurances we receive that Heavenly Father is aware of us and our situation, it won't be enough to help us endure to the end if we don't have faith and hope in Jesus Christ. Through His Atonement, we can have the absolute hope that we will one day be delivered from all of our trials. We can also know that our Savior is there to empathize perfectly with us, for He has "descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things" (D&C 88:6). He understands our trials and our sorrows because He "suffer[ed] pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind . . . that he may know . . . how to succor his people according to their infirmities" (Alma 7:11–12).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: "Of greatest assurance in God's plan is that a Savior was promised, a Redeemer, who through our faith in Him would lift us triumphantly over those tests and trials. . . . It is only an appreciation of this divine love that will make our own lesser suffering first bearable, then understandable,

and finally redemptive."⁵ Learning of Him and His Atonement is an assurance in and of itself.

All Is Well

As we understand, seek after, and wait for assurances from the Lord, they will surely come. We ought to remember those priceless moments, write them down, and think about them often. Most important, we need to trust in them and believe, as Helaman and his men and the Prophet Joseph believed, that the Lord will fulfill the promises He has made to us. He reminds us of those promises through His assurances, and even though they may not make our trials disappear, we can know that Heavenly Father is there with us to support and sustain us through anything.

After my experience in the temple that day, my trials didn't lessen. I didn't suddenly have perfect grades or more money or a lot of dates. But what I did have was a calm assurance that despite my trials, I would be OK because the Lord still intended on keeping His promises to deliver me. With that assurance I know that all *is* well. ■

NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, "Trust in the Lord," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17.
2. Carol F. McConkie, "Live according to the Words of the Prophets," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 77.
3. David A. Bednar, "The Tender Mercies of the Lord," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2005, 100.
4. Richard G. Scott, "Trust in the Lord," 17.
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, "Like a Broken Vessel," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 40.

The "packets of spiritual sunlight . . . often come after the trial has been the greatest, as evidence of the compassion and love of an all-knowing Father. They point the way to greater happiness."

