

Well, brothers and sisters, it's Sunday again, and because of the Christmas Devotional by the First Presidency tonight, we won't be doing an open Skype class. It's just me talking with you in my office this Sunday afternoon. This week as I was reading the scriptures I had a strong impression that I needed to talk about something with you tonight and it may be very 'time appropriate' with everything that's been going on in the world. I'd like to share with you a few things about me for just a moment. The reason I'm doing that is to set a precedent, kind of a foundation about what I want to talk about during the class.

I came from a background of inactivity. My mom and dad were both members but were not active in the church. So, as I grew up as a young man, I never went to Primary, I never went to Aaronic Priesthood functions and grew up in a home where I had good parents, but as far as religion and church was concerned I didn't have much influence there. But I did fall in love with a girl who was a very active Latter Day Saint young woman and took her out on our first date and we dated for a couple of years. She let it be known to me that she would never marry or consider marrying anyone but a returned missionary and, in the temple. That had been her goal from day one and I was about as far away from those kind of things as you could be. I grew up in the streets of Salt Lake City. I belonged to a gang there called the "Panthers". My dad was a police officer and my mom and dad had no idea what their boy was involved in behind the scenes, and they didn't find out until later on when I was an adult and had repented sorely for some of my activities there. I wanted to get married when I was 19 years old and I wanted to marry this gal. She was three years younger than me, and she just let it be known that that was not in the ball park. I tried to persuade her with every bit of convincing dialogue that I had, that we should get married, that we loved each other, etc. About this time, things went south on me. I lost my drivers license for 'exhibition of acceleration'. I had a hot rod Chevrolet, a '56 Chevy with a Corvette motor in it. It got me into all kinds of trouble. I had my drivers license taken away, lost my job, and about this time my bishop, that I only saw because I went to church with my girlfriend, called me into his office and asked if I wanted to consider going on a mission. After I had a good laugh and looked at him and saw that he was dead serious, I declined and went away. At that point things seemed go further south for me. Everything seemed to go badly. After a period of time, this same bishop called me in and said, "Are you sure you wouldn't like to consider going on a mission"? At that point my thought was, "Well, why not". My girlfriend needs to get a few more years under her belt, she needs to graduate from high school. My interesting thought about serving a mission was maybe I could learn a foreign language and I thought this in the back of my pea-head brain. I thought that maybe a foreign language would be a benefit to me as I searched out a career and decided what I wanted to do with my life. So, I said "Yes" and I don't believe there was anybody as unprepared to go on a mission as I was at that time. I don't believe I had ever said a prayer, never read the scriptures. If there were any prayers ever spoken, it was when dad and I went to go duck hunting or pheasant hunting and mom had a little prayer with us to make sure that we came back safely. That was about the extent of our prayers. And so it wasn't too long until the bishop asked me, "By the way, where would you like to go"? And I said; "Anywhere but Germany". And the reason I had such a bad feeling for Germany was, in high school, I didn't graduate from high school on time, because I failed an English course and half of that year they let you take, instead of English, a foreign language. Well, I took German and it was because of the German language that I studied that I didn't graduate from high school. I had to go back to night school and make up my degree and so that's kind of a bad taste in my mouth about Germans. I thought they were all Nazi's at that point and low and behold, the mission call comes and my mom is so excited and my dad is also excited for me. We opened it up and it said you have been called to serve a mission to Bavaria. I remember thinking, Bavaria, isn't that a communist country? Where's Bavaria? We looked it up and low and behold, it's southern Germany. You talk about poetic justice. So, I got called for 2 ½ years to go on a mission to Germany. When I got over there, the reason we went 2 ½ years back then was, there was no Language Training Mission, there was no MTC, you just went up to a mission home. This is where the Deseret Gym used to be, across the street from the church office buildings. You went in there for a week. You received your Temple Endowments and they set you apart. Boyd K. Packer set me apart to serve that mission. So we went for 2 ½ years and that extra six months served as your language training. They put you out on the streets and you had six months to learn the language and 2 years to preach the gospel.

What they did was give you a missionary companion. There were no native German companions in those days, so all of them were English or Americans. They gave you a missionary companion that spoke excellent German and that man was told by the mission president, "Do not speak any English at all with your companion". So it was literally, rute haug or die, in learning the German language. You learned it just because that was all you could do. There was no other way to do it within six months. So, it worked, and I was speaking and reading and writing German fluently. But an interesting thing happened. I was so unprepared. I was in the mission field for one reason. I loved this girl and she would not marry me unless I served a mission and could take her to the Temple. It wasn't six weeks into the mission when I found out this was a horrible mistake, I was with a great missionary companion, a man that just wanted to be on a

mission and he taught at BYU and his name was Elder Calvin Bartholomew. Brother Bartholomew was just the kind of missionary that you wanted to be and I was everything opposite of what you should be. One thing led to another and he and I had an altercation and I left him asleep one night and hopped a train and went to Munich. I was going home. I'd made up my mind that this was a big mistake and even though I didn't really want to go home, I felt that there was just no way I could look at 2 ½ years doing this. How can I teach the gospel to the German people and be an ambassador for Christ? I don't even know that it's true. I don't know anything about it. So, that next morning, I found myself on the front door of the mission home President's office. He came in early in the morning and asked, "What are you doing here"? And, "where's your companion"? I said, "I left him asleep down in Southern Bavaria and I'm here because I'm going home. This is a big mistake". He said to come on in for a minute. I came in and stood up and he said why don't you sit down and I said, "I'm not going to sit down, I'm not going to be here that long. I'm just here for one reason. I want to find out if you're going to help me get home or do I have to hitch hike across Europe and stow away on a ship? One way or another, I'm going home". And he said, "Sit down", and I said, "OK, but we're not going to take very long at this." Then I told him what had happened and I told him what a big mistake it was. On the train that night I had this thought about all of the reasons he was going to give me of why I should not go home and how he would try to get me to stay. I had all that figured out, what he was going to say, and when it was all said and done he stopped. I told him what was happening and what I wanted to do and he looked at me, and this is President Owen Spencer Jacobs who was a potato farmer from Idaho, and he looked at me and said, "You know what your problem is Elder Stroud?" I said: "No, why don't you tell me what my problem is." And he said, "Well, you're nothing but a fat, rotten, spoiled brat". And that was exactly the thing that I had not rehearsed him saying to me. I stood up and leaned across the desk. I put my fist in the middle of the desk, and I said, "Why, for two cents I'd pick you up and throw you through that window". And he came up out of his chair and put his fist in the middle of the desk and it was nose to nose and eyeball to eyeball. I outweighed him by probably 80 pounds, and was a foot taller than he was, and he looked at me and he said, "Son, you're not man enough, sit down". He just took all of the steam out of my sail and I didn't know what to do. He just took away everything I had by what he said. Then we sat down for a while and we talked and determined that I really didn't want to go and didn't want to disappoint my girl friend, didn't want to disappoint my mom and dad. Everybody was so thrilled that I was in the mission field. Everybody but me! And so we sat down and talked about what the problem was and came up with a solution. And the solution was this: "I'll make you a deal", President Jacobs said. "I'm going to transfer you up close to the mission home here in Munich. I don't want you to work in the field. I want you to do an experiment. I want you to read the Book of Mormon through from cover to cover. I want you to pray about it every day. I want you to start at the very first page and I want you to go to the last page. And when you get to the last page, if you still want to go home, then I will see to it that you go home. I want you to call me and report in every day and tell me about your progress".

Well, I thought that was fair enough, because really, again brothers and sisters, I didn't want to go home. I just couldn't see myself staying there for 2 ½ years and feeling what I was feeling at that point, so frustrated, scared and angry. All of the human emotions were just boiling around me, but I decided to take him up on that. He gave me a companion who was a surfer from Redondo Beach, California and he was more like me. He had come from a little bit of a rebel background but had gotten his life squared around before he came. His name was Elder Erwin. Then I had another one called Elder Scott, and those were the only missionaries I remember because they played such an important role in my life.

Well, I started reading the Book of Mormon. Before we left the mission president's office he asked me to come over and kneel down and pray with him, and he asked me to say the prayer. I'd never said a prayer and I told him that. I said, "I don't know how to pray!" Isn't that a sad situation? When you think about what missionaries are required to do now and how the bar was raised a few years back, well they wouldn't take a missionary like me now, but I'm so grateful they did then. I told him I didn't know how to pray and we knelt down and he said, "I'll help you". So, like a primary teacher helping a little primary kid, you know, bow your head, close your eyes, fold your arms. "Heavenly Father, we thank thee" kind of a thing and then he prayed for me and I remember as I, I can't remember the words, but I remembered what I felt. I felt something I hadn't felt before. I felt like this man was actually talking to somebody in that room and we got up and he embraced me, and like I said, I was probably a foot taller than he was and outweighed him by 80 pounds and he just put his arms around my chest and I remember looking down on his little bald head and he said, "Elder Stroud, I love you". And that started our experiment. You know, he treated me like a non-member. He treated me for what I was. I knew nothing, and I mean nothing!!, underlined, exclamation point, at that point in 1963.

We started our experiment and I started reading First Nephi. I read it every day and I'd pray about it the best I could and what he taught me to do, and I tried to apply that. My companion was very, very patient with me. We didn't work. He was to babysit me while I was involved with this experiment. I read all the way through and got into Alma and every day I'd check in and he'd say, "Are you praying about it"? "Yes". "What's happening"? "Nothing". I got into Alma and when I reported in I said, "Boy, this is sure boring. What's all this war and all this kind of stuff in there? I'm just so

bored". And he said, "Remember our deal, you've got to go all the way to the end of the book." And so, one night we were in Munich in our apartment. We were in an attic apartment and had one of these skylights you could open up. My companion was asleep over in his bed and I was sitting at the table reading in Third Nephi. I came to 3 Nephi 8 where that huge storm hit the Nephite people and the tremendous destruction occurred. Something happened then. Now, I don't know what it was, but as I was looking at the pages in the book, I seem to almost be able to view the terrible destruction and calamity that was going on. It was so real I thought I could almost hear the screams and yells of the people. It was so real to me that it wouldn't take much to smell the smoke of the burning buildings. I went through that whole thing. As I read those words it was more like viewing what happened than it was reading the words on the book. It went through nights, the three days of darkness and I got a feel for what that was like. Then I had a feeling when Christ appeared in the eleventh chapter. And when he came down and appeared at the temple in the city Bountiful and said to the people, "Behold I am Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified should come into the world", I received a witness by the Holy Ghost that that actually happened. And I've never forgotten that. And that's provided an anchor for me.

In the ensuing years there's been times when I struggled with activity. There have been times when I struggled with addictive behavior, but that anchor has always been there; a place where I could return to. It was just burned into my soul and even though I might doubt some things, I could never and have never doubted the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. I just received that abiding testimony. And with that, I just wanted to share that experience, because it was the Book of Mormon and revelation that, above and beyond everything else that has happened to me in my life, with various priesthood assignments, with almost 30 years in the Church Education System, with all of that, it was those two things: the Book of Mormon and personal revelation, that has provided an anchor for me in days where I was in turmoil when the trials and adversity were the greatest.

I'd like to just share with you now a thought that I had this week. We're living now, at a time in our day, where the events took place that I saw and viewed in Third Nephi. They are taking place again. President Benson said these chapters at the end of Helaman on up to Third Nephi portray our day and our pattern of what will happen in our day. Isn't it interesting, those of you who are Isaiah students and have studied Avraham Giliadi's writings, see that history repeats itself and that when the prophets, especially Isaiah, speak, they speak of things that are happening in their day and things that have happened in their past and portray those things as the exact pattern of things that will happen in the future. It's just remarkable.

So I've got a lot of thoughts on my mind I'd like to share with you. Let's go over to 3 Nephi 5 for just a minute. This is right in the area. We can see some things that are taking place. If you'll go to the chapter heading in 3 Nephi 6 it says, "The Nephites prosper – Pride, wealth, and class distinctions arise". I don't think it takes a rocket scientist to see those very things in our day. The class distinctions are part of the removal of the middle class and the allocation of wealth so that those on the top end have it all and there's no middle class by design, and the rest of the population reside in poverty. Now Margie and I have been on missions in 3 places in the world. We have seen societies where the middle class was eradicated, where corruption at the top and the government was so rampant with political intrigue and political assassinations and huge wealth distribution, we have seen literally. I was telling a granddaughter of mine this week, "I have seen poverty you can't imagine. I've been in the Philippines and seen a mother with a newborn sitting in a gutter, selling her baby for \$20 so she could have something to eat. I've seen those things and I've seen the great distinctions that are in the various countries in the world. The United States right now is torn by division like its never been in my lifetime. Not even during the civil rights days of the 60's did we have division that we have right now because of the leadership of our country, not over the last 8 years, but over the last 16 years and plus we're seeing the fruits of that right now. The Lord sends prophets who cry repentance. Look at this, murderers conspire to take over the government."

Go over to 3 Nephi 6 and let's look at verse 11: "For there were many merchants in the land, and also many lawyers, and many officers". Now that's an indicator there that we've got some problems. Go on down to verse 21: "Now there were many of the people who were exceedingly angry because of those who testified of these things; and those who were angry were chiefly the chief judges, and they who had been high priests and lawyers; yea, all those who were lawyers were angry with those who testified of these things".

I think that when we talk about draining the swamp in Washington D.C., that one of the pollutants there, are, too many lawyers. If you go on down to verse 28: "And they did enter into a covenant one with another, yea, even into that covenant which was given by them of old, which covenant was given and administered by the devil, to combine against all righteousness". Look at 27: "Now it came to pass that those judges had many friends and kindreds; and the remainder, yea, even almost all the lawyers and the high priests, did gather themselves together, and unite with the kindreds of those judges who were to be tried according to the law". So you see these lawyers and you see a lot of judges. Let's go over to chapter 7. One of the things you see in chapter 7, look at the chapter heading, right at the beginning; "The chief judge is murdered". Now we just had one of the chief judges of the United States, Scalia, died in a ranch in Texas. I think that history will show that that was a political assassination, and that he was murdered. I think the reason he was murdered was to shift a balance of power to a more liberal judge. And Mr. Obama tried to do that.

Thank goodness the government stood up and stopped him and said that the new chief judge would be appointed by the incoming president-elect. Otherwise, you'd have an imbalance of court there that could have completely destroyed what's left of the Constitution. So, I think we have already had a chief judge murdered. And I think that history and time will point that out. Notice the next statement in the chapter heading: "The government is destroyed". Go down to verse 2: "And the people were divided one against another; and they did separate one from another into tribes, every man according to his family and his kindred and friends; and thus they did destroy the government of the land". You see. So look at your dates here: 30–33 AD. The Savior comes in 34 AD, so, 2-3 years before the appearance of Christ and especially before the storm. The storm starts in 2-3 years from now. So you have the government failing, the chief judge is murdered and if you go up to verse 5: "Now all this was done, and there were no wars as yet among them; and all this iniquity had come upon the people because they did yield themselves unto the power of Satan". Verse 6: "And the regulations of the government were destroyed".

Now I was thinking about every thing that has happened here recently and I've been thinking about Donald Trump and I voted for Mr. Trump. I had some interesting feelings about him. Isaiah, 140 years before the Persian Empire steps in and destroys the Babylonian Empire, Isaiah prophesied in the Bible and if you want to go there with me for just a minute, go on over to Isaiah 45. Lots of people, I don't mean for this to be a political thing at all, I'm not doing that on purpose. Just sharing with you some ideas. Isaiah 45, I thought this was really interesting. You have the children of Israel in Babylonian captivity and have been for about 70 years. Lets go to chapter 44. This was spoken 144 years before Solomon's Temple is destroyed. 44:28 here is this prophesy of Isaiah's. Talks about a man named Cyrus. Now Cyrus has not been born yet. This is 140 years before the birth of Cyrus. The Lord says of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid". Now keep in mind that the children of Israel were in Babylonian captivity and they are there for 70 years before this man Cyrus comes on the scene and destroys the Babylonian captivity and the new kid is on the block and it's the Persian Empire that succeeds the Babylonian Empire.

Now go to chapter 45, look at verse 1: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus," (now Cyrus is not a member of the House of Israel, he is what we call a pagan, he's an idolator, he's a heathen, he's a gentile, he is outside the covenant line. He is an outsider. I want you to remember that, "an outsider whose right hand I have holden". (Notice that the Lord has picked an outsider to come in and notice in the chapter heading for 45; Cyrus will free the captives of Israel from Babylon. He chose an outsider that he anoints and takes by the right hand.) "to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates"; (That's the gates of Babylon.) "and the gates shall not be shut"; 2: "I will go before thee", (This is the Lord speaking to Cyrus.) "and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass", (Again talking about the leaved gates of Babylon that represent that huge world empire.) "and cut in sunder the bars of iron:" 3: "And I will give thee (Cyrus) the treasures of darkness" (That's the wealth of Babylon, the world.) "and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel". 4: "For Jacob my servant's sake" (Who is in bondage right now), and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee" (Cyrus, an outsider) "by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me".

Then in verse 5 again, look down at the bottom, "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:" Go over to verse 13. Again the Lord speaking through Isaiah about Cyrus 140 years before he's even born. He says, "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city" (Jerusalem), "and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts". I thought about that, about how the Lord chose an outsider. There was a big controversy about Donald Trump being an outsider. I want you to notice also that the chapter that talks about Cyrus, the ancient outsider who freed the captives of Israel, is chapter 45. I wonder, knowing the Lord loved numbers and has perfect knowledge of all things past, present, and future, isn't it interesting that Donald Trump is going to be the 45th President of the United States. An outsider who has stepped in to free his people and to set them loose from spiritual captivity and bondage. Is this the modern day Cyrus the Great? Is this the one?

Then I thought about something else. I thought about all the prophesies. You see, everybody is so excited right now. The stock market has hit an all time high and seems to be just going up and up and up. They call it the Trump bump. It's because of confidence in people, among other things. Sure, it's manipulated, but there's a new confidence in people. Things are looking brighter, things are looking better, job market is looking to be improved, the carrier episode that took place over in Indiana, and all of these different things. And so we've got tremendous excitement and confidence and anticipation like we haven't had for a long time in this country. There's a huge surge of patriotism. I love where I watch the rallies that start out with prayer and we have various pastors and ministers that offer heartfelt prayers. I love it when they pledge allegiance, when they sing the national anthem. Its just like a rebirth of patriotism that's taking place in our country. It feels so good and everybody's excited. I'm excited about what's happening! And yet, I know the prophesies. I know what's written in section 29 about the events that precede the second coming. I know what's written in section 45. I know what's in section 88 and 101. I know what's in Matthew JST 24. I know these things and I understand them. I

know what the prophets have written.

When I came home from my mission in 1966, I had received a witness of prophets and apostles. I remember that I started storing wheat in 1966. I put away our first wheat because we were told to put away a years supply. Since 1967 I have always had a years supply of food. Always! I followed President Kimball's advice to plant trees and berry bushes and grape vines and have a garden. I've been gardening for 40 years. I'm in Eager for a reason. I came to Eager because I had an opportunity to transfer with the church education system and I could choose anywhere in the world to go. And I came here because I did my homework on what it would be like to be here in the case of a societal collapse. And if the power ever went out and we went backward 200 years. I hand-picked this place. I studied all of the prevailing winds so that what'd happen if there were atomic fall out and I did my homework, believe me, I've done my homework since 1966. I live in a place here in Eager that is totally self sufficient. We're off the grid. We can stay in this house for years and take care of up to 40 people and never have to shop. So I know all of the prophesies. I've read all of the books. I've read all of the books by Roger Young. I've read all of the books on dreams and visions that came from Another Voice of Warning. I've studied all of this. I don't believe there's a seminary teacher anywhere in the church that could teach the end times scenario and the signs of the times more effectively than I can. I know the scriptures. I've been a student of them all of my life and particularly signs of the last times.

Many of you have asked me questions on what my feeling are on the call out. I'll say it again. The call out is a true principle. It's scripturally based, it's everywhere. If people don't know that the Lord calls out his covenant people from dangerous areas to supplant them in places of safety, they're not students of the scriptures. You can't read the scriptures and not know that the call out, as it's called today, is a scriptural principle. So, yes, I believe in that. I believe that I am living in a place that will be a place of safety. This place where I am at was established by Mormon pioneers as a part of the Little Colorado Mission. Brigham Young sent Mormons from Utah down into this area. They followed the Little Colorado River up to it's headwaters where I'm at. I'm at the foot of the White Mountains. And it was a terrible life in the beginning. This area was filled with outlaws and thieves and the Mormons settled in here at the peril of their lives. The two communities I live in to this day are still separated by a hundred plus year old animosity that goes all the way back to outlaws and shepherders and cattlemen. The Mormons came in here and settled this area at great cost. I believe that when asked about a call out, I was ready to go out to Cabela's and spend some significant money on materials for bug out bags, tents, and everything else, because I believe in the call out principle. And yet when it came time to push the button and order the material we couldn't do it. We just didn't feel like it and eventually what happened was the spirit settled on us and said, "You live in a place where people will come to escape for their lives." And I believe that this place was sanctified by the turmoil, the sorrow, the travail, and the adversity of the early pioneers who settled here and that their children will reap the benefits of a safe place because of the sacrifice of their pioneer fathers. I believe that there are places like that all throughout the country that have been made hallowed and sanctified. Will the Church issue a call out? I don't know. I believe there is a call out going on right now. I believe the spirit of the Lord is hovering over men and women, moms and dads, and their families and inspiring them to do certain things to prepare for the events that are sure to come. Some of those things that they're being inspired to do is to move and to sell what they have and to move to places. I know people personally and others as a result of podcasts that have shared their stories with me that 'we've up and moved without knowing where we were going'. Like Nephi in 1 Nephi 4, he goes up over the walls of Jerusalem: "I was led by the spirit not knowing beforehand where I should go". That's happening now. So whether there will be a membership-wide call out as a result of instructions given by the President of the Church, I don't know and frankly, it doesn't matter to me. What matters to me more, brothers and sisters, is that we live so close to the spirit that we sanctify ourselves. That we live so close to the spirit of the Lord that that spirit will instruct us in every detail as to what we should do, where we should go, and we don't have to worry because it won't be the philosophies of men mingled with scripture. It won't be what one person thinks might happen or how they interpret the scriptures. Your move will be guided by the spirit through personal revelation and that is always pure and it is always right. It is never wrong.

So it kind of leads me to what this is all about. I was reading this week, I wanted to share one other thing. I was reading the story of Jonah and I thought about how Jonah was called to go to Nineva. Now Nineva, at the time of Jonah's call, in the 7th century, was the biggest and the most sophisticated city on the face of the earth. It was established by the great hunter of men, Nimrod. So it is closely associated with where the Tower of Babel was and all of that area which would be today's modern day Iraq. Well, Jonah lived down there, Jonah who was of the tribe of Zebulun, lived down by the Sea of Galilee area. He was called by the Lord to go and prophesy the destruction of Nineva. Now it's interesting that Jewish tradition says that Jonah was the son of the widow Zaraphath, whose son was raised from the dead by Elijah the Prophet. Isn't that an interesting thing? That's a Jewish tradition. So, Elijah who raised up this son, if this is true, this is the man who is now called on a prophetic mission to go to Nineva, the largest pagan city, capitol of wickedness in the world and to try to get them to repent. You all know the story. He went out there and fulfilled his mission and they repented. And as a result, here's the thing, Jonah's mission forestalled the destruction of God's people by 100 years. It bought them 100 years. I'm wondering, have we had some time purchased for us with the election of

Donald Trump? Have the American people sufficiently repented that God will give them some extra time? I don't know, just some things to think about. But Jonah's mission to the Assyrians bought Israel and the covenant people of the Lord, 100 years. Roughly 100 years before they slipped into wickedness and the Assyrians came down and destroyed them and carried them away into captivity. Just some musings I'm having on this.

So, this week, as I was studying the scriptures, I came to this scripture I want to talk to you about tonight. Let's go to 1 Thessalonians 5 in your Bible. We'll just tie some things together. I've been following a lot of preparedness sites. I've belonged to "Another Voice of Warning" for about 11 years. I'm one of the old timers there. I'm a lurker. I don't participate much, but I have picked up material from that site that has blessed my life. So, I've watched these sites and there are other's I have perused over the years and there's a lot of anxiety in them right now. A lot of concern, a lot of people talking about the dreams and visions that people have had. Like I said, I've read all three of those books. I've read all of Roger Young's books, I've read so many books. I've got a library here on all of these kinds of things and I want to take you into a little different direction tonight. I'd like us to be anxious, but not frenzied. I get a feeling of frenzy as I read the preparedness sites from the LDS. The reason that there's this feeling of frenzy is that too many of us have not received the truth and taken the Holy Spirit for our guide. So we are relying on everything that is in print, and that's a lot in the information age and the day of the internet. We are relying on what's happening to others, what others are seeing in their dreams, what others are experiencing in their visions, what others are interpreting from the scriptures to mean. I just kind of think we need to back away a little bit, take a deep breath. I'm not saying relax, because I think we are in a period of jeopardy and seriousness like we've never been, ever in the history of the world. But let's back off and take a different look at things. Let's go to 1 Thessalonians 5 and I want to start right in verse one with you. 1: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you". (Paul is talking now about the signs and times and seasons of time leading up to the second coming.) 2: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night".

Now this was written roughly between 65 AD and 70 AD. This was written before the Jewish, before the apocalypse of the Roman Army destroying the Jewish nation in 70 AD with follow up destruction 7 years later. So Paul is talking about the second coming, our day, and the times and the seasons that lead up to that. Notice vs. 2. This is where Roger Young gets the title of his book from, A Thief in the Night. Now there's a difference between a thief and a robber. It's an interesting little thing you want to look at. A robber always confronts you face to face, takes what you've got, usually with bodily harm. You're usually injured, if not killed by a robber. A thief comes when you're asleep and you remain asleep and he just takes everything you've got. We think He's going to come at midnight, and that could be, when it's the darkest, when we are in our deepest sleep. Look at verse 3: "For when they" (that's those people living at this time) "shall say" (here's your two key words), "Peace and safety;"

Now that's what I want you to look at, those two words you ought to circle. When the thief comes in the night, it will come at a time when most people are saying; finally we have peace and finally we are safe. A lot of the dreams, visions, a lot of these things point towards a couple of things that I find interesting and the spirit has whispered to me that these are two areas to look to. My own personal feelings are that when it talks about peace we can also put in there prosperity. Even though it's not mentioned, prosperity comes at a time of peace and safety. That's one of the fruits of peace and safety: it's prosperity. You look at the stock market and you'll see it is at an all time high, and just seems to be going up. They call it the Trump bump. People are singing the good old days again, "happy days are here again". A lot of the dreams and visions have pointed out that the collapse, an economic collapse, would take place at a time when the markets were high. We've never seen them higher than they are now. Another indicator of times when things start to fold up is a severe winter. Now, these have all been laid out. I find it interesting that here in Round Valley, where I live at about 7,200 feet, we're have the coldest November and December that we've had in years. It gets cold up here, but it's never been cold like this in November and December. So, are we looking at that winter? Is the stock market an indicator of these kinds of things? Kind of things to watch for. But again, not frenzied, just a quiet, quiet movement forward. Preparing quietly and orderly. Then notice what it says when they shall say "peace and safety": "then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (It comes and he draws a parallel about what it would be like when the water breaks on a woman. She's in the last stages of her labor and the child's coming.), "as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape". 4 "But ye, brethren" (now we break it into two groups of people. Here we go, the foolish and the wise virgins again.) "are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief".

We live in the information age and there's never been more written and more available about signs of the times and biblical and LDS interpretations than there are now. But I'm saying that you are in the darkness. Even in the midst of all that information, you remain in the darkness if you rely on others to interpret the events that are going on around you. That's the point of my lesson today. Notice what he says: "But ye, brethren are not in darkness, but that day shall overtake you as a thief". 5: "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day" (those two words you ought to circle, day light, those are words, the Lord has referred to as the day star. He is the Lord of Light. His voice is Light): "we are not of the night, nor of darkness". Verse 6: "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others"

I'm gonna say that you are sleeping. One of the ways you're asleep is if you are accepting the philosophies of men, mingled with scripture. If you're following the uninspired dictates of others, instead of seeking for personal revelation for yourself and for your family and teaching your family to do the same thing, you are sleeping. Each one of us has to stop standing on borrowed light. We have to obtain revelation for ourself. I don't think that there has ever been a more critical time for that than now. "but let us watch and be sober". (Notice now that he pulls in an allegory: being drunken and sober). 7: "For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night". 8: "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation". 9: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath" (Did you catch that? If you're awake and you're preparing and receiving revelations and you're quietly going ahead with your preparations and not in a frenzied state and worried about this, that, and the other because you have received the truth and taken the Holy Spirit for your guide, you're not appointed to wrath. You'll get through the day that's coming. The Lord will take you, like Cyrus, by the right hand and lead you in every step of the way that you need to go.) "but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ".

Look at 11: "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do". Look at verse 14: "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men". Verse 17: "Pray without ceasing". Verse 19: (these are all that you do to qualify for personal revelation so that you can see what's coming with a clarity and have that comfort and peace that comes from those who abide in the spirit.) "Quench not the Spirit". 20: "Despise not prophesyings." Those are just some thoughts there.

Let's go to D&C 63 and let me show you a couple of other things here. I'm kind of rambling a little bit. Hope you'll forgive me and pick up what I am trying to say. Section 63 in the D&C is a section we don't look at as often as we should, but I'd like to go to section 63:5. He's talking about signs that are going to come. Look what it says: 5: "Behold, I, the Lord, utter my voice, and it shall be obeyed. 6: Wherefore, verily I say, let the wicked take heed, and let the rebellious fear and tremble; and let the unbelieving hold their lips, for the day of wrath shall come upon them as a whirlwind".

That's what we're looking at. That's what's coming in our day. Is it going to be an economic collapse that causes that? I personally believe that with a 20 trillion dollar debt, that the answer isn't in politics, but there has to be a reset. Notice what else he says: "that all flesh shall know that I am God. Verse 7: "And he that seeketh signs shall see signs, but not unto salvation". See, that's again relying on the arm of flesh. That's not faith, that's "I'll believe it when I see it"! Again, this is pointing us. We need to move in a different direction, Latter-day Saints. Especially those of us who are preppers. You need to move in a different direction and not rely upon the arms of flesh and interpretations of others. You need to seek for and obtain revelation for yourself. Verse 9: "But, behold, faith cometh not by signs, but signs follow those that believe". Then it talks about these signs. Let's go over to verse 29. We have a charge ahead of us that no other people on the face of the earth have ever had. That is to establish a society of Zion that will be in place when the Lord comes. The Lord of Lords, and King of Kings has to come to a people that are Lords and Kings. You have to come to a society of priesthood kings and queens. You can't be the King of Kings if there aren't any Kings for you to be King over. And that has to be done with a zion society.

Verse 29: "Wherefore, the land of Zion shall not be obtained but by purchase or by blood" (This was in the day when the Lord was telling members of the church to purchase up lands for their inheritance. Which they did. Notice the bottom of verse 29) "otherwise there is none inheritance for you". So, Zion is going to be obtained by one way or another way, by either purchase or by blood. Now they purchased it and the interesting thing is, the deeds to the original purchases of land, many of those deeds of trust, which are legal documents, still remain in the hands of family descendants of the original purchasers. There are people in this church that hold deeds of land to areas in and around Kansas City and Independence, Missouri. They have legal deeds. It will be interesting to see what they are going to do with those things.

Verse 30: "And if by purchase, behold you are blessed". This is what they tried to do. They purchased the land and then they were driven out of it at the point of a bayonet and took their deeds of purchase with them, which are still held by the family. 31: "And if by blood" (and that's the way it's going to be in our day. I believe that the purchase of the lands of inheritance will be reassigned, will come back into their possession, not by purchase again but by blood.) "as you are forbidden to shed blood, lo, your enemies are upon you, and ye shall be scourged from city to city, and from synagogue to synagogue, and but" (right here) "few shall stand to receive an inheritance". Now that has a double prophesy that has a prophetic fulfillment in the early days in the history of the church, when they were driven out of Jackson County, Missouri. Interesting, at the time this was given was when they're in Kirtland, Ohio and you have two church headquarters. You had the headquarters of the church in Kirtland, where Joseph resides at that time, and you have a second headquarters of the church in Jackson County. Well, they were not successful. They were driven out of the state by an extermination order. You know the history. And were called out of Missouri and moved up into Illinois and were called out of Illinois and moved into Mexico. Now, this double prophesy, where we talked about early days, there

were “few that shall stand to receive an inheritance”, and there were, because they were driven right out of the country. But I’ll tell you also, that in a future day, because of the whirlwind that verse 29 talks about, because of that whirlwind, few will be able to stand to receive an inheritance. There will be a few, that’s your key. I want you to circle that word “few”. That’s the word the Lord uses to describe the remnant that He is going to use to start the process of a society wide Zion people.

Verse 32: “I, the Lord, am angry with the wicked; I am holding my Spirit from the inhabitants of the earth”. You know what happens when he does that? When He withdraws His spirit...you saw what happened when He withdrew His spirit from the Nephites. The Lord said; “My spirit won’t always strive with man, neither will I that man should take happiness in sin”. Are we coming into that point? It appears like we’ve been able to buy a little time. Have we been able to buy a little time? Or between now and January 20th will we see an assassination of the chief High Priest, chief judge, i.e. President of the United States? I fear about that. I worry about that. I worry that the Gadiantons, don’t think for a minute that they’ve gone away, they are behind closed doors and secret chambers plotting how they can turn around this defeat that they’ve suffered, a historical, world wide, political defeat. How they can turn it around and regain their power? We’re not out of this at all, by any means. Yet, I hope that we’ve bought a little bit of time.

Then it goes on and says, verse 33: “I have sworn in my wrath, and decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man”. Vs.34 (watch) “And the saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.”

Well, these are just some thoughts, brothers and sisters. You know, if you want to have an interesting experience go on YouTube and look up Dan Rather’s video called “Lights Out”. Watch that and read what it is. It has to do with what would happen if there was a cyber attack on the grid or what if there was an electromagnetic pulse. A cyber attack is more likely than the electromagnetic pulse, in my mind. Dan Rather did a year or so work on this. He wrote a book called “Lights Out” and you can see a little video of some news conferences that he held on what would happen if the lights went out in the United States. If we had a prolonged grid failure nation-wide for 30 days, it’s estimated that 30 million people would be dead. A million people a day.

I remember my mom and dad lived through the depression and as I was working on being prepared I’d go to them and say; “What happened here and what was the circumstances here?” My mom came from Goshen, Utah and my dad was from Salt Lake. So, one was on a farm in rural Utah and the other one was up in the city. Up in the city they felt the pains of the great depression. Down in the rural areas they hardly knew it was even going on, other than the fact that hobo’s and transients were moving from coast to coast looking for work, looking for something to eat. So I talked to my mom and dad a lot about this and my dad told me, “If we were ever to have, if we ever lose the electricity, think about this for just a minute, look how interconnected we are, and this is what Dan Rather in Lights Out points out. If the power were to go out, the greatest (according to Homeland Security), whoever is in charge of national defense, the number one thing that could jeopardize our country is not an attack from foreign invaders. It’s not even a nuclear attack. It’s a hack on the grid where we lose the power. If that were to be prolonged, it would literally put us back in time 200 years. So, based on what my mom and dad said, growing up in the depression, I went online and I got the plans from the WPA, which was a Roosevelt work project during the depression, and they built outhouses. So, I got plans for an outhouse and I built an outhouse. I have an outhouse on my property and I have it on skids so that it can be moved from one hole to another. Open up the door, and inside is a nice oak seat. I asked my mom about this. I’ve never built an outhouse and never hardly used one. She said, “Well, what you want to do is you measure it and you’re sitting on the throne and you can put your feet out and your knees don’t hit the door. You can put your feet out and dangle your feet and move them back and forth. You’ve got the right distance from the door to where the seat is”. Now, that’s valuable information from people who went through the depression. I have a bucket in there filled full of corn cobs and it’s kind of a joke to show the distance between my kids, this generation, and my mom and dad’s kids. I’d open that up and they’d say, “What’s in that grandpa?” “Come over here and let me show you.” Open it up and they can recognize it, “that’s a toilet”. “Yeah, but what’s that white bucket over there with all those corn cobs in it?” And then I tell them, “That is what those were used for before you had a Montgomery Ward or a Sears catalogue. And if you were too poor to have those two books in there for toilet paper, you used those corn cobs and that’s where the saying “rougher than a cob” comes from. Anyway, I had some fun with that. I’ve taken and used every available square inch of my property. I’ve got turkeys and rabbits and chickens, and have horses available. I used to own horses, but I haven’t got any horses now, since I’ve been home from missions, but I’ve got availability to horses and we’re just set to go. If the lights go out we’re OK. Got a well that will provide water, got a solar system; if the whole house went off the grid I have a solar system. So, I’m a believer in these kinds of things. But rather than follow the promptings of others, which I have done in the past, I’m now leaning more towards when I pray, I ask my Father in Heaven in a special way with upraised hands, “Father, what’s coming that I need to know so that I can be prepared for me, my family, and for those that will seek refuge and safety in a time when things become very difficult?” Which I believe we are on the cusp of.

Back to Zion. We've talked about this in the past. It appears that Zion people are not going to voluntarily, very much voluntarily humble themselves. It appears like, instead of voluntary humility, we're going to experience compelled humility, which reverses pride. Think about voluntary humility while there is still time. Those of us who still have jobs, still have a nice home, have food, clothing, and shelter, who could still sense the urgency and the need to be about preparing, the most important preparation you can make is to sanctify yourselves. I remember in a seminary and institute inservice, we were discussing, "What's the most important thing we can do for our students"? And one of the institute teachers said, "The most important thing you can do for yourselves, for your students, and for anybody you come in contact with, is to sanctify yourself". Now, in reality, you can't sanctify yourself. All you can do is put yourself in a position where you receive light and knowledge and truth, and that sanctifies you.

Well brothers and sisters, I guess what I'm trying to say today, and lets go over to section 103 of the D&C as we wrap it up here. D&C 103:12 is talking about Zion: "For after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing". That former commandment, Section 101:13 says, "Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren—your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren, even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more" (this part) "to be thrown down". Now that was never done in Joseph's day! That's our day! So this whole thing in section 103 is talking about us.

14: "Nevertheless, if they pollute their inheritances they shall be thrown down; for I will not spare them if they pollute their inheritances". They did and that's why they were driven out of their inheritances. Verse 15: "Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;" That's the only way it's going to happen. It's going to happen by one man and one woman at a time, who have power in their priesthood, who have the ministry of angels, who have the visitation of just men made perfect, who have beings from the city of Enoch who are sent to prepare them. Who have free and open intercourse with the general assembly of the Church of the First Born, and have met the Lord face to face: Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. That's the power it's going to take to redeem Zion.

Verse 16: "Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel. Go down to verse 21: "Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant" (that seems to indicate and this ties to "Visions of Glory" that the prophet Joseph Smith is going to make his appearance again at a future day. Now we're going to have the leadership of Joseph once again.)

Verse 17: "For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye" (this is us, now) "must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm". Look at your footnote on 17c, and you'll see that it says "physical bondage". Here's the pattern, as the children of Israel were in Egyptian bondage so we can look to be in a captivity/bondage in the future for a period of time. This is why Alma in the Book of Alma talks about two groups: Limhi and his group and Alma and his group, both under Lamanite captivity. It shows what one group did that tried to escape by their own means, using their own intellect, with the strength of their own arm, and they lost most of the population of their men. You had Alma and his people, who thoroughly trusted in the Lord, and were delivered by miraculous means and didn't lose one person. We're going to have a chance to practice that in a future day. We are going to lose our freedoms for a period of time. There will be invaders on American soil. We will go into captivity for a short period. The Assyrian from the north will come down. So all of those things.

Verse 18: "And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be". With all of this captivity, there will also be mighty miracles, miracles that will eclipse anything that has happened in the past. Therefore, verse 19: "Therefore, let not your hearts faint", (Isn't that interesting. We're going to go into captivity, we're going into bondage, but the Lord says don't let your hearts faint.) "for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence". That's what happened in ancient times. The Lord withdrew Himself because they rejected him at Sinai and he sent down the Angel of the Lord to guide them in the wilderness. It was an Aaronic Priesthood guidance. But look in verse 20, in our day, "But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land".

Look at verse 26: "And my presence shall be with you even in avenging me of mine enemies, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me". So, we are moving into a marvelous day. Will you be a part of that? As long as we are in a frenzy and seeking to interpret what others interpret instead of seeking for our own guidance through the Holy Spirit to us individually, unless we do that, we'll be susceptible to anxiety, a lack of peace, and there will be a frenziedness about us in our preparations.

I pray that we'll prepare under the direction of the Holy Spirit and be like Nephi of old as he leads his brothers outside the gates to go over the walls into the ancient city of David to find the brass plates. He said: "and I was led beforehand by the spirit, not knowing the way I should go". That's our example. God bless us to seek for and obtain a greater outpouring of the spirit of the Lord, to have a greater companionship of the Holy Ghost, to sanctify us and to testify to us, teaching us of the things we need to know in this world preparatory to our encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ as the second comforter. God bless you all and thank you.