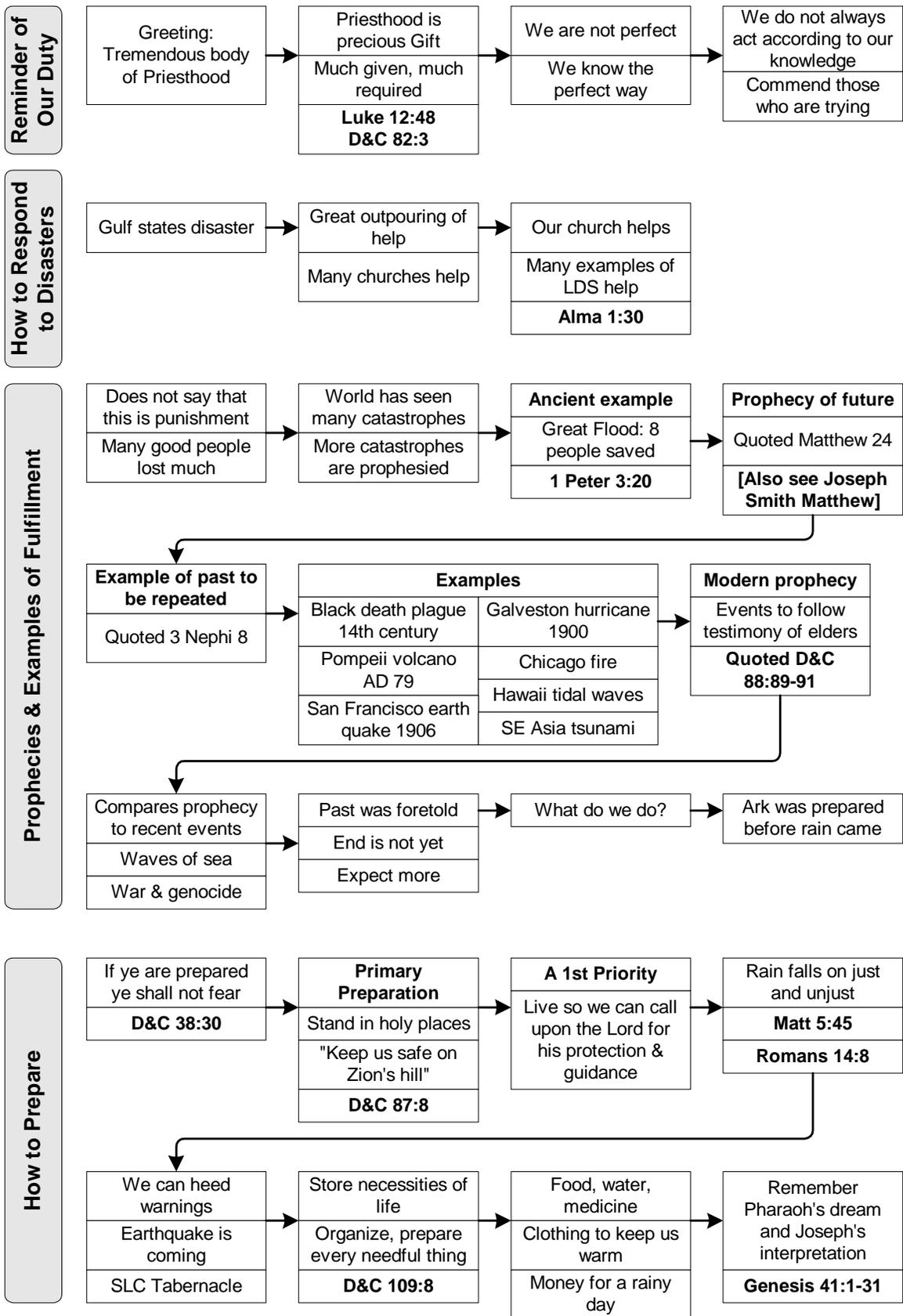


Outline Diagram of Priesthood Session Talk By President Gordon B. Hinckley, October 2005



If Ye Are Prepared Ye Shall Not Fear

Full Text of Talk

President Gordon B. Hinckley

General Conference – Priesthood Session – October 2005

We can so live that we can call upon the Lord for His protection and guidance. . . . We cannot expect His help if we are unwilling to keep His commandments.

My dear brethren of the priesthood, wherever you may be across this broad world—what a tremendous body you have become, men and boys of every race and kindred, all a part of the family of God.

How precious is His gift to us. He has given to us a portion of that which is His divine authority, the eternal priesthood, the power by which He brings to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. It follows that when much has been given to us much is required of us (see Luke 12:48; D&C 82:3).

I know that we are not perfect men. We know the perfect way, but we do not always act according to our knowledge. But I think that for the most part we are trying. We are trying to be the kind of men our Father would have us be. That is a very high objective, and I commend all of you who are trying to reach it. May the Lord bless you as you seek to live exemplary lives in every respect.

Now, as all of us are aware, the Gulf States area of the United States has recently suffered terribly from raging winds and waters. Many have lost all they had. The damage has been astronomical. Literally millions have suffered. Fear and worry have gripped the hearts of many. Lives have been lost.

With all of this, there has been a great outpouring of help. Hearts have been softened. Homes have been opened. Critics love to talk about the failures of Christianity. Any such should take a look at what the churches have done in these circumstances. Those of many denominations have accomplished wonders. And far from the least among these has been our own Church. Great numbers of our men have traveled considerable distances, bringing with them tools and tents and radiant hope. Men of the priesthood have given thousands upon thousands of hours in the work of rehabilitation. There have been three and four thousand at a time. There are some there tonight. We cannot say enough of thanks to them. Please know of our gratitude, of our love, and of our prayers in your behalf.

Two of our Area Seventies, Brother John Anderson, who resides in Florida, and Brother Stanley Ellis, who lives in Texas, have directed much of this effort. But they would be the first to say that the credit belongs to the great numbers of men and boys who have given assistance. Many have worn shirts that say "Mormon Helping Hands." They have won the love and respect of those they have assisted. Their assistance has gone not only to members of the Church in trouble, but to great numbers of those concerning whom no religious affiliation has been made.

They have followed the pattern of the Nephites as recorded in the book of Alma: "They did not send away any who were naked, or that were hungry, or that were athirst, or that were sick, or that had not been nourished; and they did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect to persons as to those who stood in need" (Alma 1:30).

Women and girls in many parts of the Church have rendered a Herculean effort in providing hygiene and cleaning kits by the tens of thousands. The Church has provided equipment, food, water, and comfort.

We have contributed substantial amounts of money to the Red Cross and other agencies. We have given millions from fast offerings and humanitarian funds. To every one of you I say thanks in behalf of your beneficiaries and thanks in behalf of the Church.

Now, I do not say, and I repeat emphatically that I do not say or infer, that what has happened is the punishment of the Lord. Many good people, including some of our faithful Latter-day Saints, are among those who have suffered. Having said this, I do not hesitate to say that this old world is no stranger to calamities and catastrophes. Those of us who read and believe the scriptures are aware of the warnings of prophets concerning catastrophes that have come to pass and are yet to come to pass.

There was the great Flood, when waters covered the earth and when, as Peter says, only "eight souls were saved" (1 Peter 3:20).

If anyone has any doubt concerning the terrible things that can and will afflict mankind, let him read the 24th chapter of Matthew. Among other things the Lord says: "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. . . .

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

"All these are the beginning of sorrows. . . .

"And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! . . .

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24:6–8, 19, 21–22).

In the Book of Mormon we read of unimaginable destruction in the Western Hemisphere at the time of the Savior's death in Jerusalem. Again I quote:

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"And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land.

"And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder.

"And there were exceedingly sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land.

"And the city of Zarahemla did take fire.

"And the city of Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof were drowned.

"And the earth was carried up upon the city of Moronihah, that in the place of the city there became a great mountain. . . .

". . . The whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempest and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings and the lightnings, and the exceedingly great quaking of the whole earth;

"And the highways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough.

"And many great and notable cities were sunk, and many were burned, and many were shaken till the buildings thereof had fallen to the earth, and the inhabitants thereof were slain, and the places were left desolate" (3 Nephi 8:5–10, 12–14).

What a terrible catastrophe that must have been.

The plague or Black Death of the fourteenth century took millions of lives. Other pandemic diseases, such as smallpox, have brought untold suffering and death through the centuries.

In the year A.D. 79 the great city of Pompeii was destroyed when Mount Vesuvius erupted.

Chicago was ravaged by a terrible fire. Tidal waves have swamped areas of Hawaii. The San Francisco earthquake in 1906 ruined the city and took some 3,000 lives. The hurricane that hit Galveston, Texas, in 1900 killed 8,000. And more recently, as you know, has been the terrible tsunami of Southeast Asia, where thousands of lives were lost and where relief efforts are still needed.

How portentous are the words of revelation found in the 88th section of the Doctrine and Covenants concerning the calamities that should befall after the testimonies of the elders. The Lord says:

"For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.

"And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.

"And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people" (D&C 88:89–91).

How interesting are descriptions of the tsunami and the recent hurricanes in terms of the language of this revelation, which says, "The voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds."

Man's inhumanity to man expressed in past and present conflict has and continues to bring unspeakable suffering. In the Darfur region of Sudan, tens of thousands have been killed and well over a million have been left homeless.

What we have experienced in the past was all foretold, and the end is not yet. Just as there have been calamities in the past, we expect more in the future. What do we do?

Someone has said it was not raining when Noah built the ark. But he built it, and the rains came.

The Lord has said, "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30).

The primary preparation is also set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants, wherein it says, "Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come" (D&C 87:8).

We sing the song:

*When the earth begins to tremble,
Bid our fearful thoughts be still;
When thy judgments spread destruction,
Keep us safe on Zion's hill.*

("Guide Us, O Thou Great Jehovah," *Hymns*, no. 83)

We can so live that we can call upon the Lord for His protection and guidance. This is a first priority. We cannot expect His help if we are unwilling to keep His commandments. We in this Church have evidence enough of the penalties of disobedience in the examples of both the Jaredite and the Nephite nations. Each went from glory to utter destruction because of wickedness.

We know, of course, that the rain falls on the just as well as the unjust (see Matthew 5:45). But even though the just die they are not lost, but are saved through the Atonement of the Redeemer. Paul wrote to the Romans, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord" (Romans 14:8).

We can heed warnings. We have been told that many had been given concerning the vulnerability of New

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Orleans. We are told by seismologists that the Salt Lake Valley is a potential earthquake zone. This is the primary reason that we are extensively renovating the Tabernacle on Temple Square. This historic and remarkable building must be made to withstand the shaking of the earth.

We 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.

Now what I have said should not occasion a run on the grocery store or anything of that kind. I am saying nothing that has not been said for a very long time.

Let us never lose sight of the dream of Pharaoh concerning the fat cattle and the lean, the full ears of corn, and the blasted ears; the meaning of which was interpreted by Joseph to indicate years of plenty and years of scarcity (see Genesis 41:1–36).

I have faith, my dear brethren, that the Lord will bless us, and watch over us, and assist us if we walk in obedience to His light, His gospel, and His commandments. He is our Father and our God, and we are His children, and we must be in every way deserving of His love and concern. That we may do so is my humble prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Context Scriptures

In addition to the long passages of scriptures President Hinckley quoted, he also referred to several others. These are those other scriptures, along with the verses before and after them which seem to be applicable. These give a fuller picture or meaning to the single verses mentioned. The comments in square brackets are mine.

Luke 12:48 (35-56)

35 Let your loins be girded about, and [your] lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed [are] those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find [them] so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom [his] lord shall make ruler over his household, to give [them their] portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed [is] that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for [him], and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not [himself], neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many [stripes].

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few [stripes]. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

49 I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

[The Great Division]

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51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

54 ¶ And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when [ye see] the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 [Ye] hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

D&C 82:3 (1-10)

1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, my servants, that inasmuch as you have forgiven one another your trespasses, even so I, the Lord, forgive you.

[You have sinned. Repent. I gave you commandments to save you. If you disobey, you have no promise.]

2 Nevertheless, there are those among you who have sinned exceedingly; yea, even all of you have sinned; but verily I say unto you, beware from henceforth, and refrain from sin, lest sore judgments fall upon your heads.

3 For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation.

4 Ye call upon my name for revelations, and I give them unto you; and inasmuch as ye keep not my sayings, which I give unto you, ye become transgressors; and justice and judgment are the penalty which is affixed unto my law.

5 Therefore, what I say unto one I say unto all: Watch, for the adversary spreadeth his dominions, and darkness reigneth;

6 And the anger of God kindleth against the inhabitants of the earth; and none doeth good, for all have gone out of the way.

7 And now, verily I say unto you, I, the Lord, will not lay any sin to your charge; go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God.

8 And again, I say unto you, I give unto you a new commandment, that you may understand my will concerning you;

9 Or, in other words, I give unto you directions how you may act before me, that it may turn to you for your salvation.

10 I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.

Alma 1:30 (28-32)

28 And thus they did establish the affairs of the church; and thus they began to have continual peace again, notwithstanding all their persecutions.

29 And now, because of the steadiness of the church they began to be exceedingly rich, having abundance of all things whatsoever they stood in need--an abundance of flocks and herds, and fatlings of every kind, and also abundance of grain, and of gold, and of silver, and of precious things, and abundance of silk and fine-twined linen, and all manner of good homely cloth.

30 And thus, in their prosperous circumstances, they did not send away any who were naked, or that were hungry, or that were athirst, or that were sick, or that had not been nourished; and they did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect to persons as to those who stood in need.

31 And thus they did prosper and become far more wealthy than those who did not belong to their church.

32 For those who did not belong to their church did indulge themselves in sorceries, and in idolatry or idleness, and in babblings, and in envyings and strife; wearing costly apparel; being lifted up in the pride of their own eyes; persecuting, lying, thieving, robbing, committing whoredoms, and murdering, and all manner of wickedness; nevertheless, the law was put in force upon all those who did transgress it, inasmuch as it was possible.

1 Peter 3:20 (20-21)

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

21 ¶ The like figure whereunto [even] baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

[They followed the prophet. Baptism can save us, if we are true to it. (done at 8 years, 8 = new beginning)]

D&C 38:30 (27-31)

27 Behold, this I have given unto you as a parable, and it is even as I am. I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine.

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28 And again, I say unto you that the enemy in the secret chambers seeketh your lives.

29 Ye hear of wars in far countries, and you say that there will soon be great wars in far countries, but ye know not the hearts of men in your own land.

30 I tell you these things because of your prayers; wherefore, treasure up wisdom in your bosoms, lest the wickedness of men reveal these things unto you by their wickedness, in a manner which shall speak in your ears with a voice louder than that which shall shake the earth; but if ye are prepared ye shall not fear.

31 And that ye might escape the power of the enemy, and be gathered unto me a righteous people, without spot and blameless—

D&C 87:8 (1-8)

1 Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls;

2 And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at this place.

3 For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon other nations, in order to defend themselves against other nations; and then war shall be poured out upon all nations.

4 And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.

[Ex-communists? Who?]

5 And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.

[Lamanites]

6 And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;

7 That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies.

8 Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen.

Matthew 5:45 (43-48)

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others]? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Romans 14:8 (8-14)

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, [As] I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in [his] brother's way.

D&C 109:8

8 Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing, and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God;

[Dedication of the Kirtland temple. Should we be dedicating our own houses to the Lord?]

Genesis 41:1-31

[If the prophet thought it important enough to mention Pharaoh's dream and Joseph's interpretation in 1998, 2001, and 2005, it's probably important to read and remember it.]