

He Restoreth My Soul
Apex Stake Women's Conference
February 23, 2019

Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are EDIFIED and REJOICE together. D&C 50:22

But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. AND SISTERS! Luke 22:32 (Christ is talking to Peter- this is after telling him that Satan wants him- to sift him as wheat.) I just texted this scripture to my family last week. As mother, I want my children to help each other in every way!

And upon these I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children. (2 Nephi 4:15- Lehi is speaking to his grandkids before his death)

Now, we will compare the word unto a seed. Now, if ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold, if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold, it will begin to swell within your breasts; and when you feel these swelling motions, ye will begin to say within yourselves—It must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the word is good, for it beginneth to enlarge my soul; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, yea, it beginneth to be delicious to me. Alma 32:28

How have the scriptures shaped and molded your life?

What scriptures have been a bedrock to your testimony?

Which scriptures have been a lifeline through difficult times?

Our Father in Heaven understood that for us to make desired progress during our mortal probation, we would need to face difficult challenges. Some of these would be almost overpowering. He provided tools to help us be successful in our mortal probation. One set of those tools is the scriptures.- Richard G. Scott

I grew up in the church and recall family scripture study (it was boring). I had fabulous seminary teachers who helped me really enjoy the scriptures. At one point I had the opportunity to meet Ardeth Kapp in SLC, at the time she was the General YW's president. She had the most beautiful burgundy mini quad. That is what I told my parents I wanted for seminary graduation. What I forgot to tell them was what color I wanted. My mom has always loved brown- so I got brown scriptures. HOWEVER, over the years, I grew to love those little brown scriptures. They are my friends. They fit perfectly in my fanny pack when I was on study abroad, they came with me on my mission to Guatemala and kept me company for many years after. I love thumbing through them and seeing what I underlined and especially what I had written along the margins. They are a treasure for me.

In preparation for today I messaged and emailed friends and family- certain women- whom I admire and who inspire me. I asked them to share with me a scripture that helped them through a particularly challenging time and what was happening in their lives. I am indebted to them. They again reminded me of precious truths.

I don't necessarily have one major event, but lots of little events that involve the scriptures. They are my friends. Years ago, I started to write in the margins of my scriptures, things I learned in classes, and if someone wrote me a letter and mentioned a scripture, I would write their name and the year to the side of the verse or verses. Thumbng through them, brings all of those back to memory. I have in my possession my seminary scriptures. They went with me to Ricks College and my first years in Provo. Mom insisted that I have a new set for the mission. I didn't want a new set, I liked having my old ones already marked. It was probably for the best, because new things stood out. The triple has a little child's scribbles on the introductory page, where I was trying to keep a short person distracted while my companion taught a lesson to her

Mom. I have markings from my own study, and from zone conferences and other missionaries thoughts that were shared over that time. They went with me through all of the single ward days. John Bytheway taught SS then and I have markings from his classes. He was a fabulous teacher even then! Then my sister and brother-in-law gave me a little mini quad. I got called to teach Gospel Doctrine, and the study from that time and season show up in that set. In the back of it I glued the Proclamation to the Family, and there are a couple of pages of quotes from Apostles and Prophets that are modern day scripture to me. I love them all. Now I listen or read on my phone. It's a different time again. A couple of weeks ago, in SS, a question came up and I picked up my little quad and went looking, because I knew where to look for an answer. Thumbing through the scriptures brings back lessons I have learned, like little drops of oil to prepare me for when the bridegroom cometh.

NW

Maybe some of you can relate to this- I certainly can. I love the part where she says, "The scriptures are my friends." In his talk, "the power of scripture," which is really such a beautiful talk (watch it, read it, listen to it) said, "They can become stalwart friends that are not limited by geography or calendar. They are always available when needed. Their use provides a foundation of truth that can be awakened by the Holy Ghost. Learning, pondering, searching, and memorizing scriptures is like filling a filing cabinet with friends, values, and truths that can be called upon anytime, anywhere in the world."

I want to tell you about my dear friend, Rose. Rose was diagnosed with bone cancer in her leg when she was about 10 years old. After they got rid of the cancer-and they had to cut it out of the bone, the doctors used a series of cages to help grow the bone in the affected leg. This means that she had a metal contraption that was screwed into the bone and little by little they would lengthen the bone. (see Ilizarov apparatus) You can imagine that his might be really hard for anyone!

I can't remember what age I was but I must of been around 15? I remember spending a lot of time in bed because I had a new frame on my leg which was being a bit of a hassle and when I

was sitting, I was only comfortable in bed so I spent my days in my room. Growing up, my parents had always managed to read scriptures with us every evening and I used to fall asleep during their long discussions on a regular basis because there would be so many debates (so fun but after an hour....SNORE!) the scriptures felt like a security blanket to me though, no matter how badly the day had gone or squabbles happening at home, those feelings all left when we sat together to read the scriptures, and since then I've recognised them as something to bring "peace during a storm".

Anyways, I'm 15, I have no friends, my favourite brother just moved to Scotland, I've got a massive heap of metal poking my leg uncomfortably which means I don't sleep and I'm no longer able to play with the new puppy we got.... I needed peace amongst all the chaos that was life so I straight away felt compelled towards the scriptures. I threw myself into the scriptures, I took all my frustrations out on the Lord, I tried to make a plan for my future in order to have goals I could work towards, but my goals needed to stay so small at the time with my leg impacting every area of my life, even my studies (you'd think spending all day in bed I would catch up on homework!) but I was either sleep deprived or on heavy medication, so my perfect ideal goal, of going to university to study something incredibly interesting, was very daunting because I could only manage getting average grades, which would all just frustrate me further. Back to the point... I felt the best use of my time and effort was to study the gospel. It would always leave me feeling better, stronger and loved, there was always a great sense of love I felt when reading the scriptures, and I would be able to help lift others around me with my "guru" knowledge of gospel so I thought it was an obvious win win situation, helping myself and others. The Book of Mormon is where I always felt most at home. Still do. But that's where I focused most of my studies, so many passages of scriptures jumped out at me on a daily basis for different reasons, I think because I was so willingly receptive at that time in my life.

Helaman 5:12, if you build your foundation on Christ, you cannot fall, despite the mighty winds and storms that beat upon you... When I read this scripture it had a massive impact on me because it was literally putting into words what I felt on a day to day basis.

I felt incredibly alone in life, sad at school and unhappy with the amount my body was able to do, and the limitations it put on me for the rest of my life, etc etc. I felt like those parts of my life were the winds and storms the scriptures spoke about. I also recognised that the peace I felt reading the scriptures and praying, was me building that foundation making me stronger and that's why I started feeling so much more resilient to what I was going through, I was able to smile and mean it, and be happy despite the storms that we encounter in life.

That scripture stayed with me for such a long time as my favourite, along with Mosiah 2:41 "consider the blessed and happy state of those who keep the commandments"... because that was the thing that continually restored my soul, the happiness and the security I felt through the gospel, in knowing my Saviour and in knowing He loves me. I didn't have a lot to be happy about in life, it felt like a struggle to concentrate on the fact you have a roof over your head, and food on the table etc. (very few 15 yr olds feel grateful for such things) but through the gospel I felt like I had an endless store of good feelings which I needed to dip into when I was having a bad day at school, felt invisible at a regionals (youth) dance thinking no guy is ever going to like me. I've dipped into that store of good feelings constantly for the last 15 years, not always knowingly, and it has never run dry.

RM

So I have three favourite scriptures the first Joshua 1:9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

I always loved this because with God, we need not fear and have known this from a young teenager. However, as I have gotten older and been faced with many difficult stepping stones rather than stumbling blocks (so a few trials) I have found that reading my scriptures brings me peace and comfort and helps me find answers to my questions. Now, don't get it twisted, I don't read a verse and all of a sudden my problem is fixed but after reflecting and taking my time to try my best and maybe try to apply what I have learnt from the scriptures. So these two scriptures have helped me through (and continue to do so) the toughest time in my life. My wonderful, fabulous, kind mother passed away after an 8 year fight with Breast Cancer. How blessed my family and I were to be in her presence for such a short time. These scriptures are as follows D&C 121:7 My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment. Oh my goodness thank goodness for this scripture 🙏🙏 I wouldn't have survived without knowing this. These trials that seem so great right now will pass and things will improve. Keep the faith. The only way we can hold on to this though is we use Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. The Lord is aware of you all and through prayer and scripture study you will feel closer to him. I'm grateful for the scriptures but in particular for the three I've shared with you all today.

AT

Children/Family/Choices

One of my favorite scriptures is 2 Nephi 32:3 (most are in the first books of Nephi, because I have read them more times than any other books). **3** Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do. I have an amazing son who has gone through many trials including cancer, brain surgery, 4 sinus surgeries and on and on. He has a father who says all the right things but does very few of them. My son reached a point about a year and a half ago where he was very angry....with God, life, everything. He has left the church and has made some choices that have caused him heartache and me too as I can't take away consequences for the choices he is making. I love him so fiercely and fought so hard to keep him alive. I am grateful every day he is here with me. However, as his mom I am at a loss for how to help him and even how to have a conversation with him. This scripture reminded me that the scriptures hold answers. Sometimes I pray for help but forget to seek the scriptures for those answers. I often wish God could just send me an email cuz I'm not so smart at figuring out what he is trying to tell me, but alas he wants me to learn and grow. This scripture reminds me "the words of Christ will tell you all things which ye should do." And following up in verse 5 it tells me "if ye will enter in by the way and receive the Holy Ghost it will show unto you all things what ye should do." So if I am doing the things I need to be doing I will have the peace in my heart and be able to see his struggles and respond to him lovingly and kindly. However, when I am slacking- our relationship struggles. So the best way I can help my son is to follow God's son and keep the Holy Ghost to guide me in my actions towards my sweet son that was His son first.

MY

Alma 32:26-27

26 Now, as I said concerning faith—that it was not a perfect knowledge—even so it is with my words. Ye cannot know of their surety at first, unto perfection, any more than faith is a perfect knowledge.

27 But behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words.

I grew up LDS, but for many reasons, I left in my teen years. After I graduated college I found myself really lost. It was my little sister, Abigail's birthday, maybe her 11th, and I asked her what she wanted for her birthday. She said she wanted me to come to church with her. I did. I wish I could say there was an instant epiphany, but there wasn't. There was enough though that I decided to read the book of Mormon for the first time all the way through. I was about 23 years old. It moved me. I found it beautiful, and haunting, and I loved it. It still wasn't enough to convince me that everything was true immediately though and so I was back and forth in two worlds for a while, just unable to figure out what I believed. At some point, I was feeling really

confused, and I began to read the book of Mormon again. This time trying to find truth. I remember reading the above scripture and it just hit me powerfully. Almost like a physical jolt. I don't know if I'd been hoping for an angel or something to just sit on my bed next to me and just neatly present me with a pre packaged testimony that yep, you believe, you're good, but this showed me that I'd approached it all wrong. I realised I had a strong desire to know once and for all, and so I figured I'd just start to experiment. I thought, let's see what happens if I start praying every day. Or what would happen if I changed some of my bad habits. Etc etc. I had some pretty strong addictions to break. Slowly, my life changed. I repented. I cleaned up my act. And the rest, as they say, is history. It's been nearly 15 years and I still fall back on that scripture when something throws me off, or when I feel overwhelmed by new changes in church. Faith always comes slowly to me and takes effort. But I figure it out.

EN

The scripture that keeps coming to my mind is a simple one.

Isaiah 1:18 "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow."

This is the epitome of the Atonement. Through the miracle of the Atonement, we can all be made whole. When we sin, or when we are wronged, we need to either repent or forgive. Both take something away from us. If we do wrong, we carry guilt, remorse, unhappiness, and other unsatisfying emotions. If we choose not to forgive, we carry anger and hurt and essentially carry an extra undesired burden. I have been in a situation where I was in the position of being wronged. I had to forgive for the betterment of my family. It was really hard-the hardest thing I've ever had to do. Flashbacks of memories, sad times, and the betrayal wouldn't leave my soul. I kept wondering how the Savior could truly forgive and if the person who wronged could truly change. And that was it...I didn't trust the change part. However, as I watched this person truly dedicate him/herself to the Savior, I saw the miracle of change. This person went from anger towards the church and pridefulness to a spirit of humility and appreciation for the gospel. This person truly changed and I had the blessing of being able to witness it. That's the true miracle of it all...that even though I had been wronged, the Savior's promise of making wrong things right rang true every step of the way. There is no wrong that the Savior can't fix. President Uchtdorf has been quoted as saying that it doesn't matter how many times we fall; it's how we get up that counts. Forgiving someone also makes you gospel focused and can strengthen testimonies and heal wounds. I've witnessed families who leave the gospel and how they've had to handle storms; without the Savior's hand, withering massive storms becomes a dire task and often the families sink. I'm grateful for the hand that the Savior has provided in my life and in my family's life. It is because of Him that my burdens have been lifted. True change is a true miracle.

MM

Many years ago, on the 4th of July, my mom sicked my dad on me and he asked me what I should be doing (I was 22 at the time). I told him I knew I should go on a mission, but I didn't want to. His classic response was, "What has that got to do with anything." He told me to go home and talk with my Heavenly Father about what he wanted me to do, and then make an

appointment with my Bishop and go from there. I recall the next morning, at my apartment, I read my scriptures, and then prayed, and while still on my knees, I continued to read. The end of the chapter I was in, was Alma 30:60.

60 And thus we see the end of him who perverteth the ways of the Lord; and thus we see that the devil will not support his children at the last day, but doth speedily drag them down to hell.

I didn't want Satan to speedily drag me down to hell, and I believe that I did call and make an appointment with the Bishop later that day. I just opened the scriptures to that page. After I put my glasses on so I could see, I have written on that page, in reference to Alma 31:5 And now, as the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God., a quote by Boyd K Packer , “True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior. The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior.”

NW

Courage

This is a scripture that was shared at a devotional I attended at Ricks college during my time there in 1990-1992. I've gone back to it many times. It was during a time when I was away from home for the first time at college in Idaho and I was homesick and lonely at times and confused as I was making choices that ultimately would affect the rest of my life. Things were not always easy and this scripture gave me comfort.

Mosiah 24:14-15

14 And I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.

15 And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord.

The speaker shared how instead of praying for a lighter burden we need to pray for a stronger

back and a cheerful heart to strengthen our backs so that we can bear these burdens with ease and strengthen us that we can carry them.

As I left the comfort of America almost 5 years ago in 2014 and struggled to adjust and learn and grow in a different country. I remembered these words to help get me through difficult times.

Since returning home 2.5 years ago, I've lost my father to cancer, my brother to suicide and a sister-in-law to breast cancer. I also had a hysterectomy last March. It has been an incredibly rough couple of years for me and I don't think I could've made it through it all without the gospel. With words such as these from Mosiah that remind us that the Lord is mindful of us and there to help ease our burdens and strengthen us so that we can carry them that they may be light. Challenges and problems will continue to be a part of this journey in life but how incredibly grateful I am for the words of the scriptures and the restored gospel to help us through until we have endured to the end.

AB

1) When I had my twins (and already had a toddler), a good friend of mine gave me a picture that simply said, "I can do hard things." I'm not sure which came first, this saying or the talk by Elaine S. Dalton. (See also Alma 20:4...I know, in the strength of the Lord thou canst do all things.) It hangs in my kitchen and I used to look at it sometimes multiple times a day amidst diaper changes, feedings and long nights. It has always been a re-affirming reminder that I have been given what I can handle for whatever stage of life I'm in.

2) 1 Nephi 11:17 And I said unto him: I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things.

Our family (like many) has navigated heartache and left us wanting or needing to understand the "why's" and pose many "what if's". Through a good friend's suicide and his wife's corresponding accident and recovery, our friendship with her and her family has fostered deep roots. It's given me perspective and gratitude for daughters with bad hair days, the wrong outfit or just emotions; while these moments aren't the funnest, both they and I are here to experience them together.

I feel it in my bones that my so-called trials are just starting. My faith in Heavenly Father can't be based on "why's or the how's" but knowing that I'm loved.

HW

Scriptures are like packets of light that illuminate our minds and give place to guidance and inspiration from on high. They can become the key to open the channel to communion with our Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

Richard G. Scott

One scripture that comes to mind is 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." As an innate and helpless worrier, this scripture has comforted me many many times. It helps to remember to choose faith over fear and trust that Heavenly Father has a plan for me. President Hinckley has a really good talk on choosing faith over fear: (God Has Not Given Us the Spirit of Fear, Ensign, Oct. 1984) This past summer when I had to have a medical procedure done, I felt A LOT of stress and anxiety about anything and everything. Comparatively, my surgery seemed like no big deal, but when I had a minute to sit and think about it, my mind would wander to all of the "what-ifs." I found myself constantly reminding myself to choose faith over fear, in reference to this scripture and President Hinckley's talk. By choosing to have faith in Heavenly Father's plan and the motto "in the end everything will be okay, and if it's not okay then it's not the end" I was able to find peace of mind and comfort when I felt like I really needed it.

KB

(I love this next story- Ivana is originally from Slovakia and she writes just likes she speaks. I love it and didn't want to change a thing!)

This story is about God that he indeed is always a God of miracles and when we do our best he does the rest .

1 Nephi 3:7 I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.

I love Heavenly Father with all my heart and am so grateful for all the blessings in my life, also for times of trials which are so hard but make us develop stronger faith in him and our Savior.

....So ...once upon a time I was baptized in England where I had very good job and not long after I was prompted by the Spirit to move back home to Slovakia where church was very small. I moved to the capital city and found a job as a teacher and it was private school. After some time I developed a desire to serve a full time mission but money was bit of a problem because most of my salary I used was to cover my bills, food and necessities of life. So I couldn't really save to go on my mission. One day I discovered that my boss was dishonest with all the parents in the school and lied about many things including finances. I had no choice but to confront her about it and to my surprise she didn't feel bad about it at all but said to me I either will keep silent about it and lie in front of all the parents in school or I am fired!!! So I guess you know the answer! I could not lie and was fired immediately that day. I remember on the way home walking with a heavy heart. I knew the decision I made was right but now I had no job, no money to pay bills etc and most importantly I had no money for my mission. The road home seemed soooo long! But after I got home a miracle happened! I got a random phone call from my former employer in England telling me she would love for me to come back to work for her. I said am not sure as I am planning to go on a mission so I would not know for how long I can work for her again and to my shocking surprise all things worked for my good!!! She told me I can stay for her as long as I want and when mission call comes in I can just go on my mission. And she promised to even sponsor me on my mission! And she

was not even a member of our church. I could not believe my ears! What a miracle!!! Exact promise in 1 Nephi 3:7! I ended up serving my full time mission in England 😊 Birmingham mission and I will be forever grateful for her and all the other people that supported me. I know God is a God of miracles.
IL

One of the scriptures I love is in Alma 37:36-37

36 Yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever.

37 Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day.

These particular scriptures helped me when my dad was diagnosed with cancer. I went to visit him and he was sleeping. The nurse called me out and said the doctor wanted to talk to me. Of course the alarm bells started ringing. I felt like I was having an outer body experience as the doctor told me that “time was short” I had to be the one to tell my family the news. My home was a 15 minute walk from the hospital. As I walked home tears rolling down my face, I prayed for strength and courage to get through this trial. I’d already lost my mother and I wasn’t LDS when that happened. I knew I’d grieve for my dad but was so worried that the adversary would ultimately get to me. I prayed the whole walk home and realized I didn’t pray for my dad to get better, I’d prayed that I wouldn’t waiver and that I could stay strong for him as I knew even with me working I’d be his main carer. When I got home I called my family to gather them all to tell them the news. As I waited for them to come, I saw my scriptures on the table. I decided to just open up a page and prayed for a scripture that would help me stay strong. The scripture I shared now is what it opened to.

That experience changed me so much. I prayed like never before and throughout my dad’s illness, I felt the Lord close by. I barely got any sleep but I never got sick and I was never tired. My faith strengthened during this time. My dad didn’t make a miraculous recovery, but I came to realize that with God all things are possible. I had some amazing experiences that have solidified my testimony. God is good and he knows me and what I need.

BA

Blessings

My favorite scripture is D&C 78:17-19. **17** Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye are little children, and ye have not as yet understood how great blessings the Father hath in his own hands and prepared for you;

18 And ye cannot bear all things now; nevertheless, be of good cheer, for I will lead you along. The kingdom is yours and the blessings thereof are yours, and the riches of eternity are yours.

19 And he who receiveth all things with thankfulness shall be made glorious; and the things of this earth shall be added unto him, even an hundred fold, yea, more.

I believe this scripture took a new meaning for me long ago when my broken engagement left me sad and confused about life. Since then though, it has been my go-to for comfort and understanding about things that just don't make sense. My patriarchal blessing is very short (only 4 paragraphs) and I like to think of these verses as an addendum to it. I especially love verse 19. It's hard to be thankful for all things but when considering our gratitude brings us blessings "even an hundred fold, yea more" give me so much hope and comfort.

LH

John 14:26-27

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Background in brief. Two young friends (me and Orla, my friend) studying for our first diploma in law (prior to law degree) it was unusual for legal secretaries/paralegal at the time to get study leave etc from the office where we worked so we were pushing boundaries and I felt a sense of nervousness about being good enough for the exams etc. I didn't want to let myself or the firm down having got their backing. It was only one week and exam days but it was a milestone!! At that time I had just met missionaries and was not that interested or at least cautiously interested but worried about how I would fit into such a new life. Anyway the missionaries knew only that we were studying and promised us that if we did our bit and study, God would do as the scriptures said and bring things into our remembrance! We attended different exam centres but

we agreed at 9am we would both say a little prayer in the way the missionaries had taught us just before the exam. We looked around and grinned madly to ourselves like two lunatics!!! We were the only ones smiling in the exam room. We had complete confidence that we would be ok whatever our results. Papers were good and we both got high scores. In fact I think I got an A in company law which is very hard to get (different grading in Ireland) and I haven't got one since!!! Better again was the conversation we had about how relaxed and uplifted we felt going into tough enough exams with the lord on our side! We did remember the things we had studied and that helped us with the grade. But the peace we felt before, during and after the exam was purely from our Father in Heaven. It was a very strong testimony building moment for me.

Whenever I have struggles with gospel doctrine or doubts about church, I remember that peaceful feeling I felt in a busy new aspect of my life. I would not say it was hardship or trouble but it was different and I am not great with change! My strongest testimony of all is the comfort and guidance of the Holy Ghost. It is my rod of iron. I have been prompted so many times when things are not quite right or I need to contact someone for no reason I know and in general I have seen afterwards why. I have learned to follow the promptings most of the time but sometimes I still delay. I am so grateful for the peace the Gospel has brought to my life and for all of the many blessings that have stemmed from my testimony of the Holy Ghost.

GT

Hold to the rod, the iron rod;
'Tis strong, and bright, and true.
The iron rod is the word of God;
'Twill safely guide us through.

Hymns, p. 274

Health/ Tragedy

A few years ago my younger sister, Shannon, who appeared to be healthy, was mowing her lawn in the heat of a Texas summer day. She came inside and told my niece she was hot and going to lay down for a bit. My niece later found her not breathing. Shannon had had a heart attack. After getting her to the hospital and having numerous tests run, it was determined that

she had been without oxygen for an extended amount of time. The doctors recommendation was to turn off the machines and let her pass. This idea was horrifying to her 6 children. Their ages ranged from 19 to 30 so were old enough to make the decisions pertaining to her health.. they didn't need everyone else to tell them what to do! Long story short: I told them of the plan of salvation...they couldn't comprehend that.

Poor Shannon languished for 4 months while she was kept alive.

The children couldn't imagine how "my God" could let this happen to their mom. It was a very sad time for us all. My nieces and nephews were mad at me but this scripture brought me peace.

Doctrine and Covenants 42:45

"Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die, and more especially for those that have no hope for a glorious resurrection."

I have done this weeping for my sister and her children but stayed in contact with those who are still living. I want to have a relationship with them....my sister would have wanted that from me.

And my prayer is that when we all meet again it will be a happy reunion for all of us.

CC

Background information- My dear friend's son, Parker was 8 months old when he contracted meningitis. For a while, the doctors didn't think that he would survive. Although Parker has many challenges, he is now a very active, inquisitive, darling 10 year old boy.

When Parker was sick, it was stories of others and their scriptures they shared with us. I had a strange incapacity to understand written word for awhile I was in so much shock. Interestingly, Heavenly Father (& His messengers) knew that in order to reach me, it would be in a different way. I heard songs constantly. Strangely on the radio or just I my head or even in the grocery store. It happened hundreds of times over months. I would get a message sent to me and knew it exactly was for me. It was incredible. I drove him to therapies kind of far for years. There was a song I listened to on repeat. "Be still my soul" By Mindy Gledhill. It was balm for my aching soul.

RH

Another backstory- our friend Jeff had a massive heart attack and died at a very young age- he wasn't 40 yet. He had 3 young kids between the ages of 4 and 10.

Here's what I realized from when my husband, Jeff died.....One scripture won't get you through. When you are totally depleted in every way; when your faith is totally stripped away and you are left wondering what you truly believe and if you truly can do what lies ahead one scripture doesn't do it. You don't have the energy to do anything but possibly keep trying for this specific moment in time. The only thing that gets you through is how you prepared before the trauma. It's about the little drops of oil that you consistently added to your lamp before (when things were oh so great) so that when the rains and winds are blowing hard in your life you have enough during that terrible time to keep the flame flickering but alive. Then, through the pure grit of trying and the exercise (and it's hard HIIT training exercise) of faith, your soul is restored and you are strengthened. But you are not suddenly strong enough to handle things. It is gradual and hard work and ebbs and flows and you don't even realize (or at least I don't because I'm not good at being grateful or noticing things - it's something I need to work on more - I'll add it to my list) where you are from where you started but gradually you begin to start adding oil back into your lamp and now know how precious each drop of oil is.

LM

A Lifetime of Scriptures

Great power can come from memorizing scriptures. To memorize a scripture is to forge a new friendship. It is like discovering a new individual who can help in time of need, give inspiration and comfort, and be a source of motivation for needed change.

Richard G. Scott

I don't have a particular scripture. Different ones help at different times. Two things make the scriptures work for me:

(1) Regular daily reading. If I'm focused, I can find something every morning to help set me in place for the day.

(2) Memorizing. There are a number I have committed to memory (and a lot I knew once but have forgotten). Saying the words slowly, out loud or in my mind, brings the Spirit and calms me. One of the

most sustaining "scriptures" is The Living Christ. It is always powerful. Just reciting it draws me closer to Him.

SS

Suggestions for improving your study of the scriptures:

- Pray before you read.
- Know how YOU hear the Holy Ghost speak to you.
- Take the TIME to study/read the scriptures.

General Conference and other Powerful Talks:

- THE POWER OF SCRIPTURE- Richard G. Scott, October 2011
<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/10/the-power-of-scripture?lang=eng>
- MY HEART PONDERETH THEM CONTINUALLY- Devin G. Durrant, October 2015
www.lds.org/general-conference/2015/10/my-heart-pondereth-them-continually?lang=eng
- TURN TO HIM AND ANSWERS WILL COME- James B. Martino, October 2015
www.lds.org/general-conference/2015/10/turn-to-him-and-answers-will-come?lang=eng
- WILL YOU ENGAGE IN THE STRUGGLE- Sheri Dew, BYU- Idaho Devotional
www.byui.edu/devotionals/sheri-dew
- GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US THE SPIRIT OF FEAR- Gordon B. Hinckley, Oct 1984, Ensign
www.lds.org/study/ensign/1984/10/god-hath-not-given-us-the-spirit-of-fear?lang=eng