

Personal Preparation to Meet the Savior

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Tapenaga Patino e Feiloai ma le Faaola

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O Le Korama a Aposetolo e Toasefululua

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Follow the Savior's teachings. His instructions are neither mysterious nor complex. When we follow them, we do not need to fear or be anxious.

My dear brothers and sisters, last October, President Russell M. Nelson taught, “Now is the time for you and for me to prepare for the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ.” When President Nelson speaks about the Second Coming, it is always with joyful optimism. However, a girl in Primary recently told me that she becomes anxious whenever the Second Coming is mentioned. She said, “I’m scared because bad things are going to happen before Jesus comes again.”

It is not just children who may feel this way. The best advice for her, for you, and for me is to follow the Savior’s teachings. His instructions are neither mysterious nor complex. When we follow them, we do not need to fear or be anxious.

Toward the end of His mortal ministry, Jesus Christ was asked when He would come again. In answering, He taught three parables, recorded in Matthew 25, about how to prepare to meet Him—whether at His Second Coming or whenever we leave this world. These teachings are crucial because personal preparation to meet Him is central to life’s purpose.

The Savior first told the parable of the ten virgins. In this parable, ten virgins went to a wedding feast. Five wisely brought oil to fill their lamps, and five foolishly did not. When the bridegroom’s imminent arrival was announced, the foolish virgins left to buy oil. When they returned, it was too late; the door to the feast was

Mulimuli i aoaoga a le Faaola. O Ana aoaoga e le o ni mea faalilolilo pe lavelave foi. A tatou mulimulita’ia, tatou te le tau fefefe pe atuatuvalet.

Ou uso e, ma tuafafine pele, ia Oketopa talu ai, na aoao mai ai Peresitene Russell M. Nelson, “O le taimi lava lenei mo oe, ma a’u, e saunia ai mo le Afio Mai Faalua o lo tatou Alii ma le Faaola, o Iesu le Keriso.” A saunoa Peresitene Nelson e uiga i le Afio Mai Faalua, e faia lava i taimi uma ma le olioli o le faamoemoe. Peitai, sa fai mai talu ai nei ia te au se teineitiiti o le Peraimeri, e popole lava o ia i soo se taimi e ta’ua ai le Afio Mai Faalua. Fai mai a ia, “Ou te fefe ona o le a tutupu mea leaga a o le’i toe afio mai Iesu.”

Ua le na o tamaiti e ono faapea o latou lagona. O le fautuaga sili mo ia, mo oe, ma mo a’u foi o le, ia mulimuli i aoaoga a le Faaola. O Ana aoaoga e le o ni mea faalilolilo pe lavelave foi. A tatou mulimulita’ia, tatou te le tau fefefe pe atuatuvalet.

I le aga atu i le faaiuga o Lana misiona faaletino, sa fesiligia ai Iesu Keriso pe o afea e toe afio mai ai. I le tali atu i ai, sa Ia aoao atu ai faataoto e tolu, o loo tusia i le Mataio 25, e uiga i le ala e tapena ai e feiloai ai ma Ia—pe i Lona Afio Mai Faalua pe o le a foi le taimi tatou te tuua ai lenei lalolagi. E taua nei aoaoga aua o tapenaga patino e feiloai ma Ia, e totonugalemu i le faamoemoega o le olaga.

Sa muamua faamatala e le Faaola le faataoto i taupou e toasefulu. I lea faataoto, sa o atu ai taupou e toasefulu i se tausamaaga o se faaiipoipoga. Na aumaia e le au popoto e toalima suauu e faatutumu ai a latou lamepa, ae toalima e valelea e le’i aumaia ni suauu. Ina ua mānu mai le taunuu mai sa tālia o le faatoafaiavā, sa o taupou valea e

shut.

Jesus identified three aspects of the parable to help us. He explained:

“And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.

“For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall ... abide the day.”

In other words, they did not need to fear or be anxious, because they would survive and prosper. They would prevail.

If we are wise, we receive the truth by accepting the gospel of Jesus Christ through priesthood ordinances and covenants. Next, we strive to remain worthy of having the Holy Ghost always with us. This capability must be acquired individually and personally, drop by drop. Consistent, personal, private acts of devotion invite the Holy Ghost to guide us.

The third element that Jesus highlighted is avoiding deception. The Savior warned:

“Take heed that no man deceive you.

“For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”

The Savior knew pretenders would try to deceive the very elect and that many disciples would be duped. We should neither believe those who falsely claim divine sanction nor venture into metaphorical deserts or secret chambers to be taught by counterfeits.

The Book of Mormon teaches us how we can differentiate deceivers from disciples. Disciples always promote believing in God, serving Him, and doing good. We will not be deceived when we seek and take counsel from trusted individuals who are themselves faithful disciples of the Savior.

We can also avoid deception by worshipping regularly in the temple. This helps us maintain an eternal perspective and protects us from influences that might distract or divert us from the covenant path.

The essential lesson of this parable of the

faatau suaau. Ina ua latou toefoi mai, sa tuai tele; ua tapunia le faitotoa i le tausamaaga.

Sa faailoa mai e Iesu itu e tolu o le faataoto e fesoasoani ai ia i tatou. Na ia faamatalaina mai:

“Ma i lena aso, pe a Ou alu atu i lo u mama-lu, o le a faataunuu ai le faataoto na Ou tautala atu ai e faataatau i taupou e toasefulu.

“Aua o i latou o e e popoto ma ua latou talia le upumoni, ma ua latou ave le Agaga Paia mo o latou taiala, ma sa lei faaseseina—e moni Ou te fai atu ia te outou, o le a gafatia le aso.”

I se isi faaupuga, sa lei moomia ona latou fefefe pe atuatuva le aua o le a latou ola ma manuia. O le a latou manumalo.

Afai tatou te popoto, tatou te maua le upumoni e ala i le taliaina o le talalelei a Iesu Keriso e ala i sauniga ma feagaiga faaleperisitua. O le isi, tatou te finafinau e tumau ma le agavaa mo le mauaina e le aunoa o le Agaga Paia e faatasi ma i tatou. O lea tomai e tataua ona mauaina e tagata taitoatasi ma le tagata lava ia, i lea matāua ma lea matāua. O faatinoga faifaipea, a le tagata lava ia, ma patino o le tuuto e valaaulia ai le Agaga Paia e taiala i tatou.

O le elemene lona tolu na faamamafa mai e Iesu o le aloese lea mai le faaseseina. Sa lapata'i mai le Faaola:

“Ia outou, nei faaseseina outou e se tasi.

“Aua e toatele o le a o mai i lo u igoa, ma faapea, o a u o Keriso; ma o le a faaseseina ai le toatele.”

Sa silafia e le Faaola o le a taumafai le 'au-faavalea e faasese le 'au filifilia ma e toatele le au soo o le a faavaleaina. E le tataua ona tatou talitonu ia i latou o ē fai mai o talitonuga ma faatinoga a se tagata ua faatagaina e se mana paia, pe ō i toafa faavaliata po o ni afeafe lilo e aoao mai ai i ni meataufaavalea.

Ua aoao mai i tatou e le Tusi a Mamona i le ala e mafai ai ona tatou iloa le eseese o le au taufaasese mai so'o. O so'o e faalauiloaina i taimi uma le talitonu i le Atua, auauna atu ia te Ia, ma faia mea lelei. O le a lē faaseseina i tatou pe a tatou saili ma talia fautuaga mai tagata faatuatua, o ni so'o faatuatua i latou lava o le Faaola.

E mafai foi ona tatou aloese mai le taufaasese e ala i le tapuai e le aunoa i totonu o le malumalu. E fesoasoani lea mea tatou te tausisia ai se vaaiga e faavavau ma puipua ai i tatou mai tosinaga e ono faalavelave ai pe tata'iese ai i tatou mai le ala o feagaiga.

O le lesona e tataua ai o lena faataoto i taupou

ten virgins is that we are wise when we accept the gospel, seek to have the Holy Ghost with us, and avoid deception. The five wise virgins could not help those without oil; no one can accept the gospel, take the Holy Ghost as a guide, and avoid deception on our behalf. We have to do this for ourselves.

The Savior then told the parable of the talents. In this parable, a man gave differing amounts of money, referred to as talents, to three servants. To one servant he gave five talents, to another he gave two, and to a third he gave one. Over time, the first two servants doubled what they had received. But the third servant simply buried his single talent. To both servants who had doubled their talents, the man said, “Well done, ... good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

The man then chided the servant who had buried his talent for being “wicked and slothful.” This servant’s talent was taken away, and he was banished. Yet, had this servant doubled his talent, he would have received the same commendation and reward as the other servants.

One message of this parable is that God expects us to magnify the abilities we have been given, but He does not want us to compare our abilities to those of others. Consider this insight provided by the 18th-century Hasidic scholar Zusya of Anipol. Zusya was a renowned teacher who began to fear as he approached death. His disciples asked, “Master, why do you tremble? You’ve lived a good life; surely God will grant you a great reward.”

Zusya said: “If God says to me, ‘Zusya, why were you not another Moses?’ I will say, ‘Because you didn’t give me the greatness of soul that you gave Moses.’ And if I stand before God and He says, ‘Zusya, why were you not another Solomon?’ I will say, ‘Because you didn’t give me the wisdom of Solomon.’ But, alas, what will I say if I stand before my Maker and He says, ‘Zusya, why were you not Zusya? Why were you not the man I gave you the capacity to be?’ Ah, that is why I tremble.”

Indeed, God will be disappointed if we do not rely upon the merits, mercy, and grace of

e toasefulu e faapea, tatou te popoto pe a tatou talia le talalelei, saili ia mafutaina i tatou e le Agaga Paia, ma aloese mai le faaseseina. Sa le mafai e taupou popoto e toalima ona fesoasoani ia i latou e leai ni suauu; e leai se tasi e mafai ona talia le talalelei, avea le Agaga Paia e fai ma taiala, ma aloese mai le faaseseina e fai ma sui mo i tatou. E tatau ona tatou faia lenei mea mo i tatou lava.

Ona faamatala mai lea e le Faaola o le faataoto i taleni. I le faataoto lenei, sa avatu ai e se alii le aofaiga eseese o tupe, o loo ta’ua faapea o taleni, i auauna e toatolu. I le tasi auauna sa ia tuuina i ai taleni e lima, i le isi na ia tuuina i ai le lua, ma i le lona tolu na ia tuu atu i ai le tasi. I le mavae ai o se taimi, sa faaluaina e le toalua muamua mea na la mauaina. Ae o le auauna lona tolu sa na ona tanumia lana taleni e tasi. I auauna e toalua na ta’ifaaluaina a la taleni, na fai atu i ai le alii, “Ua lelei ia, le auauna lelei e, ma le faamaoni: ua e faamaoni i nai mea iti, ou te tofia oe e pule i mea e tele: ina ulufale mai ia i le fafia o lou alii.”

Ona otegia lea e le alii le auauna na alu ma tanu lana taleni, i lona “leaga ma le paie.” Na aveesea le taleni a lenei auauna, ma sa faa’uunuu o ia. Ae, a na faapea na faaluaina e lenei auauna lana taleni, semanu na te maua le faamālō lava lea e tasi ma le tau i pei o isi auauna.

O le tasi savali o lenei faataoto e faapea, o loo faamoemoe le Atua ia tatou faalauteleina tomai na tuuina mai ia i tatou, ae e le finagalo o Ia tatou te faatusatusaina o tatou tomai i tomai o isi. Mafaufau i le malamalamaaga lenei na aumaia e le sikola o le Mau Faaiutaia o Zusya o Anipola, i le seneturi lona 18. O Zusya o se faiaoga iloga o lē sa amata ona fefe ina ua lata ina oti. Sa fesili ona soo, “Le matai e, aisea ua e gatete ai? Sa e ola i se olaga lelei; e mautinoa foi o le a avatu e le Atua ia te oe se tau i tele.”

Sa fai atu Zusya: “Afai e faapea mai le Atua ia te au, ‘Zusya, aisea na le avea ai oe o se isi Mose?’ O le a ou fai atu, ‘Ona e te le’i aumaia ia te au le agaga silisili na e avatu ia Mose.’ Ma afai ou te tu i luma o le Atua ma Ia faapea mai, ‘Zusya, aisea na le avea ai oe o se isi Solomona?’ O le a ou fai atu, ‘Ona e te le’i aumaia ia te au le poto o Solomona.’ Ae, talofa e, o le a sa’u tala e fai atu pe a ou tu i luma o le na faia a’u ma Ia fetalai mai, ‘Zusya, aisea na le avea ai oe o Zusya? Aisea na le avea ai oe ma tagata na ou avatu ia te oe le gafatia e avea ai?’ Oi, o le mafuaaga lena ua ou gatete ai.”

E moni, o le a le fafia le Atua pe afai tatou te le faalagolago i mana, alofamutimutivale, ma

the Savior to magnify the God-given abilities we have received. With His loving assistance, He expects us to become the best version of ourselves. That we may start with differing abilities is irrelevant to Him. And it should be to us.

Finally, the Savior told the parable of the sheep and goats. When He returns in His glory, “before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.”

Those on His right became heirs in His kingdom, and those on His left received no inheritance. The distinguishing characteristic was whether they fed Him when He was hungry, gave Him drink when He was thirsty, housed Him when He was a stranger, clothed Him when He was naked, and visited Him when He was sick or imprisoned.

Everyone was perplexed, both those on the right hand and those on the left hand. They asked when they had, or when they had not, given Him food, drink, and clothing or helped Him when He was vulnerable. In response, the Savior said, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

The message of the parable is clear: when we serve others, we serve God; when we don't, we disappoint. He expects us to use our gifts, talents, and abilities to bless the lives of Heavenly Father's children. The divine impulse to serve others is illustrated in a poem written in the 19th century by the Finnish poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg. My siblings and I repeatedly heard the poem “Farmer Paavo” throughout our childhoods. In the poem, Paavo was a poor farmer who lived with his wife and children in the lake region of central Finland. Several years in a row, most of his crops were destroyed, whether through the runoff from the spring snowmelt, summer hailstorms, or an early autumn frost. Each time the meager harvest came in, the farmer's wife lamented, “Paavo, Paavo, you unfortunate old man, God has forsaken us.” Paavo, in turn, stoically said, “Mix bark with the rye flour to make bread so the children won't go hungry. I'll work harder to drain the marshy fields. God is testing us, but He will provide.”

le alofatunoa o le Faaola e faalatele ai tomā i tatou maua mai le Atua. Faatasi ai ma Lana fesoasoani alofa, ua faamoemoe o Ia ia avea i tatou ma le ituaiga silisili o i tatou lava. Ina ia tatou amata i tomā eseese e le talafeauga ia te Ia. Ae e tata ai ia i tatou.

Ma le mea mulimuli, na faamatala e le Faaola le faataoto i mamoe ma 'oti. Pe a toefoi o Ia i Lona mamalu, “e faapotopotoina foi i ona luma o nuu uma lava; ona tuueseeseina lea o i latou e ia, e pei o le leoleo mamoe ona tuueseeseina o mamoe ma oti: ma o le a ia tuu mamoe i lona itu taumatau, ae o 'oti i le itu agavale.”

O i latou i Lona itu taumatau e avea ma suli i Lona malo, ma i latou i Lona itu agavale e leai so latou tofi. O le uiga tulagaese o le, pe sa latou fafagaina o Ia ina ua fia taumafa o Ia, faainu ia te Ia ina ua fiainu o Ia, faaape o Ia i le fale a o avea o Ia ma tagata ese, faaofu ia te Ia ina ua leai ni Ona lavalava, sa asiasi foi ia te Ia ina ua ma'i pe faafalepuipuiina o Ia.

Sa fememea'i tagata uma, i latou uma sa i le itu taumatau ma i latou sa i le itu tauagavale. Sa latou fesili pe o anafea na latou faia ai, pe na latou le'i faia foi le avatu ia te ia o meaai, meainu, ma lavalava pe sa fesoasoani ia te Ia ina ua vaivai o Ia. I le tali atu i ai, na fetalai le Faaola, “E moni, ou te fai atu ia te outou, aua na faia e outou i le tasi o e aupito itiiti o ou uso nei, o au lea na outou faia i ai.”

E manino le savali a le faataoto: pe a tatou auauna atu i isi, ua tatou auauna atu i le Atua; a tatou le faia, ua tatou le faamalieleina. Ua faamoemoe o Ia tatou te faaagaina a tatou meaalofo, taleni, ma tomā e faamanuia ai olaga o fanau a le Tama Faalelagi. O le uunaiga paia e auauna atu i isi o loo faapupula mai i se solo na tusia i le seneturi lona 19 e le tusisolo Finelani o Johan Ludvig Runeberg. Na matou faalogo soo ma nai o'u tei i le solo e ta'ua o le “Faifaatoaga o Paavo” a o matou laiti. I le solo, o Paavo o se faifaatoaga mativa sa nonofo ma lona toalu ma le fanau i le itulagi o le vaituloto o Finelani tutotonu. I le tele o tausaga sosoo, o le tele o fua o lana faatoaga sa faatama'iaina, pe ala i le ōsaōsa o le kiona liusuavai mai le tautotogo, timu'aisa o le taumafanafana, po o se vave ufitia i le 'aisa o le tauāfu. O taimi taitasi na oo mai ai le selesalega itiiti, sa tagitu'i ai le avā a le faifaatoaga, “Paavo, Paavo, lou toaina lē manuia, ua tuulafoa'iina i tatou e le Atua.” I le tali atu o Paavo, na fai atu ma le faalēano, “Palu le pa'ulaau ma le falaoamata rai

Each time the crops were destroyed, Paavo directed his wife to double the amount of bark that she mixed into the flour to ward off starvation. He also worked harder, digging trenches to drain the ground and decrease his fields' susceptibility to a spring runoff and an early autumn frost.

After years of hardship, Paavo finally harvested a rich crop. His wife exulted, "Paavo, Paavo, these are happy times! It is time to throw away the bark, and bake bread made only with rye." But Paavo solemnly took his wife's hand and said, "Mix half the flour with bark, for our neighbor's fields have frosted over." Paavo sacrificed his and his family's bounty to help his devastated and destitute neighbor.

The lesson of the Savior's parable of the sheep and goats is that we are to use the gifts we have been given—time, talents, and blessings—to serve Heavenly Father's children, especially the most vulnerable and needy.

My invitation to the anxious Primary child I mentioned earlier, and to each of you, is to follow Jesus Christ and to trust the Holy Ghost as you would a cherished friend. Rely on those who love you and who love the Savior. Seek God's guidance to develop your unique abilities, and help others, even when it isn't easy. You will be ready to meet the Savior, and you can join President Nelson in being joyfully optimistic. In doing so, you help the world prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, and you will be blessed with sufficient hope to enter the rest and joy of the Lord, now and in the future.

As we sing in one of our new hymns:

Rejoice! And prepare for that day! ...

No one knows the day and hour when He will come again,

But He'll return as scriptures say; it will be a joyful day

When our beloved Savior comes again.

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

[rye] e fai ai falaoa ina ia aua ne'i fiaaai tamaiti. O le a ou galue malosi atu e faamātū laufanua faataufusi. O loo tofotofa i tatou e le Atua, ae o le a la saunia mea tatou te manaomia."

O taimi taitasi sa faatama'ia ai fua o le faatoaga, sa faatonu ai e Paavo lana avā e faaluaina le tele o le pa'u laau na te palua i le falaoamata e aveese ai le fiaaai. Sa galue malosi atu foi o ia, e eli alavai e faamātū ai le elele ma faaitiitia ai le afāina o ona fanua i le ōsaōsa o le 'aisa i le tautotogo ma se 'aisa e vave to'a i le tauāfu.

I le mavae ai o le tele o tausaga faigata, sa i'u ina selesele e Paavo se anoanoa'i o fua o le faatoaga. Sa alaga lana avā, "Paavo, Paavo, o taimi fiafia nei! Ua oo i le taimi e tia'i ai le pa'ulaau, ae tao falaoa e faaoga ai na o le rai [rye]." Ae sa tago atu Paavo ma le faamaoni i le lima o lana avā ma fai atu, "Palu le 'afa o le falaoamata ma le pa'ulaau, ona ua ufitia le fanua atoa o lo tatou tuaoi i le 'aisa." Sa ositaulagaina e Paavo le tamaoaiga o lona aiga e fesoasoani ai i lona tuaoi lofituina ma lē tagolima.

O le lesona o le faataoto a le Faaola i mamoe ma 'oti e faapea, e tataua ona tatou faaogaina meaalofo ua tuuina mai ia i tatou—o taimi, taleni, ma faamanuiaga—e auauna atu ai i fanau a le Tama Faalelagi, aemaise o i latou e sili ona vaivai ma manaomia le fesoasoani.

O la'u valaaulia i le tamaitiiti Peraimeri atuavale sa ou ta'ua muamua, ma outou taitoatasi o le, ia mulimuli ia Iesu Keriso ma ia faalagolago i le Agaga Paia e pei ona e faia i se uo faapelepele. Faalagolago ia i latou e alolofa ia te oe ma alolofa i le Faaola. Saili le taitaiga a le Atua e atina'e ai ou lava gafatia tulagaese, ma fesoasoani i isi, tusa lava pe le faigofie. O le a e saunia e feiloai ma le Faaola, ma mafai ona e auai faatasi ma Peresitene Nelson i le faamoemoe ma le olioli. O le faia o lea, ua e fesoasoani ai e tapena le lalolagi mo le Afio Mai Faalua o Iesu Keriso, ma o le a faamanuiaina oe i le faamoemoe ua lava e ulufale atu ai i le malologa ma le olioli o le Alii, i le taimi nei ma i le lumanai.

E pei ona tatou usuina i se tasi o a tatou viiga fou:

Olioli! Ma ia tapena mo lena aso! ...

E leai se tasi na te iloa le aso ma le taimi o le a toe afio mai ai o Ia,

Ae o le a toefo mai o Ia e pei ona fai mai tusitusiga paia; o le a avea o se aso olioli

Pe a toe afio mai lo tatou Faaola pele.

I le suafa o Iesu Keriso, amene.