



OCTOBER 2026 GENERAL CONFERENCE · SATURDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

“How Long Will It Be Ere They Believe Me?”

Elder Dale G. Renlund · Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Words to remember

- *“Neither are you, brothers and sisters; there is no asterisk excluding you from God’s richest blessings. If you think there is, take out a big eraser and obliterate that asterisk.”*
- *“We can trust the Lord, especially His promises. These promises apply to you.”*

In Elder Dale G. Renlund’s own words, from the talk.

Elder Dale G. Renlund of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles began in his former life as a cardiologist. In the late 1980s, Mr. Martin developed severe heart failure that even the most advanced medications couldn’t manage; he would die without a transplant. As he waited, mechanical pumps were implanted to keep him alive, and then his liver, kidneys, and lungs began to fail. A donor heart arrived and was transplanted, but it didn’t work well, leaving him worse. After a couple of days the situation seemed hopeless, and the team was preparing to withdraw life support. Then another donor heart became available, one considered marginal, that wouldn’t be used for any other recipient in the country. With Mrs. Martin’s consent, they performed a second transplant, and the marginal heart functioned beautifully. Within hours his organs began to recover and the pumps were removed.

Ten days later, the day before discharge, Dr. Renlund found him gripping his breakfast tray, clearly irritated. Through clenched teeth: “The oatmeal isn’t hot, and the milk isn’t cold!” For three weeks he had hovered near death, and now he was complaining about hospital food. Elder Renlund was gracious about it: after such an ordeal you use up all your coping coupons, and I don’t think anybody should be tortured with oatmeal. But in that moment Mr. Martin focused on the cold oatmeal in front of him and seemingly dismissed the miracle, losing sight of both where he had been and the promise the future now held.

We can fall into the same trap, especially when day-to-day challenges loom, focusing on the here and now and losing sight of where we’ve been and of God’s promises. It isn’t a modern problem. The Lord led Israel out of Egyptian slavery, saved them at the Red Sea, and provided food and water; even when they complained about a monotonous diet, He helped them. “They survived because of God’s miracles, yet they repeatedly focused on cold oatmeal.” As they overlooked His blessings and promises, their trust in God and in Moses eroded. At the edge of the promised land they were intimidated: “Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this

wilderness!” (Numbers 14:2). They assumed the past was better and the challenge too hard even for the Lord.

The Lord’s response: “How long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have [shown] among them?” (Numbers 14:11). In effect, “Why don’t they trust me? Despite all I have done, why won’t they believe me?” Yet He repeatedly reassured them of His constancy: “I will never break my covenant with you” (Judges 2:1). Perhaps, Elder Renlund suggested, you have been served more than your share of cold oatmeal, and have doubted God’s care, His willingness to succor you, or His capacity to keep His promises. He invites us to trust Him anyway.

The Savior told His disciples, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). “Jesus overcame the world; we do not have to do so ourselves.” When our faith centers on Him, He promises peace no matter our circumstances, and joy in our here and now through our covenant relationship with Him. Faith in Christ frees us because our hope rests on his faithfulness and righteousness, not our own. Lehi told his son, “Wherefore, I know that thou art redeemed, because of the righteousness of thy Redeemer” (2 Nephi 2:3). Jacob was good and faithful, but his righteousness was not the source of his redemption, and the same is true for us.

One purpose of the Book of Mormon is to show what great things the Lord hath done, that we may know His covenants that we are not cast off forever (title page). Moroni urges us to remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men and ponder it (Moroni 10:3). Remembering His goodness positions us to grasp the bigger picture and rely on His promises.

He shared a lesson from his younger sister Linda. Reading scriptural promises, she used to see a big asterisk saying they applied to everyone except Linda. Over the years she realized, “I am not extraordinary enough to warrant an exception. The blessings are promised to me too.” Linda is extraordinary, he said, but she is still no exception, and neither are we: “There is no asterisk excluding you from God’s richest blessings. If you think there is, take out a big eraser and obliterate that asterisk.”

Joseph Smith taught that Jesus Christ knows the situation of the living and the dead and has made ample provision for them according to their circumstances. “‘Ample provision’ means that all human circumstances are within the Savior’s redemptive reach.” His Atonement allowed the Father to give Him all power in heaven and earth, a power profoundly intimate and infinite beyond human comprehension. There is more than enough to cover any breach, need, or deficit for all of us, for each of us.

Considering all Christ has done, I don’t think we want him asking us, ‘How long will it be ere you believe me?’ Instead, remember all the times he’s inclined his ear to you, especially when confronted with cold oatmeal. With Moroni he declared that “The eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled” (Mormon 8:22). He quoted the hymn “Standing on the Promises”

and closed with his witness that God's "exceeding great and precious promises" are sure, and that by them we might be partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

Let's talk about it

What did this talk teach us about the Savior? What is one small thing our family can do this week?

Kid-friendly summary in our own words · Read or watch the full talk: [churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/21renlund](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/21renlund)