Harnessed Impulses

Or, Doubling Your Leadership Marshmallows

Let's think for a moment about two or three of the worst decisions we've ever made, the ones we'd most like to undo if we could. It's a painful exercise, but we can learn a lot from it.

Do you have your list of all-time bad decisions? It may be difficult for you to limit your list to just two or three. Start by thinking about major categories of bad decisions. One of those categories might be, "Hurtful words spoken thoughtlessly." Another could be, "Commitments made quickly, with too little information." Or, "Important things I should have done sooner."

Speed is often a common theme in bad decisions. Most of them stem from moving either too quickly or too slowly. Big mistakes tend to be a product of two opposite weaknesses; impulsiveness and procrastination.

In our personal lives we are often impulsive and lazy in roughly equal proportions. We are about as likely to procrastinate home or visiting teaching as I we are to buy the first thing we see, without shopping around.

But the balance tends to shift when we are in a formal leadership position, with people that report to us. When others are watching and depending on our decisions and actions, we are much more likely to err by acting quickly.

Probably, it's pride that tips the balance. A leader who fails to act is subject to immediate criticism. By contrast, an action taken quickly has at least two advantages for a leader who wants to appear strong. Ideally, the action will turn out to be right. But even if the quick decision is a bad one, in most cases it won't be immediately obvious. Thus, if a leader wants to appear effective, it is less risky to act quickly than it is to delay.

Natural impulsiveness

Impulsiveness is one of the great tests of our mortal existence. When our eternal spirits were placed in mortal bodies, our patience, whatever it may have been in the preexistence, seems to have dropped dramatically. Anyone who has cared for a newborn infant appreciates that reality. Yet it can also be observed in older children.

You can see childhood impulsiveness in experiments known as "The Marshmallow Test." The test was first conducted by Professor Walter Mischel in the late 1960s at Bing Nursery School, which is operated by Stanford University. The test is simple. A child is invited into a room with a chair and a table. On the table is a marshmallow. The child is told that he or she will be left alone with the marshmallow for fifteen minutes. They can eat the marshmallow if they want to. But if they wait for the full fifteen minutes, they will be given that marshmallow and also another one.

Individual reactions to The Marshmallow Test are often humorous, as seen in this video: http://www.ted.com/talks/joachim_de_posada_says_don_t_eat_the_marshmallow_yet?language=en#t-

235217. The original test at Bing Nursery School produced important findings. Not surprisingly, most of the children couldn't wait the full fifteen minutes for the extra marshmallow. The surprise, though, was what the test revealed about the importance of willpower, even in childhood. The children with the willpower to wait carried that trait with them into adulthood. Compared to the children who ate the marshmallow, they lived more successful lives, as measured by outcomes such as educational attainment and healthy body weights.

Studying the causes of our impulsiveness at close range can be very beneficial. Those causes seem to fall into two main categories. One is the desire for gratification, or some sort of immediate pleasure. The other is the opposite, a desire to avoid some immediate pain.

We see the first kind of impulsiveness in the Prodigal Son. He was destined to be a leader, like his father. But he couldn't wait to spend his inheritance, even though it would likely have grown larger had he been more patient. Quite possibly, he could have doubled his wealth, like the children in The Marshmallow Test.

A different kind of impulsiveness betrayed the servant who received just one talent from his lord. The servant knew that he was expected to double his talent, like those servants who received two and five talents. But he feared failure. He buried his lone talent, so as not to lose it. Yet in the end it was taken from him because of his slothfulness.

These two temptations, gratification and fear, are different and opposite. Yet they are rooted in the same source: our mortal minds and bodies. On the one hand, we have biological cravings for pleasures such as marshmallows and the approval of our peers. The Prodigal Son impulsively fell prey to these cravings. But we are also biologically programmed to fear and avoid pain. When this fear of pain is triggered, a fight-or-flight impulse grips us. Fearing to displease his Lord by failing to increase his talent, the recipient of the single talent buried it, effectively "flying" from the danger he perceived.

Emily and the Estate Battle

We often face these dual temptations to impulsiveness, the desire for gratification and the aversion to pain. Let's look at them in a modern parable, the Family Estate Battle case. You'll recall that Emily Morris, the youngest of four siblings, is facing terrible emotional pressure from her older brothers and her sister.

Tom and Steve are angry with their sister Sally. They believe that Sally has manipulated their recently deceased father, who left a large estate. While Sally was caring for their father in the last months of his life, he revised his will. Tom and Steve assume that the revision favors Sally, who has persistent health problems and is unemployed. Tom and Steve feel that this would be unfair to them and their children, who have expected a generous inheritance.

Emily is caught in the middle. Tom and Steve are threatening Emily to take their side; if she doesn't, they'll drag her into a grueling legal battle. Meanwhile, Sally is enticing Emily with an implied offer of money, almost a bribe. All three of them are pressing Emily to make a quick decision, before their father's new will is read.

Given what we know of human impulses, how would we advise Emily? It's notable that she is receiving both types of temptation to act impulsively. Sally is tempting her with gratification, in the form of money and emotional support. Tom and Steve are tempting her with fear, hoping that she'll effectively "flee" from it by giving in to their demands.

One of the first things Emily should do is recognize that she is in a leadership position. In fact, she is effectively the leader of her family, notwithstanding being the youngest. She seems to be the only one who is concerned about doing the right thing and helping the others, rather than advancing her own interests. In this respect, she is like Nephi and Joseph of Egypt. Though Emily is younger than her siblings, in this situation she has the spiritual qualifications and thus the responsibility to lead them.

Stand Still, Be Still

The best counsel for someone in Emily's situation may be to do nothing, at least for the moment. This counsel is given humorously by the White Rabbit in the animated movie "Alice in Wonderland." The rabbit carries a large pocket watch and is obsessed with being on time; he is always hurrying and worrying about being late. In an anxious moment he inverts a common prescription for action. He means to say, "Don't just stand there, do something." But in his state of anxious confusion he instead shouts at Alice, "Don't just do something, stand there."

In leadership situations such as Emily's, with contrary voices calling for immediate action, just standing there is often the right first decision. In fact, it is exactly the command the Lord gave to Moses and the Children of Israel at their moment of ultimate peril and fear. After confidently leaving Egypt following the Lord's humbling of Pharaoh by plagues, the Children of Israel were surprised and terrified to see the Egyptian army approaching their camp on the edge of the Red Sea.

Moses, though, was not surprised. Nor was he afraid. The Lord had told him to camp in that spot to make an important point to both the Egyptians and the Children of Israel. When they saw the Egyptians coming and complained to Moses, he told his people:

> Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.[i]

The theme of standing still and being still runs throughout the scriptures. The phrase, "Be still and know that I am God," appears in both the Old Testament and the Doctrine and Covenants.[ii] Significantly, the voice of the Holy Ghost is often described as a still small voice.[iii] This divine voice will always whisper peace, even when solutions to our problems aren't immediately clear.

Standing still and being still are hard tasks for everyone, but especially for leaders. When people are counting on us, we naturally want to act as quickly as possible. That's true even when our motives are entirely unselfish, when we're personally seeking neither gratification nor pain avoidance. Even if we have the strength to be patient ourselves, our hearts go out to those we lead. We're reluctant to keep them waiting in uncertain and perhaps painful circumstances.

It should help us to remember that Heavenly Father feels the same way, though immeasurably more intensely. His love for His children is infinite. Yet, as the scriptures and the history of the Church make clear, He sometimes challenges His saints to stand still and be still under the most painful conditions, even as they are laying down their lives. He can do this because He sees the end from the beginning. He knows that all suffering and disappointment is accounted for through the Savior's sacrifice and the Plan of Salvation.

It is also helpful to remember that Heavenly Father makes a great reputational sacrifice in leading this way. Even the most faithful of His children often struggle with the question, "Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?" Suffering can draw us closer to Heavenly Father if we allow it to, but a

large percentage of Heavenly Father's children see the suffering in the world and conclude that a benevolent god would not allow it. Lacking an eternal perspective and an appreciation of the Savior's infinite Atonement, they see the apparent unfairness of the world and refuse to have faith in a greater plan of happiness that can make things right. Thus, Heavenly Father's patience as a leader ironically causes many of His children to deny His leadership and even His existence.

Waiting for Others to Master Their Impulses

Emily will find it easier to be still and stand still if she keeps all of this in mind. The scriptures contain many stories about leaders who stood still in situations like hers. Nephi and Joseph did that. Both of them bravely preached hard messages to their older brothers. Both were threatened yet stood firm, even when their lives were imperiled. Standing still qualified them for the Lord's protection. It also gave their brethren time to repent and accept their leadership.

That's an important point for leaders of the kind the Lord needs. Suppressing impulsive actions does more than prevent leadership mistakes. It also accounts for the agency and the impulsiveness of those who are being led. Even when a leader knows the right action to take, the likely responses of others must be considered. None of us like being forced or hurried into a new course of action, even when we recognize that it may be right. Our natural reaction to leadership force is to fight or flee, to either resist the force or ignore it. That should be no surprise, given that everyone in this world chose to support the Plan of Salvation, which differed from Lucifer's plan in its guarantee of individual agency. We favored the Plan of Salvation not only because we trusted Heavenly Father and the Savior, but also because we valued agency.

Effective leaders respect agency, though it often requires them to wait. Sometimes it even requires them to suffer personally. On the voyage to the Promised Land, Nephi chose to remain bound to the mast of the ship he had built, even though he had previously freed himself from his brother's bands with a simple prayer.[iv] In the court of Pharaoh, Joseph waited for his brothers to demonstrate their repentance before reuniting himself with his father in Egypt. Both of these great prophets patiently suffered for the sake of those they led.

Many other familiar scripture stories teach the importance of leadership patience. For example the parable of the Prodigal Son not only provides powerful insight into the repentance process, it also illuminates the Divine patience that allows the wayward to repent and choose to follow righteous leadership. The father of the Prodigal undoubtedly knew the boy's impulsive character. The father must have known how he would quickly waste an inheritance that had taken a lifetime—perhaps several lifetimes—to accumulate. Yet the father generously funded his son's learning experience.

The wise and patient father waited and watched for the boy's return. He could predict the unhappy consequences of riotous living. But it remained to be seen whether the Prodigal would humble himself sufficiently to return. When that hoped-for moment came, the father saw him in the distance and ran to welcome him home. The boy's response signaled understanding of principles which his father had taught but which he had to learn for himself: "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight."[v]

That is the kind of patience that Heavenly Father and the Savior extend to each of us. They wait lovingly for the most-wicked of us to come to our senses, as the Prodigal Son finally did. The Apostle Peter described their loving patience with the term "long-suffering." He applied this term to the 120 years between Noah's initial assignment to build an ark and the flood that finally came and destroyed the wicked.[vi] Those twelve decades, in other words, were a grace period.

Peter also explained why the Savior's second coming might seem unnecessarily delayed. He wrote: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."[vii]

Time-tested Leaders

As we can see from Peter's description of the Lord's longsuffering, He needed patient leaders. For this reason, our natural human impulsiveness can disqualify us for leading on His behalf.

Fortunately, He has powerful yet loving systems for helping us increase in patience and in the ability to stand still and be still.

One of those patience-cultivating systems is physiological aging and the personal experience it brings. Moses, for example, didn't become one of the meekest and most patient of leaders overnight. In fact, his long path to patience began with an apparently impulsive act. At age forty, he was a powerful prince of Egypt who had already demonstrated great leadership ability. He was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deed."[viii]

More leadership opportunities might have come to Moses in Pharaoh's court. But all of that changed in a moment, as recorded in the Book of Exodus:

> And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.[ix]

That moment altered the course of Moses' life. At the time, it must have seemed that he had lost everything. He had forty years, as he sat and tended sheep, to think about what might have been. The fall from prince of Egypt to shepherd was painfully ironic. The Egyptians considered shepherding one of the lowest forms of labor.

When the call to serve the Lord and his people finally came, Moses was eighty. By then he seemed to have given up any thought of such a call. His humility showed in his response. He said, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"[x] The Lord was undoubtedly pleased by this self-deprecating question. Moses had become, according to the Bible, "very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."[xi] After standing still through forty years of lowly shepherding, Moses was finally ready to lead.

As it turned out, the meekness Moses developed in forty years of shepherding proved essential. The Children of Israel were a very unruly and ungrateful flock. He needed more patience than ever during his forty years of leading them. The Lord had painstakingly prepared him for that.

A similar pattern applies to the leadership of the Lord's church in our day. Men of high character and capability are called into the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. They act as shepherds over the Church for years, even decades. They learn to stand still and be still as the years pass. By the time one is called to lead as Prophet, he is well-seasoned, wise but meek. In place of the impulsiveness of youth, there is profound respect for the Lord's eternal purposes and timetable.

This seems to be the Lord's pattern. When His kingdom advances, no one can truthfully say, "I did that," or, "That was my idea." Instead, there is a peaceful feeling in the heart and the grateful thought, "I was there when it happened." Looking back, the advances seem natural and inevitable. Years ago, at Ricks

College, Elder Thomas S. Monson demonstrated to a group of college administrators the way change occurs in the Lord's kingdom. "When the Church moves," he said, with a playful lilt in his voice, "It doesn't do this." He crouched low and took a broad jump.

Elder Monson walked back to his starting point. He solemnly declared, "When the Church moves, it does this." He then took a smooth, erect stride forward.

The Direction of the Spirit

Age and experience are helpful as we attempt to take such smooth strides for the Lord. But they are not essential. We know that because the Lord has chosen strong leaders while they were young. That was true of Joseph and Nephi. Of course, it was also true of Joseph Smith.

President Henry B. Eyring has promised that it will be true of BYU-Idaho students as well. Shortly after the creation of BYU-Idaho, in 2001, he said of you, "They will be natural leaders who know how to teach and how to learn."[xii]

This is possible even in your youth. There is only one requirement for effective leadership: following the direction of the Spirit. Age and experience tend to increase our patience and decrease our impulsivity, making us more susceptible to the Spirit. Moses developed his meekness this way, over 80 years.

But you can choose to be meek now, before life's mistakes and hardships naturally engender meekness in you. Moses succeeded as a leader because he faithfully followed the Lord's commands as though he were a little child.[xiii] He overcame the natural man he had become in Pharaoh's court. He recovered the meekness of childhood that King Benjamin preached in the Book of Mormon:

> For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.[xiv]

Benjamin's counsel to be childlike doesn't excuse us from studying and learning, as we're doing in this course. Oliver Cowdery learned the importance of study when he tried to translate the Book of Mormon before looking hard at the passages he was working on.[xv] In effect, he failed the translator's marshmallow test.

Yet in the end it is through the Spirit that we qualify for guidance. What the Lord told Oliver before he tried to translate remains a possibility for us all, no matter how young we may be:

> Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart. Now behold, this is the spirit of revelation; behold, this is the spirit by which Moses led the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.[xvi]

Standing Firmly

Let's begin to apply these insights to Emily's situation. She's feeling the pressure of being caught between Tom and Steve's threats and Sally's offers of money. Emily is likely fighting her impulses, wondering if she should take the money, fight the threats, or simply flee from the situation by ignoring everyone.

We have explored the benefits of standing still for now. Doing that will give Emily time to seek the Spirit's guidance. It will also give her siblings time to think better of their actions and repent, as the Prodigal Son did.

Unfortunately, there is a real chance that they won't repent, at least in the near term. Emily must be prepared to respond to the pressure they are putting on her. But she doesn't necessarily have to respond immediately. Her siblings are acting as though time is of the essence, that a decision has to be made right now. With that kind of pressure to make a hard decision among unpleasant alternatives, it's natural to forget an alternative that is almost always available: waiting to decide.

Whenever we face a difficult decision, one of our first questions should be, "How much time do I have to decide?" Sometimes, waiting has a real cost. But often the supposed deadline is artificial, a negotiation tactic designed to hurry and even manipulate our thinking. For example, we often see products or services advertised "on sale" at a price that will soon expire.

Sometimes the seller has a valid reason for encouraging us to buy early, but often the motive is merely to encourage an impulsive decision.[xvii]

When faced with decision-making deadlines, we should always ask, "Is the deadline real or artificial?" In other words, is there a real cost to waiting, other than simply disappointing the person who has created the deadline? That's a question Emily should ask. The answer in her case appears to be, "No." Her father's will won't change before it is opened. Her siblings want to be prepared in advance to dispute the will if they don't like what it says. But Emily won't hurt them by waiting to learn the facts. If she has any doubt about that, she could confirm the assumption by seeking counsel from an attorney. Quite likely, that attorney would declare waiting to be not only an acceptable decision, but the preferred one, allowing her to help her siblings when they actually know what there is to battle over.

Standing still does more than help us avoid impulsive decisions. It also allows us to determine what real deadlines we face and how much time we have to gather information and seek counsel. Yet standing still is difficult when we have not only our own impulses but also external pressures to resist. Asking people we love to wait can be particularly hard.

That, however, is what the Lord often asks of us. He rarely works to our deadlines, which are often artificial, the product of our human impatience. Most commonly, He requires us to wait for a better answer than the one we seek. Through the prophet Isaiah he explains these beneficial delays this way:

> And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.[xviii]

With these insights, Emily might say to her siblings something like this: "I want to help you, but I don't yet know how to best do that. We all need more information. Let's wait until we know more. I'll be better able to help you then."

Reproving Betimes with Sharpness

It's easy to imagine Emily's siblings responding unfavorably to that message. They could even respond so sharply that Emily might feel inclined to react with similar sharpness. There is a well-known scripture that is sometimes misread as authorizing leaders to do that. It comes from the 121st Section of the Doctrine and Covenant and says this: "Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost."[xix]

"Reprove" isn't a word we use much today. It means to reprimand or correct in a formal way, with some severity. Understanding what it means to reprove is made harder by the adjective that modifies this word, "betimes." "Betimes" is a word used today even less than "reprove." In old English, "betimes" meant quickly or immediately. But today it is more commonly assumed to mean "in good time," or, in other words, not waiting too long. There's even a third meaning for "betimes." That meaning is "at times," or "sometimes," meaning not doing something too often.

Whichever of these definitions we choose, the 121st Section of the Doctrine and Covenants makes it clear that being reproved can hurt and create bad feelings, even hateful ones. That can be inferred from the caution to only reprove when "moved upon by the Holy Ghost." There is also this implied warning, which says, "and then showing forth an increase of love to him whom thou has reproved, lest he esteem thee to be thine enemy."

Understanding and faithfully applying the principle of reproof requires an understanding of the conditions under which the Prophet Joseph Smith wrote the 121st Section. He had been a prisoner in Liberty Jail for months. He was worried about the Saints generally, but specifically about unrighteous Church leaders. He described their leadership motives as obtaining "the things of this world" and "the honors of men."[xx] He observed that these ambitions tempt leaders to "immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion."[xxi]

The marshmallow test helps us understand this temptation to dominate others, which the Prophet Joseph described as "the nature and disposition of almost all men" who "get a little authority."xxii When we feel the weight of leadership responsibilities, natural impulsiveness makes us want to get things done quickly. We may be tempted to tell others what to do, rather than seeking their opinions and enlisting their support, an effort that will take longer and might not work.

In effect, we are faced with a marshmallow test. If we are patient, we have the possibility of getting two things we want—both effective action and also colleagues who feel good about their role in taking that action. But it's tempting to want the action to be taken now, even if some of our colleagues aren't yet supportive. Our natural tendency is to get the job done quickly, even if it means foregoing the extra "marshmallow," which in this case is honoring the agency of those we lead.

Joseph Smith warned against this tendency. He identified the antidote, as expressed in these beautiful lines:

> No power or influence can our ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness, and by love unfeigned;
>
> By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—
>
> …
>
> Let they bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly.[xxiii]

The Prophet Joseph inserted his reference to "reproving betimes with sharpness" among many verses urging persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness and charity. Emily and other would-be leaders should keep that broader context in mind. Sharp reproof is, at least by word count in the 121st Section, the exception to the rule the Prophet was explaining.

An Increase of Love

Reproving effectively requires not only follow up, as indicated by the phrase, "Showing forth afterwards an increase of love." It also requires diligent preparation. Speaking in a General Priesthood meeting, President Henry B. Eyring observed,

> The word increase has special meaning in preparing priesthood holders when they need correction. The word suggests an increase of a love that was already there. The "showing forth" is about the increase. Those of you who are preparing priesthood holders will certainly see them make mistakes. Before they receive your correction, they must have felt of your love early and steadily. They must have felt your genuine praise before they will accept your correction.[xxiv]

A BYU Professor, Brent Barlow, offered similar advice in a marriage enhancement class. Professor Barlow suggested that the right ratio of praise to criticism in marriage is 10 to 1. Someone who believes that will ask at least two questions before offering sharp correction. One is, "Have I made ten consecutive compliments or otherwise expressed love and support since the last time I reproved this person?" The second question is, "Do I have a plan for making ten more compliments after this reproof?" If such a past record and a plan for the future are not in place, we are running a serious leadership risk.

Even when we have plans to balance our reproof with an increase of love, we should take care to reprove as gently as possible. No amount of love afterward will compensate for unnecessary sharpness. A faithful Saint who has felt such sharpness can have the sting taken away by the Atonement. But a wise leader will not create the temptation to hold a grudge.

President Henry B. Eyring, is one such wise leader. He often stood still before correcting his children. He would not only wait for the right time and opportunity, he would often create it, by first building the child up. Often, his positive reinforcement of good behavior led his children to repent before he had to say anything.

When that didn't happen, President Eyring's reproof always came gently. Most often it was a simple look of sadness, which inspired change more effectively than stern words would have. He always erred on the side of meekness. He was willing to reprove a second time, if necessary, to avoid overdoing it the first time and tempting the child to consider him an enemy.

Returning to our estate battle, we can see that these ideas confirm our initial recommendation to Emily. She may be well advised to stand still for now, firmly but without reproving her siblings. Given that she lives separately from her siblings, she probably doesn't have the necessary relationship foundation to do that now without making enemies of them. The Spirit might guide her to approach one or more of them. But it would most likely be to express love. Receiving guidance to reprove them now, before the will has been read and the nature of the problem is fully understood, seems unlikely.

The reading of the will is necessary to begin the true test of the agency of Emily's siblings—as well as her own. That artificial deadline they have created is actually the starting line of the contest to reunite her family. The experience of suppressing her impulses and standing still until then will season Emily. When the time comes, she'll be better prepared to lead her older siblings, as Joseph and Nephi led their families.

---

[i] Exodus 14:13-14.

[ii] See Psalm 46:10, Doctrine and Covenants 101:16.

[iii] 1 Kings 19:12, Doctrine and Covenants 85:6.

[iv] See 1 Nephi 18:11 and 1 Nephi 8:17-18.

[v] Luke 15:11-21.

[vi] 1 Peter 3:30.

[vii] 2 Peter 3:3-9.

[viii] Acts 7:22.

[ix] Exodus 2:11-12.

[x] Exodus 3:11.

[xi] Numbers 12:3.

[xii] Henry B. Eyring, "A Steady, Upward Course," BYU-Idaho Devotional, September 18, 2001.

[xiii] See Exodus 40:16; Numbers 17:11; Numbers 27:22.

[xiv] Mosiah 3:19.

[xv] See Doctrine and Covenants 9:7-9.

[xvi] Doctrine and Covenants 8:2-3.

[xvii] For example, a seller of fresh food or cut flowers may be justified in offering a reduced, limited-time price to encourage purchases before the product spoils; without this kind of encouragement, spoilage would increase, and the cost would have to be passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices.

[xviii] Isaiah 30:18.

[xix] Doctrine and Covenants 121:43.

[xx] Doctrine and Covenants 121:35.

[xxi] Doctrine and Covenants 121:39.

[xxii] Ibid.

[xxiii] Doctrine and Covenants 121:41-42, 45.

[xxiv] Henry B. Eyring, October 2014 General Conference address.