

LOOK AT THE LAST PAGE

When I joined the Church, I was eager to get involved in family history work. I began visiting local archives to search for my ancestors' information in public records.

I found the work fulfilling, but it was not always easy. The old handwriting was often difficult to read, and some of the books were moldy, which agitated my asthma. Still, I continued researching as best I could.

One day I was researching about my grandfather, looking for his date of birth. I found a 1,500-page book that might be helpful. But what if it didn't have the answer I needed? I dreaded having to look through more big, dusty books.

I began skimming the book's contents, hoping a familiar name would catch my eye. Suddenly, I thought I heard someone say, "The last page." I looked around, but it did not appear that anyone had spoken to me. I continued and read several more pages. Then I heard the same words again: "The last page." Somewhat hesitantly, I decided to check the last page. I found the text that is usually written there: a summary of children born and the total number of pages. Just in case, I checked the page that preceded the last one but found nothing helpful there, so I turned back to the page I had been reading before.

My thoughts were soon interrupted once more by the soft but persistent

voice: "The last page!" I decided to try the last page again and read the now-familiar text several times.

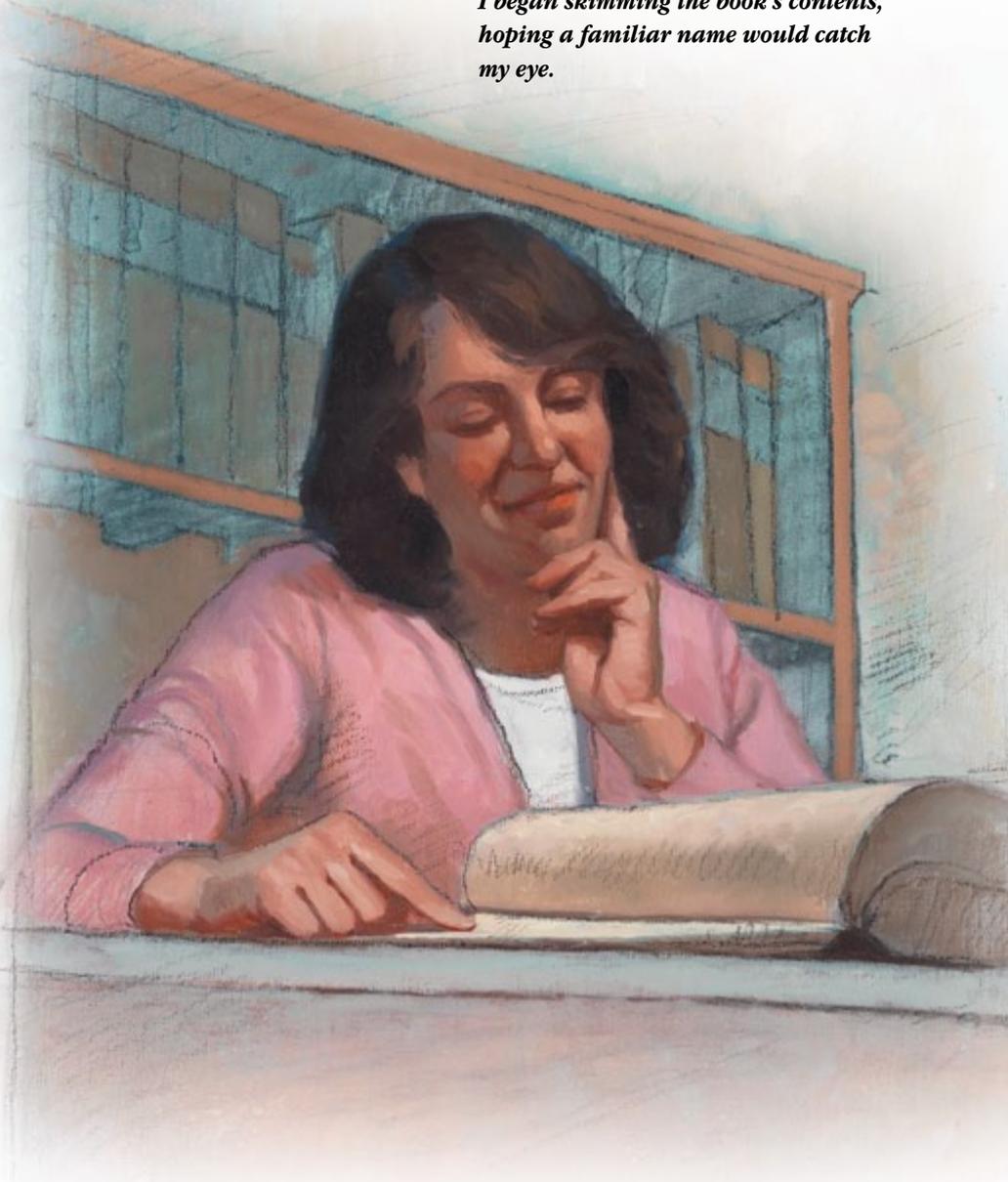
Then I noticed something I had missed before: an extra page pasted inside the back cover. As I read the handwriting scribbled across the page, I saw the names of children born near the end of December. There I recognized my grandfather's

name and saw that it stated where and when he was born and baptized. I was astonished but filled with gratitude that I had been led to the information I needed.

Family history can be challenging at times, but I know that God guides and assists us in our efforts. ■

Natalia Shcherbakova, Ukraine, as told to Pavlyna Ubyiko

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I CHOSE THE GOOD PART

As I prepared for my daughter's wedding, my mind was so occupied with wedding plans that I rarely thought of anything besides my checklist. One morning I looked at my long list of tasks. I was making progress, but I still needed to do some deep cleaning. I had been putting off cleaning the kitchen blinds, so I decided to tackle that chore.

As I climbed on the counter with my rags, brushes, and cleaner, I could see that it was going to be a dirty job. While I worked, my mind wandered to the story of Martha and Mary, the sisters who had welcomed the Savior into their home. While Martha "was cumbered about much serving," Mary "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word." Martha asked Jesus to tell her sister to help with the chores, but the Savior told her that "Mary hath chosen that good part" (see Luke 10:38–42).

"Today I will just have to be Martha," I thought. The truth was that I had been Martha for several weeks, "cumbered about" with mundane chores and wedding preparations.

My mind wandered again, and I tried to remember when my blinds had last been cleaned so thoroughly. I thought of the two girls who had come to help me get ready for a gathering at my house two years earlier. Together they had scrubbed my kitchen from floor to ceiling, including the blinds. That memory



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reminded me of their mother, an old friend I hadn't talked to in years.

At that moment I picked up the phone and dialed her number to tell her about my daughter's wedding. I didn't expect her to answer because she taught school, but I happened to call during her planning hour. We spent the next hour laughing, crying, and sharing. She had recently been through a difficult divorce and had been feeling alone and abandoned. As we talked, our spirits were lifted and our hearts were comforted.

I marveled at the way the Lord was able to work through me even while I

was doing something as mundane as cleaning blinds. I marveled even more at the truth that He knows and loves each of us enough to send help at the very hour and moment we need it.

That night I smiled as I put a check mark on my list next to "clean the kitchen blinds." Though I felt a sense of satisfaction from completing the chore, I felt a greater sense of gratitude knowing I had been an instrument in the Lord's hands. He had shown me how I could be a Mary who chose the "good part" even as I was a Martha "cumbered about" my chores. ■
Jeanette Mahaffey, Missouri, USA

THE RIGHT SCRIPTURE AT THE RIGHT TIME

While serving as an assistant chaplain in the Maricopa County Jail system in Arizona, USA, I would visit and share a scripture and prayer with detainees who requested a Latter-day Saint chaplain. On one occasion a young woman made such a request.

I went to her area of the jail, which was behind several locked doors. The reception area had two cafeteria-style tables with a bench on each side and one desk with a guard. I gave the guard the request slip, slid onto one of the benches, and waited for the young woman.

I arose as she entered the reception area, greeted her, and suggested we sit at the table. She looked sad and unkempt and was on the verge of tears. As she discussed her situation, I considered what scripture I would share. I listened carefully to her concerns, and as she disclosed the difficulties she had had with various compulsive behaviors and poor choices, I thought of the perfect scripture to help her: Mosiah 3:19.

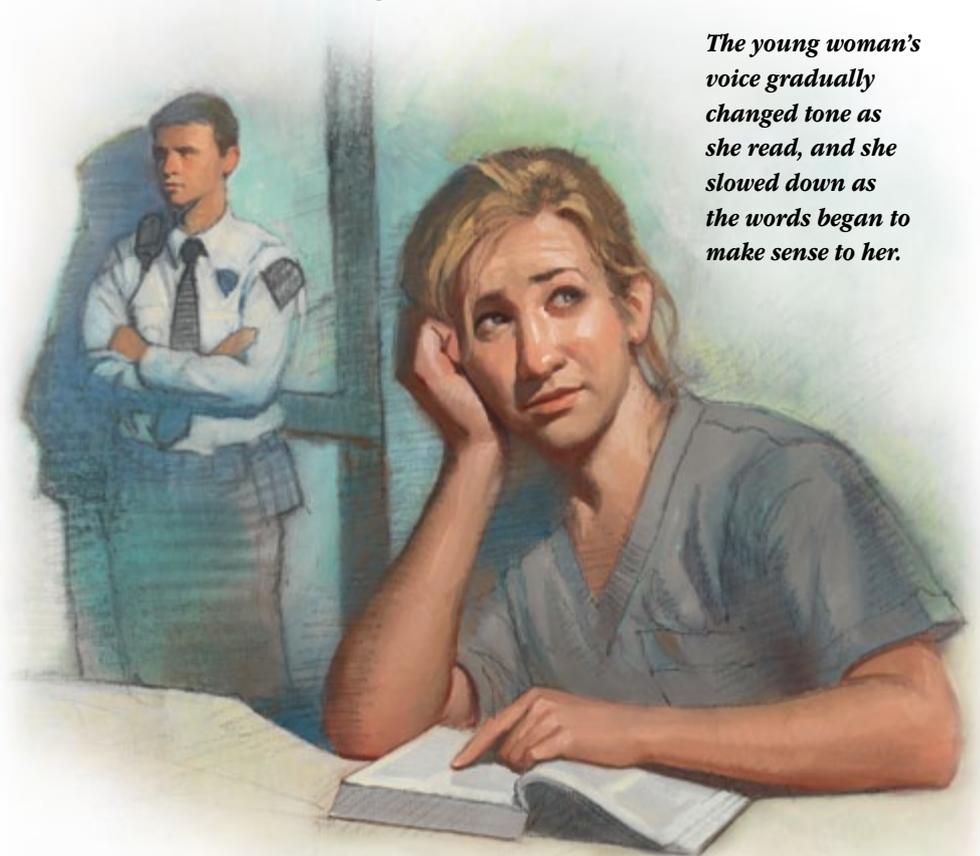
I opened the Book of Mormon to Mosiah 3:19, pushed it toward her, and asked her to read. She seemed a little disgruntled at first and began reading in a fast, singsong voice that seemed to express annoyance at being asked to read a scripture. As she finished the first phrase, “For the natural man is an enemy to God,” I interrupted to explain the meaning of

“natural man.” When she understood the reference, she continued to read. Her voice gradually changed tone, and she slowed down as the words began to make sense to her.

When she started to read the list of childlike attributes of “a saint,” she slowed down even more. I could tell she was absorbing the meaning of each attribute listed in the verse. When she read “submissive, meek, humble, patient,” I began to feel the Spirit all around us. As she read the words “full of love, willing to submit,” I witnessed a change in her. Her face brightened and her attitude, tone of voice, and general

manner seemed affected by the Spirit. I could see hope as she was taught by the Spirit what these words meant to her and how she should make the changes described in the scripture.

I said a prayer and then shook the young woman’s hand warmly. I left the jail on a spiritual high. I had never before seen such an immediate, powerful, magnificent effect from the scriptures. I knew Mosiah 3:19 because I have frequently encountered it while reading the scriptures, but never before had I understood the depth of the impact it could have on someone. ■
Allen Hunsaker, Arizona, USA



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YOU HAVE NOT FASTED

In 1998 I was enjoying being a young mother. But I panicked one day when I realized that my six-month-old son made whistling sounds when he breathed and couldn't swallow anything. The doctor immediately diagnosed bronchiolitis, a swelling of the smallest air passages in the lungs usually caused by a viral infection. He prescribed both medication and physical therapy.

The visits to the physical therapist were a trial for my son and me. My son was uncomfortable being moved in every direction, and I worried that the therapy caused him pain. I took courage, however, when the therapist explained the benefits of therapy.

Despite the medical treatment and the therapy, my son's condition didn't improve. He ate little, and the whistling continued. The doctor prescribed 5 more sessions with the physical therapist in addition to the 10 we had already attended.

While I waited during the 13th session, I read an article posted in the doctor's office titled "Bronchiolitis Kills." As I read, I realized that my son could die. I felt as though my heart was in a vise. At the end of the session, the therapist told me that my son's condition wasn't improving. I'm not sure how I got home safely because tears blurred my vision.

I called my husband and then began to pray. I told my Heavenly

Father that if His will was to take my son, He would need to give me the strength to bear it.

After my prayer I asked myself what we could do in addition to the prayers we had uttered and the priesthood blessings our son had received. I glanced at the bookshelf and saw a copy of the *Liahona* (*L'Étoile* at the time). I opened it at random, searching for help, and found an article titled "I Fasted for My Baby." Then I clearly heard a voice say, "You have not fasted for your child."

I had not, so I immediately began to fast for him. At the therapy session the next day, I was still fasting. After examining my son,

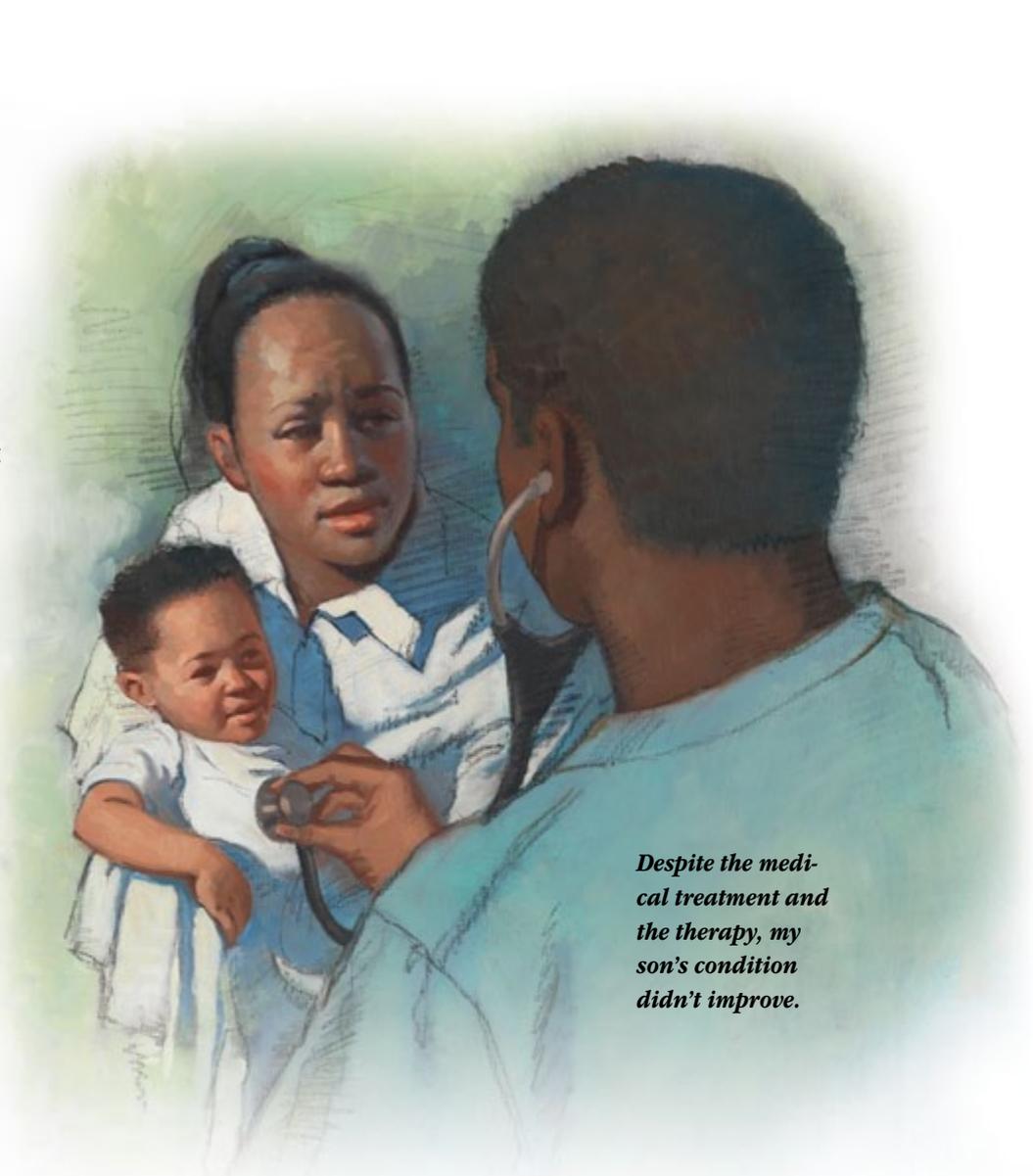
the therapist looked surprised.

"Madame," he told me, "your son is fine. I don't understand, but he doesn't need any more sessions."

I couldn't hold back the tears of joy. Returning home, I knelt to thank God for His mercy and love. I called my husband to tell him the good news. Then I ended my fast in peace, not doubting the intervention of the Lord.

My son was healed thanks to faith, prayer, priesthood blessings, *and* fasting. I have no doubt that my Heavenly Father loves me and that He also loves my son. I am confident that He will continue to help us overcome our difficulties. ■

Ketty Constant, Guadeloupe



Despite the medical treatment and the therapy, my son's condition didn't improve.