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Old Testament,
pp. 39-45

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COURTESY OF ORSON SCOTT AND KRISTINE A. CARD

Judgments of Job, by Joseph Brickey

After Job's property and children are destroyed, he is smitten with boils (see Job 1–2). Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, come to comfort him but soon begin to reprove him (see Job 4–5, 8, 11).

Nevertheless, Job says, "Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will.

"Though [God] slay me, yet will I trust in him . . .

"He also shall be my salvation" (Job 13:13, 15–16).

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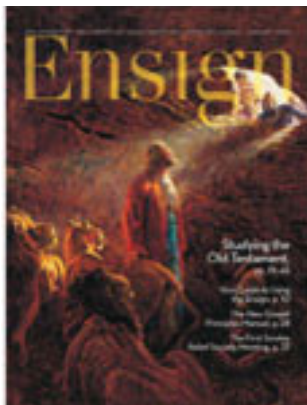
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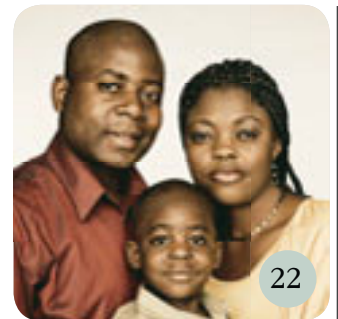
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AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
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USING THE ENSIGN: A look at how members of the Church are using their magazine.

SOLVING PROBLEMS: Watch President Boyd K. Packer's 1978 address on which the article on p. 50 is based.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PARAMEDIC: Watch video about Samantha Wills and her work as a paramedic. (Her story appears on p. 60.)

GETTING STARTED WITH FAMILY HISTORY: Want to begin your family history but aren't sure how to start? Materials in our beginner's kit may help.



HOW WE KNOW: Read weekly stories of members' conversions to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

DID YOU KNOW? You can tune into Mormon Channel, an online radio service, 24 hours a day for Church-sponsored programming, podcasts, and downloadable shows. Go to radio.lds.org.



DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

Can you tell us about a time that family prayer made a difference in your day? How has maintaining consistent habits of holding family prayer blessed your family over time? Please label your submission "Family Prayer" and submit it by February 19.

We also welcome submissions on other topics showing the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. On each submission, please

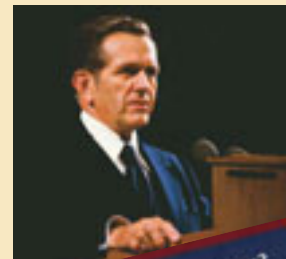
include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, ward (or branch) and stake (or district).

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By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Second Counselor in
the First Presidency



Hold on

A LITTLE LONGER

One of the enduring lessons of the Kirtland period is that our spirits need constant nourishment. We need to stay close to the Lord every day if we are to survive the adversity that we all must face.

Last summer my wife and I took our twin grandsons to Kirtland, Ohio. It was a special and precious opportunity for us to spend time with them before they left on their missions.

During our visit there, we learned to better understand the circumstances of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Saints who lived in Kirtland. That era of Church history is known as a time of severe trials but also supreme blessings.

In Kirtland the Lord bestowed some of the most remarkable heavenly manifestations and spiritual gifts this world has ever experienced. Sixty-five sections of the Doctrine and Covenants were received in Kirtland and surrounding areas—revelations that brought new light and knowledge about topics such as the Second Coming, caring for the needy,



the plan of salvation, priesthood authority, the Word of Wisdom, tithing, the temple, and the law of consecration.¹

It was a period of unparalleled spiritual growth. Indeed, the Spirit of God like a fire was burning. Moses, Elijah, and many other

heavenly beings appeared during this time, including our Heavenly Father and His Son, the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ.²

One of the many revelations Joseph received in Kirtland was a revelation he called the “olive leaf . . . plucked from the Tree of Paradise, and the Lord’s message of peace to us” (introduction to D&C 88). This remarkable revelation includes the sublime invitation, “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me” (D&C 88:63). As the Saints of Kirtland

drew near unto the Lord, He truly did draw near unto them, pouring out the blessings of heaven upon the heads of the faithful.

A Spiritual Outpouring

Perhaps the culmination of these spiritual manifestations occurred during the dedication of the Kirtland Temple on March 27, 1836. One of those present was 28-year-old William Draper, who described the day as a “day of Pentecost.” He wrote: “There was such a time of the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord, that my pen is inadequate to write it in full or my tongue to express it. But I will here say that the Spirit was poured out and came like a mighty rushing wind and filled the house, that many that were present spoke in tongues and had visions and saw angels and prophesied, and had a general time of rejoicing such as had not been known in this generation.”³

These spiritual manifestations were not limited only to those inside the temple, for “the people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place.”⁴



Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901), later to be President of the Church, was living in Kirtland during this blessed period. He observed, “One would have imagined that after receiving these wonderful manifestations no temptation could have overthrown the Saints.”⁵

But, of course, great spiritual experiences do not make us exempt from opposition and trials. Just a few months after the temple dedication, a widespread economic crisis shook the United States, and Kirtland felt the effects deeply. Banks failed, leaving many in difficult financial straits. To make matters worse, many of the Saints who were immigrating to Kirtland came with very few material possessions, not knowing what they would do once they arrived or how they would survive.

Before long, persecutions arose and mobs formed against the Saints. Members of the Church—even some of those closest to the Prophet, many of whom were present at the dedication of the temple—apostatized and condemned Joseph as a fallen prophet.

As I walked near the Kirtland Temple with my wife and grandsons, I pondered how tragic it was that some could not remain faithful even after the spiritual manifestations they had witnessed. How sorrowful it was that they could not endure the ridicule and criticism of disbelievers. How sad that, when faced with financial trial or other struggles, they could not have reached inside themselves and found the strength to remain faithful. How unfortunate it was that they somehow lost sight of the miraculous spiritual harvest at the dedication of the temple.

The Lessons

What can we learn from this remarkable era in the history of the Church?

One of the great, enduring lessons of the Kirtland period is that our spirits need constant nourishment. As President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) taught: “Testimony isn’t something that you have today and you keep always. Testimony is either going to grow and grow to the brightness of certainty, or it is going to diminish to nothingness, depending upon what we do about it. I say, the testimony

that we recapture day by day is the thing that saves us from the pitfalls of the adversary.”⁶ We need to stay close to the Lord every day if we are to survive the adversity that we all must face.

In some ways our world today is similar to Kirtland of the 1830s. We too live in times of financial distress. There are those who persecute and rail against the Church and its members. Individual and collective trials may sometimes seem overwhelming.

That is when we need, more than ever, to draw near unto the Lord. As we do, we will come to know what it means to have the Lord draw near unto us. As we seek Him ever more diligently, we will surely find Him. We will see clearly that the Lord does not abandon His Church or His faithful Saints. Our eyes will be opened, and we will see Him open the windows of heaven and shower us with more of His light. We will find the spiritual strength to survive even during the darkest night.

Although some of the Saints in Kirtland lost sight of the spiritual experiences they had, most did not. The majority, including William Draper, held fast to the spiritual knowledge God had given them and continued to follow the Prophet. Along the way they experienced more bitter trials but also more sweet spiritual growth until, ultimately, those who endured to the end were “received into . . . a state of never-ending happiness” (Mosiah 2:41).

You Can Hold On

If ever you are tempted to become discouraged or to lose faith, remember those faithful Saints who remained true in Kirtland. Hold on a little longer. You can do this! You are part of a special generation. You were prepared and preserved to live at this important time in the



As we seek the Lord ever more diligently, we will surely find Him. Our eyes will be opened, and we will see Him open the windows of heaven and shower us with more of His light.

existence of our beautiful planet earth. You have a celestial pedigree and therefore have all the necessary talents to make your life an eternal success story.

The Lord has blessed you with a testimony of the truth. You have felt His influence and witnessed His power. And if you continue to seek Him, He will continue to grant you sacred experiences. With these and other spiritual gifts, you will be able not only to change your own life for the better but also to bless your homes, wards or branches, communities, cities, states, and nations with your goodness.

It may be hard to see that at times, but hold on a little longer, for “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath

prepared for them that love him” and wait for Him (1 Corinthians 2:9; see also D&C 76:10; 133:45).

I bear witness of the truth of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and the truth of this, His Church. I testify with all my heart and soul that God lives, that Jesus Christ is His Son and stands at the head of this great Church. We have a prophet on the earth again, even President Thomas S. Monson.

May we ever remember the lesson of Kirtland and hold on a little longer—even when things look bleak. Know and remember this: the Lord loves you. He remembers you. And He will ever sustain those who “endure in faith to the end” (D&C 20:25).

NOTES

1. See, for example, sections 45; 56; 76; 84; 89; 97; and 104.
2. See D&C 76:23; 110:2–4, 11–13.
3. William Draper, “A Biographical Sketch of the Life and Travels and Birth and Parentage of William Draper” (1881), typescript, Church History Library, 2; spelling and capitalization standardized.
4. *History of the Church*, 2:428.
5. Lorenzo Snow, “Discourse,” *Deseret Weekly News*, June 8, 1889, 26.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee* (2000), 43.

IDEAS FOR TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

After prayerfully studying this message, consider the needs of those you teach, and choose points or passages from the message that you feel will be most useful to them. The Holy Ghost can help you prepare and teach the message (see D&C 42:14; 43:15–16). In addition to sharing your own testimony, you may feel impressed to ask the people you teach to share experiences or testimonies if they wish. (For other teaching ideas, see *Teaching, No Greater Call*.)

YOUTH

Strengthening Your Testimony

Take this self-evaluation quiz to help you think about how you are doing in strengthening your testimony:



- Do I desire to believe?
- Do I fast and pray for a stronger testimony?
- Do I read and ponder the scriptures each day?
- Do I try to keep the commandments each day?
- Do I try to follow promptings from the Holy Ghost?
- Do I bear my testimony when prompted to do so?

CHILDREN

Drawing Near to the Lord

In Kirtland, Ohio, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation. The Lord told him, “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me” (D&C 88:63). One way we can draw near to the Lord is by following His prophet.

Match each picture below with the things President Thomas S. Monson has asked us to do.



Pray

Be kind

Work hard to learn

Help others

Share your testimony

Read the scriptures



LEFT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CRAIG DIMOND; ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEVE KROPP; RIGHT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MATTHEW REIER

Becoming Self-Reliant



Teach these scriptures and quotations or, if needed, another principle that will bless the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you visit to share what they have felt and learned.

What Is Self-Reliance?

“Self-reliance means using all of our blessings from Heavenly Father to care for ourselves and our families and to find solutions for our own problems.’ Each of us has a responsibility to try to avoid problems before they happen and to learn to overcome challenges when they occur. . . .

“How do we become self-reliant? We become self-reliant through obtaining sufficient knowledge, education, and literacy; by managing money and resources wisely, being spiritually strong, preparing for emergencies and eventualities; and by having physical health and social and emotional well-being.”¹

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

A Gospel Responsibility

“As we live providently and increase our gifts and talents, we become more self-reliant. Self-reliance is taking responsibility for our own spiritual and temporal welfare and for those whom Heavenly Father has entrusted to our care. Only when we are self-reliant



can we truly emulate the Savior in serving and blessing others.

“It is important to understand that self-reliance is a means to an end. Our ultimate goal is to become like the Savior, and that goal is enhanced by our unselfish service to others. Our ability to serve is increased or diminished by the level of our self-reliance.”²

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

“Self-reliance is a product of our work and undergirds all other welfare practices. It is an essential element in our spiritual as well as our temporal well-being. Regarding this principle, President Marion G. Romney [1897–1988] has said: ‘Let us work for what we need. Let us

be self-reliant and independent. Salvation can be obtained on no other principle. Salvation is an individual matter, and we must work out our own salvation in temporal as well as in spiritual things.’ . . .

“President Spencer W. Kimball [1895–1985] further taught concerning self-reliance: ‘The responsibility for each person’s social, emotional, spiritual, physical, or economic well-being rests first upon himself, second upon his family, and third upon the Church if he is a faithful member thereof.’”³ ■

President Thomas S. Monson.

NOTES

1. “The Welfare Responsibilities of the Relief Society President,” *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (2009), 4–5.
2. “A Gospel Vision of Welfare: Faith in Action,” *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (2009), 1–2.
3. “Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare,” *Liahona*, Feb. 1987, 3; *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 3.

HELPS FOR VISITING TEACHING

As a visiting teacher, you can seek personal inspiration to know how to best respond to the needs of those you are assigned to watch over. Then focus your efforts on strengthening each sister’s faith and family.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

Genesis 3:19
Matthew 6:33
D&C 82:18–19; 109:8

YOUR GUIDE TO USING THE Ensign



By Don L. Searle

Church Magazines

The magazine offers a spiritual banquet for readers each month. You can enjoy it better if you know how to find your favorite items on the menu.

Often at the *Ensign* we receive letters asking, “Would you please do an article about _____?” We consider and respond to those requests because our job is to serve the spiritual needs of readers. But sometimes we find that the magazine has recently run an item or items on the requested topics, and readers, for one reason or another, may have missed those articles.

In this article, we will try to help you by pointing out where you can find items on many of the topics that interest you. And along the way, we’ll point out a few new features you will find in the *Ensign* starting this month.

Items on the Menu

One of our challenges is to serve a wide range of readers, from young single adults to elderly widows or widowers, married couples, and readers from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The magazine, as directed by Church leaders, supports the family in its divine, eternal design—father, mother, and children—as outlined in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102). Yet we know that a significant portion of adult Church members are not married, and many do not live in a family that matches this model.

Although we are not able to address each segment of our readership every month, we believe that a majority of the articles in the magazine apply to every member, single or married, old or young. We seek articles that teach universal gospel principles. In this issue, for example, please see “The Best Is Yet to Be,” on page 22, by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



How to Read the Menu

In the *Ensign's* monthly table of contents, titles convey a general idea of what an article covers. We also add a “teaser.” For example, “The Courage to Comfort,” on page 52: “When my mother died, I needed comfort and understanding. Here are some things that helped me.”

Some of the articles or items you like best, such as Latter-day Saint Voices, may be listed under Departments in the table of contents.

Many of the longer pieces in the magazine are listed under Feature Articles. But if you're one of those readers who skip over the table of

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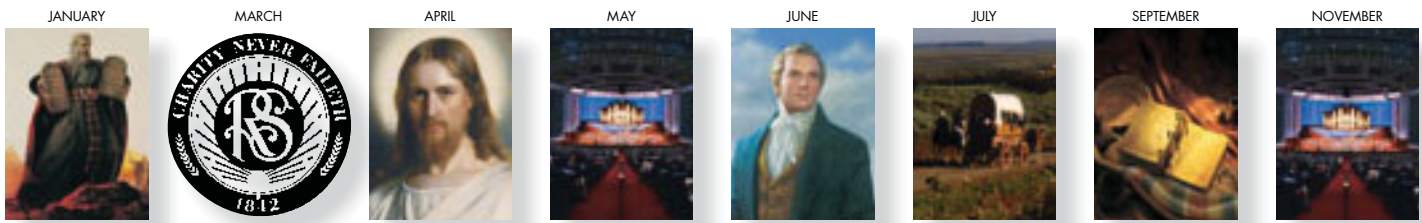
	
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DEPARTMENTS	
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9	WOMEN TEACHING MESSAGE Becoming Self-Reliant
	
YOUR HOME, YOUR FAMILY	
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21	How the Internet Affects Preparation Loren Larson How do you know when you're ready to take the next step in your journey?
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58	How Ready to Go? (What Should We Do When We Don't Know What to Do?) Loren Larson How do you know when you're ready to take the next step in your journey?
60	How to Be Ready to Help by the Spirit Loren Larson How do you know when you're ready to take the next step in your journey?

Above: The table of contents can be your menu as you consider what you want to savor in the magazine.

contents or start from the back of the magazine, there's still help in identifying topics of interest. The first page of each feature article contains an introductory sentence or two summarizing the theme of the article. See, for example, “Being Independent, Being Prepared,” on page 62. The introduction at the beginning says, “How some young adults are applying principles of preparedness to their busy, mobile lives.” The article relates experiences single adults have had with home storage and other aspects of provident living.

New This Month

You'll see a few new items in the *Ensign* this month. Some of them were developed for the



Liahona, the Church's international magazine, and will be carried in the *Ensign* as well:

We Talk of Christ—doctrine about the Savior or a testimony of Him and His influence in our lives.

Serving in the Church—counsel and examples of how we can serve better in Church callings and in our personal opportunities to touch other lives.

What We Believe—brief explanation of basic gospel doctrine, designed to help us as members understand the doctrine better and help us explain our beliefs to others.

Small and Simple Things—a section of factual information about the Church today and its history.

Family Home Evening Ideas—thoughts and suggestions you could consider as you prepare for family home evening. But remember that the best preparation is to ask for the Lord's help, through the Holy Ghost, in tailoring a lesson to meet *your* family's needs.

Until We Meet Again—a brief personal essay offering spiritual insights.

WHAT TO EXPECT EACH MONTH

The *Ensign* tries to maintain a focus on certain topics regularly—on material supporting personal spiritual growth and supporting the family. You may expect to see certain topics covered in specific months. For example, each January when adult and youth classes are beginning a new course of study, the magazine will have an article on the year's Sunday School curriculum. In this issue, for example, please see "Moses, My Son," by Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Presidency of the Seventy, page 42.

There will also be an article on the priesthood and Relief Society course of study; for example, you may enjoy in this issue the introduction to the new Gospel Principles manual on page 28 by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Following is a list of some topics that are covered in specific months.

- January—Introduction to the adult curricula for the year; improving gospel teaching
- March—The history and influence of Relief Society and women in the Church; topics of special interest to sisters
- April—The Resurrection and roles of Jesus Christ (when Easter falls in this month)
- May—general conference talks and news
- June—Joseph Smith and his mission
- July—Church history and pioneering
- September—improving teaching; education and learning; Book of Mormon
- November—general conference talks and news
- December—the birth and mission of Jesus Christ



Above: "What We Believe"

Right: "Until We Meet Again"



PHOTOGRAPHS OF PEOPLE BY DAVID STOKER; PAINTING: FULLNESS OF TIME; MOSES, BY GREG K. OLSEN; PAINTING: DETAIL: CHRIST WITH BOY, BY CARL FREDRICH BLOCH; PHOTOGRAPH OF CONFERENCE CENTER BY CRAIG DIMOND; PAINTING: BROTHER JOSEPH BY DAVID LINDSLEY; PHOTOGRAPH OF 1997 WAGON TRAIN, YELLOW CREEK, UTAH, BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF SIMULATED GOLD PLATES BY JED A. CLARK; PAINTING: SIMEON REVERENCING THE CHRIST CHILD, GREG K. OLSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF CELL PHONE BY EMILY LEISHMAN



You can usually expect to see certain topics covered in the magazine in specific months.



ensign.lds.org



Want to Write an Article?

We are glad to receive contributions from readers. Your best opportunity to contribute may be in sharing spiritual insights that have come through personal experiences.

There are a couple of things to remember that may help make your article more useful and appealing: (1) the Church magazines' audience is worldwide, including readers who may not understand the culture and circumstances familiar to you; and (2) ordinarily, articles interpreting doctrine are written by those called and sustained to positions of general leadership in the Church.

Please submit your story, article, poem, artwork, or photograph electronically if possible by going to **ensign.lds.org** and clicking on **Submit Your Material**. You can also mail typewritten submissions to *Ensign* Editorial, 50 E. North Temple Street, Room 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. Include your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, ward (or branch), and stake (or district). Send a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want your material returned. ■

FINDING WHAT YOU WANT ONLINE

There are several ways you can look for material on specific topics in the *Ensign* online.

- Go to **ensign.lds.org**. There are links to the monthly First Presidency and visiting teaching messages, to other articles, and to information on how to subscribe or submit material to the magazine. You can reach the same page by going to **LDS.org**, selecting **Gospel Library**, then **Magazines**, then from the left-hand pane select **Ensign**.
- You can select either **Past Issues** or **Search Ensign** to begin your search. Select **Past Issues** if you know the date of the item you are seeking. You will be able to select the year of publication, then the month, then the name of the article from the table of contents for that month.
- Select **Search Ensign** from the left-hand pane to look for material by topic. You will be able to enter key words in a search box to bring up a list of articles on a topic, or to look for a particular article. The more specific your key words, the more likely you are to find the desired article. For example, entering "Ezra Taft Benson pride cleansing" immediately turns up a link to "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," by President Benson in the May 1986 magazine.
- Would you like to see the article as it looked on the magazine page? From the **LDS.org** home page, select **Gospel Library**, then **Media Formats**, then **PDF**.

Click on the **Ensign** magazine and you will then be able to select a year as far back as 2001. After you click on a year, click on the cover of a magazine. You will see a larger picture of that cover with a table of contents pane on the left of your screen. In that table of contents, you will find a link to the first page of the article you want.

Submission form from Ensign.lds.org



GOD IS TRULY OUR FATHER

GOD IS OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, THE FATHER OF OUR SPIRITS. In the Godhead with Him are Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. They are distinct beings with distinct roles but are one in purpose. This truth, along with many others, was lost after the deaths of Jesus Christ and His Apostles, during a period known as the Apostasy.

The Lord began to restore these lost truths in the spring of 1820, when 14-year-old Joseph Smith prayed in a grove of trees near his home in Manchester Township, New York, to know which church to join. In answer to his prayer, he saw God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Prophet Joseph Smith later wrote of this vision: “One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing

to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

On February 16, 1832, the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon received a revelation. To introduce the revelation, they testified of Jesus Christ and God the Father: “And now after the many testimonies which have been given of [Jesus Christ], this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father” (D&C 76:22–23).

Take time to gaze into the heavens, where the courses of the stars and planets are evidence of “God moving in his majesty and power” (see D&C 88:41–47).

1. We are created in God’s image (see Moses 2:26).

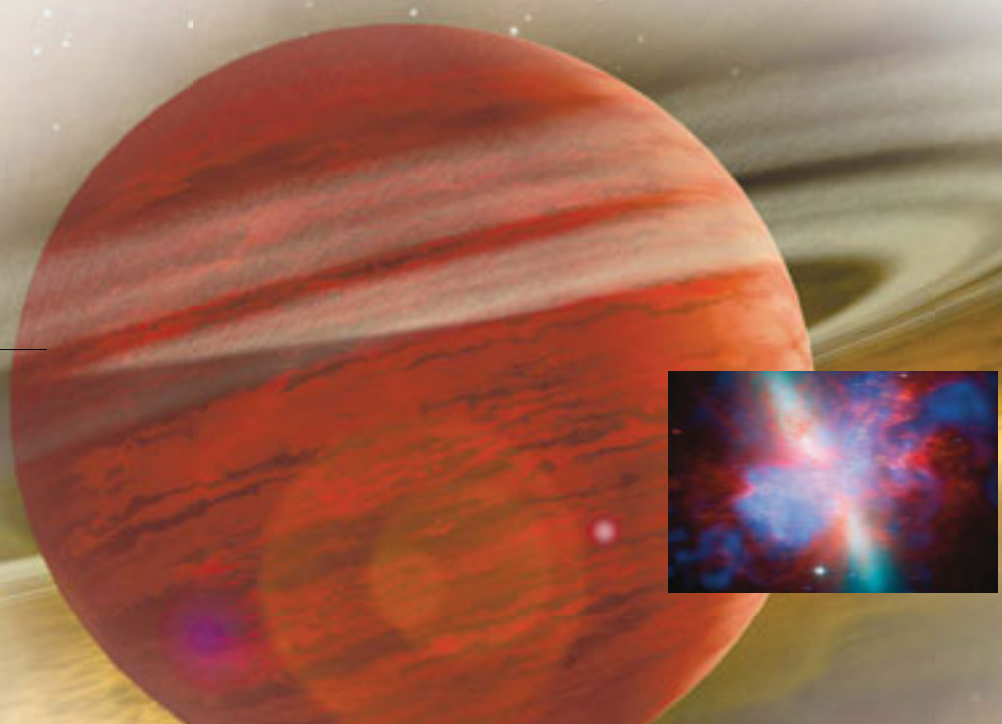


Doctrines that testify of God the Father:

Ways we can come to know our Heavenly Father:



1. Feast on the scriptures (see 2 Nephi 32:3).



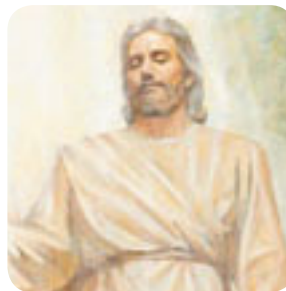
2. God is the Supreme Creator, and “all things denote there is a God” (Alma 30:44).



3. God is our Heavenly Father, a literal spiritual parent (see Hebrews 12:9).¹



4. God the Father has a tangible body of flesh and bones (see D&C 130:22).



5. Our Heavenly Father gave us the plan of salvation (see Alma 34:9).



2. Come to know Jesus Christ (see John 14:9).



3. Obey God’s commandments and follow the prophets (see John 14:21; D&C 1:38).



4. With faith, pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ (see James 1:5; 3 Nephi 18:20).

NOTE

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 39.

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth” (Mosiah 4:9).

To learn more about our basic beliefs, visit Mormon.org (available in many languages).

LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF PLANET COURTESY OF NASA/JPL; PHOTOGRAPH OF STARS © NASA AND STSCI; ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY WEHSIANG WANG; RIGHT: PAINTING OF ANIMALS BY STANLEY GALLI; ILLUSTRATION OF HEAVENLY FATHER WITH CHILDREN BY PAUL MANN; DETAIL FROM THE FIRST VISION BY DEL PARSON; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION OF FAMILY BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION OF MAN BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT MONSON BY CRAIG DIMOND; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION OF WOMAN BY RUTH SIRIUS

Walking

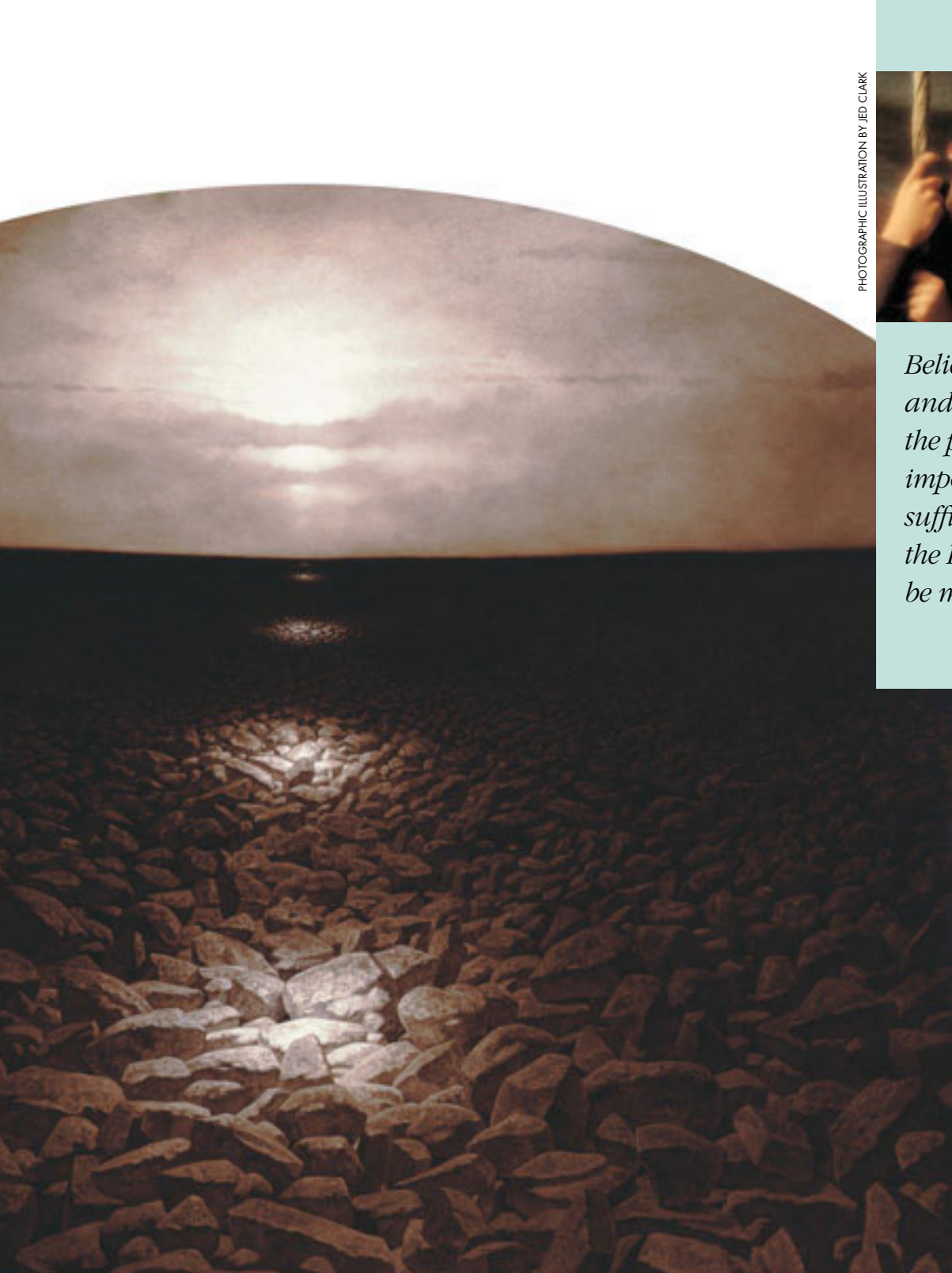
THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

By Michael
R. Blair

In recent months I have been particularly drawn to Psalm 23 because I am, in fact, walking “through the valley of the shadow of death” (verse 4). Being diagnosed with a rare form of lymphoma with an uncertain prognosis has been sobering, to say the least. But I’ve felt great hope in my Savior. He truly has been with me to teach and comfort me. Here are a few things I’ve learned:

- His teachings are a pattern for happy living. My greatest joy has been in serving others—the way the Savior spent His life. Of course, any good that I have done pales in comparison with what He did for us. He asks only that we do “all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23).
- The Lord knows what it is to suffer. Alma 7:11 teaches us that Jesus suffered “pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind” so that He can succor us. Whatever I have felt, am now feeling, or will yet feel, He knows what it is like.
- Faith in Him is powerful. Believing in miracles and the power of the priesthood is important. But faith sufficient to accept the Father’s will (see John 17) may be the most important factor in recovery. I am confident that whatever God’s will is regarding my disease will be right.
- The Savior’s grace is sufficient for all of us. We often look back at our lives and hope the good outweighs the bad. I am starting to understand that the Atonement is not something we earn. It is a gift freely given. The Lord’s grace is real, and it is sufficient to pay debts that we cannot.

REMEMBER THESE, BY DAVID LINN



PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION BY JED CLARK



Believing in miracles and the power of the priesthood is important. But faith sufficient to accept the Father's will may be more important.

I do not believe that my illness is a punishment from God. Instead, this is a time for me to learn to be dependent on Him and His Son. Regardless of the outcome of this dreadful disease, I am grateful that God has not—that He will never—give up on me. Perhaps our tests are yet another chance for us to seek after Him and to come to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. ■

Would you like to share how Jesus Christ has touched your life? We welcome accounts of your gospel experiences relating to the Savior's ministry and mission as well as insights on the mission of the Son of God. Possible topics might include the Atonement, grace, healing, hope, or repentance. Please limit submissions to 500 words, label them "We Talk of Christ," and submit them at ensign@ldschurch.org.



COMING TO MY Ancestors' Aid

By Louise Skyles

I was amazed at the guidance I received as I searched for my Chinese ancestors.

Before I joined the Church I would often look up at the sky when I was alone and feel that there were people there who loved me and wanted me to reunite with them in a wonderful place. Later, after I joined the Church, I started wondering if those people were my ancestors and if this wonderful place was heaven.

When I was 22 years old, I received my patriarchal blessing. When the patriarch placed his hands upon my head, I could feel Heavenly Father's love pouring into my heart. My blessing described the work I would do as I searched out and united my ancestors through temple ordinances.

I didn't do much about this at the time. I was the only member of the Church in my family, and because of a lack of understanding, my parents—especially my mother—did not want me to “disturb” our ancestors.

Another challenge was that because both of my parents were adopted, it would be difficult to research my biological ancestral lines.

Eventually, I was able to collect four generations of my father's adoptive parents' line. By then my brother had joined the Church, and I asked him to submit this information to the Taipei Taiwan Temple. But the temple workers told him the information was incomplete and couldn't be submitted. We knew we needed to do more before we could proceed.

My Turning Point

One night, however, I dreamed that a group of people dressed in white came toward me and asked, “Why haven't you done the work for us as you promised?” I woke up in the middle of the night and realized that these people were my ancestors.


Then in the summer of 1999 my brother was to be married in Taiwan. I was living in the United States and had a family of my own, but I made arrangements to return to Taiwan for the wedding. My friend encouraged me to pray for an opportunity to learn



more about my ancestors, since many relatives would be at the wedding.

When I arrived, I found that my father's biological brother had come for the wedding. This was surprising because my father's biological family lived far away and our family had little contact with them. I begged my father to ask his brother for any information about our ancestors. Amazingly, my uncle said that in their ancestral temple there was a book containing the records of our ancestors going back 4,000 years. Unfortunately, my father would not be able to go inside that family temple because he had been adopted out of the family, and only direct family members were allowed to go in.

I asked my father if one of his relatives could get me a copy of the book. He said he would try to call his nephew, who lived only a couple of hours away from that location. I had only one week before I returned to America, and my father said he didn't know whether his nephew could do it for me in one week. But I was constantly praying that a way would be opened, and I asked him to make the call.



One night, however, I dreamed that a group of people dressed in white came toward me and asked, “Why haven’t you done the work for us as you promised?”

Three or four days later, I received a copy of all the records. I found out that my father’s nephew had taken a day off work to go to the family shrine and make a copy for me.

Opening Another Line

My mother had been reunited with her biological family, and I wanted to find information on her side of the family. Just a couple of hours before the wedding, all of the relatives got together at my parents’ house. I thought I should ask each of them if they knew anything about their family history.

Then I remembered that my mother didn’t like me to talk about her ancestors, so I decided to ask my relatives after the wedding. But in that moment I felt the prompting, “Talk to them right now.” As I turned around, and my mother and I looked at each other, I thought once again about waiting until after the wedding to ask. The prompting was firmly repeated: “Talk to them right now!” I knew I had to listen to the Spirit and ask them immediately.

It turned out that one of my uncles owned a book that contained the records of 120 generations of my mother’s family. He said someone had sold it to him for a couple of dollars, and he agreed to make me a copy.

Later, I learned why the Spirit had prompted me so strongly to talk to them before the wedding. When I awoke the next morning, I was surprised to learn that they had all left early that morning to return home. If I had waited to ask them about our family history, I would have missed my chance.

The Last Steps

Since then I have spent much of my time reading Chinese microfilm and connecting the names in many

family books to my lines. At one point I calculated that I had connected more than 100,000 names to my ancestral line. After that I stopped counting.

I began to submit the TempleReady electronic files to the San Diego California Temple, which was closest to me at the time. Then the Church released a Chinese version of Personal Ancestral File (PAF), and I was able to send the TempleReady files in Chinese, with Romanic translation, to the Taipei Taiwan Temple and the Hong Kong China Temple. As is the procedure, these temples created family file cards for me from the TempleReady files and sent them to me. There were far too many for me to finish the work myself—no matter how much I wanted to do it. I knew I would need help.

I took the cards to the Portland Oregon Temple (closest to where I now live) and explained that I needed help. I left them at the temple. After hearing of my dilemma, the temple president called and said that while he was looking at the cards, he felt impressed that many of my ancestors had already accepted the gospel. So he proposed an idea: he would call my stake president and ask him to help me do the ordinances for my ancestors by arranging a special stake temple day. This occurred on November 12, 2004.

I have received so much help from people in my stake and other stakes as well. I believe the Lord is blessing the people who have come to my family’s aid. I am so grateful to be able to help my ancestors with the work they are not able to do for themselves. I believe that one day I will reunite with them and we will enjoy the blessings of salvation together as a family, just as I envisioned when I used to look up at the sky those many years ago. ■

HOW WE LEARNED ABOUT HAPPINESS

By Lidia Evgenevna Shmakova

I always thought we had a strong family. Our three boys and two girls were normal children, and we had normal problems with them. Sometimes when they would act up, I would get angry. Later I would think to myself, “Why did you get so mad at them?”

I didn’t know then that *perestroika*—a period of political and economic change—was beginning in Russia. I didn’t know that goods would disappear from the shelves of all the stores, that for months and later for years, we would not receive paychecks. Life became very difficult. We had struggles, and my husband and I were on the brink of divorce. There came an epidemic of drug use, and one of our sons got involved. It seemed that the sun didn’t shine in our windows anymore. I didn’t know whom to pray to, but still I asked God for help. We fought with all our strength, and little by little we pulled out of this bog.

In the summer of 1998, missionaries found us. Our lives changed 180 degrees as we headed in a new direction. Within five years we had attended the temple and had been sealed as a family for eternity.

When our middle son served a full-time mission in the Czech Republic, he wrote to us in every letter, “Stay firm and faithful. Together we are the happiest family.” Even my friends would tell me I must be the happiest woman in the world to have so many children and grandchildren and to know I will never be plagued with loneliness.

Looking back, I realize that like the people who heard King Benjamin, our family experienced a mighty



During perestroika, life was terribly hard, and our family was falling apart. Then we met the missionaries, and slowly we began to rebuild.

change in our hearts, becoming children of Christ (see Mosiah 5:7). It was a huge transformation for me. Before becoming a Latter-day Saint, when I thought about death, an unbearable grief gripped my heart and soul. It took every bit of strength I had to repel those thoughts from me. Now I have peace in my soul.

I’ve learned that happiness comes in different forms. It can be found in the blackest thunderclouds or when the earth is withering from heat. It is also in the warm rays of the sun in the midst of pouring rain. It is in the first green leaf of spring peeping out

of the cracked bud of a poplar tree. It is in the little white petal working itself out on a branch of an apple tree. It is in the darkness of the night sky with thousands of twinkling stars. It is in the tender look of a loved one. It looks out through shining eyes in family photographs.

Happiness also comes to me when I do something good for someone else. It warms my soul with a gentle flame when I pray to our Heavenly Father. Sometimes, when I think I want something more, I remember that I need to learn to value what I have—the Lord Himself gave it all to me. ■



*Faith builds
on the past but
never longs to
stay there. Faith
trusts that God
has great things
in store for each
of us.*

By Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



The Best

IS YET TO BE | *Look ahead and remember that faith is always pointed toward the future.*

The start of a new year is the traditional time to take stock of our lives and see where we are going, measured against the backdrop of where we have been. I don't want to talk about New Year's resolutions, but I do want to talk about the past and the future, with an eye toward *any* time of transition and change in our lives—and those moments come virtually every day.

As a scriptural theme for this discussion, I have chosen Luke 17:32, where the Savior cautions, "Remember Lot's wife." What did He mean by such an enigmatic little phrase? To find out, we need to do as He suggested. Let's recall who Lot's wife was.

The story, of course, comes to us out of the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, when the Lord, having had as much as He could stand of the worst that men and women could do, told Lot and his family to flee because those cities were about



As Lot and his family left Jerusalem, Lot's wife looked back and was turned to a pillar of salt for disobeying the Lord (see Genesis 19:26).

to be destroyed. "Escape for thy life," the Lord said. "*Look not behind thee . . . ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed*" (Genesis 19:17; emphasis added).

With less than immediate obedience and more than a little negotiation, Lot and his family ultimately did leave town but just in the nick of time. The scriptures tell us what happened at daybreak the morning following their escape:

"The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone

and fire from the Lord out of heaven;

"And he overthrew those cities" (Genesis 19:24–25).

My theme comes in the next verse. Surely, with the Lord's counsel—"look not behind thee"—ringing clearly in her ears, Lot's wife, the record says, "looked back," and she was turned into a pillar of salt (see verse 26).

Just what did Lot's wife do that was so wrong? As a student of history, I have thought about that and offer a partial answer. Apparently, what was wrong with Lot's wife was that she wasn't just *looking* back; in her heart she wanted to *go* back. It would appear that even before she was past the city limits, she was already missing what Sodom and Gomorrah had offered her. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once said, such people know they should have their primary residence in Zion, but they still hope to keep a summer cottage in Babylon.¹

It is possible that Lot's wife looked back with resentment toward the Lord for what He was asking her to leave behind. We certainly know that Laman and Lemuel were resentful when Lehi and his family were commanded to leave Jerusalem. So it isn't just that she

*Paul taught,
"This one thing
I do, forgetting
those things
which are
behind, and
reaching forth
unto those things
which are before,
I press toward
the mark for the
prize of the high
calling of God in
Christ Jesus."*

looked back; she looked back *longingly*. In short, her attachment to the past outweighed her confidence in the future. That, apparently, was at least part of her sin.

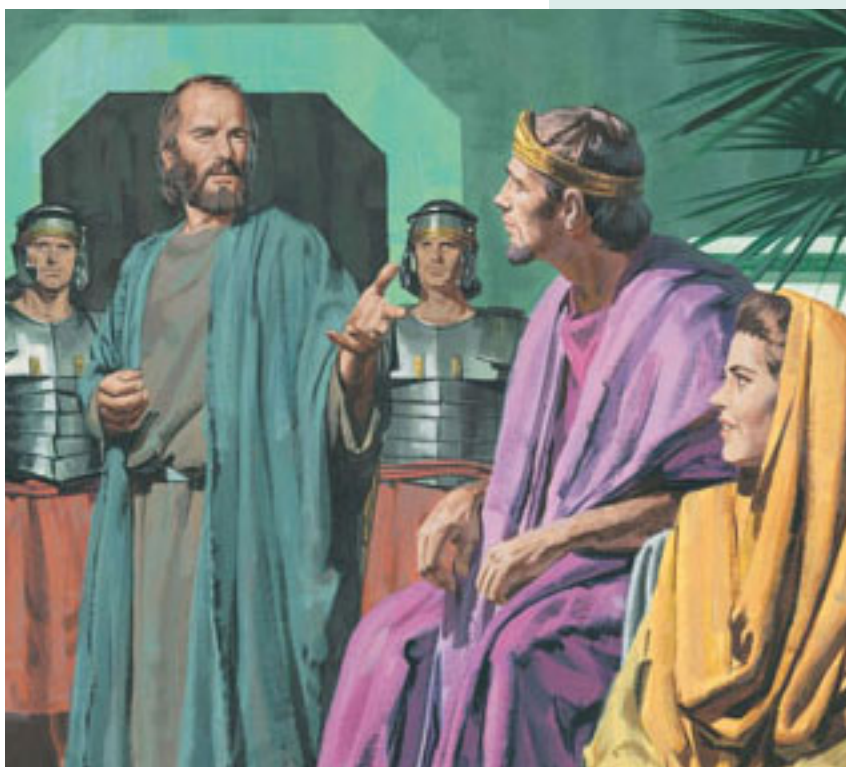
Faith Points to the Future

As a new year begins and we try to benefit from a proper view of what has gone before, I plead with you not to dwell on days now gone nor to yearn vainly for yesterdays, however good those yesterdays may have been. The past is to be learned from but not lived in. We look back to claim the embers from glowing experiences but not the ashes. And when we have learned what we need to learn and have brought with us the best that we have experienced, then we look ahead and remember that *faith is always pointed toward the future*. Faith always has to do with blessings and truths and events that will *yet* be efficacious in our lives.

So a more theological way to talk about Lot's wife is to say that she did not have faith. She doubted the Lord's ability to give her something better than she already had. Apparently, she thought that nothing that lay ahead could possibly be as good as what she was leaving behind.

To yearn to go back to a world that cannot be lived in now, to be perennially dissatisfied with present circumstances and have only dismal views of the future, and to miss the here and now and tomorrow because we are so trapped in the there and then and yesterday are some of the sins of Lot's wife.

After the Apostle Paul reviewed the privileged and rewarding life of his early years—his birthright, education, and standing in the Jewish community—he says to the



Leaving the Past in the Past

Name withheld

When I was 16, I didn't get along with my twin brother at all.

We fought about everything. One day he humiliated me at school with an intensely critical and personal attack in front of a group of friends. His actions and hurtful words left me devastated in a way my teenage self could not bear. Even when our parents confronted him about the incident, he never said he was sorry. For years I held onto the pain.

He was still on his mission when I received my own mission call. I was

preparing to enter the temple and began to reflect on my life to find where I needed to change to feel prepared to go to the temple. I realized that even though I didn't often think about what my brother did, I still needed to forgive him.

My brother had hurt me more than anyone else, and I knew it wasn't going to be easy to forgive him. So I prayed for help from Heavenly Father.

With His help, I decided to start writing my brother regularly on his mission. Before that, I'm sorry to admit, I hardly wrote him at all. Then I sent him a package. When I left on my mission, he came with my parents to the missionary training center and

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT GREER



gave me a hug. He even wrote me a few times.

I know that even though it may take time, with Heavenly Father's help, we can let the past remain in the past.

Philippians that all of that was “dung” compared to his conversion to Christianity. He says, and I paraphrase, “I have stopped rhapsodizing about ‘the good old days’ and now eagerly look toward the future ‘that I may apprehend that for which Christ apprehended me’” (see Philippians 3:7–12). Then come these verses:

“This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13–14).

No Lot's wife here. No looking back at Sodom and Gomorrah here. Paul knows it is out there in the future, up ahead wherever heaven is taking us, that we will win “the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Forgive and Forget

There is something in many of us that particularly fails to forgive and forget earlier mistakes in life—either our

mistakes or the mistakes of others. It is not good. It is not Christian. It stands in terrible opposition to the grandeur and majesty of the Atonement of Christ. To be tied to earlier mistakes is the worst kind of wallowing in the past from which we are called to cease and desist.

I was told once of a young man who for many years was more or less the brunt of every joke in his school. He had some disadvantages, and it was easy for his peers to tease him. Later in his life he moved away. He eventually joined the army and had some successful experiences there in getting an education and generally stepping away from his past. Above all, as many in the military do, he discovered the beauty and majesty of the Church and became active and happy in it.

Then, after several years, he returned to the town of his youth. Most of his generation had moved on but not all. Apparently, when he returned quite successful and quite reborn, the same old mind-set that had existed before was still there, waiting for his return. To the people in

his hometown, he was still just old “so-and-so”—you remember the guy who had the problem, the idiosyncrasy, the quirky nature, and did such and such. And wasn’t it all just hilarious?

Little by little this man’s Pauline effort to leave that which was behind and grasp the prize that God had laid before him was gradually diminished until he died about the way he had lived in his youth. He came full circle: again inactive and unhappy and the brunt of a new generation of jokes. Yet he had had that one bright, beautiful mid-life moment when he had been able to rise above his past and truly see who he was and what he could become. Too bad, too sad that he was again to be surrounded by a whole batch of Lot’s wives, those who thought his past was more interesting than his future. They managed to rip out of his

Live to see the miracles of repentance and forgiveness, of trust and divine love that will transform your life today, tomorrow, and forever.

grasp that for which Christ had grasped him. And he died sad, though through little fault of his own.

That also happens in marriages and other relationships. I can’t tell you the number of couples I have counseled who, when they are deeply hurt or even just deeply stressed, reach farther and farther into the past to find yet a bigger brick to throw through the window “pain” of their marriage. When something is over and done with, when it has been repented of as fully as it can be repented of, when life has moved on as it should and a lot of other wonderfully good things have happened since then, it is *not* right to go back and open some ancient wound that the Son of God Himself died to heal.

Let people repent. Let people grow. Believe that people can change and improve. Is that faith? Yes! Is that hope? Yes! Is that charity? Yes! Above all, it is charity, the pure love of Christ. If something is buried in the past, leave it buried. Don’t keep going back with your little sand pail and beach shovel to dig it up, wave it around, and then throw it at someone, saying, “Hey! Do you remember *this*?” Splat!

Well, guess what? That is probably going to result in some ugly morsel being dug up out of *your* landfill with the reply, “Yeah, I remember it. Do *you* remember *this*?” Splat.

And soon enough everyone comes out of that exchange dirty and muddy and unhappy and hurt, when what our Father in Heaven pleads for is cleanliness and kindness and happiness and healing.

Such dwelling on past lives, including past mistakes, is just not right! It is not the



gospel of Jesus Christ. In some ways it is worse than Lot's wife because at least she destroyed only herself. In cases of marriage and family, wards and branches, apartments and neighborhoods, we can end up destroying so many others.

Perhaps at this beginning of a new year there is no greater requirement for us than to do as the Lord Himself said He does: "He who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more" (D&C 58:42).

The proviso, of course, is that repentance has to be sincere, but when it is and when honest effort is being made to progress, we are guilty of the greater sin if we keep remembering and recalling and rebasing someone with his or her earlier mistakes—and that *someone* might be ourselves. We can be so hard on ourselves—often much more so than on others!

Now, like the Anti-Nephi-Lehies of the Book of Mormon, bury your weapons of war and leave them buried (see Alma 24). Forgive and do that which is sometimes harder than to forgive: forget. And when it comes to mind again, forget it again.

The Best Is Yet to Be

You can remember just enough to avoid repeating the mistake, but then put the rest of it all on the dung heap Paul spoke of to the Philippians. Dismiss the destructive, and keep dismissing it until the beauty of the Atonement of Christ has revealed to you your bright future and the bright future of your family, your friends, and your neighbors. God doesn't care nearly as much about where you have been as He does about where you are and, with His help, where you are willing to go. That is the thing Lot's wife didn't get—and neither did Laman and Lemuel and a host of others in the scriptures.

This is an important matter to consider at the start of a new year—and every day ought to be the start of a new year and a new life. Such is the wonder of faith, repentance, and the miracle of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The poet Robert Browning wrote:

LEARNING FROM THIS ARTICLE

What lessons from the past can guide you in the future?

What blessings do you want to exercise faith to receive?

Grow old along with me!

The best is yet to be,

*The last of life, for which the
first was made:*

Our times are in his hand

Who saith, "A whole I planned,

*Youth shows but half; trust God:
see all, nor be afraid!"²*

Some of you may wonder: Is there any future for me? What does a new year or a new semester, a new major or a new romance, a new job or a new home hold for me? Will I be safe? Will life be sound? Can I trust in the Lord and in the future? Or would it be better to look back, to go back, to stay in the past?

To all such of every generation, I call out, "Remember Lot's wife." Faith is for the future. Faith builds on the past but never longs to stay there. Faith trusts that God has great things in store for each of us and that Christ truly is the "high priest of good things to come" (Hebrews 9:11).

Keep your eyes on your dreams, however distant and far away. Live to see the miracles of repentance and forgiveness, of trust and divine love that will transform your life today, tomorrow, and forever. That is a New Year's resolution I ask you to keep. ■

From a Brigham Young University devotional address given on January 13, 2009. For the full text of the address in English, visit <http://speeches.byu.edu>.

NOTES

1. See Neal A. Maxwell, *A Wonderful Flood of Light* (1990), 47.
2. Robert Browning, "Rabbi Ben Ezra" (1864), stanza 1.

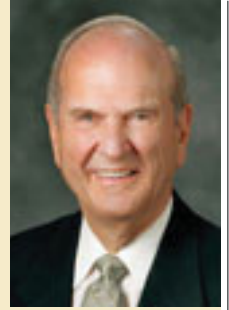


Gospel Principles

They shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer
and the very pains of His discipline, that they
may know how to come unto Him and be saved.
— Isaiah 53:4



By Elder
Russell M. Nelson
Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



THE NEW Gospel Principles MANUAL I

Since 1998 the lesson manuals for Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes have been volumes of *Teachings of Presidents of the Church* (hereafter *Teachings*). Each manual focused on the life and teachings of one of our beloved prophets. These wonderful books create an invaluable resource for members across the world to come to know and love these great men and the marvelous doctrines they taught. Their counsel is as inspiring and pertinent today as it was when those Brethren first delivered the addresses included in those books. We hope that you continue to use the inspired literature of these faithful servants of the Lord. Their teachings are timeless.

Beginning in 2010 we will take a two-year leave from the study of manuals

in this series. In their place, during the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes on the second and third Sunday of each month, we will study the newly revised *Gospel Principles* manual. Naturally, members may wonder why the change was made and how it will affect them. The following are some questions that may come to mind and the answers.

Why the Change in Curriculum?

Since we first began using *Teachings*, millions of people have joined the Church. Many of them have tender testimonies and, with relatively limited experience in the Church, will benefit greatly by a focus on the fundamentals of the gospel. In addition, all Church members will benefit by a return to the basics. A careful study of core

This beautiful volume will be a great addition to any home library as well as the Church classroom.

doctrines as presented in the new and improved *Gospel Principles* manual will help members strengthen their understanding of the fundamental teachings of the gospel.

The *Teachings* manuals have been a wonderful curriculum for our

The new Gospel Principles manual features color photographs and illustrations.

classes and precious additions to our personal libraries. In 2012 we will resume the study of the teachings of our great Presidents.

How Will This Affect Me?

The *Gospel Principles* manual will be used as the course of study for second- and third-Sunday Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes. It will also be used as the manual for the Gospel Principles Sunday School class for new members, investigators, and members returning to activity. Because of this, some of you may wonder if there won't be some redundancy. Of course there will! Isn't it wonderful that we can gain the added benefit of repetition. Even the Savior taught the same doctrines multiple times to reinforce concepts. Consider how often He teaches us through the scriptures to believe and be baptized (see, for example, 3 Nephi 11:23–38)!

Knowing that we need to learn principles line upon line, precept upon precept, the Lord repeats many concepts so that we do not miss them (see Isaiah 28:10, 13; 2 Nephi 28:30; D&C 98:12; 128:21). Such instruction, handled by caring teachers who take an interest in the welfare of their class members, will help increase faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In practice, however, there will be less overlap than



Teaching suggestions in each chapter help teachers invite learning and teach by the Spirit.

one might think. The Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes typically will use the manual two weeks a month, on the second and third Sundays, just as the *Teachings* manuals have been used. Lessons will follow a

Each section begins with thought-provoking questions or statements that will aid individual study and foster classroom discussion.

sequential order in which we will finish the *Gospel Principles* manual in two years. Meanwhile, teachers preparing for the Gospel Principles Sunday School class will tailor their lessons each week to the needs of their class participants. Generally speaking, new members, investigators, and members returning to activity will participate in the Gospel Principles class for a period of time determined by them and their bishop or branch president, after which time they will attend the Gospel Doctrine Sunday School class.

As with the *Teachings* manuals, there will be no cost to individuals receiving these new manuals. Each ward or branch will provide the necessary manuals for its members.

In some parts of the world, the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes have been using the books *Duties and Blessings of the Priesthood* and *The Latter-day Saint Woman* instead of *Teachings*. Published in 45 languages, the new edition of *Gospel Principles* will be available in some of these units during the years 2010 and 2011. Where the new manual is not available, however, the older edition of the *Gospel Principles* manual will still be used.

Find the new *Gospel Principles* manual online at languages.lds.org.

How Has the *Gospel Principles* Manual Changed?

Our excellent *Gospel Principles* manual was first published more than 30 years ago. It has enjoyed wide use in the Church as a manual for Sunday School lessons, for teaching new members about basic gospel principles, and as an important resource in the home. However, the Brethren felt we could improve upon the existing manual and breathe new life into it. The result is a beautiful volume that will be a great addition to any home library as well as the Church classroom.

The new edition has several significant features in the design and text:

1. Design

The new edition will be increased in size and have a new cover similar to the *Teachings* volumes. We also have updated the design of the text to make it easier to read. The visuals will be in color. All of this provides a more pleasing visual experience that will enhance personal study.

2. Text

The text has been revised to make the manual more effective for personal study, teacher preparation, and class discussions. To aid personal study, many of the quotations and source citations have been updated to link this book with the *Teachings* volumes that have been published previously. This will allow individuals to learn more from the prophets who are quoted in the *Gospel Principles* manual. The integration of these manuals will enrich study both in the classroom and at home.

3. Teaching and Learning Suggestions

In each chapter are ideas that will help teachers improve their teaching. The ideas are based on sound teaching principles from



The new Gospel Principles manual is designed to enhance teaching in the home and classroom, as well as to aid personal study.

Teaching, No Greater Call, the Church's resource for teacher improvement. The ideas are intended to help teachers love those they teach, invite diligent learning, and teach the doctrine by the Spirit.

Additionally, questions that begin each section in a chapter will help foster discussion and direct class members to the content within the section. Questions that follow each section will help class members ponder, discuss, and apply what they have read.

A Timeless Book

It is our hope that the new *Gospel Principles* manual will take a prominent place in the homes and lives of all Latter-day Saints. The new edition will inspire teaching and enhance personal study. Brothers and sisters, by reinforcing your study of the core doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ, your testimony will grow, your happiness will increase, and you will find a greater abundance of the blessings of the Lord in your life. ■

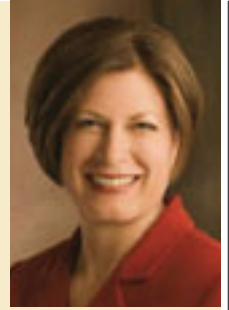


1 Increase Faith and Personal Righteousness.

The first-Sunday lesson gives us an opportunity to turn to the scriptures for the doctrines that will help us meet the challenges of the latter days.

By Julie B. Beck

Relief Society
General President



STUDYING THE WORK OF Relief Society

When our presidency was first called, we were given some resources about the history of the Relief Society, which had been collected over the years. We studied them prayerfully, wanting to know the purpose of Relief Society and what the Lord would have us do during our administration.

As we studied that history carefully, we learned that the purpose of Relief Society as established by the Lord is to organize, teach, and inspire His daughters to prepare them for the blessings of eternal life. Relief Society applies to all aspects of a Latter-day Saint woman's life. Sisters are taught and inspired through visiting teaching, service, and Relief Society meetings. Each Sunday our goal in Relief Society is to study the doctrine and principles that will help us achieve our purposes. As a result of our Sunday lessons, sisters should be able to live the gospel with greater conviction in their families and homes.

The First Sunday Is Different

On the second, third, and fourth Sundays of the month, we study *Gospel Principles* and teachings from general conference as a way to lead us to the blessings of eternal life. However, on the first Sunday of the month, a member of the Relief Society presidency instructs us and leads us in discussions as to how we can fulfill our sacred responsibilities as members of the Relief Society.

As Latter-day Saint women we have the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and testimonies of the plan of salvation. We are responsible for the female half of that plan. It cannot be delegated to others. We are accountable before the Lord for the discharge of our duties. And the first Sunday of the month is the Lord's gift of time to us as Relief Society sisters to learn how to fulfill our responsibilities.

I hope that we will use that gift of time to fulfill our three lifelong responsibilities as members of the Relief Society: (1) increase faith and personal righteousness, (2) strengthen families and homes, and (3) seek out and help those in need.

On the first Sunday of the month, the Relief Society presidency leads us in discussions on how we can fulfill our sacred responsibilities as Relief Society sisters.

2 Strengthen Families and Homes.

On the first Sunday of the month, we can learn how to uphold, nourish, and protect families.



STEP UP AND BE STRONG



“Some women have said that it is frightening to teach a class or speak in front of a group. I can assure you I know from experience that it can be rather intimidating. Let’s remember what Eliza R. Snow once said to her niece who was called upon to speak in front of a group. When her niece arose, she was unable to say anything because fear overcame her. She finally just sat down. Eliza kindly and gently advised her, ‘Never mind, but when you are asked to speak again, try and have something to say.’ . . .

“At a wonderful Relief Society meeting, Eliza R. Snow recorded in the minutes that ‘nearly all present arose and spoke, and the spirit of the Lord like a purifying stream, refreshed every heart.’ We hope our sisters today feel nourished, edified, and uplifted every time they attend a Sunday lesson.

“Sisters, now more than ever, we need

women to step up and be strong. We need women who declare the truth with strength, faith, and boldness. We need women to set an example of righteousness. We need women to be ‘anxiously engaged in a good cause’ (D&C 58:27). We need to live so that our lives bear witness that we love our Heavenly Father and the Savior Jesus Christ and that we will do what They have asked us to do. We need to rescue ‘all that is finest down deep inside of [us]’ so that as daughters of God we can do our part to build the kingdom of God. We will have help to do this. As Joseph declared, ‘If you live up to your privileges, the angels cannot be restrained from being your associates.’”

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, “Now Let Us Rejoice,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 115, 116.

I hope we will turn to the scriptures and approved Church resources for the examples, principles, and doctrines that will help us accomplish these responsibilities and learn how to meet the challenges of the latter days. Emma Hale Smith, our first Relief Society president, was told to “expound scriptures, and to exhort the church, according as it shall be given thee by my Spirit” (D&C 25:7). We can follow her example.

If I were to do this in a first-Sunday Relief Society meeting, I would begin by prayerfully deciding what we should be learning. I would then search the scriptures to discover what they have to teach us on that topic. I would learn what prophets and Church leaders have taught. Then I would pray for the Spirit’s guidance as I wrote down some discussion questions we could use as we study together in our first-Sunday meeting. I would hope that sisters would go home stronger and use this same pattern to study in their homes and teach their families.

Increasing Faith and Personal Righteousness

My grandmother, Isabelle Bawden Bangerter, was known to be a woman of great faith. She acquired her faith as a child and worked to increase it all her life. She taught Relief Society for many years, and among Relief Society sisters she was known as a theologian, a woman who knew the gospel well and could teach it from the scriptures. She was still studying the scriptures when she died at the age of 97. Grandma Bangerter was a woman who was confident in her eternal roles and responsibilities. When I was a young mother, I asked her if it was possible to rear a righteous posterity in a world filled with wickedness. She raised herself up, and pointing at me, she emphatically said, “Yes! You

must! That is why you are here!” Her teaching inspired me to become more intentional about my responsibilities and to approach life with greater faith. It is possible to have that kind of direct and inspired teaching every week in Relief Society.

Sisters frequently have questions about how to live through the experiences of this mortal life in a faith-filled way. The first Sunday of the month gives us the opportunity to bring together the combined faith that exists in each Relief Society. The wisdom of all present can help answer real questions and provide inspired answers.

Following are other examples of what we can study on the first Sunday to help us increase our faith and personal righteousness:

- Making and keeping covenants.
- Qualifying for a temple recommend and worshipping in temples.
- Qualifying for, recognizing, and following the influence of the Holy Ghost.
- Teaching and defending Jesus Christ’s gospel.
- Participating in sincere personal and family prayer.
- Having family home evening.
- Implementing principles of self-reliance and provident living.

Strengthening Families and Homes

When I was a young Relief Society sister, we had a mother-education class once a month. Though I had a wonderful and skilled mother, I still learned from my teachers in Relief Society how to be a better mother and how to improve my home. We learned home-making principles and skills, we learned how to be better parents, and we learned how to strengthen our marriages.



BLESSINGS OF THE TEMPLE

“Do whatever may be necessary to qualify to receive [the blessings of the temple]. . . .

“. . . Go to the temple to seal our families eternally. Let us return to the temple as often as our circumstances will permit. Let us give our kindred dead the opportunity to receive the ordinances of exaltation. Let us enjoy the spiritual strength and the revelation we receive as we attend the temple regularly. Let us be faithful and make and keep temple covenants to receive the full blessings of the Atonement.”

Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, “Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 114.

3 Seek Out and Help Those in Need. We have the responsibility to provide relief—relief of poverty, illness, doubt, ignorance, and all that hinders the joy and progress of women.

Young mothers often ask me if we can ever have mother education again in Relief Society. My answer is yes. We can learn how to uphold, nourish, and protect families on the first Sunday of the month.

Following are some examples of what we can study on the first Sunday to help us strengthen families and homes:

- Understanding and defending the divine roles of women.
- Embracing the blessings of the priesthood.
- Forming eternal families.
- Maintaining strong marriages.
- Bearing and rearing children.
 - Expressing love for family members and nurturing them.
 - Accepting responsibility to prepare a

righteous rising generation of Latter-day Saints.

- Knowing, living, and defending the doctrine of the family.
- Searching out deceased family members and performing temple ordinances for them.

Seeking Out and Helping Those in Need

First-Sunday lessons are our opportunity to strengthen one another and find answers to life's difficulties. At any given time many of the sisters in each Relief Society are experiencing trials and disappointments. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has called each ward Relief Society a "circle of sisters." He said:

"Each sister, no matter where in that circle she stands, can look to either side and feel the spirit of inspiration coming back as she extends the



gentle hand of charity to those on either side. . . .

“ . . . You will serve your organization, your cause—the Relief Society—this great circle of sisters. Your every need shall be fulfilled, now, and in the eternities; every neglect will be erased; every abuse will be corrected. All of this can come to you, and come quickly, when you devote yourself to Relief Society.”¹

It has been my experience that each ward Relief Society has the capacity to give to one another the support that is needed. If we seek and receive the help of the Holy Ghost, all answers can be found in each circle of sisters.

We have the responsibility to provide relief—relief of poverty, illness, doubt, ignorance, and all that hinders the joy and progress of woman. Relief Society has always been engaged in providing relief to others.

We know that because we are living in the latter days, we as individuals and families are facing many difficult challenges. These challenges include abuse, addictions, apathy, debt, depression, disobedience, unemployment, family disintegration, illness, persecution, poverty, and violence. This sounds very much like what the Apostle Paul prophesied in 2 Timothy 3:1–7, 13. However, we need not be afraid. We have the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul also gave us the solution:

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:14–16).

RESOURCES FOR FIRST-SUNDAY LESSONS

- Scriptures
- Teachings of latter-day prophets
- The *Ensign* magazine
- *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Finances and Family Home Storage* (pamphlets, item nos. 04007, 04008)
- *For the Strength of Youth* (pamphlet, item no. 36550)
- *Family Guidebook and A Parent's Guide* (booklets, item nos. 31180, 31125)
- *Marriage and Family Relations* (Sunday School manual, item no. 35865)
- *Preach My Gospel* (missionary guide, item no. 36617)



On the first Sunday, a member of the Relief Society presidency can personalize the work of Relief Society. She can focus on charitable works as solutions to specific ward or branch needs. She can train the sisters to be visiting teachers who address the needs of others as they find them. And when appropriate, she can make assignments to help specific people in need.

Using the First Sunday

I believe that as Relief Society leaders seek the help of the Holy Ghost, they will be inspired as to what to study and teach during the first-Sunday meeting of Relief Society. I know that the Lord's work will continue to go forth across the earth and that it will prosper in large part because the good women of the Church will do all they can to further that work in their own homes and families first and then in their other circles of friendship and acquaintance. ■

NOTE

1. Boyd K. Packer, “The Circle of Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 109, 110.

WHO, ME? TEACH?



And now we'll turn the time over to [fill in your name] for our lesson." If you were to hear these words in church next Sunday, would you feel fearful or confident?

Sooner or later every member of the Church becomes a teacher. It might happen in Primary, in Relief Society or a priesthood quorum, in visiting or home teaching, or in family home evening. For many people who are new in the Church, the role of teacher may not be familiar. Even those who have taught many times may wonder how they can be more confident and effective in touching lives for good.

Here are some simple ideas that can help each of us fulfill our teaching assignments:

1. Prayer is an important teaching tool. Begin each phase of your lesson preparation by praying humbly for the guidance of the Spirit. Rely on the Lord's promise to all teachers: "The Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith" (D&C 42:14).
2. Almost every lesson has more material in the manual than you will be able to cover in class. Read the lesson, and prayerfully choose one or two main principles that you feel are best for your class.
3. Prayerfully study the scriptures related to your lesson, and draw examples and principles from them. The word of God can have a "more powerful effect upon

the minds of the people than . . . anything else" (Alma 31:5).

4. Take comfort in the fact that you do not need to know everything about the lesson to be an effective teacher. Plan some simple questions that will allow your class members to share their experiences and insights. These can be the most moving and memorable parts of your lesson.
5. As a teacher, you are called to learn as well. Gospel teaching "calls for your diligent efforts to increase your understanding and improve your skills, knowing that the Lord will magnify you as you teach in the way He has commanded."¹

For more teaching ideas, see *Teaching, No Greater Call*. ■

NOTE

1. *Teaching, No Greater Call* (1999), 4.

LEADERSHIP IDEAS

When you are serving in a presidency, be sure to attend when teachers and others called to serve in your organization are set apart. Then set a time when you can meet to:

1. Explain the responsibilities of the new calling.
2. Pass on lesson manuals or leadership materials.
3. Offer support and further training.
4. Express your appreciation for and faith in the newly called member.



IF I WERE GOING TO TEACH

I would read through and begin praying about that lesson the Sunday before. That gives me a full week to pray, to seek inspiration, to think, to read and watch for real-life applications that will give vitality to my message. You won't finalize the lesson that early, but you will be surprised to find how many things come to you during the week, how much God gives you—things that you will feel to use when you do finalize your preparation."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Teaching and Learning in the Church" (worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 10, 2007), *Liahona*, June 2007, 58; *Ensign*, June 2007, 90.

**Right: Abraham,
Father of the Faithful,**
by Ruth Dubrez

**Far Right: The Lord
Fulfilleth all His Words,**
by Clark Kelley Price

**Below: Rebekah at
the Well,**
by Michael Deas



Prophets

of the Old Testament

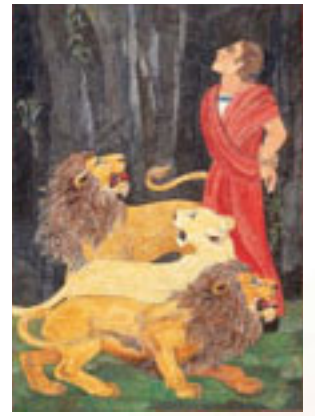


Above: Adam and Eve,
by Douglas M. Fryer

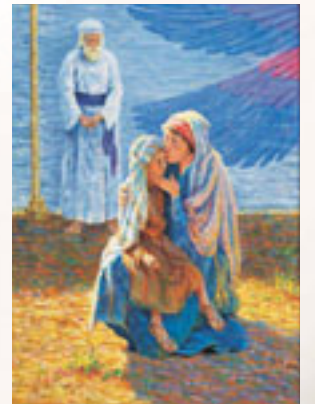
*"Surely the
experiences of the
great prophets of the
Old Testament have
been recorded to help us
understand the importance
of choosing the path of strict
obedience."*

President Howard W. Hunter,
"Committed to God,"
Ensign, Nov. 1982, 58.

Below: *The Prophet Isaiah Foretells Christ's Birth*,
by Harry Anderson

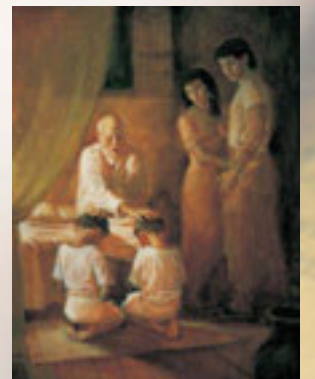


Above: *Daniel in the Lions' Den*,
by Phyllis Luch



Above: *Hannah Presenting Samuel to Eli*,
by Clark Kelley Price

Below: *Moses with Aaron and Hur*,
Artist Unknown



Above: *Israel Blesses Ephraim with Birthright*,
by D. Keith Larson



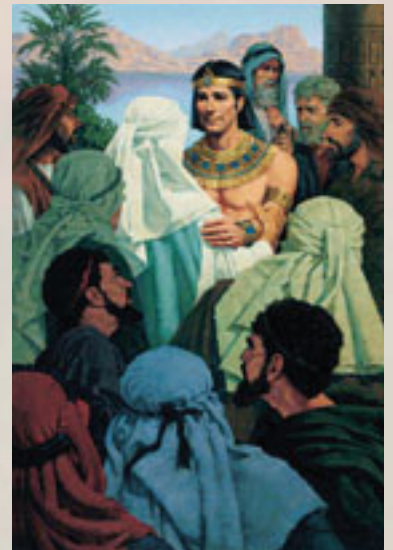
Above: **An Angel of the Lord Came to Elijah,**
by Walter Rane



Above: **David and Goliath,**
by Steve Nethercott

"The Old Testament prophets from Adam to Malachi are testifying of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament, and it was He who conversed with Abraham and Moses."

President Spencer W. Kimball,
Ensign, May 1977, 76.



Above: **Joseph Making Himself Known to His Brothers,**
by Ted Henninger



By Elder Ronald A. Rasband
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

“Moses, My Son”

*God knows us, loves us,
and desires our salvation
and exaltation.*

From my earliest days in Primary, I have always loved the stories of the Old Testament. Though these stories at times seemed supernatural to me with their portrayals of divine intervention in the affairs of God’s children, they are, first of all, accounts of the lives of otherwise ordinary men and women. Noah, Ruth, Jeremiah, Esther, and many others dealt with challenges that are the common lot of mankind: they married, had children, worked to survive, confronted enemies, battled discouragement, and in the process had their lives touched by God in often spectacular ways.

In reading about these Old Testament individuals, we discover that they were not so different from us. The fact that God was mindful of them and that they were of service to Him gives hope that the same is possible for us.

While working on his translation of the Bible in June 1830, the Prophet Joseph Smith had a vision



in which he was shown an extraordinary experience that had been given to Moses (see Moses 1–8).

This revelation serves as a further witness to what Moses taught in the Old Testament. This was the same man of whom it was said, “Now the man Moses was very meek, above

all the men which were upon the face of the earth” (Numbers 12:3). Here is a perfect example of an ordinary man having an extraordinary experience.

In this remarkable vision, Moses learned the truth about:

- Who God is.
- Who we are in relation to Him.
- Why He caused the earth to be created.
- The reality of Satan and how we can resist him.
- The role the Lord Jesus Christ played.

Let’s explore some of these in greater detail.



A Son of God

In this revelation God repeatedly refers to Moses as “my son” and teaches him that he was created in the similitude of the Savior (Moses 1:6). Commenting on the importance of this truth, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

In a revelation restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith, God repeatedly referred to Moses as “my son” and taught him that he was created in the similitude of the Savior.

“Consider the power of the idea taught in our beloved song ‘I Am a Child of God’ . . . Here is the answer to one of life’s great questions, ‘Who am I?’ I am a child of God with a spirit lineage to heavenly parents. That parentage defines our eternal potential. That powerful idea is a potent antidepressant. It can strengthen each of us to make righteous choices and to seek the best that is within us. Establish in the mind of a . . . person the powerful idea that he or she is a child of God and you have given self-respect and motivation to move against the problems of life.”¹

After being shown the creations of God and witnessing the power and glory of the Lord, Moses was moved to declare, “Now, for this cause I know that man is nothing” (Moses 1:10). Does this contradict Elder Oaks’s statement?

Not at all. Moses had simply come to understand that *by comparison*, God is infinitely wiser and more powerful than mortal men and women. It is our faith that as sons and daughters of God, we have the potential to become like Him.

Resisting Satan

After witnessing the power and glory of God, Moses was confronted by Satan, who “came tempting him, saying: Moses, *son of man*, worship me” (Moses 1:12; emphasis added). Note that Satan attempted to persuade Moses that he was not, as he had been assured, a son of God



MOSES OVERCOMES SATAN, BY JOSEPH BRICKEY

but rather a “son of man”—that is, a mere mortal. It is obvious why Satan wants us to doubt that we are spiritually begotten children of God. Dissuading us that we have divine potential erodes the nobility to which we ought to aspire and invites us to embrace the sins of this world. In doing so we surrender to the adversary and forfeit our rightful divine inheritance.

Moses provides us with a wonderful example of how to resist the blandishments of Satan. Moses said, “I will not cease to call upon God” (Moses 1:18), teaching

us the importance of prayer. Then Moses commanded Satan to depart from him, speaking “in the name of the Only Begotten” and thus declaring his loyalty to Jesus Christ and his dependence on the Savior’s Atonement (Moses 1:20–21). By displaying such determination, Moses was strengthened and succeeded in driving Satan from him.

God Reveals His Purposes

After Satan had departed, Moses again beheld the glory of God and was shown a marvelous vision. He was shown “the earth, yea, even all of it; and there was not a particle of it which he did not behold, discerning it by the spirit of God.

“And he beheld also the inhabitants thereof, and there was not a soul which he beheld not; and he discerned them by the Spirit of God; and their numbers were great, even numberless as the sand upon the sea shore” (Moses 1:27–28).

Awed by the extent and grandeur of what he had beheld, Moses asked what we might have asked had we been in his place: “Tell me, I pray thee,

why these things are so, and by what thou madest them” (Moses 1:30).

The answer the Lord gave is perhaps the most succinct and revealing description found anywhere of the purposes of God. He explained:

“This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39; emphasis added).

What a declaration! God’s works may be endless, but He knows and loves each of us. His intent—His “work”

Moses commanded Satan to depart from him, speaking “in the name of the Only Begotten” and thus declaring his loyalty to Jesus Christ.

and His “glory”—is to bring salvation and exaltation to us, His spiritually begotten children.

President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, provided this simple, yet profound explanation of what this means:

“There is a distinction between immortality, or eternal existence, and eternal life, which is to have a place in the presence of God. Through the grace of Jesus Christ, immortality comes to all . . . , just or unjust, righteous or wicked. However, eternal life is ‘the greatest of all the gifts of God’ (D&C 14:7). We obtain this great gift, according to the Lord, ‘if you keep my commandments and endure to the end.’ If we so endure, the promise is, ‘you shall have eternal life’ (D&C 14:7).”²

As Latter-day Saints, we are grateful for the wonderful gospel truths provided by the Book of Moses. These additional insights strengthen what we are taught by Moses in the Old Testament. If these truths—our relationship to God, the reality of Satan, and the plan of salvation—were universally understood by the world, imagine what they would do to dispel fear, doubt, hopelessness, and unrighteousness. Without an understanding of these truths, mankind continues to “grope for the wall like the blind, . . . as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men” (Isaiah 59:10).

Many times in my own life I have felt an assurance that God is interested in me—in my personal salvation. And as Moses knew, I know that I am one of Heavenly Father’s sons. I also know that each of us is precious to and loved



USING THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDY GUIDE

“I use my study guide every week,” says Twyla Harris, whose booklet is filled with notes. “I read the listed scriptures, answer the questions, and share what I have learned with my children and grandchildren.”

Sister Harris has discovered that the *Old Testament Class Member Study Guide* is a valuable tool for learning the gospel. “I have a testimony that if we follow the teachings of the gospel, we will avoid many problems, and our life will be filled with hope,” she says.

You too can enhance your gospel study by using the study guide with your scriptures. The study guide includes the following helps for each Sunday School lesson:

1. Scripture-reading assignments.
2. Questions that encourage class discussion.
3. Questions that help us think about modern-day application of Old Testament scriptures.

The Old Testament consists of prophecies and teachings from at least 29 prophets and other inspired leaders. The study guide is written to help us focus on the chapters that highlight their prophecies and teachings as well as the enlightening events from their lives.

As we study the Old Testament and the books of Abraham and Moses in the Pearl of Great Price, we can prayerfully and diligently use the study guide as the tool it is meant to be. And as we study and read this ancient scripture, may we remember the words of President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency: “The message of the Old Testament is the message of Christ and his coming and his atonement” (“The Message of the Old Testament,” *A Symposium on the Old Testament* [1979], 5).

by God. He cares, He whispers, and He watches over us in ways unique to each of our lives.

Like Nephi of old, I can say: “I do not know the meaning of all things” (1 Nephi 11:17). Nevertheless, I do know and witness that God our Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in their infinite greatness, know and love you and me personally as expressed to Moses through revelation. ■

NOTES

1. Dallin H. Oaks, “Powerful Ideas,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 25.
2. James E. Faust, “The Supernal Gift of the Atonement,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 12.

MAKING MOUNTAINS

The Parables of
the Mountain Guide
and the Mountain

By Adam C. Olson
Church Magazines





As an interpretive tour guide in Yushan National Park in Taiwan, Chén Yù Chuàn (Richard) is often assigned to escort important visitors around the park. Typically when he asks his guests what they would like to see, they want to go to the top of Yushan (Jade Mountain), the highest peak in northeast Asia at 12,966 feet (3,952 m).

Richard has a passion for nature and loves the beauty and majesty of Yushan. But through experience he has learned something important that he tries to share with his visitors: the spectacular view from above gains its real value only after one has experienced what's below.

Visiting the peak, with its manmade trails and wonderful view, is a great experience, but Richard tries to explain that there is much to learn and much hidden beauty to find in the more difficult-to-access river gorges and canyons below.

"To appreciate the height, you must experience the bottom," he says. "You can't appreciate the end without understanding the process."

Some of his visitors are persuaded; however,

most just want to make it to the top—and they want the easiest way there.

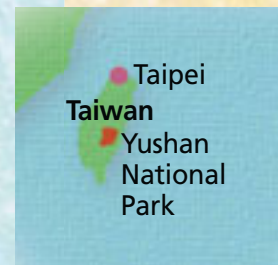
Richard sees some spiritual symbolism in their attitudes. As he describes it, the peak of life's experiences is to be able to return to God's presence (see Alma 12:24). Yet while many recognize the value of that goal, some don't realize that to be *with* Him, we must become *like* Him (see 1 John 3:2; 3 Nephi 27:27; Moroni 7:48). And there is no quick and easy path to that peak.

The True Guide

Richard doesn't want to take visitors for just a walk; he wants to give them an experience. But he is limited in how much he can teach them by their level of desire.

"I can take those who *want* to experience nature to places that others rarely see," he says. "Their experience may be more difficult, but it is much richer."

Richard feels that life is no different, and his personal experiences reflect this



Taipei
Taiwan
Yushan National Park

To appreciate the summit, one must experience the valleys, says Richard Chén (left, at Baiyang Waterfall in Taroko National Park). Brother Chén is a guide in Yushan National Park, home to Jade Mountain (above).

principle. While a university student, Richard began a search for real purpose in life. He visited a number of churches without finding what he was searching for—until he met the missionaries.

His parents, however, strongly opposed his joining the Church. They worried about their only son leaving their faith. They also worried about what would become of them. Many in their culture believe that their standing in the afterlife depends heavily upon the veneration offered them by their living descendants.

Although he struggled with his parents' opposition, Richard had gained a testimony of the Savior and the need to follow Him.

THE GROWTH REQUIRED TO RETURN HOME

One's life . . . cannot be both faith-filled and stress-free. . . .

"Therefore, how can you and I really expect to glide naively through life, as if to say, 'Lord, give me experience, but not grief, not sorrow, not pain, not opposition, not betrayal, and certainly not to be forsaken. Keep from me, Lord, all those experiences which made Thee what Thou art! Then let me come and dwell with Thee and fully share Thy joy!' . . .

"Real faith . . . is required to endure this necessary but painful developmental process."

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds," *Ensign*, May 1991, 88, 90.



"Jesus Christ is the way," Richard says. "He is the True Guide back to the Father" (see John 14:6).

He chose to follow the Savior and be baptized, trusting that the Lord would lead him down the right path even if it looked harder.

A week after his baptism, he was blessed with a good job as a radio news reporter for the largest broadcasting corporation in Taiwan. Getting the job pleased his parents,

and along with the change for good they saw in him, it helped smooth ruffled feathers. It also strengthened his faith and taught him an important lesson.

"If we don't follow Jesus Christ," he says, "we will miss a lot of important experiences that we need." These experiences may be more difficult, but they are necessary for our good (see 2 Nephi 2:2; D&C 122:7).

How Mountains Are Made

Anyone who follows Richard through his beloved gorges and valleys will undoubtedly learn that the mountains of Taiwan and its precipitous east coast were created by the collision of two plates in the earth's crust. The intense heat and pressure created by that powerful force turned layers of sediment first to limestone, then to the marble for which the east coast is famous. That same unseen power shakes and grinds and buckles the earth, eventually sending mountain ranges soaring into the heavens.

Whether in Yushan or Taroko National Park, where he worked earlier, Richard loves to point out evidence of how the forces of nature formed Taiwan from the bottom up.

"There are ripple marks on the highest rock, and there are sea fossils and other evidence of what's on top having once been at the bottom," Richard says. "If you want to understand the summit, you must understand the depths, because that's where the summit began."

Richard believes this is important because it parallels the purpose of life. In difficult times it can seem like we aren't just visitors to the mountain but more like the mountain itself, buffeted by forces and stresses that shape us and push us toward heaven if we can bear them with patience and faith (see Mosiah 23:21–22; D&C 121:7–8).

Making Mountains of Us

From his own experiences Richard has learned that we cannot rise up out of the world to reach our highest potential without undergoing uncomfortable, sometimes painful, experiences.

As a radio reporter Richard worked under considerable pressure covering a wide variety of topics on short deadlines. He soon learned that social drinking was an

important way many reporters obtained information. Work became increasingly difficult because he refused to participate in the drinking.

The thought of finding a new job eased his conscience but not his challenges. His radio job had helped pacify his parents after he joined the Church. So when he left the high-paying, prestigious, full-time job for part-time contract work as a guide, his parents were disappointed for a time.

It was another difficult path to choose, but he doesn't regret taking it because he knows that to be "exalted on high" (see D&C 121:7–8), we must first experience the lows (see D&C 122:5–7).

"We sometimes limit what God can make of us



because we don't want to experience the bad with the good," he says.

Following the Lord led him to a job he enjoyed. It led him to serve a mission. It introduced him to his future wife, with whom he now has four beautiful children. Despite the trials, there has been no end to the blessings.

When discipleship leads through "the path of the low valley" (2 Nephi 4:32) and even "the valley of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4) on its way to "him who dwells on high" (D&C 1:1), Richard takes comfort in the promise that "the words of Christ, if we follow their course, [shall] carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land of promise" (Alma 37:45)—further confirmation to him that it is only after experiencing the challenges of life that we will be prepared to enjoy the summit. ■



Those who follow Brother Chén through the valleys, such as this one created by a tributary of the Liwu River (far left), learn about the intense geological forces, such a waterfall (left) or the contorted marble wall of the Mysterious Valley (above). The forces that make mountains are parallel to the refining process one must endure to return to God's presence.

For more on this story, including a gallery of photos from Taroko National Park, visit ensign.lds.org.



Solving

By President Boyd K. Packer

President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS IN THE LORD'S OWN WAY

Our bishops face increasing calls to counsel members with problems that have more to do with emotional needs than with the need for food or clothing or shelter.

My message, therefore, is to the subject: solving emotional problems in the Lord's own way.

Fortunately, the principles of temporal welfare apply to emotional problems as well. . . .

Principles of Self-Reliance

The welfare handbook instructs: “[We must] earnestly teach and urge Church members to be self-sustaining to the full extent of their powers. No true Latter-day Saint will . . . voluntarily shift from himself the burden of his own support. So long as he can, under the inspiration of the Almighty and with his own labors, he will supply himself with the necessities of life” ([1952], 2). . . .

We have succeeded fairly well in teaching Latter-day

Saints that they should take care of their own material needs and then contribute to the welfare of those who cannot provide for themselves.

If a member is unable to sustain himself, then he is to call upon his own family, and then upon the Church, in that order. . . .

When people are *able* but *unwilling* to take care of themselves, we are responsible to employ the dictum of the Lord that the idler shall not eat the bread of the laborer. (See D&C 42:42.)

The simple rule has been to take care of one's self. This

couplet of truth has been something of a model: “Eat it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.”

When the Church welfare program was first announced in 1936, the First Presidency said:

“. . . *The aim of the Church is to help people help themselves*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 3; italics added). . . .

It is a self-help system, not a quick handout system. It requires a careful inventory of all personal and family resources, all of which must be committed before anything is added from the outside.

It is not an unkind or an unfeeling bishop who requires a member to work to the fullest extent he can for what he receives from Church welfare.

There should not be the slightest embarrassment for

Spiritual independence and self-reliance is a sustaining power in the Church. If we rob the members of that, how can they get revelation for themselves? How will they know there is a prophet of God? How can they get answers to prayers? How can they know for sure for themselves? . . .

any member to be assisted by the Church. *Provided*, that is, that he has contributed all that he can. . . .

The substance of what I want to say is this: The same principle—self-reliance—has application to the spiritual and to the emotional. . . .

Unless we use care, we are on the verge of doing to ourselves emotionally (and, therefore, spiritually) what we have been working so hard for generations to avoid materially.

Counseling

We seem to be developing an epidemic of “counselitis” which drains spiritual strength from the Church much like the common cold drains more strength out of humanity

than any other disease. . . .

Speaking figuratively, many a bishop keeps on the corner of his desk a large stack of order forms for emotional relief.

When someone comes with a problem, the bishop, unfortunately, without a question, passes them out, without stopping to think what he is doing to his people. . . .

Application to Families

. . . Fathers are responsible to preside over their families.

Sometimes, with all good intentions, we require so much of both the children and the father that he is not able to do so.

If my boy needs counseling, bishop, it should be my responsibility first, and yours second.

If my boy needs recreation, bishop, I should provide it first, and you second.

If my boy needs correction, that should be my responsibility first, and yours second.

If I am failing as a father, help me first, and my children second.

Do not be too quick to take over from me the job of raising my children.

Do not be too quick to counsel them and solve all of the problems. Get me involved. It is my ministry.

We live in a day when the adversary stresses on every hand the philosophy of instant gratification. We seem to demand *instant* everything, including instant solutions to our problems. . . .

It was meant to be that life would be a challenge. To suffer some anxiety, some depression, some disappointment, even some failure is normal.

Teach our members that if they have a good, miserable day once in a while, or several in a row, to stand steady and face them. Things will straighten out.

There is great purpose in our struggle in life. ■

This excerpt comes from a general conference address originally given in April 1978. Punctuation standardized; subheads added. The full text can be found at ensign.lds.org.



President Boyd K. Packer
President of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles

A large illustration at the top of the page shows two young women with long blonde hair. The woman on the left has a sad, tearful expression, while the woman on the right has a gentle, comforting smile and is leaning her head against the other's. In the background, other people are walking in a hallway, suggesting a school setting.

THE COURAGE TO COMFORT

By Amy Weir

I was 13 years old when my mother died of breast cancer. The awkward beginning of my teenage years, mixed with the realities accompanying a great loss, made that time in my life very stormy. Looking back, I realize that there were some wonderful friends around me, even though I felt so alone. They gave me the comfort and friendship I desperately needed, right when I needed it.

Sometimes it can be hard to know what to do when a friend suffers a tragedy, even if the event is not as severe as losing a loved one. But with a little courage, you can do a lot of good. Remember that everyone grieves differently. If you are unsure about how to help, pray for guidance and follow the Spirit. Here are some ideas that might help you.



When my mother died, I needed comfort and understanding. Here are some things that helped me.

Act Normal

One of the worst memories I have of the difficult time following my mother's death is of walking into junior high school the day after the funeral. An uncomfortable silence fell on the hallway, and everyone stared at me as I made my way to my locker. I am sure they just felt bad for me and didn't know what to say, but I felt so exposed, as though I were on display.

Those first few days back at school were rough, and I really appreciated my close friends who acted normal around me. As always, they joked around, talked about which boys they thought were cutest, and complained about upcoming school assignments. After school we went to the movies, took bike rides, or just hung out. This "normal" time with them was a big relief from the spotlight that seemed to follow me.



Be Sensitive

Avoid saying “Call me if you need anything” unless you are a close friend. This may seem like odd advice, but I remember how many people told me that. I know they meant well, but they were practically strangers. They had hardly ever spoken to me before, so why would I call them for sympathy or help? If you don’t know the person well, just say something like, “I’m really sorry about your loss,” or “I’m really sorry that happened to you.” You don’t need to promise that you will be waiting for a call for help.

If you *are* close, go ahead and tell your friend that you are available to talk or help, or take the initiative and call to see how things are going. Just be sure to act cheerful instead of complaining about your own troubles, which may only add to your friend’s emotional burdens. Be of good cheer (see D&C 78:18). It is one of the best gifts you can give to a friend in need.

Make a Gesture

Although I disliked awkward stares and too much attention, I did appreciate knowing that people cared about me. I still have the sympathy card my best friend had the whole band class sign for me. I remember feeling so grateful to have some tangible support I could hold in my hands. The card gave me strength and made me feel less lonely. Even now, more than 20 years later, when I have troubles I get the card out and look over the old signatures, picture my classmates’ faces, and chuckle at how horrible our eighth-grade band sounded. The card reminds me that others cared about me even when I felt totally alone.

Your gesture doesn’t have to be a card; it could be a short note, a small gift, or even just a listening ear. Don’t be afraid to do something kind; your friend needs all the kindness you can give.

Be Patient

When my mother died I was so blinded by my own grief that it took me a while to realize how much I needed and appreciated my friends’ efforts, so don’t get discouraged if your friend doesn’t respond right away. The bigger the tragedy, the longer it may take to heal, and the longer it may be before your friend is back to normal.

Remember the Lord’s Promises

Alma tells us that one of our baptismal covenants is to “bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light,” and to “mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:8–9). You may be nervous about trying to comfort a friend, but remember 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” (1 Nephi 3:7). Heavenly Father will not only help you know what you can do for your friend, but He will also prepare a way for you to do it. He will give you the courage to comfort. ■

Widows and Widowers

By Kersten Campbell

Moving Forward with Faith

Many widows and widowers wonder if they will ever feel alive again after the death of their beloved companions. But surviving spouses from around the world bear witness that there is life after the death of a loved one and that a loving Father in Heaven will help provide the way to move forward.

Forward with Faith

One difficulty widows and widowers face after the death of a spouse is the challenge of moving on with their temporal lives. Some find it hard to make important decisions alone or to assume responsibilities formerly shouldered by a spouse. In addition, the financial situation of a widow or widower may be dire, especially if the spouse accrued medical bills as the result of a long illness, or if the widow or widower is left with no means to support the family.

Helen Thompson, a 64-year-old widow from Australia, was facing many of these temporal challenges after her husband passed away. Three of her seven children still lived at home, and to add to the complications, one of Sister Thompson's older daughters had also become a widow at the same time.



The ride to the hospital . . . seemed to take forever. As I walked in the doors, one of the emergency room attendants came to meet me, to tell me what I already knew: my husband was dead. A part of me died too, that misty November morning.”

Sue Fullmer of Utah, from an essay she wrote on becoming a widow.

“I was facing some major financial difficulties,” she remembers. “It was a very tight situation.”

But Sister Thompson found that the answer to her temporal problems came from living gospel principles and relying on the Lord.

One of the greatest blessings came from paying tithing. “I’ve always paid my tithing,” she says. “I felt I couldn’t afford not to.”

Sister Thompson trusted in the principle of tithing, and the Lord showed her how to find the answers she so desperately sought. “I was reading in the Book of Mormon,” she recalls, “where the brother of Jared was asked to build some boats (see Ether 2). As I was reading, I noticed the steps the brother of Jared took when he was facing a serious problem. I thought since my problems were serious too, that I could follow his example.”

Sister Thompson did some research, gathered ideas, and presented them to the Lord. She received guidance as a result of her prayer.

“I followed the same steps as the brother of Jared,” she said. “The plan allowed me to catch up on my house payments and other obligations.”



Help from family and friends, hope through service, and concerted efforts to feel happiness can fill widows and widowers with the faith needed to move forward.

Forward with Comfort

Like Sister Thompson, others have found peace in the principles of the gospel as they have pondered the Atonement and sought the companionship of the Holy Ghost in their daily lives. In England, 33-year-old Andrea Fahey's husband died suddenly following surgery. Sister Fahey felt an overwhelming sadness and wondered how she could raise her three young children alone. She found that daily prayer and scripture study brought the Holy Ghost, which gave her comfort and the strength to move forward.

She says, "When I pray for the Holy Ghost to be with me, I am more calm and controlled. I am able to think about the different path that my life is now to follow."

LaRae S. Blake of Texas, a mother of eight, also relies upon the Holy Ghost. After she lost her husband to cancer, she found peace in contemplating the blessings of the Atonement.

"I had such an increased appreciation of the Atonement of the Savior," she says, "My faith in His love for me and my family, and my knowledge that He understands the heartache I was going through, helped me to see things



Pondering the Atonement of Jesus Christ and seeking the companionship of the Holy Ghost have helped many widows and widowers manage their grief.

contemplated. People have cooked and cleaned. A family in my student ward asked their family to give them money instead of presents for Christmas and

with an eternal perspective. I knew my Heavenly Father had given me the gift of the Holy Ghost, who has the role, among others, of a comforter.”

Forward with Help

Sister Blake also attests that the service she received from people who desired to reach out was instrumental in helping her move forward.

She remembers, “I had so many people reach out to me in love and kindness. The Relief Society and Young Women came and cleaned my house. A friend helped me figure out the medical bills, the insurance, and the paperwork that had to be done to change the accounts over to my name. People brought over food and paper goods and called me on special occasions that were hard to get through, such as the first Christmas after his death.”

Sister Blake says she especially appreciated her home and visiting teachers. “I had an excellent home teacher who helped me learn how to care for the house. He taught me how to light a water heater and fix an old door. He also gave my children blessings at the beginning of the school year.

“My visiting teacher helped me to learn to use the computer, which had always been my husband’s job.”

Jason Morris, a 29-year-old widower from Nevada, says he appreciated those who simply came over and served without asking permission. When his wife, who suffered from leukemia, passed away just five months after giving birth to their daughter, Brother Morris felt like he was in a fog for weeks. He says people who offered specific acts of service were the most helpful.

“I have been served in ways I would never have

then gave the money to us. This same family watched my daughter for free while I completed my last year of law school. They even threw a surprise birthday party for me and have included us in many activities.”

Widows and widowers say inclusion in family activities is important. Many face crushing loneliness they find hard to bear, and some feel ostracized when old friends who are couples no longer feel comfortable associating with them. Much appreciated are the families who reach out and continually invite them places and include them in their family gatherings, even long after the painful loss.

Also pressing is the need to talk about what happened, even if it results in tears. After a three-year battle with cancer took her husband, Diana Redfern of England was devastated and frightened at the prospect of being alone. She relates how people in her ward helped her adjust to her new situation.

“At the time of Bob’s death, people were very kind to me. They reached out. I was listened to, and that is what I needed. What was not helpful was when people avoided talking about my husband because they thought it would upset me. I *wanted* to talk about him. It helped ease the loss over time.”

Forward with Hope

Another thing that helps, says Debbie Ryals, a 55-year-old widow from South Carolina, is the strength and peace that come from serving in the house of the Lord. She finds comfort in the doctrine of eternal families made possible through the ordinances of the temple. She lost her husband suddenly and unexpectedly when he was taken by a rare blood disorder. At the time, she was not a member of the Church, but she says that in spite of being taught

otherwise, she always knew that families were eternal. That is why when the missionaries knocked on her door soon after her husband's death and taught her about eternal families, she believed them. She was baptized within six months. Since then, the doctrine of eternal marriage has given her hope and helped her to get through the lonely days and nights when she misses her beloved companion.

"I love the temple," she says, "I find it very peaceful, and I come away with a sense of renewal. It's like I've been rededicated, and I can face the world once more."

Sue Fullmer agrees. Sister Fullmer, of Utah, lost her husband to a sudden, unexplained illness. She says, "When you are a single parent, you have that burden to shoulder all alone, day and night. But all that weight is lifted away from you when you walk through the doors of the temple. The temple is a place where I can feel my husband near to me. It is another witness that this life is part of eternity."

Forward with Joy

Most widows and widowers say that despite feelings of despair and loneliness, it is possible to have joy again. Trisha Grant-Call, a 38-year-old widow from Utah, says widows and widowers need to allow themselves to have joy.

"It takes awhile to find happiness after a loss," she says, "but I like to try to realize what I do have. I still find joy through my children. I still have an amazing part of my husband in my girls and me. I still find joy in being around my horses and animals. Striving to live the life that Heavenly Father wants for me gives me happiness."

Many widows and widowers say that they find happiness in keeping busy, focusing on family, improving themselves, magnifying callings, and becoming involved in things they care about. But all of them testify that much of their happiness comes from serving others. Kevin Campbell, a 50-year-old widower from Washington, lost his wife after her three-year battle with cancer. He says he found healing as he attended the single-adult ward and reached out to those who were in as much need of comfort as he was.

He recalls, "The Lord put many in my path to serve, touch, and care for. It healed me, and at the same time it gave me much strength. I reached out to many in my local singles ward and made my house a meeting place where all were welcome. I learned that so many single members are hurting in so many ways, and all it takes is for someone to care, reach out, and serve."

Forward with the Love of God

Whether it be through service, personal revelation, the comfort of the Holy Ghost, or earthly angels sent to ease their burdens, these widows and widowers bear testimony that the blessings and miracles in their time of grief have been rich and abundant. Through their struggle and example of enduring to the end, they bear strong witness that no matter how great the loss or how deep the sorrow, there can be happiness and healing through the gospel of Jesus Christ. ■



PURE RELIGION

I express my sincere appreciation to one and all who are mindful of the widow [and widower]. To the thoughtful neighbors who invite a widow to dinner and to . . . the visiting teachers of the Relief Society, I add, may God

bless you for your kindness and your love unfeigned toward her who reaches out and touches vanished hands and listens to voices forever stilled. . . .

"Thank you to thoughtful and caring bishops who ensure that no widow's cupboard is empty, no house unwarmed, no life unblest. I admire the ward leaders who invite the widows to all social activities, often providing a young Aaronic Priesthood lad to be a special escort for the occasion. . . .

" 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world' (James 1:27)."

President Thomas S. Monson, "The Fatherless and the Widows: Beloved of God," *Ensign*, Aug. 2003, 6-7.

By Elder
Stanley G. Ellis
Of the Seventy



WHAT SHOULD WE DO WHEN WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO?

The Lord expects us to inquire, study, and act even when we lack perfect knowledge.

After Nephi and his brothers had repeatedly failed to get the brass plates from Laban, Nephi set out to make a final attempt, “not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do” (1 Nephi 4:6).

Many prophets throughout the ages have faced a similar challenge of having to act in faith. Adam was commanded to offer sacrifices without knowing why (see Moses 5:5–6). Abraham left his homeland to travel to a new land of inheritance without knowing where it was (see Hebrews 11:8; Abraham 2:3, 6). Paul journeyed to Jerusalem without knowing what would happen to him once he arrived (see Acts 20:22). Joseph Smith knelt in a grove of trees without knowing which church he should join (see Joseph Smith—History 1:19).

We also may find ourselves in situations that require us to take action without knowing what to do. Thankfully, the experiences above teach us ways to move forward despite uncertainty.

Nephi encouraged his brethren to be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord (see 1 Nephi 4:1). Then he acted on that faith. He “crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban,” being “led by the Spirit” (1 Nephi 4:5–17). The Spirit told him not only what to do but also why it was so important that he do it (see 1 Nephi 4:12–14).

Adam responded by being “obedient unto the commandments of the Lord” (Moses 5:5). Abraham acted in faith and, as a result, “sojourned in the land of promise” (Hebrews 11:9). Paul chose not to fear “bonds and

afflictions” but to finish the ministry he had “received of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 20:23–24). Joseph Smith pondered the scriptures and determined to follow the invitation to “ask of God” (Joseph Smith—History 1:13).

Our Responsibility to Act

The scriptures warn us that not knowing is not an excuse for not doing. Nephi “desired to know the things that [his] father had seen,” pondered them in his heart, and “was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord” (1 Nephi 11:1). Laman and Lemuel, meanwhile, spent their time “disputing one with another concerning the things which [Lehi] had spoken unto them” (1 Nephi 15:2).

The Lord expects us to inquire, study, and act—even though there are some things we may never know in this life. One of those things is the hour of His Second Coming. He said, “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Matthew 24:42). Because of this uncertainty, President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98) counseled members of the Church to prepare, but he affirmed that he would continue to plant cherry trees.¹

“When you are living worthily and your choice is consistent with the Savior’s teachings and you need to act, proceed with trust,” said Elder

Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. If we are sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit, Elder Scott added, “either the stupor of thought will come, indicating an improper choice, or the peace or the burning in the bosom will be felt, confirming that your choice was correct [see D&C 9:8–9]. When you are living righteously and are acting with trust, God will not let you proceed too far without a warning impression if you have made the wrong decision.”²

Prove the Lord

Two experiences from my life—when I wasn’t sure what to do—illustrate the importance of obeying the commandments and following the living prophets. In college I ran out of money, so I found a part-time job. When I received my first check, I did not know whether it would be enough to get me through to the next paycheck. But I remembered the Lord’s promise regarding tithing: “Prove me now herewith . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing” (Malachi 3:10).

I decided to prove the Lord. I paid my tithing first, and He blessed me to survive. In the process I learned to trust in His promises.

Years later, when Sister Ellis and I had young children and I was starting a new career, my employer changed medical insurance plans. The old plan would end on June 1 and the new one would start on July 1, leaving us without insurance for one month. We did not know what to do, but at that point



We need look no further than the prophets, the scriptures, and the Savior for an answer.

we remembered a talk by President N. Eldon Tanner (1898–1982) in which he counseled Church members to always have health insurance.³

I talked with the company, and we negotiated a contract to ensure continuous insurance coverage throughout June. On June 28 our oldest son, Matt, fell off the high diving board at the neighborhood pool and hit the concrete deck. He suffered a fractured skull and a brain concussion. He was rushed by helicopter to the hospital, where he was treated by specialists. The costs were astronomical and would have ruined us financially. Fortunately, health insurance paid for most of his treatment.



What Should We Do?

So what should we do when we don't know what to do? We need look no further than the prophets, the scriptures, and the Savior for an answer. These valuable sources teach us to:

1. Seek answers through study and prayer.
2. Obey the commandments.
3. Trust in the Lord and in His promises.
4. Follow the prophet.
5. Go forward in faith, not fear.
6. Complete our mission.

And in each of these steps, may we follow the counsel of President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "Always, always follow the promptings of the Spirit."⁴ ■

NOTES

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* (2004), 250.
2. Richard G. Scott, "Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 10.
3. See N. Eldon Tanner, "Constancy amid Change," *Liahona*, Feb. 1982, 46; *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 82.
4. Boyd K. Packer, "Restoration," *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 11, 2003, 2.

Abraham left his homeland to travel to a new land of inheritance without knowing where it was. He acted in faith and, as a result, "sojourned in the land of promise."

WITH A LIFE HANGING IN THE BALANCE

By Samantha M. Wills

The construction worker lay where he had fallen, precariously balanced on a plank nine inches (23 cm) wide and 100 feet (30 m) in the air. He had been struck by a falling steel beam that had partially severed his left arm and leg.

As a paramedic attached to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance, covering most of the north of England, I never know what the next emergency call will bring or what kind of situation we will face when we get to the scene.

In this case, the victim could not be moved safely until his injuries were assessed. I was hoisted up by crane on a metal cargo platform. Once I reached the victim, a construction worker held onto the back of my reflective jacket, serving as a human "crane" to allow me freedom of movement to examine the victim.

In situations like this, years of training take over, so I began to assess the man's injuries. On his knee was an emergency field dressing placed there by the construction crew's own first aid responder. Normally I would examine the injury to assess the damage since that is the protocol we are trained to follow.

But as I reached out, the Spirit prompted me: "Do not move the dressing." So I did not touch it. Three more times during the incident, I was encouraged by others involved—the first responder, my colleague on the ground, and a doctor—to examine the knee wound, and

three more times, the Spirit prompted me not to touch the dressing. Once we had stabilized the patient, we lifted the man onto the cargo platform, we were both lowered to the ground, and we transported him to the hospital.

In the emergency resuscitation area, the trauma team waited for us. One doctor quickly removed the field dressing from the knee. Immediately an artery ruptured, and the patient began bleeding profusely. In the controlled environment of the hospital, this life-threatening situation was quickly resolved. If it had happened on the plank 100 feet up, the victim may well not have survived.

Every morning I pray and ask Heavenly Father to help me, to bless me with the inspiration to know how to best help my brothers and sisters who will be in need today. Over the years, experience has taught me that whatever the Spirit prompts me to do, be obedient. That obedience has protected me as well.

For example, one of my responsibilities is to act as navigator, guiding the helicopter pilot to the incident scene. Emergency helicopters can and do fly most anywhere, which makes them invaluable for reaching accident scenes quickly but it also makes them vulnerable. When we are flying at more than 140 miles (225 km) per hour, power cables and telephone wires can be practically invisible. And they can slice through a helicopter in an instant.

On one trip we were coming in to land in a most awkward place. Suddenly the Spirit told me, "Put the clipboard down!" Again almost immediately, I felt, "Put it down!" So I leaned forward to place my clipboard on the case

by my knees. As I did so, my point of view altered, and I saw the power cable right below us. "Wires! Wires! Wires below!" was all I could say. And even though we actually touched the cable and caused it to bow, the pilot responded instantly, and we lifted away and were saved. That was the closest to disaster I have come. Without the Spirit's prompting, that emergency call would have had a very different ending.

I am so grateful for the loving way Heavenly Father is aware of all our needs. The Lord is always watching over us. He wants us all to remain spiritually safe and to return home to Him, so He often speaks to us by the still, small voice of the Spirit. All we have to do is listen and obey. ■

Without the Spirit's prompting, that emergency call would have had a very different ending.



LEFT, ABRAHAM LEVING HARAN, BY G. BERNARD BENTON; RIGHT, ILLUSTRATION BY GREGG THORKEISON

BEING Independent, BEING Prepared

By Lisa Barton

MARCIA
*finds great comfort
in following the
Prophet's counsel.*



JOCELYN
*was able to help
others during
a crisis.*



EMILY
includes foods
that store well
when she shops.

How some young adults are applying principles of preparedness to their busy, mobile lives.

Jocelyn is from Texas, Abby from Idaho, Marcia from Virginia, and Emily from Utah. They come from different backgrounds and have different career plans. But what they share, in addition to a home in northern Virginia, is the need to apply principles of provident living to their busy young-adult lives.

Jocelyn Winter attends medical school. Much of her time and energy go into balancing school-work with meeting financial obligations. Marcia Brisson is finished with school for now and is working full-time.

Abby Croshaw is also working full-time but is considering a career change. And Emily Hardman is planning to move across the country to go to law school. All are finding that by applying the principles found in

All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage (Item# 04008000) and *Family Finances* (Item# 04007000) they are better able to adjust


to the shifting demands of young-adult life. Not only do they feel better prepared for new stages of life, including marriage or career changes, they also feel more secure about the future, no matter what it brings. As the Lord said: "If ye are prepared, ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30).

Furthermore, as these women apply the principles of provident living to meet their current needs, they find greater peace and have more faith as they seek emotional, spiritual, and temporal blessings.

Keeping It Simple

With school, family, employment, Church, and social commitments, Emily needs to simplify wherever possible, and that includes her home storage program. She was surprised to find that working to obtain personal home storage items did not require extensive efforts. "I don't have a lot of time to spend at a Church cannery or anything like that, but I can buy an extra can of pasta or something when I shop," she says. Emily selects items that store well and that she would normally eat. This avoids potential waste and helps her avoid going over her budget.

Provident living is more than food storage. It also includes avoiding extravagance and unnecessary expenses. Marcia works in a metropolitan area where eating at nearby restaurants is a popular but costly convenience. "I try to make an effort to bring my lunch. Eating out is expensive, and you lose a lot of money by doing it," she says. Keeping track of where her money goes helps Marcia set money aside not only for general savings but also for potential future expenses, including unplanned ones such as car repairs.



ABBY
was grateful
for her storage
when severe
storms struck.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROGER MOTZKUS

While neighbors and other people in her community were emptying store shelves of emergency supplies during the initial stages of a violent storm, Abby was safe in her home knowing she was prepared for the worst and able to help others.



The Blessings of Obedience

For Marcia, obedience to prophetic counsel on personal preparedness is important, even though it would be easier to rely on nearby family. “I obey just because we’re asked to, and it’s not really more complicated than that,” she says. Doing so has helped Marcia become independent.

“It’s not just about buying extra food,” adds Emily. “Being prepared and self-sufficient teaches you that it’s your own responsibility to provide while establishing yourself.” Emily says Elder Quentin L. Cook’s counsel to live in faith instead of fear¹ has inspired her to move forward with her goal to remain self-reliant while she attends law school. Emily knows that if she follows the commandments, the Lord will help her.

Abby, too, knows the blessings that come from obedience. She recalls that when a series of bad rainstorms hit her city, she was grateful she had followed the counsel of the prophets to build up a short-term home storage supply. During the inclement weather, she was safe in her home while others in the community were rushing on crowded roads to the grocery store for supplies. “Even if you made it to the store, the shelves were completely empty,” she says. “My roommates and I didn’t even feel the stress because we had food stored at our house. I was grateful we had listened.”

Obtaining the Blessings

President Thomas S. Monson has taught, “Our journey into the future will not be a smooth highway stretching from here to eternity. Rather, there will be forks and turnings in the road,

to say nothing of the unanticipated bumps. . . .

“Prepare for the future.”²

Jocelyn says, “It really gives me a sense of security to know that the teachings in the Church focus on things to help us succeed, especially in times of trial.” Years ago, Jocelyn’s stake in Texas temporarily housed members displaced by a hurricane. Her personal resources proved valuable. Even though she didn’t use them for herself, someone else needed them. “I gave away what I had to others. Just helping one person can make a difference if everyone pitches in,” she says.

The *All Is Safely Gathered In* pamphlet points out that not everyone will have financial resources or space for storage in a traditional sense, and some are prohibited by law from storing large amounts of food. In these circumstances, the First Presidency encourages members to store as much as their circumstances allow.

Emily has found that doing as much as *her* circumstances allow has reduced stress and increased confidence. Even though she feels financial pressure when she thinks about moving across the United States to attend law school (first-year law students are not allowed to have jobs), she feels at peace. “I know I can pray and ask in confidence for God’s help because I’ve done what I was asked to do,” she says. Perhaps that reserve—the security that comes from obedience—is the best kind of all. ■

NOTES

1. Quentin L. Cook, “Live by Faith and Not by Fear,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 70.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “Treasure of Eternal Value,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2008, 7.

WHY PROVIDENT LIVING WORKS FOR ME



I took a job in a new city and began to build a small reserve of food and household necessities, as well as a savings account. Later, I broke my foot and became helpless for nearly two months. Help from good friends and having that small reserve in place allowed for far fewer trips to the grocery store. Although this was not the type of disaster I was anticipating, I was grateful for the counsel to be prepared.”

Shannon Wilson, Texas, USA



Right now I don't need a lot to live on, but I do keep enough savings to help me in an emergency. For me, it's about having faith. I know that I lived my life in a way that prepared me to deal with the challenges of serving a mission. Now, I feel the way that I am living is a reflection of the foundation I built as a missionary. I learned then and know now that as long as I am preparing myself by developing a relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, I will be ready for the future.”

Jaron Malyon, Washington, USA



I grew up in a home where we used food storage on a regular basis. Living out of home, I never felt entirely comfortable or secure until I had some kind of food storage of my own. It had meager beginnings; whenever packets of pasta came on special, I purchased a few extra ones. Now I store entire boxes of food. I keep them in my closet, where they are protected from heat or weather elements, but they are still easily accessible so that I can rotate the stock regularly.

“Thankfully, there hasn't been any major disaster or need for me to rely solely upon my food storage or other supplies, but I consider it a blessing to have the security of knowing I could live on my storage if needed. It is also a blessing to be able to partially rely on it when I don't have as much income at a particular time due to extra expenses or fewer hours at work. I know that implementing provident living principles in our lives is a commandment from the Lord that helps us be more fruitful and independent.”

Jaci Smibert, Australia



My parents encouraged me to work for extra money by mowing lawns and babysitting, and they helped prepare me to be wise with money and live providently. A blessing I've received from these experiences is that I am resourceful and I don't stress over the future. As an adult, I am better able to decide between what I want and what I need, which has helped me to be practical in other areas, like home storage.”

Joshua Keene, Virginia, USA

HEALING MY HOMESICKNESS

I began college at age 18. After a short time, however, I transferred to another university and changed my major. My new university was only a couple of hours from my home, but I found myself terribly homesick and discouraged, wanting to give up and return to my family. Yet I knew if I did, I would be abandoning my chance to earn a degree.

One weekend not long after the school year began, all of my roommates went home for a visit. I knew that if I went home too, I would not return. I couldn't even call and speak to my family for fear I would break down and not be able to focus on my studies. I had been praying for the strength to overcome my homesickness, but now I was praying to know whether I should even remain at school and complete a degree.

Early that Sunday morning as I walked slowly across the quiet campus on my way to church, I wondered how I could stay at school when I missed my home and family so deeply and couldn't overcome my loneliness. But what would I do if I left school?

When I arrived at church, the previous ward had just left the chapel.



At that moment I knew what I needed to do. The Lord had answered my prayers in such a simple way, but I could not deny that it was an answer just the same.

I entered, hoping for a moment to pray for direction. As I found a place to sit and slowly moved onto the wooden pew, I noticed a printed program from the previous sacrament meeting. There on the front of the folded paper were the following words: "Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not."¹

At that moment I knew what I needed to do. The Lord had answered my prayers in such a simple way, but I could not deny that it was an answer just the same.

It wasn't long after that Sunday that my loneliness and discouragement left. As a result, I enjoyed my

remaining years in school. I gained a degree, lifelong friends, and a stronger testimony by following the promptings of the Spirit.

Now, more than 25 years later, I still recall that answer to my prayer, and I use those same words from that sacrament meeting program to commit myself to difficult tasks. I have shared my experience with close friends and family in hopes that they too might gain strength in difficult times.

I know the Lord cares about our feelings and everyday choices, and I know He answers our sincere prayers. ■

Sue Hirase, Utah, USA

NOTE

1. Thomas Henry Huxley, in John Bartlett, comp., *Familiar Quotations* (1968), 725.

COULD I CLOSE MY BUSINESS ON SUNDAY?

Three weeks after I opened my heart, received the gospel, and made the important decision to be baptized in 2001, I attended a Sunday School class in which we discussed the importance of observing the Sabbath day.

As a successful business owner with a large number of employees, I had been working on Sundays for more than 20 years. But as the importance of this day became clear to me, I decided to tell my three store managers that we were not going to open anymore on Sunday.

A few weeks after I announced my decision, my three managers told me that several insistent customers, mainly schoolteachers, asked whether we might open our stores the following Sunday. I work in the candy business in Papantla, and people needed to buy candy and piñatas to prepare for El Día del Niño (Children's Day), which would be observed the following Monday. On Children's Day, held on April 30 in Mexico, schools have parties and

games, and children receive candy.

"Tomorrow, on Saturday, I'll let you know," I told my managers.

When I got home, I told my wife what had happened. I expected her to say, "Stay open. After all, it's just one Sunday." But that was not her answer.

With a firm voice, she told me that I was the head of the family and that it was my decision. But then she asked me, "If someone told you that this Sunday you could receive either a huge fortune or you could

I told my wife that several insistent customers asked whether we might open our stores the following Sunday.

receive your Father in Heaven, which would you choose?"

Her question helped me realize the importance of receiving the Lord every Sunday, and I knew I had to stand by my decision. Honoring the Lord is the most important thing we can do on Sunday, and since then I have not missed an opportunity to do so.

If we put the things of the Lord before the things of man, we will be given a testimony of the Sabbath day. For our observance of the Sabbath day, my family and I have been greatly blessed, as has my business. May we all receive the blessings of honoring the Lord's day. ■

Gerardo Adrián García Romero,
Veracruz, Mexico





HOW COULD WE PAY OUR RENT?

A year and a half after my wife, Rebeca, and I married, the company I worked for closed. Suddenly I found myself unemployed.

Rather than look to be hired by someone else, I felt prompted to start my own company. I knew that this challenge could be a complicated one, so I turned to Heavenly Father to confirm what I had felt. Prayer played a vital role in that initial decision and has continued to be crucial since.

In August 2003 I started my own company doing painting, gardening, landscaping, and maintenance work. Things aren't always easy when you have your own company, especially when starting out. At the beginning

of one month, Rebeca and I needed to pay rent for our home. We didn't have a penny. So one morning we prayed that we might somehow obtain the money we needed. Later that day I was hired for a job that paid enough to cover our rent.

A month after I started my company, the stake president asked me to meet with him. Soon I was called to be the bishop of our ward. I realized that Heavenly Father had opened a way for me to accept and fulfill this calling. With my other job, I would not have had the necessary time for members of the ward and for my own family. But because I have my own

company, I have a flexible schedule. I have been home for important events in my family's life, such as when my children were born and started walking and talking. In addition, my wife and I have been able to serve in the San José Costa Rica Temple. These opportunities, which came because we had responded to promptings and sought direction in prayer, have tied us together.

I recently resumed my university

studies. When the impression came to return to school, I worried about how I could provide for my family. Two days a week I would be in the classroom, not at work. How was my family going to make it?

Again, my wife and I made this challenge a matter of prayer, and the Lord responded. I began receiving permanent contracts, which have made

it easier for me to make up workdays I miss while at school.

In all of these experiences, we have seen the Lord keep His promise: "Ask, and ye shall receive" (3 Nephi 27:29). Prayer has been important to our family's development and improvement. We have seen and felt that when we turn to the Lord, He blesses us. We know that He knows us by name, and we can ask Him for whatever we need. ■

Douglas Arévalo, Costa Rica

We didn't have a penny. So one morning we prayed that we might somehow obtain the money we needed.

I DIDN'T HAVE A TEMPLE RECOMMEND

When I was 17 years old, I had a strong desire to see a Latter-day Saint temple. I lived in Denmark with my family, where at that time there was no temple. For Saints living in Denmark, the closest temples were in Switzerland and England. I didn't know anyone in those nations, so traveling to either country by myself was out of the question.

But because I had family in Utah, I decided to save money so I could visit and do baptisms for the dead in the Salt Lake Temple. I wrote my aunt and cousins in Utah to see if it was all right if I came for a visit. They were excited to hear of my plans.

A year later I had finally saved enough money for my long-awaited trip. A few days after I arrived in Utah, my aunt drove me to the Salt Lake Temple. I was thrilled to see it in person and excited to do baptisms for the dead. When I got to the entrance, however, a temple worker asked to see my temple recommend. No one had ever told me about a temple recommend! The worker kindly explained what a temple recommend is and told me that I could get one from my bishop.

My heart sank. I would have to be content with visiting relatives and seeing the temple from the outside.

During fast and testimony meeting the following Sunday, I felt the need to share my testimony, telling the

congregation how blessed they were to live so close to a temple. I also said I would have loved to have gone inside but couldn't because I didn't have a recommend, though I had always been taught to live worthily. I closed my testimony by encouraging the members to attend the temple as often as they could.

After church, my relatives' bishop approached me and said he would try to help me get a temple recommend, and we set up an interview. During the interview, he asked me if my bishop spoke English. I said no. He replied, "And I don't speak Danish." My heart sank again.

But the bishop said, "You have come this far; let's not give up just yet. I know the Lord will help us. We just have to have faith."

He then asked for my bishop's phone number in Denmark, which

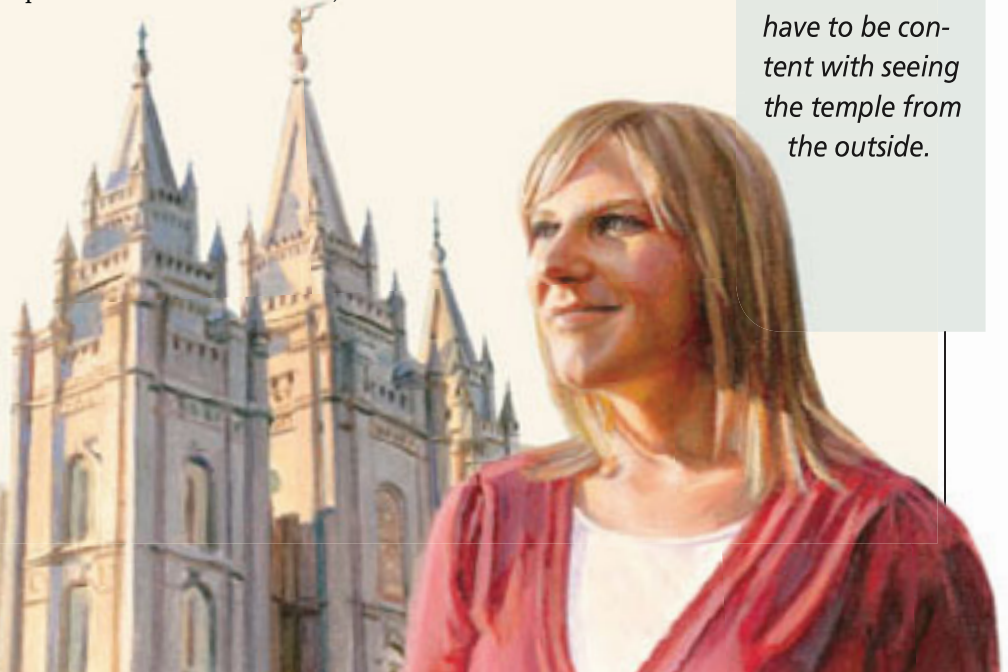
I happened to have with me. I was surprised to hear my bishop's son answer the phone. He told me he had just returned from his mission to England. When I told the American bishop, he said, "Perfect. He can translate for us."

Soon all four of us were on the phone—my bishop giving me a recommend interview, his son translating for the American bishop. Before long I had my recommend and was finally able to enter the temple! I cannot put into words the joy I felt knowing that the Lord had opened the way for me.

I was later married in the temple and have been blessed with four beautiful children. I am so thankful Heavenly Father has given us temples, and I'm grateful to know that I am sealed to my family and that, if we live righteously, we can be together forever. ■

Anne-Mette Howland,
Utah, USA

No one had ever told me about a temple recommend. My heart sank. I would have to be content with seeing the temple from the outside.





Family Home Evening Journal Sharing

Does your journal sit unused in a drawer? We are a journal-writing family, and it seemed a shame not to use them in a productive way. So every Monday evening, one of our goals is to read from a family member's journal. When each of our five children was born, we started baby journals, recording our thoughts and aspirations for them. When they were old enough to participate, they kept their own journals. With everyone's contributions over the years, we have a lot of journal entries to choose from. Each week we share excerpts from a different family member's

journal. Sometimes we share recent entries; others are from years past. We are always careful to not share sensitive information. Each family member may choose what to share. If your family hasn't kept

journals, you might see if other relatives, such as grandparents, will let you read selections from theirs. Hopefully you can encourage your family to begin keeping journals. Our children enjoy hearing about

the funny things they said when they were younger and the lessons they have learned along the way. Writing in our journals is a much anticipated activity in our family. We know we're not just writing for our future posterity. We are recording our thoughts and life experiences to benefit our family now.

Stephanie Nixon, Florida, USA



ILLUSTRATION BY BETH MARION WHITTAKER

HELPS FOR HOME EVENING



"The Courage to Comfort," p. 52: Stories can awaken learner's interest. We can often teach a principle more effectively when we first share a story to illustrate it. This helps learners understand the principle in terms of everyday experiences." (*Teaching, No Greater Call*, [1999] 93). Consider sharing a personal story when you were able to offer comfort or when someone offered comfort to you.

"Aided by the Spirit," p. 18: After reading this article together, family members could share experiences

when they have been blessed by following the promptings of the Spirit.

"Making Mountains," p. 46: This article compares overcoming challenges with climbing a mountain. You might be able to create an activity, such as climbing a hill or some stairs, that would help family members remember and apply the principle.

"I Will Be Found of You," p. 80:

A fun activity could be to play hide-and-seek as a family, and then relate the game to the promise found

in Jeremiah 29:13: "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."



Small & Simple Things

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD



Hong Kong

China was dedicated for the preaching of the gospel on January 9, 1921, in Beijing by then Elder David O. McKay (1873–1970) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. However, missionary work was limited to the city of Hong Kong. In 1949 Elder Matthew Cowley (1897–1953) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles opened the mission with a prayer from Victoria Peak—the highest point overlooking the city.

The Chinese translation of the Book of Mormon was finished in

1965, followed by the Doctrine and Covenants in 1974. The Hong Kong China Temple was the first temple in the world built as a multi-use structure. The building also contains a chapel, mission offices, and the temple president’s home.

When Hong Kong returned to Chinese control from British control in 1997, the Hong Kong Mission became the China Hong Kong Mission.



Elder Matthew Cowley, an Apostle, opened the Hong Kong Mission in 1949.



The Hong Kong China Temple.



SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTER TEACHING

- Try to arrange the seating so you can see each class member and so everyone can see the chalkboard and other visual aids.
- When trying to promote discussion, avoid yes-and-no questions. Instead of asking, “Did Nephi have faith?” ask, “How did Nephi show his faith?”
- Be attentive when class members are answering questions or commenting so they know their thoughts and opinions are appreciated.
- If your meetinghouse has a library, ask the librarian to show you what’s available to use with your lesson. Possibilities might include gospel art pictures, videos or DVDs, or resource books.



By the Numbers

Members in Hong Kong	22,939
Missions	1
Stakes	4
Districts	1
Wards and Branches	32
Temples	1

One Act of Kindness

By Arinzechukwu Okere

One never knows what a little kindness can generate. One January, while serving in Akure in the Nigeria Lagos Mission, I had a small gift that I wanted to give to someone. I wondered, “Whom can I give it to that will benefit from it?” I took the gift to church two Sundays, yet I was undecided.

On the third Sunday, I went to church thinking I would give it to a good friend. He did not come to church that day, but I had a feeling that someone else needed it. Looking around the chapel, I saw a boy whose parents were not members of the Church. He seemed so lonely. I felt impressed to give him the gift. I presented it to him, feeling very happy within.

Something wonderful happened. His mother came to church the following Sunday. She thanked me for the gift. She said, “I have been promising my son that I would one day come to church. Today I came to express my gratitude for the gift.” That was how my companion and I met her; since then she has joined the Church. How happy the boy was to see his mom finally baptized.

I know that by small means great things are brought to pass.

TEMPLE SPOTLIGHT

Cardston Alberta Temple



President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) dedicated the site for the temple at Cardston, Alberta, Canada, on July 27, 1913. It was the old tabernacle square, originally given to the Church by Charles Ora Card, who founded the settlement in 1887, when the immigrant Saints first arrived. Then Elder David O. McKay (1873–1970) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles laid the cornerstone on September 19, 1915.

President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) dedicated the building on August 26, 1923.

The temple is built of off-white granite from quarries near Nelson, British Columbia. A veritable fortress of God in spiritual strength as well as physical appearance, the Cardston Alberta Temple has a commanding view of the Canadian prairie in all directions from Cardston.



As an Apostle, Elder David O. McKay laid the cornerstone of the Cardston Alberta Temple in 1915.



One of the temple's striking features is a 33-foot-wide (10-m) sculpted panel on the east side. The sculpture depicts the Savior offering living water to the Samaritan woman at the well.

LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF CARDSTON ALBERTA TEMPLE BY ANITA SATTERFIELD; PHOTOGRAPH OF TROWEL BY JED CLARK; PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY BY BOYART STUDIO; PHOTOGRAPH OF TEMPLE PANEL BY ELDON K. JINSCHOTEN; RIGHT, TOP: PHOTOGRAPHY VISUAL RESOURCE LIBRARY; RIGHT, BOTTOM: PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY GEORGE HOMER DURHAM

GREAT LIVES REMEMBERED

Nathan Eldon Tanner

Though he was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, N. Eldon Tanner grew up in Canada, where his parents, Nathan William and Sarah Edna Brown Tanner, had helped settle the small town of Aetna, near Cardston, Alberta. Their first home was a one-room dugout cut from a hillside and reinforced with timber. The hard farm life on the prairies of western Canada developed a strong work ethic and sense of responsibility in Nathan.

When he was young, the rest of his family fell ill with smallpox. The neighbors were afraid to come in because of the disease, so young Nathan spent two nights and three days without sleep as he cared for the sick.

Despite heavy responsibilities on the farm, Nathan completed his schooling and became principal of a three-room school, where he fell in love with one of the teachers, Sara Isabelle Merrill. They married and became the parents of five daughters.

N. Eldon Tanner's reputation for hard work and integrity led to many leadership responsibilities in government and business. He was speaker of the house in the Alberta legislature, a minister in the provincial cabinet, president of a petroleum company, and head of the company that built the 2,000-mile (3,220-km) Trans-Canada Pipeline.

But his family and the Church always came first. He was a devoted

father who played an active role in rearing and nurturing his daughters from the time they were infants. When he became counselor to a bishop in Cardston and adviser to the deacons quorum, Brother Tanner found that some of the boys were not attending because their families could not afford Sunday clothes, and the boys were embarrassed to wear their overalls. He made an agreement with the boys, and when they showed up at priesthood meeting the next Sunday wearing overalls, there was Brother Tanner, also wearing overalls. He won the hearts of those boys, and soon they were all active.

N. Eldon Tanner became bishop of the Cardston Ward, later served as a stake high counselor, and then became president of the newly formed Calgary Alberta Stake. It was while he was serving as stake president that the call came to serve as a General Authority and Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve in October 1960.



Above: Elder N. Eldon Tanner. Below, left: Elder and Sister Tanner with their family. Below, right: Elder Tanner as a young man.



IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT N. ELDON TANNER

- Born on May 9, 1898, in Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Sustained as Assistant to the Twelve on October 8, 1960.
- Ordained an Apostle on October 11, 1962.
- Sustained as Second Counselor to President David O. McKay on October 4, 1963. Served as Second Counselor to President Joseph Fielding Smith and as First Counselor to President Harold B. Lee and to President Spencer W. Kimball.
- Died on November 27, 1982, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

When N. Eldon Tanner passed away, President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said of him: “Nathan Eldon Tanner was one of the great and noble men of our time. He was recognized as a giant among men. In the annals of Church history he will be remembered as one of the influential counselors in the First Presidency of the Church.”¹

NOTE

1. In “President N. Eldon Tanner Dies,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 11.

Changing the World One Virtuous Woman at a Time

By Heather Whittle Wrigley

Church Magazines

In April 2008, the newly called Young Women general presidency—Elaine S. Dalton, Mary N. Cook, and Ann M. Dibb—stood atop Ensign Peak on the northern edge of Salt Lake City and looked out over the valley.

From their vantage point the figure of the angel Moroni sparkled on the Salt Lake Temple, and they knew then what the Lord had in mind for the young women of the Church.

The three women held aloft a walking stick from which waved a gold Peruvian shawl—their banner and ensign to the nations, a call for a return to virtue.

“We cannot get caught up with this new value of virtue without saying the reason for the value is the temple,” Sister Dalton said. “And the temple is

the reason for everything we are doing in Young Women, because it will help these young women to come unto Christ.”

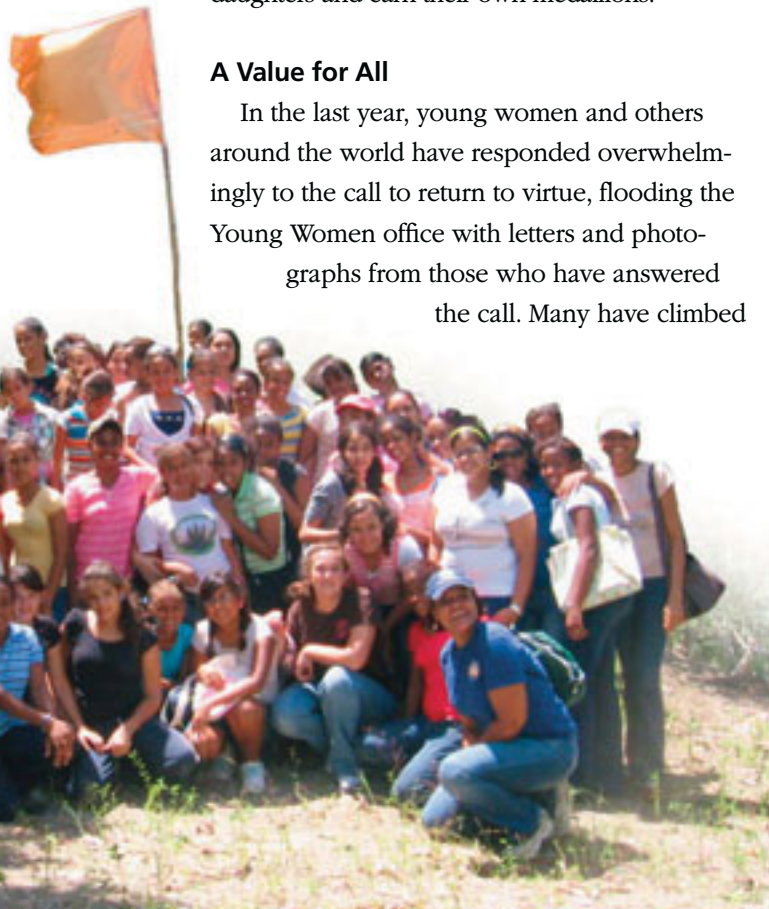
Virtue was officially added to the Young Women values in November 2008. It is defined in the Personal Progress book as “a pattern of thought and behavior based on high moral standards. It includes chastity and purity” (*Young Women Personal Progress* [booklet, 2009], 70).

This value is unique in that all the experiences and the value project are required, where the other values allow young women to choose from several options. In addition, mothers have been invited to complete the Personal Progress program with their daughters and earn their own medallions.

A Value for All

In the last year, young women and others around the world have responded overwhelmingly to the call to return to virtue, flooding the Young Women office with letters and photographs from those who have answered the call. Many have climbed

Young women and their leaders in the Santo Domingo Dominican Republic Independencia Stake ascended Cambita Garabito, a mountain in the Dominican Republic, where they raised their own banner to virtue in August 2009.



mountains and unfurled their own banners.

The project for the value of virtue is to follow the Savior's admonition to learn of Him (see D&C 19:23) by reading the entire Book of Mormon and recording thoughts regularly in a journal.

The Book of Mormon teaches about societies that prospered and were happy when they were virtuous and pure but that fell when they were no longer virtuous, Sister Dibb said.

Men and women have been equally enthusiastic about the new value, the Young Women presidency said, citing examples of entire groups of young men and singles wards that have worked on the value together.

Sister Dibb emphasized that both men and women must focus on virtue to obtain the greatest blessings. "Men have no power or strength to exercise the priesthood that they receive if they are not morally pure," she said. "And women receive that power and strength to fulfill their divine callings as wives, mothers, and as women as they practice virtue."

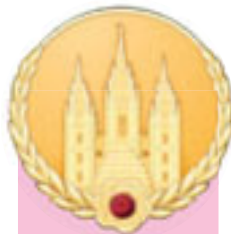
Return to Virtue

Sister Dalton said she believes that now is the time to emphasize the value of virtue, a time when the world does everything but promote virtue.

"It's interesting to us that in this world so many young women can lose sight of their identity as daughters of God," Sister Cook said. "We're just reminding them of that, and also of the fact that if you have made a mistake, you can repent."

The commitment to remain virtuous and pure is possible because of the enabling and redeeming power of the Savior's Atonement, Sister Dibb said. The fourth value experience focuses on repentance.

In the last year, many women—both old and young—have communicated a desire to return to



The Young Womanhood Recognition medallion has a new design.

being virtuous women. "[The addition of virtue] has created an excitement for women who have made wrong choices. Many have said, 'I can be a virtuous woman again. . . . It is possible for me,'" Sister Cook said.

Many of those who desire to be virtuous again wonder where they can start. The Young Women presidency shares with them this formula: Pray night and morning. Read in the Book of Mormon five minutes or more each day. And smile.

"If all women in the Church and the world did this, think what the world would be like in five years," Sister Dalton said. "We really do believe that virtuous young women led by the Spirit can change the world." ■

PERSONAL PROGRESS UPDATED

The Young Women general presidency has updated Personal Progress materials to reflect recent changes.

The new Personal Progress booklet has a pink cover and includes the activities for the new eighth value—virtue—that was added at the end of 2008. Most of the value activities remain the same, but some have changed slightly to be more current and more focused on temple covenants.

The Young Womanhood Recognition medallion now depicts, in addition to the temple spires, a beehive that suggests harmony, cooperation, and work; the Mia Maid rose for love, faith, and purity; and the laurel wreath, which stands for honor and accomplishment. A small ruby in the center of the rose symbolizes the new value of virtue (see Proverbs 31:10) and the completion of Personal Progress.

Additional materials include a new theme poster and scripture ribbons. The ribbons will be given at the completion of value experiences and projects.

The materials are currently available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Content in 51 additional languages will become available throughout early 2010. ■

Youth to Celebrate a Brand New Year

By Ryan Kunz

Church Magazines

Church units worldwide will receive a DVD entitled *A Brand New Year: 2010 Youth Celebration*. The DVD introduces the 2010 Mutual theme and can be used to supplement youth classes, quorum meetings, Mutual, bishop's youth discussions, and other activities throughout the year.

The 2010 Mutual theme is “*Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest*” (Joshua 1:9; emphasis added). The first segment of *A Brand New Year: 2010 Youth Celebration* features a special message from Elder M. Russell Ballard, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and a musical montage of youth throughout the world.

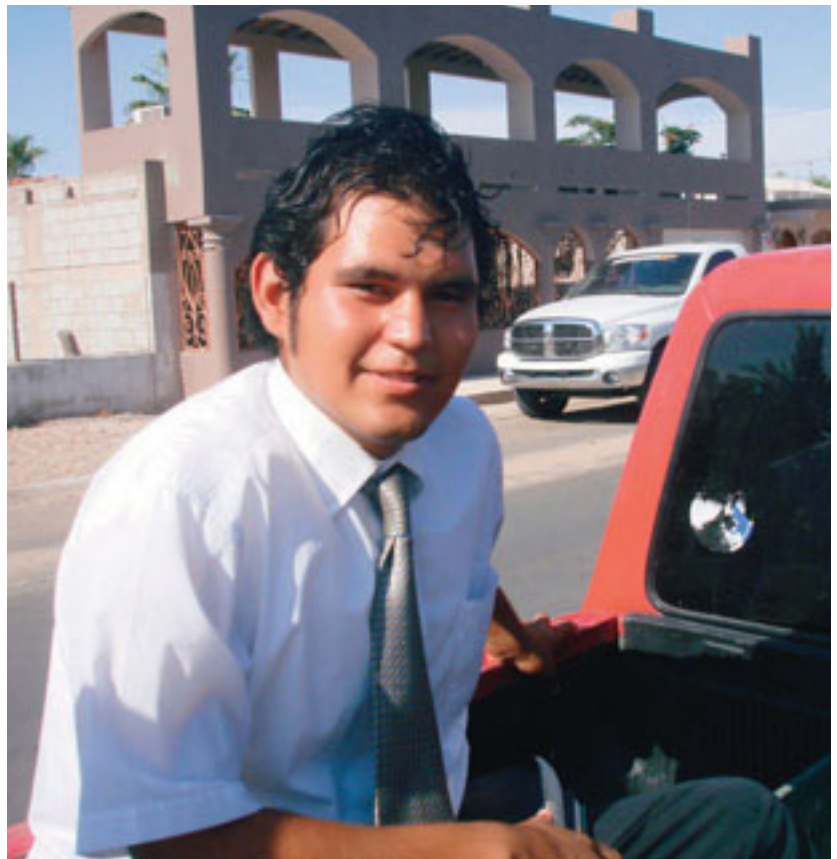
The DVD also contains nine additional segments, which include inspiring messages in the form of stories, testimonies, music, and special presentations from the Young Men and Young Women general presidencies. These segments focus on gospel standards from *For the Strength of Youth*, including education, family and friends, music and dancing, dating and virtue, health, service, and repentance.

Young people from all over the world share their thoughts and testimonies throughout the DVD.

“We are excited for the youth of the Church to be able to see each other on this DVD and be strengthened by each others’ testimonies,” said Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president. “Those who watch will see courageous youth everywhere choosing to live the standards [of the Church] and making a difference in the world.

We hope priesthood and auxiliary leaders and teachers will use the DVD in their classes to teach standards and in activities to help youth commit to live and apply these standards in their lives.”

Church leaders have encouraged local priesthood and auxiliary leaders to review the DVD and use it in their meetings and activities. The first segment of the DVD can be used in New Year's Eve activities or other special events where the theme is presented. The remaining segments



PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER HARRIS

Manuel Saràbia of Mexico shares his experiences on the DVD.

are designed to be used throughout the year to expand upon the theme.

The segments are published with subtitles in Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Material from the DVD is also available for download on the Internet. ■

Members Assist with Measles Initiative

Since the Church joined the Measles Initiative and Partnership in 2003, thousands of Church members have helped in the effort to eliminate the disease.

Approximately 56,000 Church members around the world have provided more than 600,000 hours of service in 32 countries in Africa, Asia, and Central and South America.

A group of humanitarian organizations—the American Red Cross, the United Nations Foundation, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization—founded the Measles Initiative and Partnership in 2001 with the goal of reducing the number of deaths due to measles worldwide by 90 percent by the end of 2010.

As part of the Church's commitment to the initiative, which included a US \$3 million donation, the First Presidency invited Church members in affected countries, under the direction of local priesthood and Relief Society leaders, to participate in helping to organize and publicize the vaccination campaigns.

Church members hand out information sheets, hang street

posters and banners, help at vaccination posts, and develop radio and TV spots. One young returned missionary composed a musical jingle for the campaign in Madagascar. This jingle has been translated and sung in 28 languages on dozens of radio stations in most countries where the campaign has taken place.

Cape Verde, a string of islands a few hundred miles off the coast of western Africa, is one of the many countries where Church members volunteered. In the March 2009 campaign, members helped make possible the vaccinations of more than 50,000 children. More than 600 members in Cape Verde volunteered 4,200 hours to promote the campaign door-to-door.

From the beginning of the initiative in 2001 to December 2008, 600 million children and youth have been vaccinated in the target countries, resulting in a 74 percent decrease in measles deaths around the world and an 89 percent decrease in Africa alone. Deaths due to measles decreased from 750,000 in 2000 to 197,000 in 2007, bringing the world much closer to the United Nations' goal of fewer than 100,000 deaths worldwide by the end of 2010.

Additional New Temple Presidents Announced

The following new temple presidents and matrons join those previously announced in the December 2009 issue.

Temple	President and Matron
Cebu City Philippines	Gerald E. and Linda G. Mortimer
Oquirrh Mountain Utah	Alan S. and Leslie P. Layton
Palmyra New York	William H. and Kathy Sherwood
Papeete Tahiti	Michael F. and Maria T. Moody
Porto Alegre Brazil	Lennis M. and Peggy L. Knighton
Preston England	Albert and Aileen F. Roy
Recife Brazil	Frederick G. and Carol Y. Williams
Redlands California	Eldon H. and Flora H. Morgan
Regina Saskatchewan	Robert A. and Claudia R. Gehmlich
Sacramento California	William W. And Shanna N. Parmley
San José Costa Rica	Arthur L. and Elaine A. Porter
São Paulo Brazil	Stanley D. and Sheryl L. Neeleman
St. Louis Missouri	Grant Richard and Linda Oscarson
Stockholm Sweden	Paul K. and Bonnie L. Oscarson
Taipei Taiwan	Harvey G. and Sherry W. Horner
The Gila Valley Arizona	Keith and Kathleen M. Crockett
Tokyo Japan	Tohru and Sachiko T. Hotta
Vancouver British Columbia	Cordell B. and Marilyn J. Rolfson
Veracruz Mexico	David K. and Mayrene H. Bickmore
Villahermosa Mexico	Jorge and Bertha T. Méndez ■

Correction

The new temple recently announced for Fortaleza, Brazil, in the November edition of the magazine will be the seventh temple in Brazil, not the sixth. Along with the temple announced for Concepción, Chile, it brings the total number of temples in South America to 14. ■

Music and Cultural Arts Submissions Wanted

This year's deadline for members to submit original music and theatrical works to be considered for publication or performance by the Church is March 31, 2010.

Selected music is presented in the Church Music Festival, and selected scripts and poetry are shared in the Cultural Arts Submission Presentation. Occasionally works are selected for future publication on the Church Web site or in the Church magazines.

Music submissions include songs, children's songs, hymns,

anthems, hymn arrangements, and instrumental and other works.

Cultural arts submissions may be theatrical scripts including dramas, comedies, and musicals. Poetry and oratorios with performance value have also been accepted.

The works submitted should be suitable for use in Church units, teach gospel principles in uplifting ways, be doctrinally correct, and accurate if historically based.

For more information, call 801-240-6492. ■

Music Submission

Guidelines can be found at www.lds.org/churchmusic. Click on **Music**, then **Other Music**, then **Church Music Submissions**.

Cultural Arts Submission

Cultural arts submissions should include:

1. Two copies of the script and any associated music on 8 1/2 x 11 inch (22 x 28 cm) paper.
2. A statement signed by all contributors that says, "The work submitted, entitled '_____', is my original work, is owned by me, and conforms to the submission rules."
3. A cover letter with the piece's title; author's name, address, phone number, and e-mail address; central theme; synopsis; and cast requirements.

The names of all contributors should appear on the cover letter, script, and signed statement.

Send cultural arts submissions to:
Church Theatrical Script Cultural Arts Submission,
50 E. North Temple St. Rm. 2082
Salt Lake City, Utah, 84150-6070, USA.

WORLD BRIEFS

Elder Bednar Meets with Members of Scottish Parliament

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles met with ministers of the Scottish Parliament for two hours in September to discuss how Scottish members can support moral issues and to highlight Church teachings on the importance of the family. The meeting at the Holyrood Parliament Building in Edinburgh included five ministers of Parliament. Elder Bednar and other Church leaders also visited Ireland for several Church meetings.

African Saints Mobilize in Day of Service

Wearing yellow vests, members in more than 30 countries enjoyed the third All-Africa Service Project in August 2009. In Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Sierra Leone members repaired roads, fixed up old homes, and cleared drainage. In Kenya, South Africa, and Cameroon they scrubbed jail cells and restrooms, planted trees, fixed roads, and worked in orphanages. The Church partnered with service groups, other denominations, and government agencies in the effort.

Church Holds Auditions for Nauvoo Pageant

The Church needs professional-quality actors for 20 roles in the 2010 Nauvoo Pageant. Cast members must be experienced, faithful members of the Church, ages 20 to 60. Weekly rehearsals will be held in Salt Lake City in May and June. The show runs July 6 through 31. Auditions are January 15 and 16 in Provo and January 19 through 21 in North Salt Lake. Schedule an audition by calling 801-240-6492. See nauvoopageant.org for more information. ■

In Other Church Magazines

HERE'S WHAT'S IN THE NEW ERA

WE WANT THE BEST FOR YOU:

ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND

Elder Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles tells youth that happiness can only be found by living the gospel of Jesus Christ.



MUTUAL THEME FOR 2010:

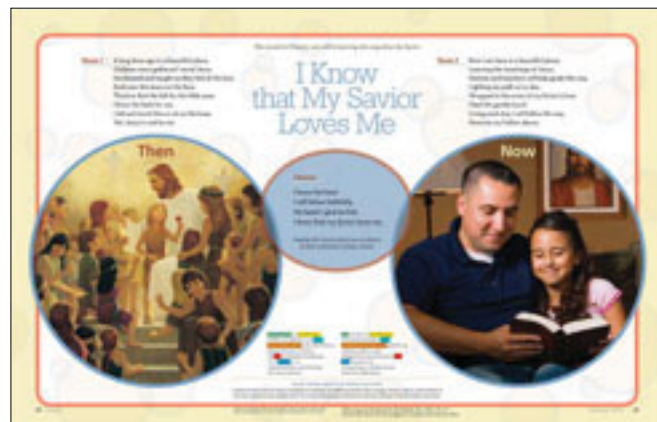
"BE STRONG AND OF A GOOD COURAGE"

The Mutual theme for the year comes from Joshua 1:9. Read a message from the Young Men and Young Women general presidencies, and a Line upon Line feature providing specific explanation of the scripture from which the theme is taken.

HERE'S WHAT'S IN THE FRIEND

A YEAR ON TEMPLE SQUARE

Each month in 2010, the *Friend* will include an article featuring a different part of Temple Square. The January 2010 *Friend* features the opportunity a 11-year-old girl had to visit the grounds outside of the Salt Lake Temple. *Friend* readers will get a closer look at Temple Square and learn why it is an important place.



I KNOW THAT MY SAVIOR LOVES ME

The *Friend* has included a teaching guide that Primary leaders and parents can use to help children learn "I Know that My Savior Loves Me." The teaching guide focuses on helping children recognize similar phrases in the song's two verses.

"I WILL BE FOUND OF YOU"

By Aaron L. West
Curriculum Department

At the conclusion of our Sunday School lesson, Sister Hart asked us to turn to Jeremiah 29. She said she would read verses 12–14 aloud, and she asked us to ponder the meaning of the words.

"Then shall ye call upon me," she read, "and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

"And I will be found of you, saith the Lord . . ."

Sister Hart went on, finishing verse 14, but my thoughts lingered happily behind, savoring the promise "I will be found of you." I was reminded of the times when my wife, Emma, and I played hide-and-seek with our young children. When it was our turn to hide and their turn to seek, we always made ourselves easy to find. Sometimes we made noises or left a foot in plain view so they would find us quickly. Sometimes we hid in the same place repeatedly. We wanted the children to search for us, but we also wanted them to find us. We looked forward to their hugs and their joyful, unrestrained giggles of triumph.

This memory deepened my understanding of our Heavenly Father's love for us. He wants us



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID STOKER

My thoughts turned to the hide-and-seek games my wife and I played with our young children. We wanted them to search for us, but we also wanted to be found.

to search for Him, but He also wants us to find Him—He knows how happy we will be when we do. He does not try to trick us. Rather, He does all He can to help us know where and how to search: He gives us the scriptures, calls prophets, listens to our prayers, guides us by the power of the Holy Ghost, blesses us with temples and priesthood ordinances and family and friends. And if we have found Him somewhere once, we are sure to find Him there again if we are willing to renew our search.

"I will be found of you, saith the Lord." What a comforting promise! In a world where trouble and temptations seem to find us so easily, it is reassuring to know that our greatest source of strength is so easy to find. ■



COURTESY OF LEO AND ANNETTE BEUS

WORDS OF CHRIST

Jesus in the Synagogue at Nazareth, by Greg K. Olsen

“And when [Jesus] had opened the book [of Isaiah], he found the place where it was written,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the

captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised [see Isaiah 61:1]. . . .

“And he [said] unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled. . . .

“And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power” (Luke 4:17–18, 21, 32).



Beginning with this issue, the Ensign will look a bit different on the inside. Some of the new items you see will be carried in both the Liahona, the Church's international magazine, and the Ensign. To learn about these new items, as well as how to find all the things that interest you in the Ensign, go to page 10.