

Liahona

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"Thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard; . . .

". . . And blessed art thou; for because ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard, and have kept my commandments, and have brought unto me again the natural fruit, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away, behold ye shall have joy with me because of the fruit of my vineyard."

Jacob 5:3, 75

Olives, extensively cultivated throughout Mediterranean countries, have a long scriptural history, from the dove bringing an olive leaf to Noah, to the Savior teaching on the Mount of Olives, to Jacob's allegory of the olive trees.



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International magazine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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Family Home Evening Idea

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following is one example.



“Even If You’re Shy,” page 60: You can use your family home evening to share the gospel! Discuss as a family what fears make it difficult for you to share the gospel. You might pray as a family that the Lord will help you feel confident in sharing the gospel and then pray about whom you could invite to family home evening. Consider inviting each member of the family to bear testimony during the lesson. You might choose to teach a lesson about the Restoration or the plan of salvation. Consider recording your experience and feelings in your journals.

MORE ONLINE

The *Liahona* and other Church materials are available in many languages at languages.lds.org. Visit facebook.com/liahona.magazine (available in English, Portuguese, and Spanish) to find inspirational messages, family home evening ideas, and material you can share with your friends and family.

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By President
Henry B. Eyring

First Counselor in
the First Presidency

Prophecy AND PERSONAL REVELATION

The true Church of Jesus Christ has been restored and is on the earth today. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has always been led by living prophets and apostles, who receive constant guidance from heaven.

That divine pattern was also true anciently. We learn in the Bible: “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

God has again spoken in our time, through the Prophet Joseph Smith. He revealed through the Prophet Joseph the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness. He restored His holy priesthood with its keys and all the rights, powers, and functions of the sacred power of the priesthood.

In our day, living prophets and apostles are authorized to speak, teach, and direct with authority from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Savior said to the Prophet, “What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

In general conference twice a year, we are blessed with the opportunity to hear the word of the Lord for us from His servants. That is a privilege beyond price. But the value

of that opportunity depends on whether we receive the words under the influence of the same Spirit by which they were given to those servants (see D&C 50:19–22). Just as they receive guidance from heaven, so must we. And that requires of us the same spiritual effort.

“Do Your Homework”

Years ago one of the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles asked me to read a conference talk he was preparing for general conference. I was a junior member of the quorum. I was honored by his confidence that I might help him find the words the Lord would have him speak. He said to me with a smile, “Oh, this is the 22nd draft of the talk.”

I remembered the counsel a loving and kind President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) had given me earlier with great emphasis: “Hal, if you want to get revelation, do your homework.”

I read, pondered, and prayed over that 22nd draft. I studied as best I could under the influence of the Holy Ghost. By the time that quorum member gave his talk, I had done my homework. I am not sure I helped, but I know that I was changed when I heard the talk given. Messages came to me far beyond the words that I had



read and that he spoke. The words had greater meaning than the ones I had read in the draft. And the message seemed to be meant for me, fitted to my needs.

The servants of God fast and pray to receive the message He has for them to give to those who need revelation and inspiration. What I learned from that experience, and many others like it, is that to gain the great benefits available from hearing living prophets and apostles,

we must pay the price ourselves of receiving revelation.

The Lord loves every person who might hear His message, and He knows the hearts and circumstances of each one. He knows what correction, what encouragement, and what gospel truth will best help each person to choose his or her way along the path to eternal life.

We who listen to and watch the messages of general conference sometimes think afterward, “What do

I remember best?” The Lord’s hope for each of us is that our answer will be: “I will never forget the moments when I felt the voice of the Spirit in my mind and heart telling me what I could do to please my Heavenly Father and the Savior.”

We can receive that personal revelation when we hear prophets and apostles and as we work in faith to receive it, just as President Lee said we could. I know that is true from experience and by the witness of the Spirit. ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

Consider reading aloud President Eyring’s story about studying the draft of his quorum member’s conference talk. You might ask, “What is the price of receiving revelation?” After your discussion, you could

invite those you visit to ponder and implement a plan to receive the upcoming general conference messages “under the influence of the same Spirit by which they were given to [God’s] servants.”

YOUTH

Heavenly Father Spoke to Me through a Conference Talk

By Anne Laleska Alves de Souza

I was having doubts about what I should study at the university. Most people spoke badly about the course that I wanted to take, so I prayed to the Lord to see if He agreed with my decision.

My answer came the following day while I was reading a general conference talk in the *Liahona*. I felt as though Heavenly Father was telling me He couldn't choose for me—this was a decision that I would have to make alone. I knew that no matter what I chose, I would have to work hard to be successful.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION POSED BY MODEL

I know that my prayer was answered. The confirmation of the Holy Ghost helped me make a decision. I've learned to give my best efforts and know that Heavenly Father will help me.

The author lives in Sergipe, Brazil.

CHILDREN

Follow the Prophet

Prophets and apostles speak for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. They teach us how to follow Jesus. Follow the paths to get to some of the things the prophet and apostles have asked us to do.

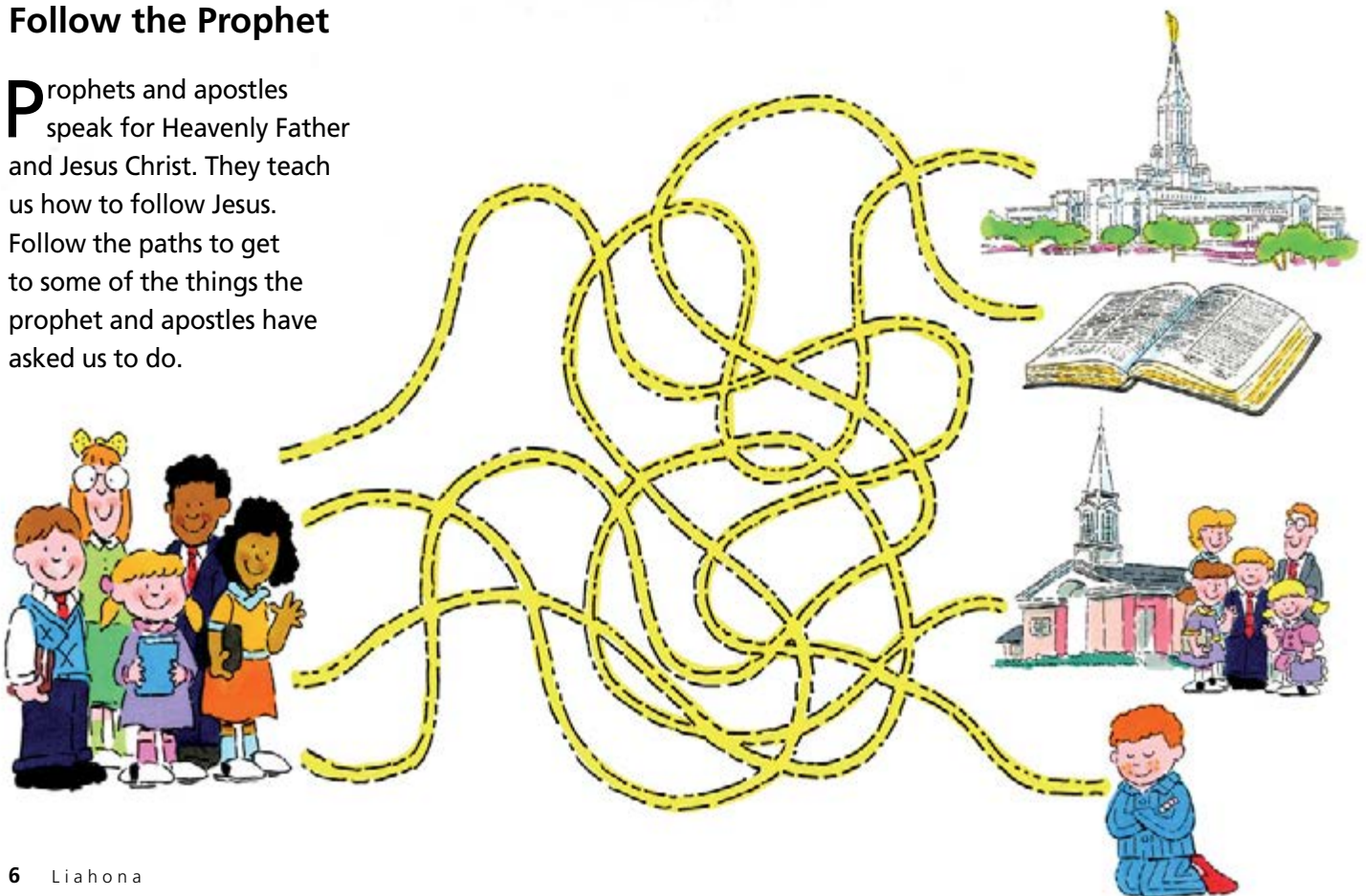


ILLUSTRATION BY VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” increase your faith in God and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to reliefsociety.lds.org.

Daughters of Our Eternal Father

The scriptures teach us that “we are the offspring of God” (Acts 17:29). God referred to Emma Smith, wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as “my daughter” (D&C 25:1). The family proclamation teaches us that we are each “a beloved spirit . . . daughter of heavenly parents.”¹

“In [the premortal] realm, we learned about our eternal female identity,” said Carole M. Stephens, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency.

“Our mortal journey to earth did not change those truths.”²

“Your Father in Heaven knows your name and knows your circumstance,” said Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “He hears your prayers. He knows your hopes and dreams, including your fears and frustrations.”³

“We each belong to and are needed in the family of God,” said Sister Stephens. “Earthly families all look different. And while we do the best



we can to create strong traditional families, membership in the family of God is not contingent upon any kind of status—marital status, parental status, financial status, social status, or even the kind of status we post on social media.”⁴

Additional Scriptures

Jeremiah 1:5; Romans 8:16; Doctrine and Covenants 76:23–24

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129.
2. Carole M. Stephens, “The Family Is of God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2015, 11.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, “To Young Women,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 28.
4. Carole M. Stephens, “The Family Is of God,” 11.
5. See Gospel Topics, “First Vision Accounts,” topics.lds.org.



Faith, Family, Relief

From Our History

In his account of the First Vision,⁵ the Prophet Joseph Smith verifies many truths—including that our Heavenly Father knows our name.

Young Joseph struggled to know which church to join and found guidance in James 1:5. Joseph concluded he would ask God.

One spring morning in 1820, he went to the woods to pray but was immediately seized upon by some dark power. Of this he wrote:

“Just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

“It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. 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 1:16–17).

Consider This

How does knowing you are a daughter of God affect your decisions?

DO THE INSTRUCTIONS MAKE SENSE?

By Ruth Silver

A bicycle trip convinced me of the need to constantly check the Lord's road map of life.

Several years ago I went on a bicycle trip in France with my sister, sister-in-law, and her daughter. Each morning we were given three pages of detailed instructions that, if followed exactly, would guide us to our destination of the day. While we were cycling through vineyards, the directives might instruct us to “go 165 feet (50 m) north, then turn left and go 330 feet (100 m).” More often, the instructions gave signs and street names.

One morning we cycled down an attractive road but soon realized that our instructions no longer fit the territory. Rapidly becoming lost, we decided to return to where we last knew we were on the right track to see if we could sort out where to go.

Sure enough, when we got there, we found a small road sign, noted in our instructions, that we had failed to see. Soon we were on our way again, matching our progress with

the instructions, which again were making perfect sense.

The experience served as a metaphor that answered a puzzling question I'd had: Why, when someone has had a testimony of the gospel, would he or she ever fall away? It became clear to me that when we take a wrong turn (sin) or fail to follow God's commandments, the instructions (the word of God) no longer make sense. The map, as it were, no longer fits the territory we're in. If we haven't strayed too far, we may recognize that the fault is ours and that we need to return (repent) or recommit to live as God has commanded to where we knew we were following the route correctly.

Too often when the instructions no longer fit where we are, we question the instructions. Instead of turning back, we blame the instructions and then eschew them altogether. Finally, having given up the vision of our

destination, we become lost, wandering in paths that may seem, temporarily, very attractive but will not get us where we need to go.

Every day we have the opportunity to study the scriptures. And every six months, we are treated to a general conference of the Church. Are not these times when we can check our road map and make sure we are where we need to be? Once, as I listened to conference, I felt that, imperfect as we are, we can know we're on the right road if these instructions are making perfect sense to us.

Even as following right directions will get us to destinations in this life, studying the scriptures and heeding the counsel of living prophets allow us to check our course and adjust it if need be so that, ultimately, we arrive at our celestial home. ■

The author, who lived in Colorado, USA, passed away last year.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Name withheld

You epitomize those women who, since the days of Nauvoo, have served each other through loving and inspired visiting teaching.

I don't know your name, how old you are, or anything else about you. All I know is that you are Joann's visiting teacher, and I appreciate your conscientious service with all my heart.

I know that visiting a less-active sister like Joann (name has been changed), my daughter-in-law, is not easy, especially when she probably isn't very welcoming. I doubt she even wanted you to come at first. But Joann has told me you have been a real friend to her, stopping by to see how she's doing and accepting her as she is.

In the 19 years since Joann married my son, this is the first time she has ever mentioned having a visiting teacher. Recently she told me how regularly you visit and how thoughtful and kind you always are. She said you have helped her several times when she was sick and have even offered to take my granddaughter to Young Women.

For the past 10 years, she, my son, and their family have lived hundreds of miles from us. I have prayed that



others would love and care for them as I do, and I have pleaded tearfully with Heavenly Father that others would reach out to them as I would if they lived close by. From what Joann says, you are the answer to my prayers.

Even if Joann and my son don't obey the Word of Wisdom and don't attend church, they are still good people and they love their children. Somehow your eyes were not clouded by Joann's cigarette smoke. You did not define her by whether she attended church. You got to know her and learned that she is a loving mother who wants her daughter to attend church and gain a

testimony. And when Joann had surgery, you brought in dinner instead of wondering if she had brought some of her health problems upon herself.

How grateful I am that you are an example for my granddaughter. She can look up to you as someone who cares about everyone and goes out of her way to show loving concern. She told me that one day when you didn't have a car, you walked more

than a mile to her house with your small children to bring cookies.

"I was thinking of you and your mom and wanted to do something nice for you—just because," you told her.

I wish I could tell you how much I appreciate your dedication to your calling as a visiting teacher. You epitomize those women who, since the days of Nauvoo, have served each other through loving and inspired visiting teaching. You have demonstrated that service and love through the way you have affectionately visited my less-active daughter-in-law.

Thank you. ■



By Elder
L. Tom Perry
(1922–2015)

Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles

THE PRIESTHOOD: A SURE ANCHOR

This article was prepared by Elder L. Tom Perry on May 28, 2015, two days before his passing, to be shared with young priesthood holders.

The greatest strength in my life has been the priesthood of God. I believe it will also be a sure anchor for you young men. But for it to have power in your life, you need to understand and use it.

Early Experiences with the Priesthood

I grew up in a comfortable environment in Logan, Utah. I had no childhood worries about food or shelter or education. But perhaps because life was easy, I needed something to hold on to that would anchor me.

For me that anchor was the priesthood of God. I was in an unusual situation when I was growing up. My dad was called to be the bishop when I was a year old, and he was my bishop for 19 years. His fatherly and spiritual guidance was a tremendous help to me.

I think that is mostly why I looked forward to receiving the Aaronic Priesthood on my 12th birthday. I remember the special day I felt my father’s hands on my head as he

ordained me. After that, I advanced through the offices of the Aaronic Priesthood and received callings I enjoyed very much.

Passing the sacrament was very special to me. You could see people commit themselves to obey the Lord and keep His commandments as they partook of the emblems of His body and blood.

Growing in Priesthood Understanding

As time progressed, I graduated from high school, and then after a year in college, I was called on a mission. I enjoyed every minute of it and loved my companions. One in particular was a strength to me. I learned much from him as we fulfilled our responsibilities.

Because the country was at war, when I returned from my mission I joined the United States Marine Corps. When the war was over, I returned to college, married, and started a family. Successive professional moves took me to many places across the United States, where I learned much as I served in many priesthood callings. I finally landed in Boston, Massachusetts, where I served as a

stake president. It was from there that I was called to be an assistant to the Twelve and then, after 17 months, to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Lessons Learned as an Apostle

What have I learned as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve?

I’ve learned that there is a guide, an anchor, and a protection in the priesthood.

The priesthood has always existed. Before Adam came to earth, he had the priesthood. As Adam’s posterity scattered with the priesthood, it became necessary to organize how the priesthood was administered. The





Lord did that by calling Abraham to preside over his family of priesthood holders. This organization continued under Isaac and Jacob, whose name was later changed to Israel.

Centuries later, the children of Israel found themselves in captivity. The Lord sent Moses to deliver them, but when he did, they proved themselves not ready as a people for the Melchizedek Priesthood. So they were left with the Aaronic Priesthood until the time of the Savior.

I find it very interesting what the Savior did first as He began His ministry. He organized the Melchizedek Priesthood. He called twelve Apostles and taught them the laws and order of the priesthood. He called Peter to be

the chief Apostle, establishing a line of authority in His Church. In that day and this, it is Jesus Christ who selects His chief Apostle to preside over the Church, and it is the Savior who directs him in his priesthood duties.

So the priesthood has a direct line from our Lord and Savior through the chief Apostle to the other Apostles and on to the other priesthood holders in the Church. Keys of authority are given to the Apostles, and as long as those keys are on the earth, we will be guided by the Lord Himself. This divine direction protects us and assures us that the Church will not vary from the truth. It will remain consistent because it is not directed by any earthly being. It is directed by the Lord.

Learn the Doctrines of the Priesthood

The greatest advice I have for you young men is to study the doctrines of the priesthood, understand the power you have in exercising your priesthood, and learn how it can bless your lives and the lives of others.

I promise if you'll learn the doctrines of the priesthood and fulfill your priesthood duties, the priesthood will be a sure anchor that will keep you spiritually safe and bring you great joy. Be a true priesthood quorum. Reach out to your friends and bring them into your quorum. Create a brotherhood in your quorum that will be a permanent foundation for your lives. ■

Elder Ronald A. Rasband

GIFTED LEADER,
DEVOTED FATHER

By Elder M. Russell Ballard

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Ron Rasband never doubted that he would serve a full-time mission. The only question the 19-year-old had while opening his mission call was *where* he would serve.

“My dad went on a mission to Germany. My older brother went on a mission to Germany. My future brother-in-law went on a mission to Germany,” he recalls. “I thought I was going to Germany.”

But the Lord had other plans. Ron had been called, instead, to the Eastern States Mission, headquartered in New York City, USA. Disappointed, he took his call to his bedroom, knelt by his bed, said a prayer, randomly opened his scriptures, and began reading:

“Behold, and lo, I have much people in this place, in the regions round about; and an effectual door shall be opened in the regions round about in this *eastern land*.”

“Therefore, I, the Lord, have suffered you to come unto this place; for thus it was expedient in me for the salvation of souls” (D&C 100:3–4; emphasis added).

Immediately, the Holy Ghost confirmed to Ron that his call to the Eastern States Mission was no mistake.

“I went from being disappointed to having my first of many scriptural impressions that



this is where the Lord wanted me to go,” he recalls. “That was a pivotal spiritual experience for me.”

His mission to the Eastern States was the first of several Church callings that would take him places he never expected to go. And with each calling—as a teacher, bishop, high councilor, mission president, member of the Seventy, Senior President of the Seventy, and Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ—Elder Ronald A. Rasband has accepted the Lord’s will and continued to rely on His Spirit as he has served God’s children.

Above right: Elder Ronald A. Rasband as a mission president in New York City in 1998.

Far right: Elder Rasband with his sister, Nancy Schindler; mother; and brothers, Russell and Neil.

Right: With his parents as a seven-year-old boy.



Ron was generally a good boy, but he admits that he had a mischievous side. “More than a few times, my [Primary] teachers went to my mother, the stake Primary president, and said, “That Ronnie Rasband is a tough little kid,” he says. “But they never gave up on me. They showed me

great love and always invited me back into class.”²

Born of Goodly Parents

In his first address as an Apostle of Jesus Christ, Elder Rasband expressed heartfelt gratitude for his ancestry. “I was born of goodly parents in the gospel,” he said, “and they of goodly parents back six generations.”¹

His mother, Verda Anderson Rasband, was a loving leader who nurtured young Ron’s love of the scriptures. His father, Rulon Hawkins Rasband, was a faithful priesthood holder who exemplified the virtues of hard work.

Born on February 6, 1951, in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, Ronald A. (Anderson) Rasband was the only child of his parents’ union. Both had been married and divorced, and Ron grew up under the added care of two older brothers and an older sister.

“He was a combination of our parents, so we all loved him,” says his sister, Nancy Schindler. “Ron never allowed Mom and Dad to stand by each other or sit together without him being in the middle of them.”



Ron’s childhood centered on the Church—ward meetings, ward parties, ward dinners, and ward sports teams. When he wasn’t busy at the Cottonwood First Ward meetinghouse, he was working odd jobs, doing Scouting activities, and spending time with friends. At home, family time centered on the scriptures, games, and chores.

“My father taught me what work is by his example,” he says. “My mother taught me about work by having me do it.”

Ron’s father drove a bread delivery truck, arising daily by 4:00 a.m. and returning home late each night. His mother stayed home to raise the children, supplementing the family income by making and selling porcelain lace dolls.

Ron’s innate ability to lead, delegate, and get things done—which would serve him well in his professional and ecclesiastical responsibilities—proved useful early on.

“Ron was assigned to mow the



lawn,” his sister recalls. But Ron, like Mark Twain’s Tom Sawyer, had a way of persuading his friends to help.

“I would look outside, and there would be his best friend mowing the lawn for him,” Nancy says. “The next week another of his friends was mowing. He just sat on the front porch and laughed and joked with them as they did his work.”

Ron’s parents struggled financially, but the family had the gospel. “We never had a lot of money,” Ron recalls, “but it never affected my happiness.”

Trusted Friends and Leaders

Growing up, Ron was blessed with good friends and trusted priesthood leaders, including his boyhood stake president of 14 years—James E. Faust (1920–2007), who subsequently served in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and in the First Presidency. Ron’s family enjoyed a close relationship with President Faust and his family. “He always referred to me as one of his Cottonwood boys because he helped raise me,” he says.

Ron had no time for school sports once he reached high school because he always had a job, but he made time for loyal friendships that have lasted a lifetime.

“I’ve always admired Ron for who he is, but he wasn’t perfect,” says childhood friend

Kraig McCleary. With a smile, he adds, “I’ve told him that if he gets to heaven, I’ll get there too because we did the same things growing up.”

Ron left on his mission in early 1970, but Kraig was thinking about postponing missionary service until after that fall’s hunting season. That’s when Ron called him from his mission.

“I don’t know how he got permission to call, but he chastised me for not being more excited about getting right out on my mission,” Brother McCleary says. “Of course, I didn’t postpone it.”

Ron calls his mission a “fantastic” experience. “The Lord blessed me with many miraculous, faith-promoting experiences,” he says. “My mission was huge for my spiritual life.”

Ron spent part of his mission in the Bermuda islands. His mission president, Harold Nephi Wilkinson, sent only “straight-arrow missionaries” there because he could visit them only occasionally.

“We were totally on our own, but the president didn’t have to worry about us,” Ron recalls. “We got the job done.”

From the beginning of their marriage, Elder and Sister Rasband have put the Lord first. Married on September 4, 1973 (below), they were eventually blessed with four daughters and a son (above). Opposite page: Jon Huntsman Sr., Elder Rasband’s former business partner and mentor, calls Elder Rasband a “gifted leader of intense loyalty.”



The “Dream Girl” of Delta Phi

After completing his mission in 1972, Ron found a job, enrolled at the University of Utah that fall, and joined Delta Phi Kappa, a fraternity for returned missionaries. At the fraternity’s social activities, he couldn’t help but notice an attractive young woman named Melanie Twitchell. Melanie was one of Delta Phi’s elected “dream girls,” who helped with the fraternity’s service activities.

Like Ron, Melanie came from an active Latter-day Saint family. Her father, a career military officer, and her mother never let the family’s frequent moves become an excuse for missing church.

Melanie was impressed by Ron’s kindness, courtesy, and gospel knowledge. “I said to myself, ‘He is such an amazing man that it doesn’t matter if I never get to date him. I just want to be his best friend.’”

As their relationship grew, the Spirit confirmed her impressions of Ron and of his commitment to the Lord. Soon their friendship blossomed into what Melanie calls a “storybook, fairytale romance.”

Elder Rasband says she was a perfect match. “Melanie was every bit my equal in gospel devotion and heritage. We became best friends, and that’s when I asked her to marry me.”

They married on September 4, 1973, in the Salt Lake Temple. Since then, he says, his “selfless eternal companion . . . has helped mold me like potter’s clay into a more polished disciple of Jesus Christ. Her love and support, and that of our 5 children, their spouses, and our 24 grandchildren, sustain me.”³

“Let’s Go”

While serving as the elders quorum president of his married student ward, Ron became acquainted with Jon Huntsman Sr., the ward’s high council adviser. Jon was immediately impressed with the way Ron ran the quorum.

“He had incredible leadership and organizational skills,” recalls Elder Huntsman, who served as an Area Seventy from 1996 to 2011. “I thought it unusual that a

young man who was still in college could run a quorum in such a way.”

For several months, Jon watched Ron turn ideas into action as he completed priesthood duties. When a senior marketing position opened at Jon’s company—which would become Huntsman Chemical Corporation—he concluded that Ron had the skills he wanted and offered him the job. The position started the following week in Ohio, USA.

“I told Melanie, ‘I’m not going to drop out of school and move,’” Ron recalls. “I’ve worked my whole life to graduate from college, and I’m finally close to my goal.”

Melanie reminded Ron that finding a good job was why he was in school.

“What are you worried about?” she asked. “I know how to pack and move. I’ve been doing it my whole life. I’ll let you call your mother every night. Let’s go.”

Jon’s confidence in Ron proved well placed. Under Jon’s mentorship, Ron advanced quickly in the growing company,

becoming its president and chief operating officer in 1986. He traveled extensively for the company—both domestically and internationally. Despite his busy schedule, Ron tried to be home on weekends. And when he traveled, he would occasionally take family members with him.

“When he was home, he really made the children feel special and loved,” Melanie says. He attended their activities and sporting events whenever possible. Jenessa MacPherson, one of the couple’s four daughters, says her father’s Sunday ecclesiastical duties often kept him from sitting with the family during Church meetings.

“We would fight over who got to sit by him at church because it was such a novel thing to have him there,” she





says. “I remember putting my hand in his hand and thinking to myself, ‘If I could just learn to be like him, I’ll be on the right track and will be becoming more like the Savior.’ He was always my hero.”

The couple’s son, Christian, recalls fond memories of “father-son time.” Friends came and went because of the family’s frequent moves, he says, “but my father was always my best friend”—albeit a competitive one.

Whether shooting a basketball with Christian, playing a board game with his daughters, or fishing with family and friends, Ron loved to win.

“While we were growing up, he would never *let* anyone win,” Christian says. “We had to earn it, but it made us better. And the tradition continues with his loving grandchildren.”

Over the years, Ron’s family could not help but notice how ministering in Church leadership magnified his ability to show love and compassion, to express feelings of the Spirit, and to inspire others to do their best. After the birth of Ron and Melanie’s grandson Paxton, the family relied heavily on Ron’s spiritual strength and support.

Paxton, born with a rare genetic disorder, suffered from myriad health problems that tested the family physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Elder Rasband has called

the journey that followed Paxton’s birth “a crucible for learning special lessons tied to the eternities.”⁴

During Paxton’s short three years on earth—when questions were many and answers were few—Elder Rasband stood as a spiritual pillar, leading his family in drawing upon the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

With the announcement of his new calling, several family members and friends were not surprised. “Those of us who know him best,” Christian says, “raised our hands the highest when he was sustained as an Apostle.”

“I’ll Go Serve”

In 1996, at age 45, Ron was in the middle of a successful career when the call came to serve as mission president of the New York New York North Mission. Like the Apostles of old, he “straightway left [his] nets” (Matthew 4:20).

“Accepting the call took only a micro-second,” Elder Rasband says. He said to the Lord, “You want me to go serve; I’ll go serve.”

Ron took along a great lesson he had learned from his professional experience: “People are more important than anything



Top left: Elder and Sister Rasband with Church members in New Delhi, India, in November 2015. Above: Elder and Sister Rasband during his service as mission president in New York City, 1996–99; with their grandson Paxton, who helped the family learn “special lessons tied to the eternities”; and at the cornerstone ceremony of the Sacramento California Temple.

else.”⁵ With that knowledge and his honed leadership skills, he was ready to begin full-time service in the Lord’s kingdom.

Ron and Melanie found missionary work in New York City both challenging and invigorating. Ron was quick to delegate responsibility to the missionaries—inspiring their loyalty, and teaching, building, and lifting them in the process.

In 2000, a short eight months after Ron and Melanie had completed their mission, Ron was called to the Seventy, where his preparation, experience, and many talents have blessed the Church. As a member of the Seventy, he served as a counselor in the Europe Central Area Presidency, helping to oversee the work in 39 nations. Though he left college more than 40 years ago, he remains a serious student, welcoming ongoing mentoring from his senior Brethren as he supervised the North America West, Northwest, and three Utah Areas; served as Executive Director of the Temple Department; and served in the Presidency of the Seventy, working closely with the Twelve.

Recently, Elder Rasband observed, “What a great honor and privilege it is for me to be the least among the Twelve and to learn from them in every way and in every occasion.”⁶

“What They Knew, I Know”

Two paintings adorn the walls of Elder Rasband’s office. One is of Mormon missionaries teaching a family in Denmark in the 1850s. The second is of early missionary Dan Jones preaching from the perch of a well in the British Isles. The paintings (above right) remind Elder Rasband of his own ancestry.

“These early pioneers gave their all to the gospel of Jesus Christ and leave a legacy for their posterity to follow,” he has testified.⁷ What pushed Elder Rasband’s ancestors forward amidst adversity and persecution is what most qualifies him for his new calling: a knowledge and a sure witness of the Lord and His work.




“I have so very much to learn in my new calling,” he has said. “I feel very humble about that. But there’s one aspect of my calling I can do. I can bear testimony ‘of the name of Christ in all the world’ (D&C 107:23). He lives!”⁸

As a great-grandson of pioneers, he adds: “What they felt, I feel. What they knew, I know.”⁹

And what they hoped for in their posterity is embodied in the life, teachings, and service of Elder Ronald A. Rasband, who is following their example and honoring their legacy as he goes forward as one of the Lord’s special witnesses. ■

NOTES

1. Ronald A. Rasband, “I Stand All Amazed,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 89.
2. Ronald A. Rasband, “Friend to Friend: Golden Nuggets,” *Friend*, Oct. 2002, 8.
3. Ronald A. Rasband, “I Stand All Amazed,” 89.
4. Ronald A. Rasband, “Special Lessons,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 80.
5. Ronald A. Rasband, press conference, Oct. 3, 2015.
6. Ronald A. Rasband, testimony, Priesthood and Family Department devotional, Dec. 1, 2015.
7. Ronald A. Rasband, “I Stand All Amazed,” 89.
8. Ronald A. Rasband, testimony.
9. Ronald A. Rasband, Pioneer Day address, Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, July 24, 2007.



Because I had been less active years ago, a member who knew me then couldn't believe I was called to be a bishop.

By Patrick J. Cronin III

During a priesthood executive committee meeting, our full-time missionaries reported meeting a member whose records were not in the ward. I recognized the name immediately and mentioned that she and I had been in the same ward many years ago.

One of the missionaries said, "Yes, bishop, she mentioned that and seemed quite surprised that you were the bishop."

I asked them, "What did she say?"

They said she looked very surprised and said, "*He's* the bishop?"

I had to laugh and explain that this sister knew me as a very different person 30 years ago.

As I contemplated this incident later, I thought about how much my life had changed during the 30-plus years that my family and I have been members. I have known many members of our ward for 20 years and have served as branch president and as bishop, but none of these members knew me 30 years ago. Although I occasionally share incidents from my past to teach about repentance and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, most of the ward doesn't know what an incredible journey my life in the Church has been.

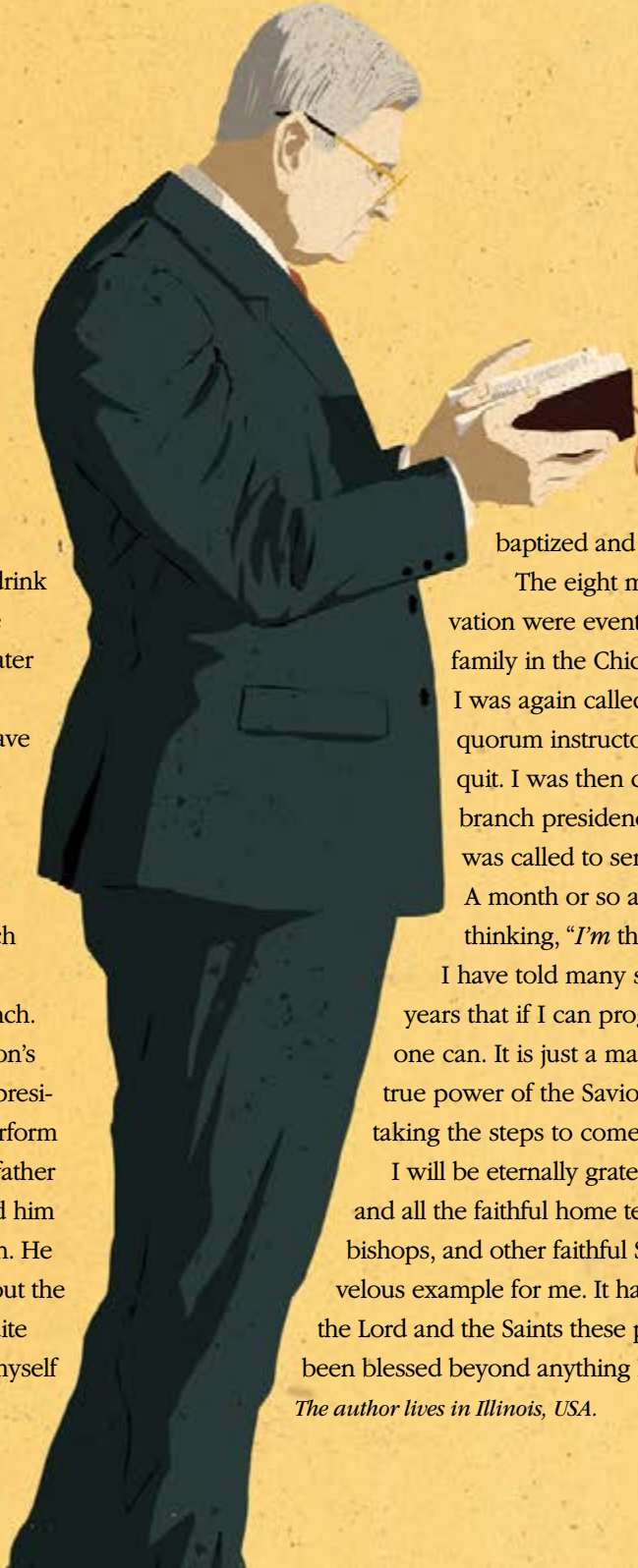
My family and I were introduced to the Church in May 1979, and I knew immediately that this was where we belonged. We were baptized in June, and at first we were all active, but it wasn't long before I stopped attending and returned to old habits. I never really had any doubt about the truthfulness of the gospel and the Restoration, but I did not think I had what it took to be a good member of the Church.

In 1982, because of my continued alcohol abuse, my wife, who had never failed in her faith, filed for divorce. At the time my family was living in Oklahoma, USA, but I had returned to Illinois, USA, where I had been raised. I had reached the point where I was about to lose the only thing that truly mattered to me: my family.

I began praying on my knees morning and evening to a God who I was no longer sure existed or, if He did, I figured He had long ago forgotten me. Yet for three months I prayed faithfully. Early one morning, while I was deep in prayer, a feeling of great relief came upon me and I knew that God lived, that He knew me, and that He loved me. I also knew I would never touch another drop of alcohol.

That very evening I received a call from my wife to let me know she was going to mail me the divorce papers to sign. During that conversation she suddenly said, "There is

He's THE BISHOP?



something very different about you. I don't believe you are ever going to drink again, and I am going to tear up these papers." We reunited, and two years later she gave birth to our third son.

One would assume that I would have returned to full activity in the Church, but I am a stubborn man. I returned for a time and even received a calling as an elders quorum instructor. But I soon began to feel inadequate to teach and again became inactive.

In 1991 we moved into a small branch. Several months before our youngest son's eighth birthday, my wife, the Primary president, asked him who he wanted to perform his baptism. Of course he wanted his father to perform the ordinance. My wife told him that probably was not going to happen. He did not accept that answer and set about the task of activating his father. He was quite relentless, and in short order I found myself serving as the Scoutmaster, and I later

baptized and confirmed my son.

The eight months following my activation were eventful. We were sealed as a family in the Chicago Illinois Temple, and I was again called to serve as an elders quorum instructor, only this time I didn't quit. I was then called as a counselor in the branch presidency, and five months later I was called to serve as the branch president. A month or so after my call, I remember thinking, "I'm the branch president?"

I have told many struggling Saints over the years that if I can progress in the gospel, anyone can. It is just a matter of understanding the true power of the Savior and His Atonement and taking the steps to come unto Him.

I will be eternally grateful to my wife and children and all the faithful home teachers, quorum leaders, bishops, and other faithful Saints who set such a marvelous example for me. It has been a privilege to serve the Lord and the Saints these past 20 years. My life has been blessed beyond anything I could have imagined. ■

The author lives in Illinois, USA.

SCRIPTURE TRANSLATION:

INTO THE **Language** OF OUR **Heart**

This experience is familiar to those who have been involved in translating the scriptures from English into other languages. It happens over and over:

A young Armenian holding a copy of the Book of Mormon only recently translated into his language approaches a member of the team who assisted with the translating: “Thank you,” he says. “I have read the Book of Mormon in English. I have read the Book of Mormon in Russian. I have read it in Ukrainian. But until I was able to read it in Armenian, I did not truly understand it. When I read it in Armenian, it finally made sense. It was like coming home.”

Coming Home

If the gospel of Jesus Christ is our spiritual home, then it is only right that it feel comfortable and familiar. At home we rest. We nourish ourselves. We talk with those we love in the language taught us at our mother’s knee. This is the language of our heart, and since the heart is what the gospel must reach, reading the scriptures in the language of our heart is vital.

The Doctrine and Covenants suggests as much. There the Lord reveals that through the priesthood keys held by the First Presidency, “the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations . . . of the gospel of their salvation.

COUNTLESS EXPERIENCES SHOW THE LORD’S HAND IN THE WORK OF TRANSLATING HIS SCRIPTURES.

By R. Val Johnson
Church Magazines





*The scriptures
touch the heart
more powerfully
when read in our
native language—
the language of
our heart.*



The complete Book of Mormon has been published in 89 languages, and selections have been translated in another 21 languages.

“For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ” (D&C 90:10–11).

Jim Jewell, who worked on the scriptures translation team at Church headquarters, tells a story of how close to home the scriptures can come when translated into the language of the heart:

“In translating the Book of Mormon into Sesotho, the language spoken in the African nation of Lesotho, we needed to find someone to help us evaluate the work of the translation team. The project supervisor, Larry Foley, identified a member of the Church from Lesotho who was a graduate student at Utah State University. In Lesotho, education is conducted in English, so this lady and her children had studied in English from the first grade on, but they still conversed at home in Sesotho.

“She agreed to work on the translation. Her evaluation of the chapters we sent to her was indeed helpful. We routinely submitted specific questions regarding vocabulary and language structure to which she provided helpful commentary. However, we noted that she had highlighted in yellow many verses unrelated to our

questions. When we asked her about the highlighted verses, she said: ‘Oh, those are verses that touched my heart deeply which I had never fully understood in English. I highlighted them so that I could share them with my children.’”

A Model for Scripture Translation

Translation of the Bible has a long and fascinating history, beginning

with the translation of parts of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek. Later, the Bible was translated from Greek into Latin and from Latin, Hebrew, and Greek into a myriad of other languages.¹ As a result, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not translate the Bible into different languages but adopts versions already accepted as authoritative by Christians speaking those languages.²

“FOR IT SHALL COME TO PASS . . . THAT EVERY MAN SHALL HEAR THE FULNESS OF THE GOSPEL IN HIS OWN TONGUE, AND IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE, THROUGH THOSE WHO ARE ORDAINED UNTO THIS POWER” (D&C 90:11).



THE SCRIPTURE TRANSLATION PROCESS

1

Approval to Translate

- Scripture translation is requested by the Area Presidency when the number of Church members who speak the language is growing and when basic Church materials have been translated in the language.
- The request is reviewed by several Church headquarters committees, including members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency.

Translation Phases

Introductory phase:

- An existing Bible translation is selected for Church use.
- Basic materials are translated first: *Gospel Fundamentals* (includes basic doctrines as well as the name of the Church, the sacrament prayers, the baptism prayer, and the Articles of Faith), *The Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith* pamphlet, and a web page on LDS.org.
- General conference talks may also be interpreted in the language.

Phase 1:

- Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price (about 10 years of work).
- Foundational texts such as “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” selected hymns, and *Preach My Gospel*.



Most of the scriptural translation work the Church does, therefore, is of the Book of Mormon (the first to be translated), the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. The language from which these books are translated is English, the language the Prophet Joseph Smith revealed them in, the language of his heart. The process used to translate the scriptures into non-English languages should be familiar to students of Church history. It is much the same process the Prophet used to translate the Book of Mormon into English.

Joseph Smith was a humble, largely uneducated farm boy. But he had the qualities and potential the Lord needed for the work that needed to be done. Indeed, Joseph and his family were prepared and set in place to do this very work.³

Joseph was also given help—both divine and mortal—in translating the Nephite records. The angel Moroni visited Joseph yearly for four years before allowing him to retrieve the record. We don’t know all that Moroni taught the Prophet, but his visits apparently prepared him spiritually and mentally for the task ahead.⁴

The Lord also prepared “interpreters” ahead of time as a means to translate a lost language. Described as two clear stones bound in metal rims, these and a similar instrument called a seer stone helped the Prophet translate the Nephite record into English.

The Prophet didn’t detail the process; he simply testified that he translated the Book of Mormon by “the gift and power of God.”⁵

In addition to the divine assistance he was given, Joseph had mortal help in the form of scribes who produced the written copy that others ultimately typeset, printed, paid for, and distributed to the world.

Not unlike the preparation and help Joseph received in his translation work, those delegated with the task of translating the scriptures today are prepared by the Lord and given help in their work—both divine and mortal.

A Revelatory Work

Infusing the rigorous translation process is a spiritual energy perhaps best described as “revelation by council.” The two or three people who are selected as translators team up with others in doing the work. They have Church headquarters supervisors, local reviewers, a lexicon for reference,⁶ translation guides, computer programs, and ecclesiastical support that extends all the way to the First Presidency. (See the accompanying chart.) When the First Presidency gives final approval of a translation, the work is then typeset, printed, and distributed. Having been prepared in a digital format, it is also posted on LDS.org and in the Gospel Library app.

This collaborative effort is both intense and inspired. It involves



dedicated attention to the quality of the content and the quality of the physical format it is delivered in. Translations are reviewed at many levels, particularly at an ecclesiastical level that seeks the Lord's approval. Only when that approval is given does a translation move forward. While not precisely revelatory in the way the Prophet Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon, the process is clearly guided by the Lord—by His gifts and by His power.

This doesn't mean that a translation is perfect when first completed. Often, time and further reviews by those studying the scriptures suggest improvements in grammar and vocabulary or find typesetting or spelling mistakes. Rarely, changes are made in the explication of doctrine. When these are made, they are made under the guidance of the First Presidency.

The Lord Provides

The Lord sustains this translation work in other ways as well. It is commonly reported by the translation team at Church headquarters that when a need arises, the Lord provides.

As one of many examples, a translator was needed for the translation and recording of Church materials in Mam (pronounced "mum," a descendant of the Mayan language, spoken in Guatemala). Among the first missionaries called to Guatemala was an elder whose grandfather

had spoken Mam. The missionary had been raised in a city and spoke only Spanish. But every night his grandfather would come to him in dreams and teach him the Mam language. This young elder became the primary translator of Mam in the Church.

Often, the work of translation is done at great personal sacrifice. Depending on financial situations, some translators donate their service and others are paid so they can have time to devote to translation.

The man who became one of the Urdu translators was converted to the Church in Pakistan while working as a teacher. As a result of his conversion, he lost his job; he lost his house, which was provided by the school where he taught; and he lost the schooling for his children. A Church translation supervisor approached him about serving as a translator and offered him a modest recompense. After working as a translator for a few months, the man visited with the supervisor and timidly asked if the supervisor would buy him a new ballpoint pen. The one he had been using had run out of ink. Only then did the supervisor discover and fix a clerical error that had resulted in the translator receiving much less than what he should have been paid.

But just as the Lord blessed Joseph Smith in ways that enabled him to complete his work, the Lord blesses

Phase 2:

- Numerous other materials can be requested, such as the *Liahona* magazine, seminary and institute manuals, manuals for Sunday instruction, hymns and children's songs, temple and family history materials, and interpretation for stake and regional broadcasts.

Key Workgroups

Translation team:

- Two or three temple-worthy Church members with adequate maturity in the gospel.
- Aided by a verse-by-verse translation guide, a lexicon, and a Church headquarters translation supervisor.

Ecclesiastical review committee:

- Three to five men and women who are Church leaders in the area.
- Called and set apart to help review the translation for readability and doctrinal accuracy.
- Wording changes are not made until the committee unanimously agrees and the changes are in harmony with the translation guide.

Member reviewers:

- Local Church members also review the translation.
- They give feedback on the clarity and appropriateness of the wording.
- Clarity of translation ensures that the Holy Ghost can bear witness of the truth of the teachings.

The scripture translation process involves both the head and the heart, both mental skill and spiritual insight.

His translators. For instance, the translator of the Latvian scriptures was a lawyer who had studied law in Russia, where he had been converted to the restored gospel. Back in Latvia, he was setting up his business. He was also serving as a branch president. He couldn't have been busier, but the Church needed him and his facility with English.

He asked for time to pray about the request because accepting it would, as he told the Church representative, "take food out of the mouth of my children." After praying, he decided to accept but asked the Lord to bless him with the means to do what is a difficult, spiritually demanding, time-consuming work.

He began going to his law office one hour earlier every day and using that hour to translate the Book of Mormon. He finished well under the five years the process usually takes. In fact, this was one of the fastest translations since Joseph translated the Book of Mormon in roughly 60 days.

Many more experiences could be related that illustrate the Lord's hand in the work of translating His scriptures. They all declare clearly that this is His work and that He cares deeply about it. He prepares people to do His work. He prepares the tools they need to hasten the work. And He inspires and blesses them along the way.

The result is a world enriched by the word of God, given to His children in the language of their hearts. ■

IN THE WORK OF TRANSLATING THE LORD'S SCRIPTURES, IT IS CLEAR THAT THIS IS HIS WORK. HE PREPARES PEOPLE WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO HASTEN THE WORK, AND HE INSPIRES AND BLESSES THEM ALONG THE WAY.



NOTES

1. See the eight-part series, "How the Bible Came to Be," by Lenet H. Read printed in the *Ensign* between January and September 1982.
2. See, for example, "Church Edition of Spanish Bible Now Published," mormonnewsroom.org.
3. See Matthew S. Holland, "The Path to Palmyra," *Ensign*, June 2015, 24–29; *Liahona*, June 2015, 14–19.
4. See Kent P. Jackson, "Moroni's Message to Joseph Smith," *Ensign*, Aug. 1990, 12–16.
5. Joseph Smith, in introduction to the Book of Mormon. For an expanded description of Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Mormon, see Gospel Topics, "Book of Mormon Translation," topics.lds.org.
6. The lexicon defines every word in the English scriptures so translators can better understand the meaning of the words. Often, words have more than one meaning, so translators must depend on context, inspiration, and teamwork to identify the right solution. Occasionally, questions about meaning are resolved only by the First Presidency.



**By President
Russell M. Nelson**

President of the
Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

Senior Missionary

MOMENTS

*One of the best ways for
senior couples to make
magnificent memories is
to serve a mission together.*

When our friends who are 60 or 70 years old forget something, we often jokingly refer to the lapse in memory as a “senior moment.” But I would like to discuss a different kind of senior moment—a moment so magnificent that the memory of it will be everlasting. It is the moment when a senior missionary couple realizes that they are doing exactly what the Lord would have them do. At such memorable moments they recognize that:

- They have a lifetime of experience to share, and talents, skills, and gospel understanding they can use to bless others.
- Their example is a blessing to their children and their children’s children.
- As they serve, they are making enduring friendships.
- Their marriage is growing stronger every day.
- Service in His name is sweet.

Moments in the Making

My senior couple friends, such moments should be in the making for many of you. Consider the story told by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles about what a senior couple serving in Chile was able to do. The parent of one of the young elders died. The mission president was far enough away that he couldn’t get to the missionary quickly.

“But there was a sweet [mature] missionary couple serving in the area,” Elder Holland says. “They came and sat with that missionary and tenderly cared for and comforted him until the mission president could make personal contact. We had great young missionaries in our missions, but no young single missionary could have done for that elder what that couple was able to do.”¹

Their skill at that moment was simply to convey compassion in a time of need. They weren’t concerned about speaking any language other than the language of Christlike love. They weren’t worried about missing a grandchild’s birthday or a baby blessing, as important as those events may be. They were concerned about being where the Lord could use them to bless the life of one of His children. And because they were willing, He was able to let them represent Him.

Service Is Seldom Convenient

The truth is, no senior missionary finds it convenient to leave home. Neither did Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, or Wilford Woodruff. They had children and grandchildren too, and they loved their families just as we do. But they also loved the Lord and wanted to serve Him. Someday we may meet these stalwarts who helped to establish this dispensation. When we do, we will rejoice that we

did not seek the shadows when we should have served.

Some may prefer to serve while still living at home. After a stroke left Aase Schumacher Nelson (no relation) confined to a wheelchair, she feared her lifelong desire to go on a mission with her husband, Don, would not be fulfilled. Then a neighbor talked to them about his Church-service mission at a bishop's storehouse. Encouraged, they talked with a supervisor at the facility, completed their recommendation forms, and were called to serve for two days a week at a storehouse near their home.

"It's easy to just lay back and think, 'Oh, I'm not needed anymore,'" Aase Nelson says. "But now I feel that I *am* needed. And that's been a testimony to me."

You Are Definitely Needed

If you are tempted to think you're not needed, let me reassure you that you are. There is not a mission president in the Church who would not love to have additional couples serving in his mission. Seniors strengthen the younger elders and sisters. They provide support that helps others to serve better in their own responsibilities. And can you imagine what it means to a leader who has only been a member for a few years to have ready access to seasoned Church members? Senior couples are often a literal answer to the prayers of bishops and branch presidents.

We encourage mission presidents to seek out couples to meet needs in their missions. Bishops should seek out couples who could serve. LDS.org lists pages and pages of opportunities for senior couples. But most of all, couples might get on their knees and ask Heavenly Father if the



A couple in Seoul, South Korea, savors the sweetness of serving together.

time is right for them to serve a mission together. Of all the qualifications, a *desire* to serve may be the most important (see D&C 4:3).

As I extol the work of senior missionaries, I realize that there are many who would like to serve but are not able to do so. Limitations imposed by age or poor health deserve realistic appraisal, as do the important needs of family members. When desire burns within yet such limitations exist, others can be your arms and legs, and you can provide needed funds.

Senior couples, no matter who you are or where you are, please pray about this opportunity to create great senior missionary moments together. Heavenly Father will help you know what you can do. ■

NOTE

1. Jeffrey R. Holland in Joseph Walker, "Elder Jeffrey Holland: LDS Church Desperately Needs More Senior Missionaries," *Deseret News*, Sept. 14, 2011, 3.



Top: The Malmroses meet regularly with President Robison to discuss how to use their talents as they serve others. Above: Young missionaries at the training center in Accra, Ghana, say that having support from Elder and Sister Malmrose is like having a second mother and father serving at their side.



FROM HOME OR AWAY FROM HOME
Serving from home or away from home, senior missionary couples "come and help" in wards and branches, mission offices, visitors' centers, temples, inner-city missions, medical assignments, employment resource centers, self-reliance programs, addiction recovery programs, family history, records preservation, the Church Educational System, public affairs, humanitarian services, and more. And more and more couples are needed.



Senior Missionaries:

NEEDED,
BLESSED,
AND
LOVED

*Serving as
a missionary
couple may be
more flexible,
less expensive, and
more joyful than
you think.*

By **Richard M. Romney**
Church Magazines

“CAN YOU COME AND HELP?”

It's a question Gerald and Lorna Malmrose of Washington, USA, had answered before. They said yes when their former bishop, then a mission president, asked if they could serve with him in the West Indies. They said yes again when their stake president called them to fulfill a service mission at Church headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, working with computers and human resources.

When their former bishop and mission president, Reid Robison, called again, this time as president of the missionary training center in Accra, Ghana, he asked if the Malmroses would help once again.

“We knew we could trust the Lord,” Elder Malmrose says. “So we decided to trust Him again.” They said yes, completed their recommendation forms, received their call, and soon were in Ghana.

Serving as a Couple

The Malmroses' experiences demonstrate some principles about senior couples serving missions that may not be widely understood:

- *There are two types of missions.* (1) The President of the Church calls senior couples to serve either from

their own home or away from home. (2) A stake president calls Church-service missionary couples to fill local or regional needs part-time, from 8 to 32 hours per week. They usually live and serve locally but sometimes may serve away from home.

- *Mission presidents are encouraged to find couples who can meet needs in their mission, and couples may indicate their preferences.* “We’re not saying that couples can pick and choose their own missionary assignments,” explained Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “A call is still a call. . . . [But] we talk to our senior couples about their service preferences, and every consideration is given to letting them serve where and how they want to serve.”¹
- *Mission presidents counsel with couples about how to best use their skills and abilities.* “To have the most meaningful experience as a senior couple,” President Robison says, “you need to have the opportunity to work both in areas you’re passionate about and where you have a skill level that makes you feel you have something to offer.”

For example, President Robison knew that Elder Malmrose speaks French, helpful because many Africans



MAKE YOURSELVES AVAILABLE

"We need many, many more senior couples. . . . Make yourselves available. . . . There are few times in your lives when you will enjoy [so much] the sweet spirit and satisfaction that come from [serving] together in the work of the Master."

President Thomas S. Monson "As We Meet Together Again," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 6.



speak French. "I had envisioned him being involved in travel and working on visas," President Robison says. "But when he got here, I sensed that wasn't his true interest. So I invited him to use his computer skills. He has saved us hours and hours." Elder Malmrose also helps missionaries, especially French-speaking missionaries, prepare names and do temple work for their families. Sister Malmrose, a certified medical assistant, was assigned to work with the mission doctor and nurse.

He Prepares the Way

Like the Malmroses, other couples find that when they trust the Lord, He prepares the way. That's what happened for Alvin and Corazon Rieta of Kawit, Cavite, in the Philippines.

"Two years prior to our decision to serve, we began putting into place firm plans for our family business," Elder Rieta explains. "Our son and daughter had graduated from college and could take over for us, but we wondered who would solve business problems and how our clients would react to our plans."

Sister Rieta was also concerned about leaving her aging mother. "I was afraid we might lose her while we were away," she says. "I also felt unequal to the challenge of teaching the gospel."

They counseled with their bishop and with a couple who had recently served in Davao. "All of them bore strong testimonies that the Lord would guide each couple to know how to deal with their affairs at home, their family, and the funds for their mission," Sister Rieta says.

"As we sought guidance," Elder Rieta says, "our fears were addressed—our business went well in spite of challenges, our clients

expressed joy and support, and our family drew closer together in taking care of our sick mother. We began to understand that the Lord truly would help us."

The Rietas now serve in member and leadership support in the Philippines Cagayan de Oro Mission.

A Lot You Can Do

Some couples wonder about physical limitations, but not Keith and Jennilyn Mauerman of Utah, USA. Years ago, four months after they were married in the Los Angeles California Temple, Keith was drafted and sent into combat. An airborne squad leader, he was walking ahead of the other soldiers when a land mine exploded. He lost both legs. When he arrived back home, Jennilyn rushed to his side.

"I knew I didn't have to worry," Keith says, "because we have an eternal marriage. My wife has supported me all along. She still sustains me every day."

When Sister Mauerman retired, they decided to serve a mission. But would Elder Mauerman's being a double amputee cause a problem? "There are always things I *can't* do," he says, "but there are so many things I *can* do, we knew there would be a place for us."

While completing their recommendation forms, he checked a box indicating he had served in the military. Soon they received a call from Church Military Relations. "I had an ID card that would allow us to enter military bases, so they asked our permission to recommend us for a military relations mission."

The Mauermans were called to serve at a military base in North Carolina, USA. Elder Mauerman recalls: "The sign at the gate said 'Fort Bragg, Home of the Airborne.' When

the guard greeted us with the airborne motto ‘All the Way!’ it was the first time I had heard it in years. It felt like home, even though I had never been to Fort Bragg. I knew our mission call was a perfect fit and that the Lord is mindful of me.”

“We taught lessons about becoming self-reliant and resilient and about strengthening marriage,” Sister Mauerman says. “Initially we didn’t want to share our story, but we found that sharing it made all the difference. Soldiers and their spouses looked at us and said, ‘If you can do it, we can too.’”

Portuguese. Study and effort, however, helped Elder Romrell’s Portuguese skills to return and Sister Romrell’s to grow. So did a ukulele.

“I wasn’t really planning to bring it,” Sister Romrell says, “but Elder Romrell was inspired to, and it’s amazing to see what it’s done. As we teach investigators and work on reactivation and fellowship, it’s fun to use it to get people to sing hymns. We learn the language, and the hymns bring a strong spirit with them.”



Having overcome financial concerns, Elder and Sister Rieta serve in their own country, the Philippines.



For the Mauermans, serving in military relations is a perfect fit. “It feels like coming home,” they say.



Inspired to bring along a ukulele, the Romrells use it to share the universal language of music as they visit homes and sing hymns.

The Mauermans had such a positive experience in North Carolina that they asked to serve again. Today they travel about 40 miles (64 km) from their home in Orem to Salt Lake City two times a week to serve in the Church Military Relations office. They also teach senior couples at the missionary training center in Provo, where they find that just about every group includes somebody who has overcome obstacles in order to serve.

Universal Languages

Called to the Brazil Cuiabá Mission, Randy and Lou Ellen Romrell of Utah were concerned. Although Elder Romrell had served in Brazil as a young missionary, he’d let his Portuguese slip. And Sister Romrell didn’t know

Even though her Portuguese skills are still developing, she is already fluent in music. “Music brings people together,” she says. “Even if I can’t understand everything they say during a visit, when we sing, we connect.” Invited to speak in schools about the American holiday of Thanksgiving, the Romrells sang hymns of gratitude—accompanied by ukulele. And Sister Romrell also uses a more conventional instrument, the piano, to accompany hymns at church.

And Portuguese? “Even if you’re not fluent, learning just a few words helps,” she says. “Simply saying hello and greeting people goes a long way. Let them know you’re learning. Make it simple and rely on the Spirit.” And the Spirit, of course, is another language everyone can share.



“WHAT YOU WANT ME TO BE”

“When I think of the great need for senior missionaries, I always think of that beloved hymn ‘I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go’ (*Hymns*, no. 270) and its message, ‘I’ll be what you want me to be.’”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



COUPLES NEEDED

“Our message to all of our mature couples is simple: we dearly need you. We are doing everything we can to make it as convenient as possible for you to go. . . . The times cry out for it. There are people who need you. Please—go.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, *Deseret News*, Sept. 14, 2011.

Serving at Home

Paul and Mar Jean Lewis from Utah had already served three missions together (Palmyra New York Temple; Hong Kong China Temple; and Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia with seminaries and institutes). They were preparing to serve another when their stake president asked, “Would you be willing to serve right here in our own stake,

“Many couples, when they think about serving a mission, are worried about what they’ll do with their home and their car or what they’ll miss out on with their family,” Elder Lewis says. “We’ve been able to live in our own house and drive our own car. We are encouraged to go to family activities, as long as they don’t interfere with missionary responsibilities. And we were even here for the birth of a grandchild.”



Serving from home, the Lewises enjoy getting to know full-time missionaries and members of their own stake.



The Sorensens give school children in the Cook Islands small stones to remind them to remain “rock solid in Christ.”

supporting the mission we live in?”

“We’re new here, so it was a wonderful opportunity,” Sister Lewis says. “We serve with the young elders and sisters, have a close association with the mission president, go to district and zone meetings, and work with ward mission leaders.” They also visit investigators and those who are less active.

“We have met wonderful people we would never have known otherwise,” Sister Lewis says, “including some who have drifted off the path. To see them come back, receive ordinances, and go to the temple is a wonderful blessing.”

Family Blessings

On the other hand, Jill and Kent Sorensen, who are from the same stake, say one of the best ways to strengthen their family has been to serve away from home. Sister Sorensen says, “One of the main excuses couples give for not going is grandkids, married children with struggles, daughters expecting babies, aging parents—you name it. Family is a priority, and you miss them every day. But going on a mission sends a powerful message that missionary work is important too.”

Besides, Elder Sorensen notes, “there are so many ways to keep in touch now that

you can check in all the time.”

The Sorensens’ missionary journey began three years ago, when their bishop asked them to host monthly firesides for couples contemplating missionary service. “After talking about it constantly,” Sister Sorensen says, “we had to go ourselves!” They received a call to serve in the Cook Islands, where Jill’s grandparents served 50 years ago.

Today, among other duties, they are asked to teach Bible classes in schools.



Throughout the world, couples say that in addition to helping others, serving together strengthens their marriage and brings them closer to Heavenly Father.

“We talk about Christ being the rock,” Elder Sorensen says. “We give the students a small rock and encourage them to remain rock solid in Christ. Now everywhere we go, people say, ‘Rock solid!’ when they see us.”

Come and Help

If you are contemplating a full-time mission or a Church-service mission, all of these couples would ask you the same question President Robison asked Gerald and Lorna Malmrose: “Can you come and help?” And they will tell you that, no matter how you participate, this promise is sure: You are needed, you can contribute, and you will be blessed and loved. ■

NOTE

1. “Elder Jeffrey Holland: LDS Church Desperately Needs More Senior Missionaries,” *Deseret News*, Sept. 14, 2011, deseretnews.com.

MANY WAYS TO SERVE

View current opportunities, hear from those currently serving, and find answers to questions at lds.org/callings/missionary.

EASIER THAN EVER

Flexible policies make it simpler for couples to serve.

- Church-service couples may live at home and serve locally.
- Couples may serve for 6, 12, 18, or 23 months. They can serve internationally for less than 18 months if they pay for travel.
- Couples may, at their own expense, take a short leave of absence, normally 7 to 10 days, to return home for a critical family event.
- Housing costs are capped. Couples pay no more than a set amount for housing, including rent, utilities, and furnishings.
- Housing will be safe and comfortable. Missions or area offices secure housing that is clean, modestly furnished, and economical.
- Schedules are less strenuous. Couples are not expected to follow the same schedule of work hours and activities as the young single missionaries.
- Family communication occurs more often. Couples may communicate with their families more frequently than is outlined for young single missionaries.



WHEN
Pornography
Hits Home—

WIVES AND
HUSBANDS

Both Need to Heal

I have seen firsthand that the Savior's power to heal can come to wives as well as husbands when the husbands struggle with pornography.



Name withheld

Within my first six months as bishop, I had several couples in my ward come to me in confidence to tell me of the husband's struggle with pornography use. In some cases, the wife was reeling from the shock of having just learned the devastating secret; others had been aware for months or years.

I have felt compassion for each of these couples and have felt the Savior's redeeming power as I have counseled

regularly and carefully with each of the brothers to help them "shake off the chains . . . that would bind [them] fast" (2 Nephi 9:45).

Perhaps the greatest outpourings of the Spirit have come, however, as I have met with their wives. I have found that, while some of the wounds are fresh and others are scarred over from years of exposure, all of these sisters cope with a deep spiritual hurt caused by questions such as, "What have I done to cause him to not be attracted to me?" or "Why does he want to imagine himself with someone else rather than with me?"

Because it is the husband who has transgressed, it is easy for the bishop to feel that the husband most needs access to the keys to unlock the Savior's healing power, but I have learned that the wife's need to be healed of pain and trauma is as great as the husband's need to be healed of sin and obsessive urges.

In his discourse to the Nephites, the prophet Jacob condemned the men for their unfaithful conduct toward their wives, "many of whose feelings [were] exceedingly tender and chaste and delicate before God, which thing is pleasing unto God" (Jacob 2:7). He continued: "Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives . . . because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you" (Jacob 2:35). I have witnessed these sobbings firsthand. They often spring not just from the wife's deep sense of betrayal caused by her husband's pornography use but also from the demeaning words and surly behavior that frequently surface as a result of his inner struggle. It is not uncommon, in fact, for a man whose habit has come to light to cast blame on his wife for his behavior, citing various actions that she has done or failed to do. Tragically, it is also not uncommon for the wife to begin to internalize and even believe these accusations.

One such couple sat in my office just days after the husband's disclosure of a pornography habit that had plagued him since his youth. While listening to a Relief

Society lesson based on Sister Linda S. Reeves's April 2014 general conference address, "Protection from Pornography—a Christ-Focused Home," the wife began to recognize in her husband's critical behavior toward her many of the tendencies the instructor was describing. Following the lesson, she confronted her husband with the question, and he confessed the secret that he had been concealing for so long. Her already-battered self-esteem was now compounded with a burning resentment. During their first meeting with me, they struggled to see how their marriage could continue. I assured them that there was hope, gave some initial counsel, and then invited them to come back and meet with me individually.

Along with the fervent prayers that I offered in preparation for those meetings, I also reviewed the suggestions



HOW PRIESTHOOD LEADERS CAN HELP

As leaders work with the spouses of members who are struggling with pornography, their efforts to ensure that these spouses feel heard and understood may be just as important as any counsel they can offer. Consider the following suggestions from Ministering Resources (ministering.lds.org):

- Meet together regularly and provide support.
- Emphasize the Savior's ability to provide personal healing for the spouse of the pornography user (see Alma 7:11 and Matthew 11:28–30).
- When appropriate, invite the individual to consider attending a support group meeting through the addiction recovery program or a similar support group.
- Help the spouse understand that he or she can receive

his or her own inspiration to know how to set clear boundaries in the relationship and in the home.

- Help the spouse find a trusted friend or family member who can provide meaningful support on an ongoing basis.
- Help the individual using pornography be accountable for his or her actions and support his or her spouse.
- Review the resources for spouses and family members on overcomingpornography.org and addictionrecovery.lds.org (particularly the "Spouse and Family Support Guide").
- Consider referring the spouse of the pornography user to professional help or counseling. Identify local resources that provide services in harmony with gospel principles.



Below: Kerri was devastated when she learned of her husband's challenge with pornography, but she found hope and healing through Jesus Christ and His Atonement. Watch her story at overcomingpornography.org.

provided in Ministering Resources on LDS.org, particularly in the resource for supporting the spouses of pornography users, where I read the following:

“Express your love and concern for her individually, as well as for her spouse. Clarify that she is not responsible for her spouse’s pornography use or poor behavior and is not expected to endure abusive behavior.”

As I met with this sister, I heeded this counsel and added to it the assurance that her husband’s actions were not about her at all, not about something that she had or had not done, but were instead about his own internal conflict. I watched a wave of relief and consolation come over her as she grasped these words and felt the Spirit’s confirmation that they were indeed true. At the end of the interview, she asked if I would give her a priesthood blessing. I realized that I was the only one to whom she could turn for such a blessing, as she preferred to keep her situation private from family and friends.

To help with the healing process, I invited the husband to attend a local Latter-day Saint addiction-recovery group, and I encouraged his wife to attend the corresponding group for spouses and family members. She told me of the comfort she felt from meeting with other sisters who understood what she was suffering and the hope that it gave her to see couples who had waded through the same trial and

had managed to emerge from it together.

Several months have now passed since my first meeting with this couple, and my love and concern for them have grown as a result of our numerous interactions. While I recognize that their continuing path will not be without setbacks, it is a joy for me to learn of each additional month that the husband has kept himself free from lust and pornography and to see his wife’s increase in self-worth and confidence, which is readily apparent.

In recent interviews with them, the anguish and tears from our early meetings have been replaced with frequent smiles and even laughter. But perhaps the greatest outcome has been hope—hope that not only can their marriage continue but also that it even has the potential to become something beautiful and exalting.

I recognize that, unfortunately, not every couple experiences this same outcome. Some marriages may fail when the pornography user refuses to make progress. Regardless of the path the husband chooses to take, however, I have learned that the counsel to minister to the wives is inspired. I hope that no sister in this situation will ever feel that she is being overlooked, misjudged, or misunderstood by her bishop. The bishop’s ministration is a key channel through which the Savior manifests His power to fully heal each heart—even those that have been “pierced with deep wounds” (Jacob 2:35). ■



COUNSEL AND COMFORT FOR SPOUSES

“We as leaders are also greatly concerned about the spouses and families of those suffering from pornography addiction. Elder Richard G. Scott has pleaded: ‘If you are free of serious sin yourself, don’t suffer needlessly the consequences of another’s sins. . . . You can feel compassion. . . . Yet you should not take upon yourself a feeling of responsibility for those acts.’ Know that you are not alone. There is help. Addiction recovery meetings for spouses are available, including phone-in meetings, which allow spouses to call in to a meeting and participate from their own homes.”

Linda S. Reeves, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, “Protection from Pornography—a Christ-Focused Home,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 16.

Watchmen ON THE TOWER

“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence.”

Isaiah 62:6

Watchmen

Watchmen were sentries stationed on a wall or in a tower in order to look out for and warn of dangers approaching from afar. They were employed to protect cities as well as vineyards, fields, or pastures.

Kinds of Towers

Towers in city walls were usually built at gates or in corners (see 2 Chronicles 26:9). Both gate and corner towers provided elevated positions from which to view approaching dangers and fend off enemy attacks (see 2 Chronicles 26:15).

Fortress or citadel

towers were usually freestanding structures built on high ground or other strategic locations. They were sometimes large enough to be a final refuge for a whole city's population when they were under attack (see Judges 9:46–52).

Towers in vineyards, fields, or pastures were small structures built to help protect crops and herds from thieves and animals (see 2 Chronicles 26:10; Isaiah 5:2; 27:3). Often, the lower level was a room where tools were stored.





THE DUTY TO WATCH

“Through the centuries, prophets have fulfilled their duty when they have warned people of the dangers before them. The Lord’s Apostles are duty bound to watch, warn, and reach out to help those seeking answers to life’s questions.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “God Is at the Helm,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 25.

BIBLE FACTS



In the Old Testament, the Lord is sometimes compared to a fortress or citadel tower of refuge (see Psalm 18:2; 61:3; Proverbs 18:10; 2 Samuel

22:3), and prophets are sometimes compared to watchmen (see Isaiah 62:6; Jeremiah 6:17; Ezekiel 3:17; 33:7; Hosea 9:8; Micah 7:4).

“I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me,” (Ezekiel 3:17; see also Ezekiel 33:1–7).

Watchmen on the tower:

Have an elevated view. As God’s called and authorized servants, prophets are separated from the world, draw closer to Him, and are allowed to see things from a more heavenly perspective.

See things the rest cannot see. “A seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known” (Mosiah 8:17).

Are vigilant. Prophets have a solemn responsibility to warn us of coming dangers, and they will continue to do so regardless of public opinion or trends in society.

Warn of things while they are still far off. “A prophet denounces sin and foretells its consequences. He is a preacher of righteousness. On occasion, prophets may be inspired to foretell the future for the benefit of mankind” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Prophet,” lds.org/scriptures/gs).

Offer safety and protection. By heeding prophets’ warnings, we can find safety and avoid the calamities that may befall us, individually or collectively, if we do not obey. ■



PHOTOGRAPHS OF TOWERS. BACKGROUND © ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK; CHRIST IN A RED ROBE, BY MINERVA K. TEICHERT

A SECOND CHANCE

The first time I met him, I was holding my violin.

He shuffled close to me while I was walking into the lunchroom, my violin case slapping against my leg.

“Violin,” he said as he approached.

“Yes,” I said.

I had never really talked with anyone who had a disability and didn’t know what else to say. He followed me to my table and sat beside me, pointing at my violin case.

“Violin,” he said again.

I opened my case and his eyes lit up. Too roughly, he plucked at the strings. My heart thudded when I imagined a string snapping from my violin, and I eased the case shut. He encircled me in a hug before he left.

I saw him frequently after this.

Whenever he saw me, he would

“Violin,” William said as he approached.

wrap his arms around my shoulders as he kissed the top of my head.

For the rest of high school, I always tried to avoid him when I saw him coming. When he would find me and smother me with his hugs and wet kisses, I’d tolerate them for a few seconds with a forced smile and then walk away quickly without uttering a word.

“Oh, no,” I muttered when I saw him at my last orchestra concert of high school. Following the concert, he meandered toward where I stood with my friends outside the auditorium.

My friends stood back as he came up to me with a grin, his arms open for a hug.

“William!”

I turned and saw a woman jogging toward us.

“Sorry,” she said, linking her arm with his. “William loves the violin. He begged me to bring him to this concert tonight. Let’s go, honey.”

Until that moment, I hadn’t realized that I never even knew his name. I’d met William two years before but spent so much time avoiding him that I’d never made the effort to really know him. As I watched William and his mom leave, waves of shame rolled over me.

Years later, after I had gotten married, I gave birth to a beautiful

little boy with Down syndrome whom we named Spencer. I often found my thoughts lingering on William as I looked at my son, and I wondered if Spencer would have similar experiences. Would people avoid him because he kissed too much or hugged too tight? Would his peers be uncomfortable with his limitations?

When Spencer was four months old, I took him to our local hospital for an appointment. As I unloaded him from the car, I saw two people exiting the hospital. In disbelief, I realized it was William and his mother.

“William!” I called out when we got closer, my heart pounding.

“Hi!” He ambled across the parking lot, a wide grin lighting up his face. He thrust out his hand and grasped mine in an enthusiastic handshake.

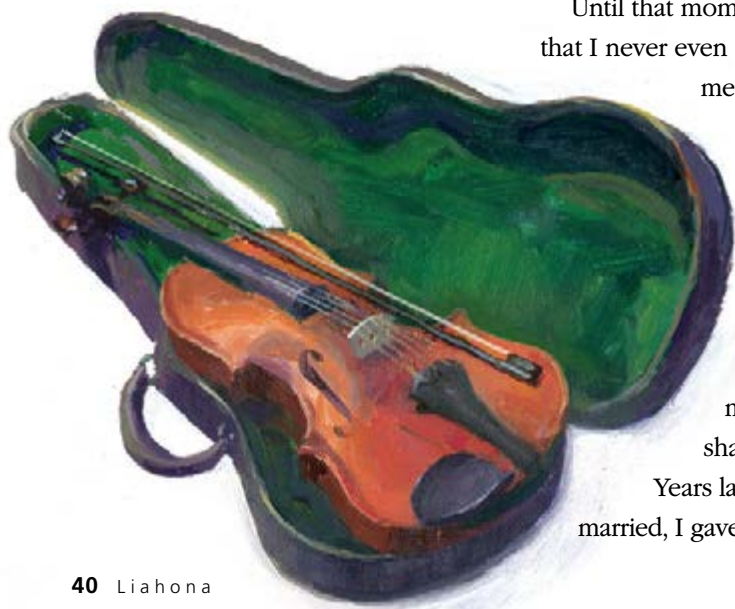
“How are you?” I asked him.

“Violin,” he said, the excitement shining in his eyes.

Violin. He remembered me too. “Yes,” I choked out through a teary laugh, “I played the violin.”

As we spoke, my heart rose in prayer for the tender mercies of a loving Father in Heaven who knew how much I had wished to meet William again. I am grateful that God saw me—a struggling young mother overwhelmed with my son’s health problems and worried for his future—and gave me an experience that reminded me that He is aware of us. ■

Kaylee Baldwin, Arizona, USA





I heard the woman place what seemed to be an infinite number of coins on the counter to pay her bill.

GO HELP HER

I stood in line at a gas station. In front of me, a mother with two small children asked for \$3 worth of gas and two vanilla ice cream cones.

At first glance I could see that they had very little. The children were barefoot and wearing tattered clothing.

I heard the woman place what seemed to be an infinite number of coins on the counter to pay her bill.

After paying for my gas, I walked out and glanced at the mother's car. It was an older model that likely got very poor gas mileage.

I felt a twinge of sympathy for this mother of two, but I started my motorcycle and went on with my day.

Less than a minute into my ride on

the highway, a voice came to me: "Go help her." The prompting came twice.

I shook my head, thinking that she had probably already left. What would I say to her anyway?

The voice came clearly a third time: "Go help her!"

I turned back toward the service station, trying to figure out what I was going to say if she was still there.

Upon arriving, I saw that her car doors were open. She was in the driver's seat, and her two small children were enjoying their ice cream in the backseat.

I offered a small prayer, asking Heavenly Father what I should say.

The same voice said to me, "Introduce

yourself and ask if she needs help." I approached her car and introduced myself. I shared with her that I felt impressed to ask her if she needed help.

She began to cry and said, "I just finished praying to Jesus, asking Him to send someone to help me."

Heavenly Father had answered her prayer. I paid to fill up her tank with gas and gave her the phone number of someone in our elders quorum who was hiring at the time. I do not know what happened with this young mother afterward, but I am grateful I followed the prompting to help her. ■

Thomas Robbins, California, USA

DON'T SHOOT!

Bob and I sat in our police car, waiting for a sign of movement down the street. We had begun our stakeout two hours earlier after spotting the car mentioned in a police radio alert.

“Stickup in progress,” the alert had said. “Two males, both armed. They were just seen in an orange car.

Witnesses say the men are brutal and willing to shoot.”

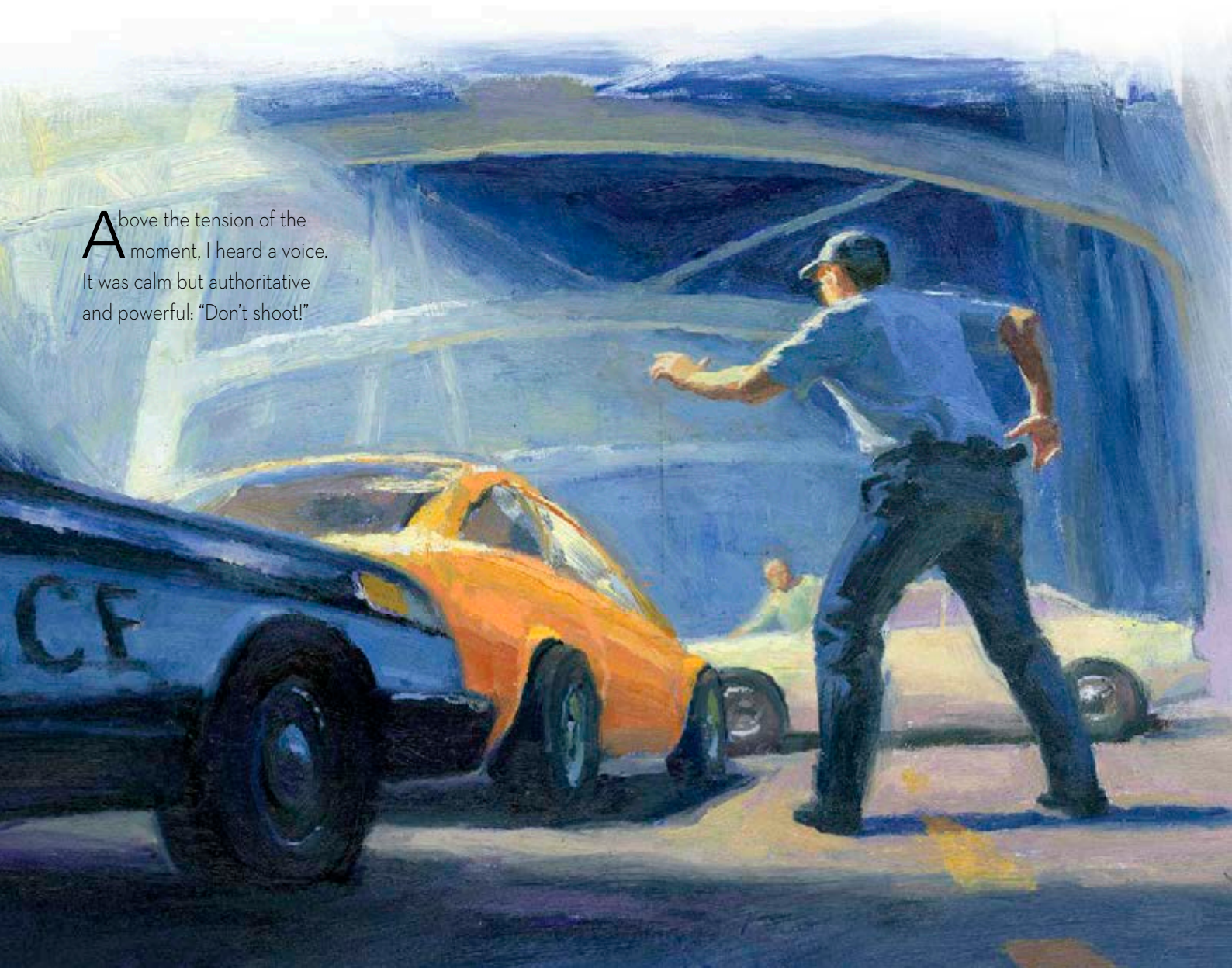
A rash of recent armed robberies had occurred in the area, yet despite our best efforts, the robbers had repeatedly escaped. These thoughts fled my mind as soon as I saw two figures come out of a home on the darkened street and hop into the

orange car. They were now heading our way.

“Requesting a backup unit,” I said. “Suspects rolling northbound from our location.”

Our backup, two plainclothes detectives in an unmarked car, pulled ahead of the car while Bob and I followed. After our three vehicles

Above the tension of the moment, I heard a voice. It was calm but authoritative and powerful: “Don’t shoot!”



had entered a bridge, our backup suddenly stopped crossways on the bridge in front of the orange car and we parked behind it, boxing in our suspects. Almost immediately, the car stopped and both figures ducked out of sight.

“Step out of the car with your hands on your head!” I ordered after getting out of my car. No one responded.

Braced and ready to fire, I again commanded, “Step out of the car with your hands on your head. Do it now!”

Suddenly the driver rose up and turned toward me. I could see a nickel-plated object flash in his hands.

My police training and common sense dictated that I pull the trigger to save my life. But above the tension of the moment, I heard a voice. It was calm but authoritative and powerful: “Don’t shoot!”

I expected to be shot any moment, but I waited for someone in the car to open fire first. Instead, the driver raised his hands, lifted over his head what looked like a gun, and dropped his hands into his lap.

“Freeze!” I said as I rushed to the car. “Don’t move!”

The moment felt like a TV show—until I realized that the hardened criminals in the car were actually two frightened young girls. What I had thought was a gun was only a seat-belt buckle.

The girls, we soon learned, had loaned the car to their boyfriends.

They had no idea what kind of men they were.

“I thought you were dead, Cal!” Bob told me later. “I almost opened fire. I don’t know why I didn’t.”

The two detectives in the unmarked car said the same thing, though no one but me heard the voice. I know that only the power of heaven could have saved those two girls from death and four police officers from making a tragic mistake. This experience gave me a sure knowledge that our Heavenly Father can and will intervene for our benefit. ■

Name withheld

TEACH THEM TO READ THE BOOK OF MORMON

During our service in the Geneva Switzerland Mission, I was called and set apart to be the branch president, and my wife was called as the Relief Society president. Together we worked with all our strength to revitalize the struggling branch. Although organized in the 1960s, the branch had not seen any baptisms for many years and had not sent any missionaries to the mission field for 15 years.

It was evident that we needed the Lord’s help in order to find solutions for the numerous difficulties the branch faced. After I had prayed about the branch’s challenges, the Spirit of the Lord said to me, “Teach the members to read the Book of Mormon, and you will be successful.”

Immediately, we made plans to commit all the members to start reading the Book of Mormon.

Extraordinary results followed. Peace and the Spirit returned to the branch. New families joined the Church. Motivated by his desire to serve, a young man left on a mission. Several struggling marriages were strengthened, and families became closer. This branch continues to progress today.

We and the branch members witness for ourselves the miraculous power of the Book of Mormon. It truly is the keystone of our religion and of our testimonies of the gospel and of Jesus Christ. We love it with all of our heart. It is a source of unending and unalterable knowledge.

This experience taught us that the Book of Mormon is the surest means of helping our brothers and sisters move out of the shadows of spiritual darkness that cover the earth. This book brings peace, joy, happiness, and a strong desire to follow the Savior Jesus Christ. ■

Emilien Rioux, Quebec, Canada

Recognizing Satan's Counterfeits

By Dennis C. Gaunt

I was putting a couple of U.S. dollar bills into my wallet at the grocery store when one of the bills caught my eye. I thought the green color was a little lighter than the others, so I examined it closer. Then I noticed the image of President George Washington didn't look quite as sharp. Even the paper felt wrong. It was counterfeit! The clerk exchanged it for a genuine dollar bill and then turned the counterfeit bill over to the store manager.

I have thought a lot about that counterfeit dollar bill since then. I wondered how long it had been in circulation and how many people it had fooled over the years. In fact, had I not been paying attention, I might have been fooled as well. But by comparing it against the real thing and focusing on the differences instead of the similarities, I could tell it was counterfeit.

The Book of Mormon is filled with examples of spiritual counterfeiters, who followed Satan's methods of

lying and deceiving others for their own gain. By studying their tricks and tactics, we begin to notice their mistakes and errors in the same way a trained eye begins to notice the difference between genuine and counterfeit currency. The more we train our eye to identify the differences, the better prepared we will be to expose the counterfeiters of today and resist their lies.

Gathering Intelligence about Satan's Counterfeits

Satan seeks to lead us away through his own brand of spiritual counterfeiting, and if we are not careful, we will be fooled. President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) warned: "Satan is a skilful imitator, and as genuine gospel truth is given the world in ever-increasing abundance, so he spreads the counterfeit coin of false doctrine. Beware of his spurious currency, it will purchase for you nothing but disappointment, misery and spiritual death."¹

When we are faced with spiritual counterfeits, the Book of Mormon can help us determine what's true and what's not.

The best defense we have against being fooled by Satan's counterfeits is to be as familiar as possible with truths of the gospel. The more deeply we know the truth, the easier it will be to spot the differences when Satan presents us with his counterfeits. So when he does, we need to look for the differences and not the similarities, just like I did with my dollar bills, because that is where the lies will always be revealed.



President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) taught: “The Book of Mormon exposes the enemies of Christ. . . . God, with his infinite foreknowledge, so molded the Book of Mormon that we might see the error and know how to combat false educational, political, religious, and philosophical concepts of our time.”²

Today we are at war with Satan. We, like any army, need to know

what the enemy is up to. Knowing when and where the enemy will attack, for instance, can be invaluable information. That’s why the term for acquiring such information is called “gathering intelligence.” To know our enemy is to become smarter than our enemy. The Book of Mormon can help us “gather intelligence” on Satan’s counterfeit methods.

Flattering Speech Is Counterfeit

Well over half of the counterfeiters in the Book of Mormon use flattering speech and a charismatic personality to achieve their goals. For example, Sherem “had a perfect knowledge of the language of the people; wherefore, he could use much flattery, and much power of speech, according to the power of the devil” (Jacob 7:4). King Noah’s wicked priests spoke

“vain and flattering words” (Mosiah 11:7), thus causing the people to engage in idolatry and other wickedness. Korihor achieved similar results in his day, “leading away the hearts of many” (Alma 30:18). Amalickiah and Gadianton both used their penchant for flattery to raise up armies of wicked followers (see Alma 46:10; Helaman 2:4).

This is not by accident. Flattery is shallow, insincere, hollow, and exaggerated. Nephi warned of those who “shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark” (2 Nephi 28:9).

Flattery is often used to deceive; it usually has an ulterior motive or hidden agenda. Flattery is all about style over substance, and it appeals to the vanity and pride of the natural man within. The Lord’s prophets, however, tell us the simple yet important truths we *need* to hear.

Flattery is the language Satan speaks. President James E. Faust (1920–2007), Second Counselor in the First Presidency, explained: “[Satan’s] voice often sounds so reasonable and his message so easy to justify. It is an appealing, intriguing voice with dulcet tones. It is neither



“[Satan’s voice] is an appealing, intriguing voice. . . . No one would listen to Satan’s voice if it sounded harsh or mean.”

hard nor discordant. No one would listen to Satan’s voice if it sounded harsh or mean.”³

When the world presents us with an idea, philosophy, or opinion that seems to appeal solely to our vanity or pride or that simply sounds too good to be true, that ought to be a warning to us immediately. Treat those ideas as counterfeit. Compare them against the truths taught by the Lord’s prophets. Look for differences, not similarities, and the counterfeit ideas will become obvious.

Nehor—a Popular Counterfeiter

Nehor freely used Satan’s method of flattery. Let’s examine him as a

case study of a spiritual counterfeiter. Nehor, whose doctrine seemed to embrace the idea of a redeemer, was a popular and charismatic preacher among the Nephites. Nehor raised up many followers by teaching that “all mankind should be saved at the last day” and “have eternal life” (Alma 1:4).

Can we see why Nehor’s message would be so attractive? He was teaching about an easy-going and relaxed God—a God who, because He loves everyone, will save everyone, no matter what. So go ahead and do what you like, because it’s all good. It’s a seductive philosophy that was embraced as much by the people of Nehor’s day (see Alma 1:5) as it is by many people

today. A free ticket to heaven is something people apparently want.

So what was the problem with Nehor's message? Let's look at the main points of his argument again:

- God created all people—true.
- God loves all people—true.
- We shouldn't be afraid of God—true.
- We should rejoice at the idea of salvation—true.

So far, there are a lot of similarities between what Nehor taught and gospel truths. But remember—just as with counterfeit money, we need to look for the differences, not the similarities. So let's look at Nehor's last point:

- God will grant everyone eternal life—false!

Now here is the important difference that tells us Nehor is a spiritual counterfeiter. Salvation from physical death *is* guaranteed to all, but salvation from spiritual death is conditional on our willing repentance. If we repent, then we can receive eternal life (see Jacob 6:11). But there is no free ride.

Gideon and Alma Recognized the Counterfeiter

Nehor's evil was exposed the day he met Gideon, a righteous teacher in the Church of God. Gideon had

stood up to King Noah years earlier and thus had experience with spiritual counterfeiters (see Mosiah 19:4–8). Nehor “began to contend with him sharply, that he might lead away the people of the church; but [Gideon] withstood him, admonishing him with the words of God” (Alma 1:7). Gideon recognized Nehor as a counterfeiter. Once exposed, Nehor resorted to another of Satan's methods—murder. But Gideon's death was not in vain. The people brought the counterfeiter Nehor before Alma to be judged.

Alma recognized that not only was Nehor guilty of priestcraft and murder but also that if left unenforced, priestcraft among the people “would prove their entire destruction” (Alma 1:12). So Nehor was condemned to die, and suffered “an ignominious death” (Alma 1:15).

Gideon and Alma are examples for us. When we have the Spirit with us, we will see and hear “things as they really are” (Jacob 4:13). We will recognize Satan's counterfeit plans and schemes “with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night” (Moroni 7:15).

Our “counterfeit” enemy is smart, but like Gideon and Alma, we can be smarter. Just as I began to gradually recognize the differences between my



SATAN SPREADS LIES

“Satan, our adversary, wants us to fail. He spreads lies as part of his effort to destroy our belief. He slyly suggests that the doubter, the skeptic, the cynic is sophisticated and intelligent, while those who have faith in God and His miracles are naive, blind, or brainwashed. Satan will advocate that it is cool to doubt spiritual gifts and the teachings of true prophets.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Be Not Afraid, Only Believe,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 78.

pair of dollar bills, we can gradually train our eye as well as our mind and spirit to recognize the differences between truth and lies. As we do so, we will recognize the counterfeiters and resist their lies. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 376.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* (2014), 132.
3. James E. Faust, “The Forces That Will Save Us,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2007, 6; *Liahona*, Jan. 2007, 4.

Measuring Blessings in Madagascar

By Mindy Anne Selu
Church Magazines

After his wife suffered a heartbreaking miscarriage during their first pregnancy, Solofo Ravelojaona felt that their prayers were answered a year later with their second pregnancy. He and his wife, Hary Martine, consider the birth of their daughter to be one of their greatest blessings. Solofo explains, “Because we asked God and He gave her to us, we gave her a name that, in Malagasy, means ‘God’s answer.’”

Solofo, a young adult from Madagascar, holds to the knowledge that God answers prayers and in time blesses the faithful. “Life is hard,” says Solofo, “and when people don’t get what they want, some start asking, ‘Why did this happen to me?’ They might leave the Church or question their belief in God. But when we live the gospel and read the scriptures, it’s easier. When you really live the gospel, you can really see the blessings.”

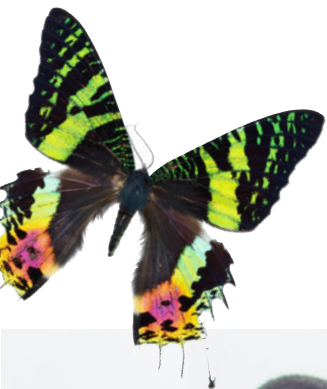
Living in a country with serious challenges, such as extreme poverty, instability within the government, a weak infrastructure, and natural disasters, it’s clear why Solofo says life is hard. But for him, the blessings that living the gospel brings outweigh any hardships. “I cannot even count the blessings I receive, as long as I live the gospel,” he says.

Because the Church is relatively new in Madagascar (the first branch was organized in 1990), Solofo says the hardest part about being a member is the rumors and misconceptions about the Church. Solofo comments that, just as in Lehi’s vision of the tree of life, “people may not fully embrace the gospel because they feel ashamed in front of their friends and scared that they’ll be rejected by their family.” What makes Solofo different, he suggests, is that, “I have never been ashamed. I live the gospel, and I always want to share it with my colleagues, even though some of them aren’t really interested.”

Despite the political upheaval and economic hardships in his country, Solofo relies on the blessings that come from living the gospel.

He often shares his simple testimony, so much so that his co-workers nicknamed him “pastor.”

In the midst of economic and political turmoil, Solofo and Hary Martine rely on the blessings of their temple covenants (they were married in the Johannesburg South Africa Temple one year after their missions—his in Uganda, hers in Madagascar), as well as their trust in the Lord. “I have the gospel, and I just put my life in God’s hands,” Solofo explains. He can rely on his solid testimony because he already has faith in “God’s answers.” ■



MORE ABOUT SOLOFO

What foods do you like to eat?

The food we eat is rice—a lot of rice. One of the things I like is called *ravtoto*. We use a special tool to pound cassava leaves into small pieces and serve it with rice and pork.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I like to play the keyboard, sing, and read. Because the branch president knew that I loved singing and could play the keyboard, when I came into the branch, he said, “Ah, we have someone to lead the choir,” and I offered my time. They didn’t have a choir before, but I started to teach them, and now they enjoy it.

FACTS ABOUT MADAGASCAR

Languages: French, Malagasy
Capital: Antananarivo

BY THE NUMBERS

- 22,005,222 people (estimate as of 2012)
- 80 percent of the animals found in Madagascar do not exist anywhere else on earth
- 4th largest island in the world
- 60 percent of the world’s vanilla is exported from Madagascar

THE CHURCH IN MADAGASCAR

- 9,190 Latter-day Saints
- 37 wards and branches
- 2 stakes
- 1 mission





**By Elder
Dale G. Renlund**

Of the Quorum
of the Twelve
Apostles

SPIRITUAL STABILITY: BUILDING AN UNSINKABLE SHIP

We need sufficient spiritual stability to successfully navigate our mortal lives and return safely to our heavenly home.

In the early 17th century, Sweden's king, Gustav II Adolf, commissioned a warship that would be christened the *Vasa*. The ship represented a substantial outlay of resources, particularly the oak from which the vessel would be built. Gustav Adolf closely oversaw the construction process, attempting to ensure that the *Vasa* would fully realize his expectations.

After construction began, Gustav Adolf ordered the *Vasa* to be made longer. Because the width supports had already been built from precious oak, the king directed the builders to increase the ship's length without increasing its width. Although the shipwrights knew that doing so would compromise the *Vasa's* seaworthiness, they were hesitant to tell the king something they knew he did not want to hear. They complied. Gustav Adolf also insisted that this ship have not simply the customary single deck of guns but cannons on three decks, with the heaviest cannons on the upper deck. Again, against their better judgment, the shipwrights complied.

On August 10, 1628, the *Vasa* began its maiden voyage. After the *Vasa* left the harbor, a strong wind entered its sails, and the ship began to tip. Before long, "she heeled right over and water gushed in through the gun ports until she slowly went to the bottom under sail, pennants and all."¹ The *Vasa's* maiden voyage was about 4,200 feet (1,280 m).

Gustav Adolf's desire for an extravagant status symbol ruined the design of what would have been a magnificent sailing vessel, the mightiest warship of its time. The shipbuilders' reluctance to speak up—their fear of the king's displeasure—deprived the king of their knowledge and insight. All involved lost sight of the goals of the enterprise: to protect Sweden and to promote its interests abroad. A ship that attempts to defy the laws of physics is simply a boat that won't float.

For us to successfully navigate our mortal lives, we need sufficient spiritual stability to confront crosswinds and crosscurrents, make the necessary turns, and return safely to our heavenly home. There are things we can do to increase our spiritual stability. I will touch on four.

✦ **Obeying God's Commandments**

The first is obeying God's commandments. Just as the *Vasa* was subject to physical laws, we are all subject to spiritual laws. No one is exempt. We need to obey these spiritual laws, which we refer to as God's commandments.

Working with physical laws in the ship's construction might have felt restrictive to Gustav Adolf, but the *Vasa* would not have sunk before its mission started had it complied with these laws. Instead, it would have had the freedom and flexibility to accomplish what it was intended to do.

So, too, obedience to God's laws preserves our freedom, flexibility, and ability to achieve our potential. The commandments are not intended to restrict us. Rather, obedience leads to increased spiritual stability and long-term happiness.

Obedience is our choice. Jesus directed, "Behold, I have given unto you the commandments; therefore keep my commandments" (3 Nephi 15:10). It is that simple. Settle it. Decide now to be exactly obedient. Nothing will increase spiritual stability more. Nothing will give us greater freedom to accomplish our life's mission.

✦ **Heeding Counsel and Becoming Lifelong Learners**

Second, we need to pay attention and give heed to counsel from trusted sources and commit ourselves to becoming lifelong learners.

One of the pitfalls of gaining knowledge is the arrogance that can come when we think we know so much that there is nothing left to learn. We have all seen this in individuals who are too certain of their own brilliance. It is really hard to teach a know-it-all.

Mindful of this, and desirous to be a lifelong learner, President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has said, "I am still a child with lots to learn. Most folks can teach me something."² When he extended the call to me to be a General Authority, President Eyring taught me an important lesson. He said that when he hears someone tell a story that he has heard before or use a scripture that he is very familiar with, he asks himself, "Why is the Lord underlining that for me?" and "What have I yet to learn from that story or scripture?" If we wish to increase our spiritual stability, we will be willing to learn and will be sufficiently humble to accept guidance no matter our age and experience.

It really is our choice. We can listen to and heed counsel given to us by Church leaders, especially those we sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators; by parents; and by trusted friends—or not. We can seek to be lifelong learners—or not. We can increase our spiritual stability—or not. If we fail to increase our spiritual stability, we will become like the *Vasa*—a boat that won't float.





✦ *Making Jesus Christ Our Foundation*

Fourth, finally, and most important, our spiritual stability increases in proportion to the degree to which we establish Jesus Christ as our foundation.

Without Christ, we are driven like a vessel tossed about upon the waves. We have no power because we have no sail. We have no stability, especially in times of storm, because we have no anchor. We have no direction or purpose because we don't have anything with which to steer. We must make Christ our foundation.

In order to face, overcome, and be prepared for the crosswinds and crosscurrents of life, we must obey God's commandments; become humble, willing, and determined lifelong learners; serve others; and establish Jesus Christ as the foundation of our lives. As we do so we increase our spiritual stability. Unlike the *Vasa*, we will be able to return to safe harbor, having fulfilled our destiny. ■

From a Brigham Young University devotional, Sept. 16, 2014. For the full text in English, visit speeches.byu.edu.

NOTES

1. Letter from the Swedish Council of the Realm to King Gustav II Adolf; translation quoted in Richard O. Mason, "The *Vasa* Capsizes," virtual-school.edu/mon/CaseStudies/Vasa/vasa.html. Many accounts of the *Vasa* exist; see, for instance, vasamuseet.se/en for history and other links.
2. Henry B. Eyring, in Robert I. Eaton and Henry J. Eyring, *I Will Lead You Along: The Life of Henry B. Eyring* (2013), 409.

✦ *Serving Others*

Third, being outwardly directed, caring about others, and serving others increases our spiritual stability.

Eternity stays in clearer focus when we focus on others as we seek to help Heavenly Father's children. I have found it much easier to receive inspiration when I am praying to find out how I can help another than when I am simply praying for myself.

We may believe that at some future point we will be in a better situation to help. In reality, now is the time. We are mistaken if we think that it will be more convenient when we have more time, more money, or more anything to serve others. Regardless of circumstances, we have a choice. Will we help others or not? We flunk a significant test of mortality if we do not choose to help those in need. And, if we do help, we increase our own spiritual stability.

LEARN TO PLAY A HYMN *in 10 Minutes!*

Compiled and Adapted by Daniel Carter
Church Music and Cultural Arts Division

If you've never played the piano before but always wanted to learn, here is your opportunity. All you need is a music keyboard. Even if you don't have one at home, you could take this article with you to a place where there is a piano or keyboard to begin learning.

This lesson is so simple and easy that you will be able to play a hymn by the end of it. In fact, it's possible that you could play the hymn melody in this lesson in about 10 minutes!

Ready? Let's begin!

Getting Ready to Play the Piano

1. As you sit at the piano and rest your fingers on the keyboard, move the bench back far enough so your elbows are slightly bent.
2. Sit in the center of the bench, directly in front of the center of the keyboard.
3. Sit toward the front edge of the bench with your back straight and your weight forward.
4. Rest your feet on the floor.
5. Sit comfortably, maintaining good posture.
6. Make sure there is good light for you to see the music and the keyboard.

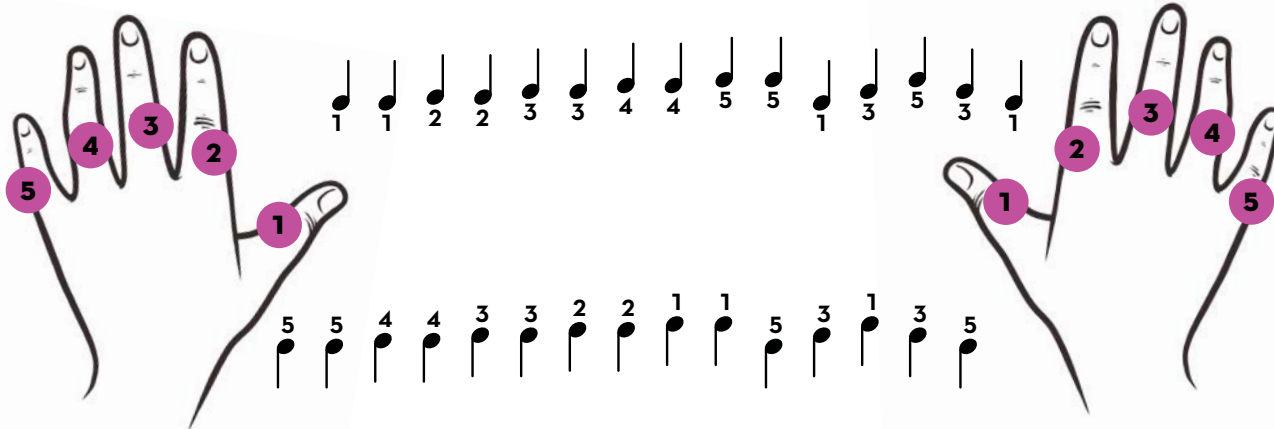




7. Stand. Drop your hands to your sides and relax them. Notice their natural curve, as if they were holding a ball. As you sit again, place your fingers on the keyboard, keeping the same natural curve.
8. Position your hands above the keyboard, letting your fingers touch near the center of the large area on

the white keys. Hold your palms above the keyboard, but don't rest them on the keys or on the wood below the keys.

9. Strike the key with the pad of your finger just below the fingertip. Keep each finger curved, lifting it from the knuckle on the back of your hand. As you strike the key, keep your finger joints bent.

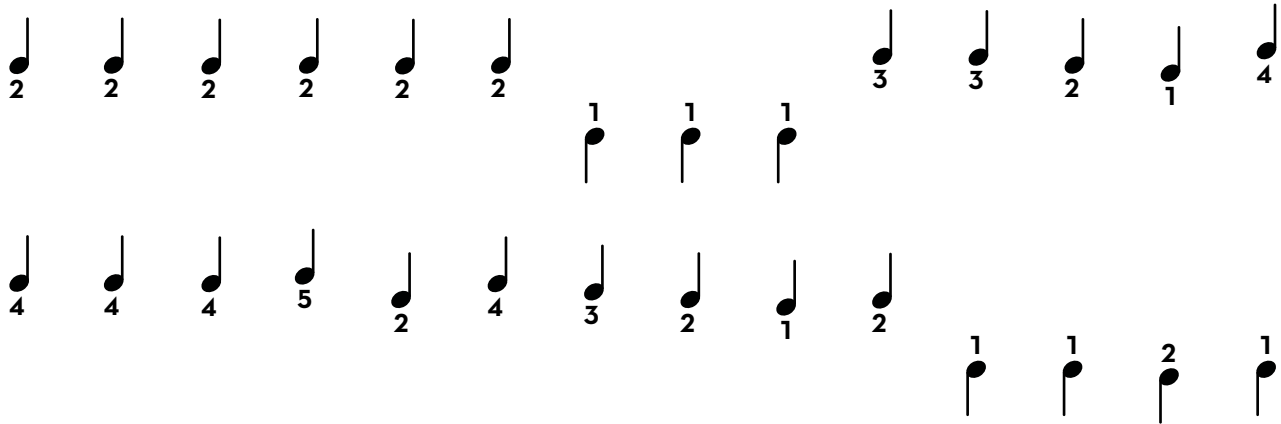


Playing by Finger Numbers

To help you place the correct finger on each key, the fingers are given numbers as shown here. Finger numbers are written next to the notes on the page.

Place your hand above any group of five keys, holding each finger above one key. Practice the finger numbers by playing the keys with the correct finger as indicated. Notes with stems going

up are for the right hand. Notes with stems going down are for the left hand.



Playing “There Is a Green Hill Far Away”

Place your hands on the keyboard as shown below.

Use the groups of two and three black keys to help you find the correct position.

Play this hymn, following the finger numbers as shown. Notes with stems going up are for the right hand, and notes with stems going down are for the left. Practice the hymn until you are comfortable with it. Use the principles of good fingering

technique listed in the nine-point checklist.

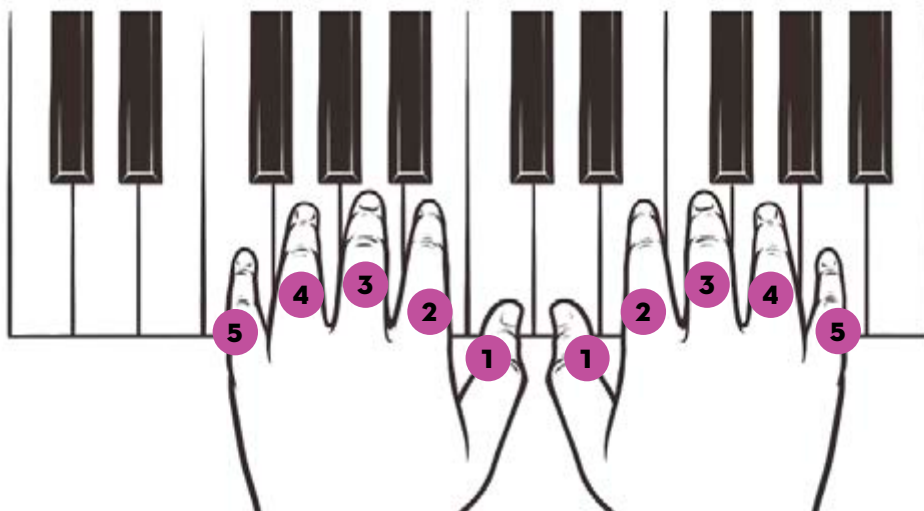
Now you’ve been introduced to playing the piano and have learned a simple hymn melody. To play other hymns, you need to learn some basic principles about beats, rhythm, and notes.

Here’s the best part: the lesson you just learned is the first lesson in the Church Keyboard Course, available in six languages from Church distribution.¹ The easy-to-follow instruction plan helps you learn by yourself or in groups.

You might even get your whole family involved in learning the piano together as a family home evening activity. The course can be completed in just six weeks.

Numerous studies show that private music lessons help improve students’ focus, academic excellence, and reasoning skills.²

By learning music skills, we develop the talents the Lord has given us, increase our knowledge, and learn many different ways we can use our knowledge and talents to build His kingdom. ■



NOTES

1. To order the Keyboard Course Kit, go to store.lds.org.
2. See Laura Lewis Brown, “The Benefits of Music Education,” pbs.org; Jessica Velasco, “How the Arts Can Help Students Excel,” the Science of Learning Blog, Dec. 11, 2012, scilearn.com/blog/how-arts-help-students-excel; “Music Helps Children Learn Maths,” *The Telegraph*, Mar. 22, 2012, telegraph.co.uk.

COMMITTED TO Quit

My piano skills weren't improving, even after years of practice. My parents said I could quit on one condition: I had to learn 50 hymns.

By Gretchen Blackburn

I stormed into my house, eyes flooding with tears after yet another disappointing piano lesson. It was my fourth year taking piano, and I had barely improved past “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” My teacher had tried to find something positive to say about my horrific playing, but I only felt worse. My parents were paying money for piano lessons that I didn't want and had no hope for.

I wanted my parents to let me quit. “Please,” I begged. “I'll do anything. What will it take?”

After discussing it between themselves, they said, “If you learn 50 hymns, we will let you quit.”

I started practicing right away. I wanted to quit so badly I was willing

to spend extra time on the piano.

The first hymn, “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet” (*Hymns*, no. 19), took nearly a month to master. I was still intent on quitting, so I continued practicing.

An interesting thing happened: the hymns got easier to master. I felt happier throughout the week. I found myself humming hymns during the day and singing louder in sacrament meeting.

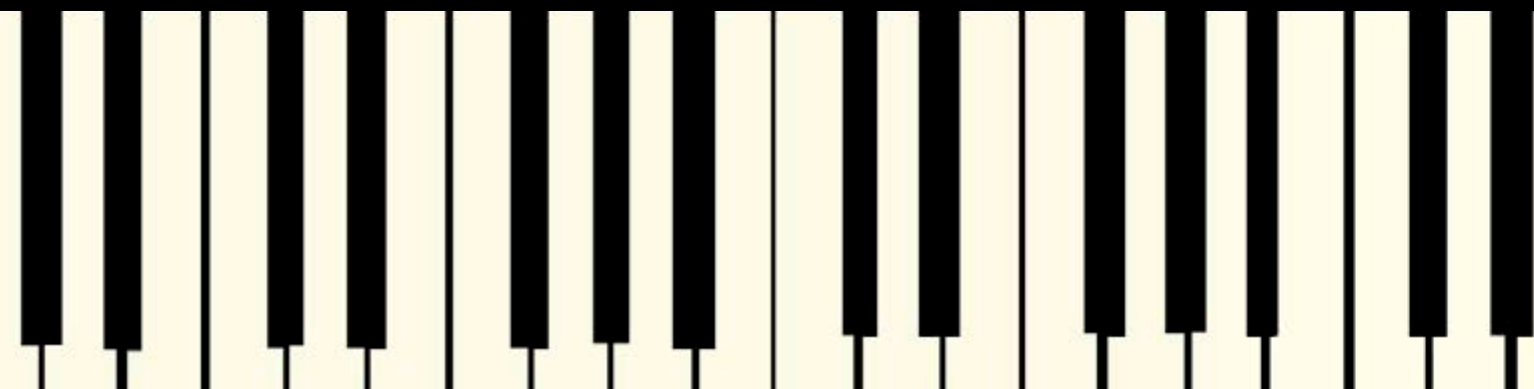
Eventually, I stopped keeping track of how many hymns I knew. As I became more skilled on the piano, I realized I could learn a new hymn almost perfectly in less than 30 minutes.

When I finally did add them

all up, I had learned way over 50 hymns. And there was no way I was going to quit playing piano. I had become much more confident in my abilities to play and had felt the power of the hymns in my life.

Hymns are like scriptures; they speak truth. When I play the hymns, I feel like I am immersing myself in the scriptures. Learning how to play the hymns has been a kick start to building my testimony and learning truth. I find myself going through the words of different hymns to help me throughout my day. Playing piano has strengthened my testimony and has opened doors for me wherever I go.

The author lives in New York, USA.



SHOCK, SORROW, & GOD'S PLAN

Through the most devastating experience of my life, I felt that Heavenly Father was with me during my entire journey.

By Paola Çajupi

It was an early morning in 2008 when my mother woke me up to go to school. I was really happy that morning, but I didn't know that it would turn into the worst day of my life or the last time I would be with her. I didn't finish all my classes that day because a friend of our family had to pick me up and tell me that my mom had killed herself. I was only 12 years old.

I thought, "How can I live without my mother?" She was my best friend.

I cried for months. I didn't like going to school because the other children treated me differently and felt sorry for me. I had no clue what I was supposed to do; I only knew I had to be strong for everyone else.

One day, five or six months after my mom's death, I was alone in my room by the window, crying, trying to understand what I was here for. Suddenly I heard a voice in my head: "You are my daughter; I won't let you suffer." I knew it was God. But it surprised me because I didn't believe in Him anymore, especially since I felt that it was God who had taken my mother from me. Even though I didn't know what He meant, I felt safe.

Three years later I went to Rome, Italy, to visit my uncle. He kept telling me about this church he went to. One Sunday, he took me with him. I will always remember

walking toward the church's doors for the first time and feeling the love of Heavenly Father when I went in. It felt like home.

I started going to church every single Sunday and to every activity during the week. I loved being with the youth of the Church. They made me happier. They thought and believed in the same things that I did. Then, after three months, my summer holiday finished and I had to go back to Albania.

When I returned home, I told my dad about the feelings I had had and how happy I had felt during all that time. He didn't like it. He told me he wouldn't allow me to continue to go to church or learn more about it. So I would have to be patient for the next three years until I turned 18 years old. Then I could decide for myself and get baptized.

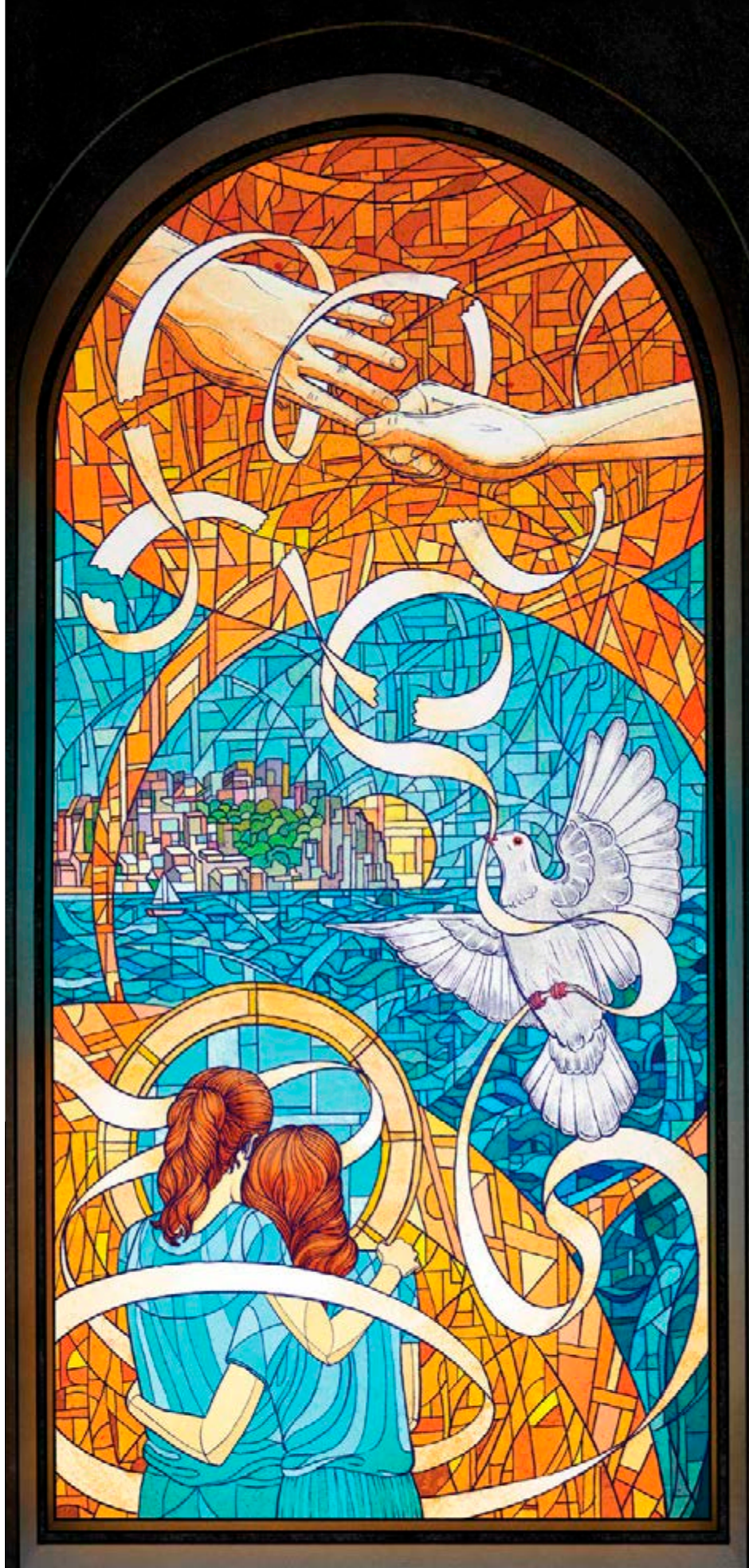
During this time I was blessed with so many people who would tell me about what they learned each Sunday at church. One of those people was Stephanie. She had been living in Italy when my uncle joined the Church, but she had returned to her home in the United States. My uncle thought it would be good for us to write to each other, so I added her as a friend on Facebook.

Even though we had never met in person, I will always be grateful to her for helping me build my faith and learn more about the gospel of Jesus Christ. She wrote to me almost every Sunday and told me everything she learned in church and then would answer my questions. She was a great friend to me.

Finally, after years of being patient, I was baptized just two days after my 18th birthday. And soon I will share with my mother the happiness I felt that day, because I will be baptized for her. I know she will be proud of the life I have chosen.

I feel blessed by Heavenly Father because He was with me during my entire journey in so many ways. I just had to wait and be patient because He had a plan for me. He's the one who gave me strength to go through all the challenges I faced. He was always there, helping me be happier. ■

The author lives in Albania.





By Elder
José A. Teixeira
Of the Seventy

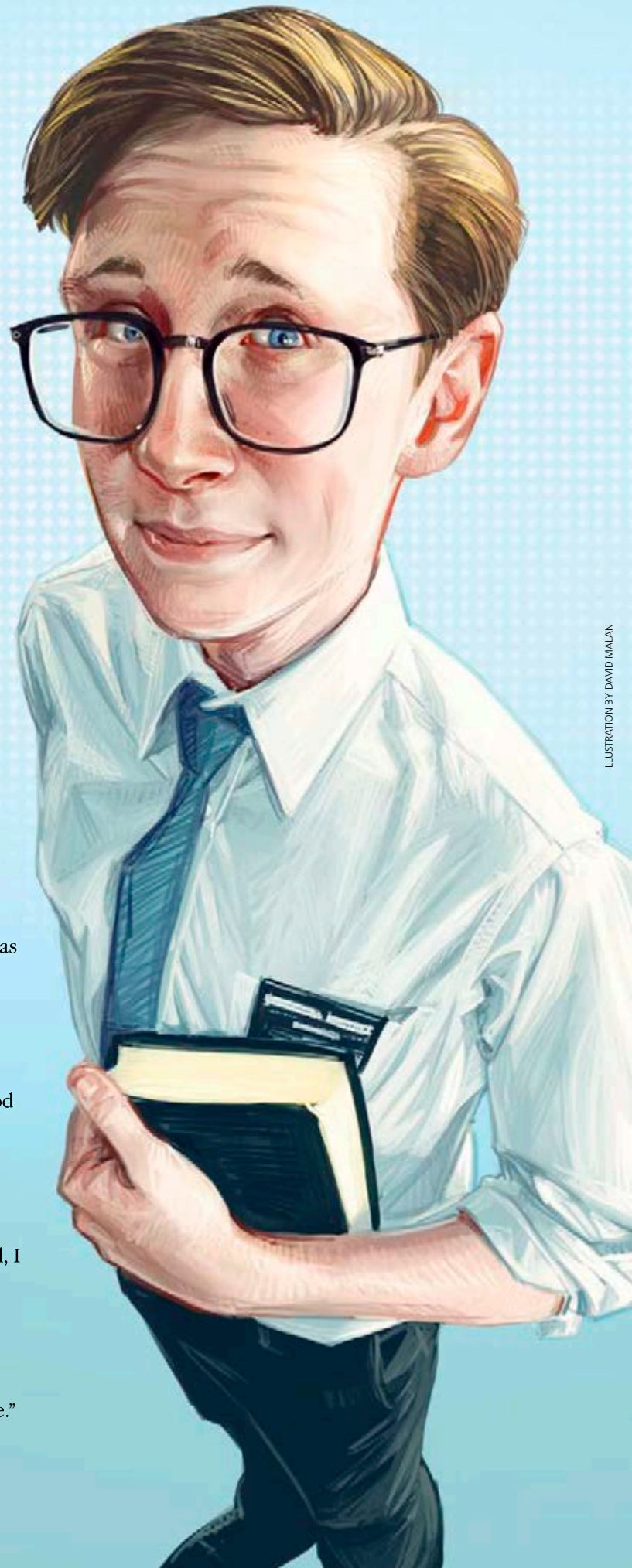


ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID MALAN

EVEN IF YOU'RE SHY

Trust the Lord, and He will bless you in your efforts to share the gospel.

When I was a new mission president in Brazil, I was interviewing some elders. I asked one to tell me about himself.

“I am very shy,” he said. He worried that his shyness was getting in the way of being able to serve.

I asked, “Do you think the Lord can help you to be a good missionary anyway?”

“I believe the Lord can do anything.”

“Then let Him help you. Do you think you can do that?”

“I can,” he said.

I have to confess that as he walked away, I thought, “Well, I hope it works.”

Weeks passed and soon the same missionaries came for interviews again. This time the shy elder’s companion said, “President, I don’t know what you told him, but it certainly made a difference. He’s become great at talking with people.” And so I was looking forward to visiting with him again.

When he came into my office, he looked down at his feet. “I have some good news,” he said. “I’m still shy, but I asked the Lord to help me. Then I opened my mouth and started to speak. And you know what? I do it all the time now. I don’t even remember what I say. The incredible thing is that people like it. They feel the Spirit. They relate to me and to what I have to tell them.”

I was amazed to see how this missionary was transformed when he put his trust in the Lord. He became a great instrument in bringing happiness to many people.

“I’m still shy,
but I asked the Lord
to help me.”

Overcoming Fear

When we share the gospel, we sometimes feel nervous. But as this shy missionary demonstrated, the Lord will guide us if we trust in Him. The Holy Ghost will help us know what to say (see 2 Nephi 32:2–3), and when people feel the Spirit, they often respond in a positive way. Many become intrigued by what we believe and want to know more.

Great Joy

I have a testimony that Heavenly Father will guide us in our efforts to share the gospel, and in that process we will feel great joy. In fact, that joy will be with us not only now but also in the world to come. (See D&C 18:16.) That’s a good reason to step outside your comfort zone and do something, even if you’re shy. ■

THREE FEARS YOU CAN CONQUER

Beside shyness, I know of three additional fears that cause some of us to say, “I’m afraid that if I talk about the gospel, I’ll lose my friends.” Thank goodness that, with faith, those fears can be overcome.

1. I DON’T KNOW ENOUGH.

If you lack knowledge about the gospel, the full-time missionaries can help. They can teach us the message of the Restoration, help us strengthen our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and help us understand repentance and how to apply it in our lives and why baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost are important. Another great source of knowledge is *Preach My Gospel*. I would encourage every young man and young woman to have a copy and to make it part of your daily study with your scriptures.

2. I’VE NEVER DONE THIS BEFORE.

If you lack experience, practice with the missionaries! They can help you to know what to say or not to say in a certain situation. As you spend time with the missionaries, you will feel the love they have for the gospel and for their fellow man. They have found the courage to share the gospel; they can help you do the same.

3. I’M AFRAID TO SHARE.

When we share our testimony, we help our friends see higher things, and they begin to respect us and love us in a different light. This happens almost every time. A lot of young people say, “I was fearful, but when I spoke honestly, my friend began to trust me and to ask more questions.” We shouldn’t be afraid of sharing what we have. It is precious because it comes from God. And what better way to show love for our friends than to share with them what we know to be true?

OUR SPACE

HONEST IN ALL THINGS

Alivsi H., Jalisco, Mexico

At the beginning of every semester at school, we get a free set of products containing a notebook, an agenda, and a random sample product. One year I lined up to get my set and realized that the sample I got was particularly useful for me.

At the end of the day, I saw that they were giving two samples of the same product. It would be easy to get in line again and get a second set, and I decided to do it. After all, they were free, and I needed that product.

I made a quick stop at the restroom, where I saw a cell phone that some

girl had left by accident. It was one of the latest models, and I had just lost my own phone a week before. But I didn't even consider keeping it.

"That's stealing," I said to myself.

Then, on my way to get my second set of free stuff, I realized that would be as dishonest as keeping the phone because I would have to lie and say I hadn't gotten one before.

I was thankful for this small experience that taught me a big lesson. I turned the phone in and went home

with only one notebook, one agenda, and one sample product, but with a nice feeling for being true in all things, no matter how small. ■



BLESSED FOR OBEYING THE LAW OF TITHING

Sabrina T., São Paulo, Brazil

When I was little, my family and I passed through many financial trials that lasted until I was about 10 years old. My dad couldn't find other work, so he worked as a street vendor and earned very little. My mother stayed home to care for me and my younger brother.

But even passing through so many tribulations, we had a testimony of paying tithing and giving other offerings. We faithfully paid our tithing every month and never lacked anything. We know with certainty that we were continually blessed because of the Lord's infinite kindness and because

He keeps His promises when we are obedient to His commandments.

Our days of financial trial finally ended. The blessings that the Lord has given us in these last few years have been amazing.

I know that for those who faithfully pay tithing and pay their offerings in love with the goal of blessing the lives of others, nothing will lack and something even better can happen, as with me and my family. The blessings will increase. I know this. I lived this. ■

LOOK GOOD?

Look again. Satan wants us to trade true joy for a mere illusion of happiness that will never satisfy. Don't take a single bite.

(See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "You Can Do It Now," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 56.)



“I get made fun of at school for being LDS. I know I need to stand up for my beliefs, but it’s so hard! How do I become brave enough?”

You’re right that you need bravery to confront this situation. After all, Jesus Christ has commanded, “Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations” (D&C 115:5). But having the courage to let your light shine may or may not mean speaking up against those who mock you.

In either case, you can let the opposition inspire you to be better. As you work hard to strengthen your testimony, you can develop the kind of quiet courage that will help you speak up or simply continue doing what is right, even if others mock.

Being teased can be upsetting, but remember that you can pray to be filled with charity so that others can feel Christ’s love through you (see Moroni 7:48). Because every situation is unique, seek the guidance of the Spirit to know how to respond in a Christlike way in each instance.

Depending on the situation, it might be best to speak privately with those who have made fun of you or even to just ignore unfriendly taunts while continuing to live your beliefs. If others aren’t interested in listening to what you have to say, your example of kindness, forgiveness, and sincerity may be the best message you can send.

Show True Courage

Those who make fun of you may not stop simply because you get brave enough to ask them to stop, but they might stop when you exert your courage by living what you are—a Latter-day Saint. Before you know it, the radiance of our Heavenly Father’s approval will shine on you, hopefully opening their eyes to the restored gospel in your life.

Bright U., age 17, Imo State, Nigeria

Find Strength in the Basics

Prayer and fasting are important because they will help you be able to face the jokes and challenges at school, just as Jesus Christ faced much mocking when He was here on earth. They will help you develop more love and patience toward people.

Walter C., age 15, Jaén, Peru



Be Guided through Prayer

For a long time I was the only member in my school. My closest friends seemed to understand me, but other school friends made fun of me. One day I prayed and felt the need to talk with one of them who encouraged the others to make fun of me. I explained that I didn’t feel angry at him, but I asked him to give me the



respect he'd like to have. After hearing our conversation, one of my teachers always defended me when he saw something happen. I know that the Lord will be with you as you talk with these people.

Shanela S., age 14, Pangasinan, Philippines

Build Your Testimony

First, gain a real testimony of the truths you want to share with others. Then have love for the people making fun and don't get into arguments, because contention is never supported by God (see 3 Nephi 11:29). Most important, strive to have the Spirit always with you. The Spirit will help you have more love and more courage, and He will make your words powerful.

Julia F., age 19, Hesse, Germany



Love Your Enemies

I have been in similar situations. If you have faith and humble yourself, you will be blessed with strength and faith that you need to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, . . . and pray for them" (Matthew 5:44). I'd encourage you to search the scriptures for answers on how to be strong. Pray when you are feeling alone in your faith. Romans 8:31 says, "What shall we then say to

these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" You have God on your side! Anything is possible.

Reagan T., age 15, Utah, USA



Don't Be Afraid

Speak about your religion more often or purposely do things to bring it up. I was in a similar situation and wrote, "I Love Being LDS" on my backpack. By doing so, I opened the door to several missionary opportunities and showed people that I wasn't afraid to let them know I am LDS. Whatever you do, don't let them get to you. Pray for them and for yourself. Soon you'll find that if you focus on saving others' souls, you won't be as afraid to let them know the truth of our Father's gospel.

Savanna P., age 14, Texas, USA



THE COURAGE OF OUR CONVICTIONS

"It is often difficult to be different and to stand alone in a crowd. It is natural to fear what others might think or say. Comforting are the words of the psalm: 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?' [Psalm 27:1]. As we make Christ the center of our lives, our fears will be replaced by the courage of our convictions."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Be an Example and a Light," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 88.

UPCOMING QUESTION

"How can I know God is listening to my prayers?"

Submit your answer and, if desired, a high-resolution photograph by May 1, 2016, at liahona.lds.org, by email to liahona@ldschurch.org, or by mail (see address on page 3).

The following information and permission must be included in your email or letter: (1) full name, (2) birth date, (3) ward or branch, (4) stake or district, (5) your written permission, and, if you are under age 18, your parent's written permission (email is acceptable) to publish your response and photograph.

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.






By Elder David A. Bednar

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

What do Apostles do?



Apostles are servants of the Lord. They travel to visit members of the Church around the world.

The first time I traveled as an Apostle, I met a man who had a hard time living the Word of Wisdom. I told him, “The Lord sent me here to give you a very simple message: ‘You can do this. I promise you will have His help as you face this challenge.’”

Would the Lord send one of the Twelve Apostles halfway around the world to help just one person? The answer is *yes*. He does it all the time. ■

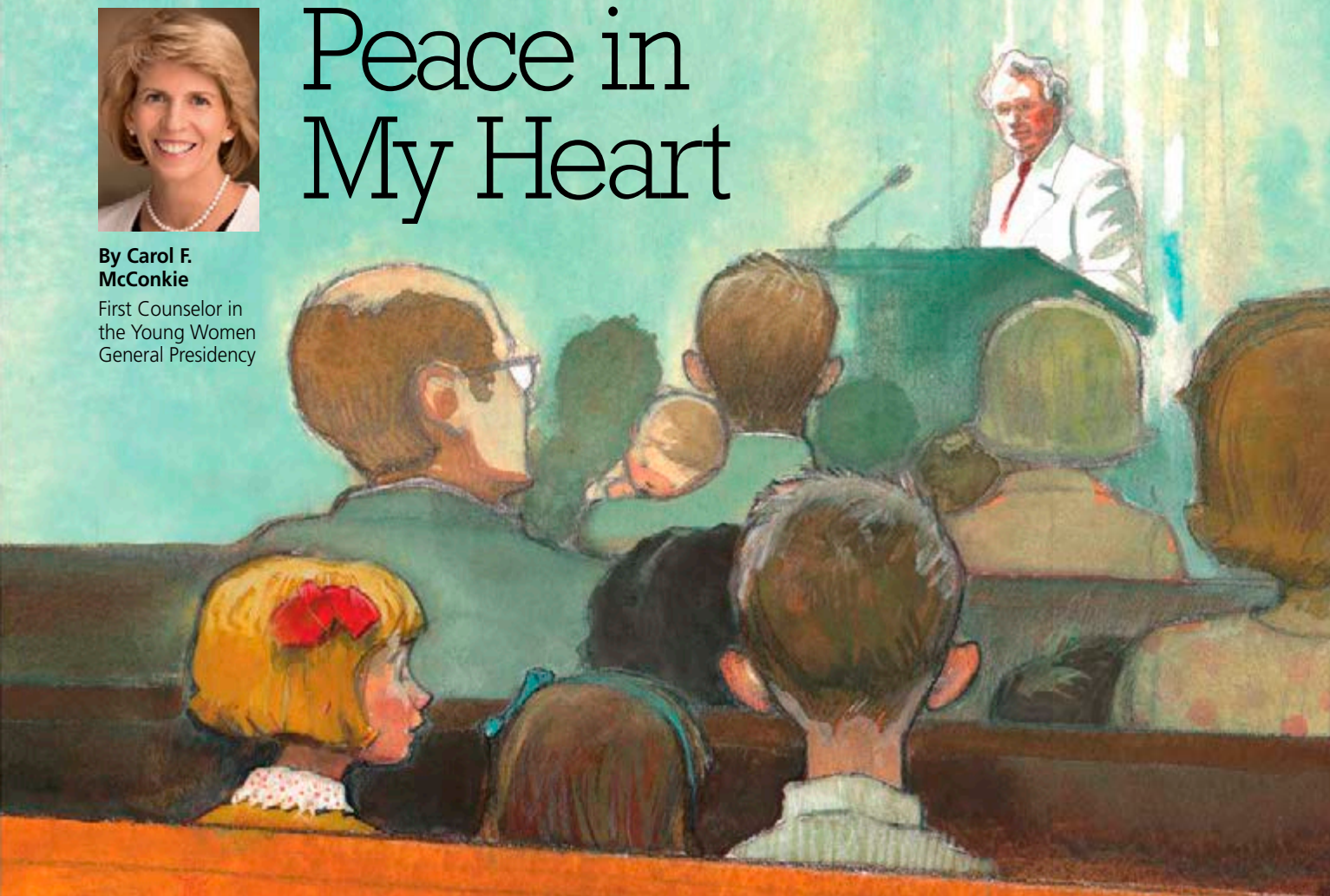
From Elder and Sister Bednar’s Face to Face worldwide broadcast.



By Carol F.
McConkie

First Counselor in
the Young Women
General Presidency

Peace in My Heart



When I was eight, I saw the prophet, President David O. McKay (1873–1970). He came to dedicate a new Church building in Palmyra, New York, USA. My family went to the dedication. A lot of other people came too. We were all excited to see the prophet!

I was pretty small, so it was hard for me to see around all the people. But I could still feel President McKay's love. For just a minute, I saw his white hair and his kind face. I thought, "This is what a prophet of God looks like." I had read about

prophets in the scriptures, but this was my first time seeing a prophet or any General Authority in person. I realized that prophets are real people. And they love us! I'll always remember the love and peace I felt that day.

When I was 11, I had another experience that helped me feel peace in my heart. Stake conference was coming up, and I got to sing in the stake choir. I was so excited! I wore a pretty white shirt, and I felt so special. The song we sang had the words from John 14:27, "Peace

I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Those words really touched my heart, and I've remembered them ever since. When I sang those words, I knew they were true. I felt the Holy Ghost tell me that following Jesus Christ helps us feel peace. Since then, whenever I have challenges, this scripture comes to my mind and gives me peace. The truth I learned when I was young has blessed my whole life. ■

Ethan's TESTIMONY

By Larry Hiller

Based on a true story

"Listen, listen. The Holy Ghost will whisper. Listen, listen to the still small voice" (Children's Songbook, 106).

Ethan sat in sharing time and looked on as his best friend, Sam, bore his testimony. His friend Sarah was waiting her turn. Sam talked about a service project he did. He said he had a testimony of service. Sarah bore her testimony about families. Ethan's teacher also bore his testimony. He talked about temple work. All of them testified that the Church is true. It seemed like everyone except Ethan had a testimony.

"What do I have a testimony of?" Ethan wondered.

He thought back a few years to when he and his friends were baptized. His Primary teacher, Sister Calder, had given a talk on the Holy Ghost.

"The Holy Ghost can give you a burning feeling in your heart. He can help you know what is true," she'd said. "And that's how you get a testimony of what you believe."

Ethan tried to do what was right so he could feel the Holy Ghost. He read the scriptures and prayed. But he

It seemed like everyone except Ethan had a testimony.





had never had that burning feeling people talked about. Did that mean he didn't have a testimony?

This question stuck in Ethan's head all the next day. He was still thinking about it when he and Sam were skateboarding after school. He wondered how he could ask Sam about it.

"Hey, Sam," Ethan finally asked, "were you scared when you bore your testimony yesterday?"

Sam hopped off his board and walked to the grass. "Not really," he said, sitting down. "I've shared my testimony at family night before."

Ethan joined him and set his skateboard on his lap. "But how did you know you had a testimony?"

"Well, I prayed and I felt good about it."

Ethan slowly nodded and spun a wheel with his hand. Somehow he wanted to feel that way too.

That night, when the house was dark and quiet, Ethan knelt by his bed to pray.

"Heavenly Father," he said, "please help me have a testimony.

Help me know that the Church is true. That Joseph Smith was a prophet. And that the Book of Mormon is true."

In the middle of his prayer, Ethan stopped. He thought for a minute. Then he asked himself, "Well, do I know anything yet?"

And then a quiet, peaceful feeling came over him. It wasn't a powerful burning feeling. But Ethan knew, *that* was the Holy Ghost.

A thought came into Ethan's mind: "I know that I know." And as he thought about it, he realized he had felt this peaceful feeling before.

Whenever he read the Book of Mormon, it felt good and right. Now he knew that feeling was the Holy Ghost testifying to him. When he went to church and it felt good and right to be there, that was the Holy Ghost too. He had already been getting a testimony!

He didn't need to know everything right now. But he did know that the Holy Ghost was real and could help him keep building his testimony.

Ethan began to pray again. But this time it was to say thank you. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Pesos for Heavenly Father

By Angela Peña Dahle

“Keep the commandments. In this there is safety and peace”
(Children’s Songbook, 146).

Ana chewed her last bite of tortilla. It was soft and yummy. Ana loved her grandmother’s tortillas. They were the best part of breakfast.

Ana watched her grandmother, Abuela, wash the dishes.

It was like any other morning. But one thing was not the same.

Abuela usually walked to the market to buy food. But not today. Today there was no money to buy food.

“What will we eat tomorrow?” Ana wondered.

Then Ana remembered. She knew where some money was! Last night she saw Abuela put a few pesos in a little white cloth.

“Abuela, did you forget? You have money to buy food.”

“What money?” Abuela asked.

Ana ran to get the money. She shook the little bag of coins. *Clink! Clink!*

Abuela smiled. “That is our tithing, Ana. That is *His* money.”

“But what will we eat tomorrow?” Ana asked.

“Do not worry,” Abuela said. “I have faith that Heavenly Father will help us.”

The next morning Abuela gave Ana the last corn tortilla. Then she



sat down in her chair. She stitched red flowers onto a dress and told stories about when she was a little girl. She did not look worried.

Then Ana heard a knock. She ran to open the door.

“Uncle Pedro!”

“I had a feeling I should visit you two,” Uncle Pedro said. He put three sacks on the table. One had corn flour for tortillas. Another had meat. Another had fresh vegetables from the market.

“Oh, my sweet son,” Abuela said. “I’m going to make you my best meatball soup!”

“Your soup is the best in the world,” Uncle Pedro said.

Ana laughed and clapped her hands.

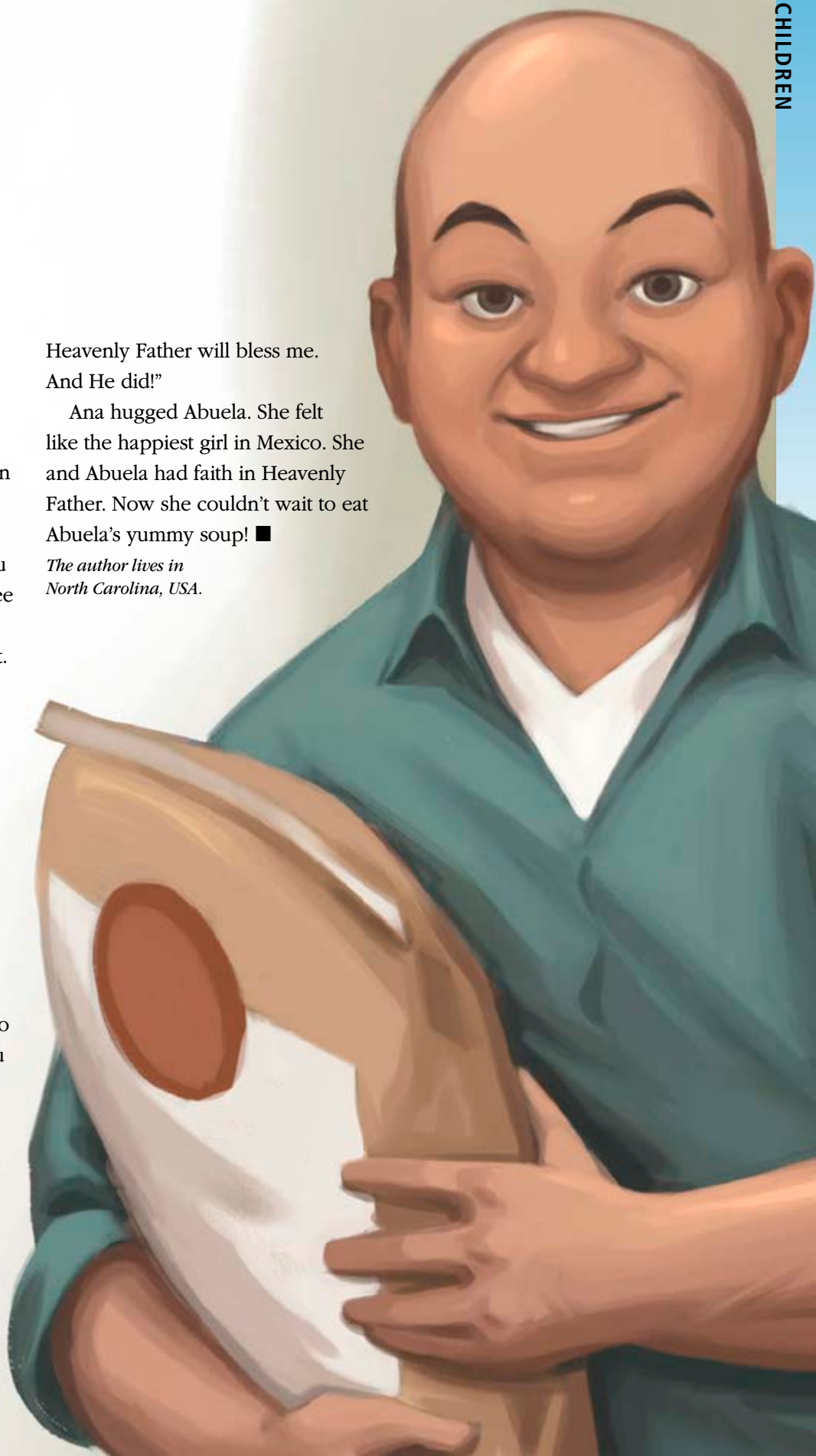
Then she stopped. There was one thing she wanted to know. “Abuela, did you know Uncle Pedro would come today? Is that why you weren’t worried?”

“No,” Abuela said. “When I pay my tithing, I have faith that

Heavenly Father will bless me. And He did!”

Ana hugged Abuela. She felt like the happiest girl in Mexico. She and Abuela had faith in Heavenly Father. Now she couldn’t wait to eat Abuela’s yummy soup! ■

The author lives in North Carolina, USA.

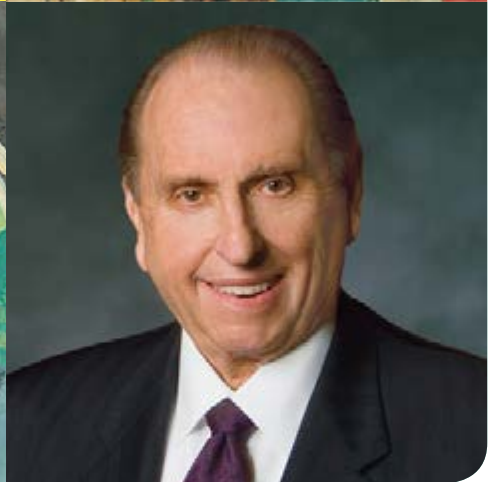
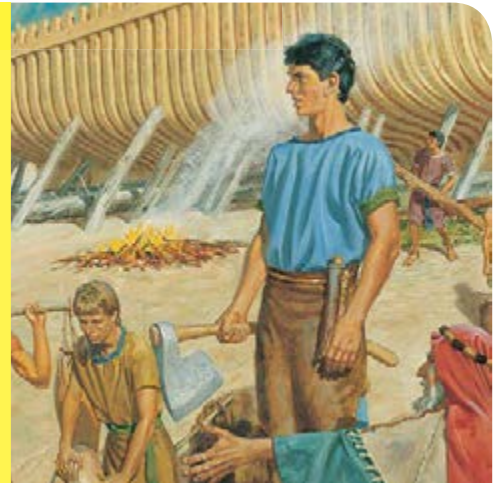


Following Prophets and Apostles

By Jenna Koford



God calls prophets and apostles to teach us what God wants us to know. In the scriptures we can read about prophets like Noah, Nephi, and Joseph Smith, and apostles like Peter and Paul. We have prophets and apostles today!



DETAIL FROM THE LORD FULFILLETH ALL HIS WORDS, BY CLARK K. PRICE; DETAIL FROM JOSEPH SMITH, JR., BY DANQUART A. WEGGELAND; DETAIL FROM NEW TESTAMENT STORIES, BY PAUL WANN; DETAIL FROM NEPHI AND LEHI DIRECT BUILDING THE SHIP, BY JERRY THOMPSON; ILLUSTRATIONS BY GARTH BRUNER

What is a “prophet, seer, and revelator”?



A **prophet** speaks for God.

A **seer** can see the past, present, and future.

A **revelator** reveals (or shows) us the will of God.

- The members of the First Presidency are all prophets, seers, and revelators. So are all the Apostles.
- Only the President of the Church has the authority from God to lead the whole Church.
- How many living prophets, seers, and revelators do we have in all?

12 15 3 1

Answer: 15

Why is it important to follow the prophet?

A prophet is like someone watching from a tower (see also page 38). He can see danger that is coming and tells us how to be safe. He helps us follow Jesus Christ.



What has our prophet asked us to do?



Our prophet today is President Thomas S. Monson. Here are some things he has asked us to do.

- Follow Jesus’s example and love everyone.
- Pay tithing and donate to the missionary fund.
- Stay away from bad movies, TV, and other media.
- Put a picture of the temple in every bedroom.
- Study general conference talks.
- Visit the elderly and be a good neighbor.

Pick one thing from the list you can do this month. What will you do? ■

Alma Repented

Alma was a priest of the wicked King Noah. He listened to the prophet Abinadi teach about the commandments. Alma knew he needed to change his life and follow God instead of doing wicked things. He wrote down what Abinadi taught. He began teaching others the gospel. Later he had a family and named one of his sons Alma.



I was playing goalie and doing a great job. Then I remembered I needed to repent for saying something mean yesterday. I needed to do it, but I was in the middle of football.

Then I remembered something. You can pray anywhere you need to! After I prayed, I felt good that I repented.

Peter G., age 8, Utah, USA

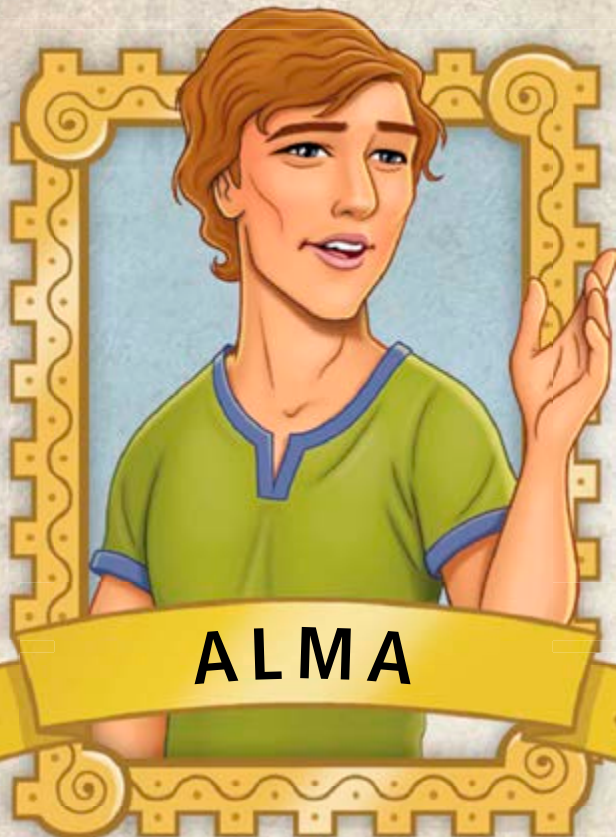


Damon B., age 8, Utah, USA

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JARED BECKSTRAND



Cut, fold, and keep this challenge card!



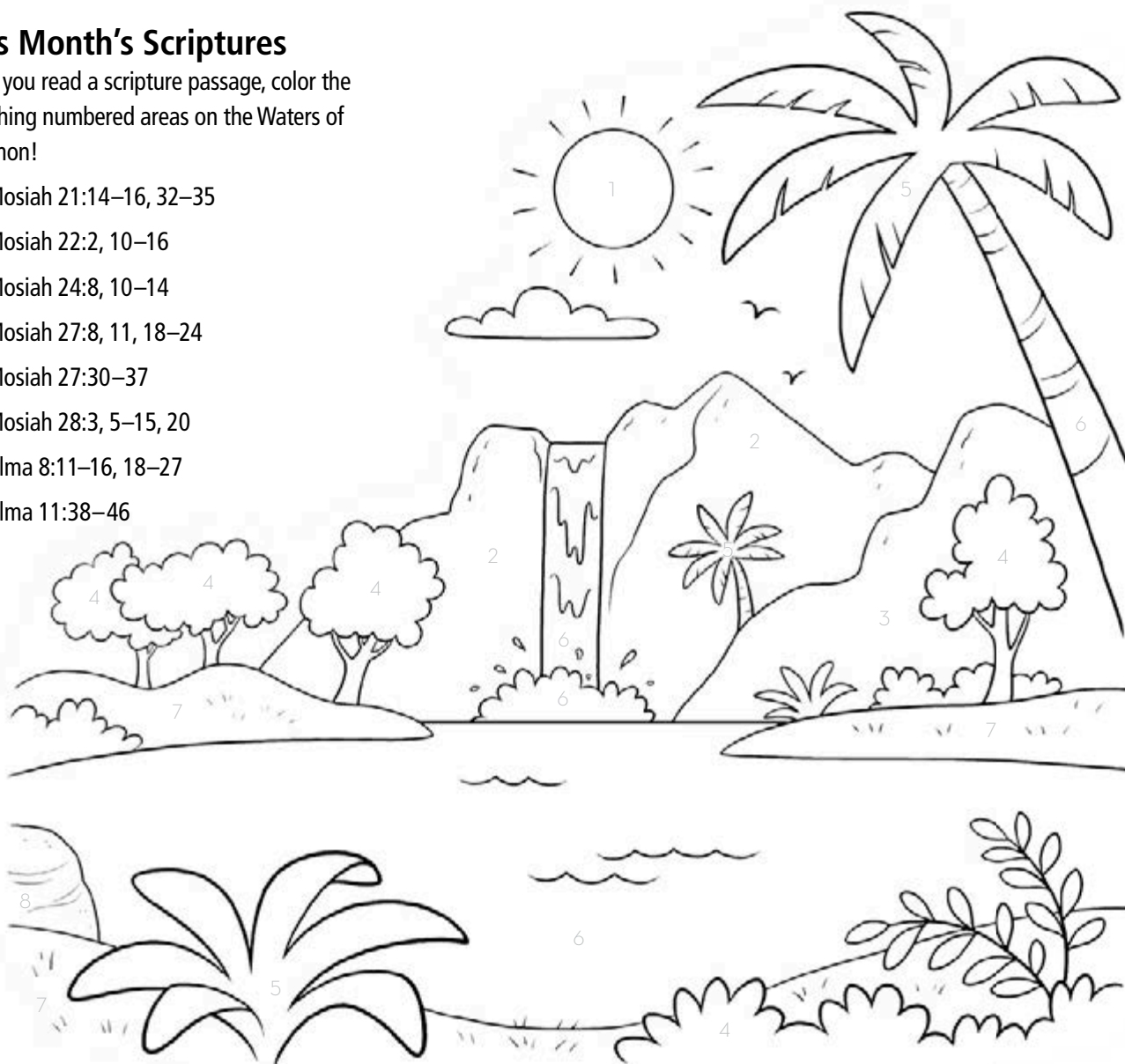
I Can Repent!


- Memorize Mosiah 18:9.
- Write or draw something the prophet said in general conference.
- Pick one way you can change for the better. Try doing it this month.
- I challenge myself to . . .

This Month's Scriptures

After you read a scripture passage, color the matching numbered areas on the Waters of Mormon!

1. Mosiah 21:14–16, 32–35
2. Mosiah 22:2, 10–16
3. Mosiah 24:8, 10–14
4. Mosiah 27:8, 11, 18–24
5. Mosiah 27:30–37
6. Mosiah 28:3, 5–15, 20
7. Alma 8:11–16, 18–27
8. Alma 11:38–46

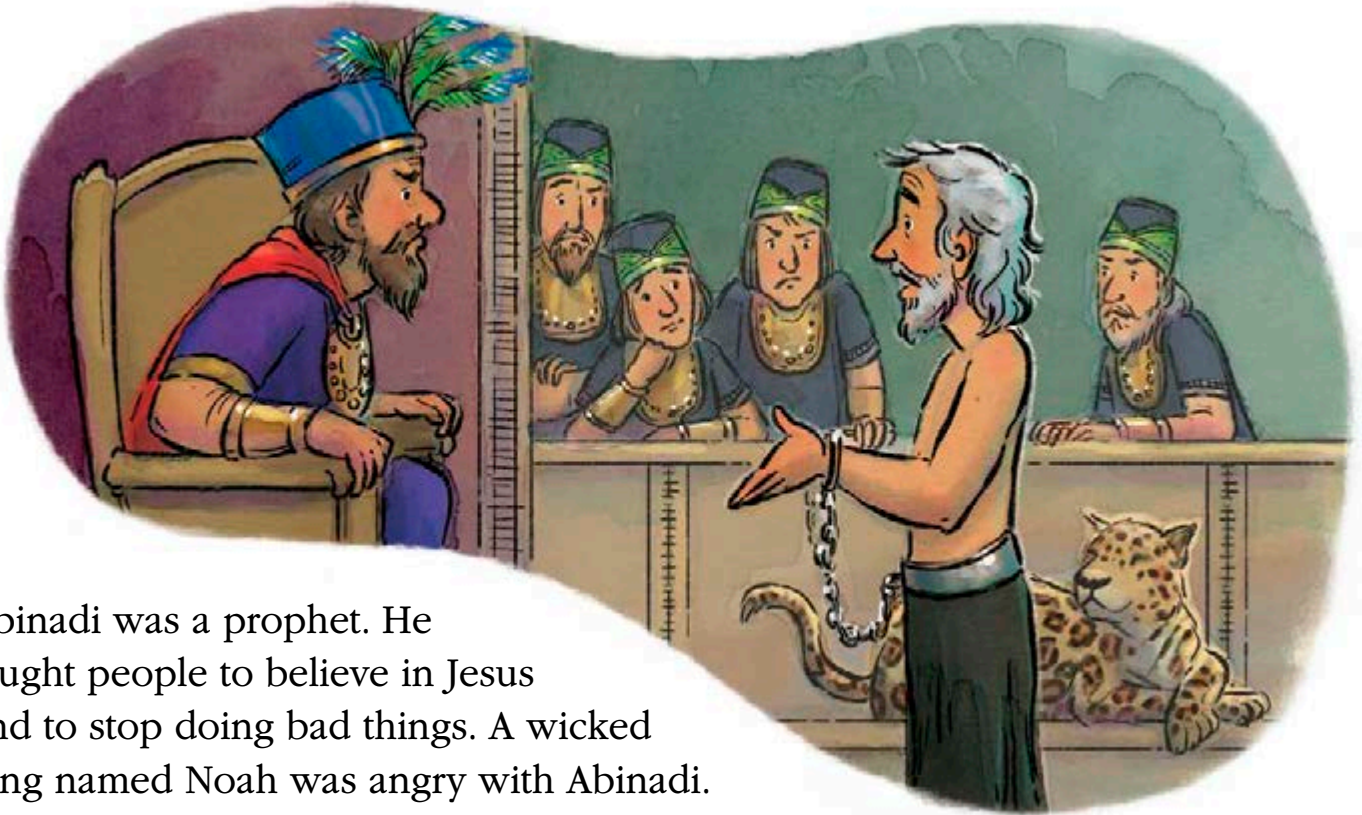




The Waters of Mormon

Alma hid from wicked King Noah near a peaceful place called the Waters of Mormon. Many people came to hear Alma teach the gospel. They wanted to be baptized. When Alma baptized them, the people made the same promises, or covenants, that we make when we are baptized. You can read more about these promises on the next page.

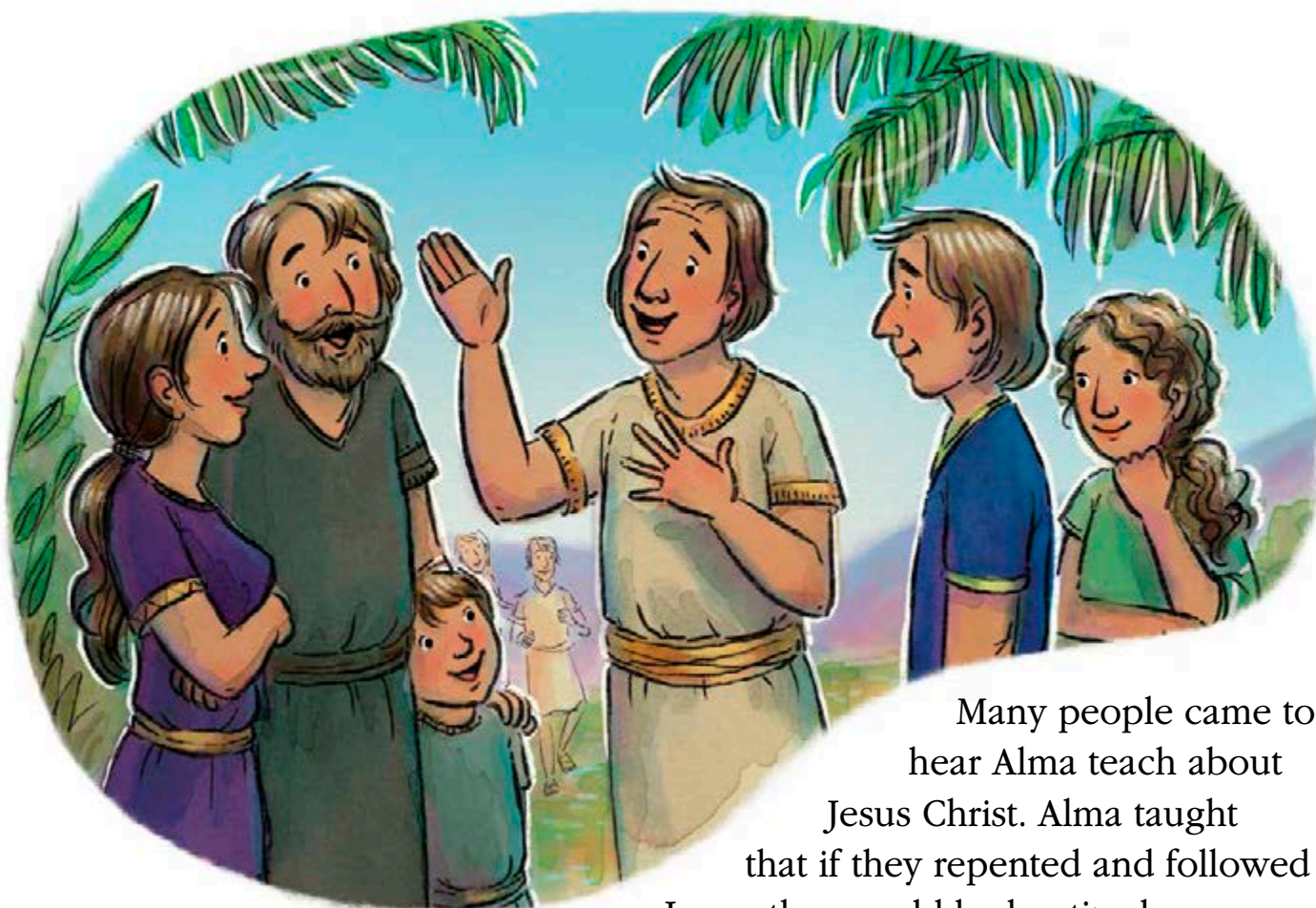
Alma Baptizes Many People



Abinadi was a prophet. He taught people to believe in Jesus and to stop doing bad things. A wicked king named Noah was angry with Abinadi. Noah didn't want to repent.

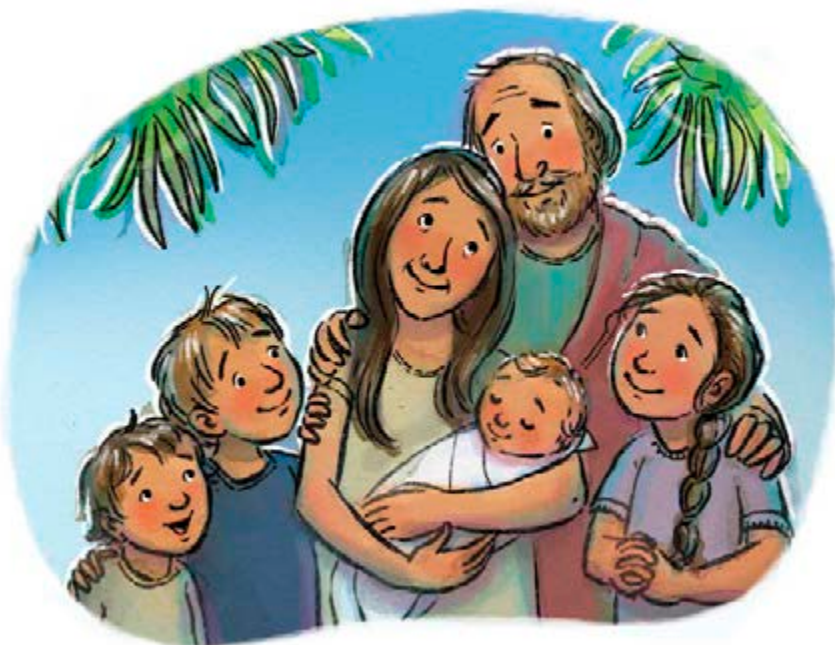


A man named Alma believed Abinadi. He ran away and hid from the angry king. He felt sorry for doing wrong things, and he repented, just as Abinadi had taught.



Many people came to hear Alma teach about Jesus Christ. Alma taught that if they repented and followed Jesus, they could be baptized.

The people clapped with joy. They promised to comfort others. They promised to love God and tell other people about Him. They were ready to be baptized.





One by one, Alma baptized the people. They were very happy to be part of Jesus's Church.

When we are baptized, we make the same promises that Alma's people did. And we become part of Jesus's Church too! ■

From Mosiah 16–18.

The Sabbath Is a Special Day



ILLUSTRATION BY APRYL STOTT



By President
George Q. Cannon
(1827-1901)

First Counselor in the
First Presidency

SEEKING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

How many of you are seeking for these gifts that God has promised to bestow?

Every man and woman in the Church of Christ can have the gifts of the Spirit of God divided to them according to their faith and as God wills. . . .

How many of you . . . are seeking for these gifts that God has promised to bestow? How many of you, when you bow before your Heavenly Father in your family circle or in your secret places, contend for these gifts to be bestowed upon you? How many of you ask the Father, in the name of Jesus, to manifest Himself to you through these powers and these gifts? Or do you go along day by day, like a door turning on its hinges, without having any feeling upon the subject, without exercising any faith whatever, content to be baptized and be members of the Church and to rest there, thinking that your salvation is secure because you have done this? . . .



. . . I know that God is willing to heal the sick, that He is willing to bestow the gift of discerning of spirits, the gift of wisdom, of knowledge and of prophecy, and other gifts that may be needed. If any of us are imperfect, it is our duty to pray for the gift that will make us perfect. Have I imperfections? I am full of them. What is my duty? To pray to God to give me the gifts that will correct these imperfections. If I am an angry man, it is my duty to pray for charity, which suffereth long and is kind. Am I an envious man? It is my duty to seek for charity, which envieth

not. So with all the gifts of the gospel. They are intended for this purpose. No man ought to say, "Oh, I cannot help this; it is my nature." He is not justified in it, for the reason that God has promised to give strength to correct these things, and to give gifts that will eradicate them. If a man lack wisdom, it is his duty to ask God for wisdom. The same with everything else. That is the design of God concerning His Church. He wants His Saints to be perfected in the truth. For this purpose He gives these gifts and bestows them upon those who seek after them, in order that they may be a perfect people upon the face of the earth, notwithstanding their many weaknesses, because God has promised to give the gifts that are necessary for their perfection. ■

From The Latter-day Saints Millennial Star, Apr. 23, 1894, 258-61; punctuation and capitalization standardized.

INSIGHTS



How does early belief grow into a knowledge and a witness?

“I can’t remember not believing in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. I have loved Them since I learned of Them at the knees of my angel mother, reading scripture and gospel stories. That early belief has now grown into a knowledge and a witness of a loving Heavenly Father, who hears and answers our prayers.”

Elder Ronald A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “I Stand All Amazed,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2015, 90.

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Recognizing Satan's Counterfeits

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Here's one key way to tell the difference between Satan's lies and the Lord's truths.

FOR YOUTH

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EVEN IF YOU'RE SHY

Have you ever felt too shy or scared to share the gospel? Here are three suggestions.



FOR CHILDREN



Following Prophets and Apostles

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What is one thing that you can do this month to follow the prophet, President Thomas S. Monson?



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