

Liahona

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Wondering about a Patriarchal Blessing? p. 18

Spring Cleaning Our Lives, p. F2



Liahona



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Front: Photograph by Jerry Garns. Back: Photograph of Mesa Arizona Temple by Welden C. Andersen; Photograph of Hong Kong China Temple by Craig Dimond; Photograph of México City México Temple; Photograph of Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple by Floyd Holdman.



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Illustrated by Jewel Hodson.



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Family Home Evening Ideas



"Be One of the Greatest,"

p. 12: Elder Richard G. Scott

and Elder Charles Didier

give counsel for young people who
are preparing to join "the greatest
generation of missionaries." Discuss
these ideas with your children. Ask
what they can do right now, regard-
less of their age, to prepare to teach
with the Spirit when they are old
enough to serve missions.

"It Wasn't a Sacrifice," p. 34:

Share an experience from your life in
which unanticipated blessings came
from sacrificing something you really
wanted. Explain how the Lord some-
times has different plans for us than
we may imagine for ourselves.

"A Temple-Motivated People,"

p. 40: Share your feelings about the
temple. Using President Howard W.
Hunter's article, explain in appropriate
detail the ordinances of the temple.
Ask each person to set a personal goal
to always be worthy to attend the tem-
ple and, if you live close enough, to
attend often.

"About Patriarchal Blessings,"

p. 18: Ask your children if they have
questions about patriarchal blessings.
Use the information in this article to
answer these questions.

"Did You Know?" p. 48: Read
about Jesus' baptism (see Matthew

3:13–17; Mark 1:3–11; Luke

3:21–22; John 1:19–37).

Emphasize that everyone

needs to be baptized. Jesus and His
prophets have set an example. Using
this article, create a quiz about the
prophets' baptisms. You might ask
questions such as "Which prophet was
baptized in a swimming pool?"

"A Wildflower and a Prayer,"

p. F6: Read together Sister Gayle M.

Clegg's story. Ask your children if they
have ever felt lonely. Remind them that
Heavenly Father is always near and that
something as simple as a wildflower
can help them remember their parents
love them and pray for them.

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Finding Peace

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

First Counselor in the First Presidency

In a world where peace is such a universal quest, we sometimes wonder why violence walks our streets, accounts of murder and senseless killings fill the columns of our newspapers, and family quarrels and disputes mar the sanctity of the home and smother the tranquility of so many lives.

Perhaps we stray from the path which leads to peace and find it necessary to pause, to ponder, and to reflect on the teachings of the Prince of Peace and determine to incorporate them in our thoughts and actions and to live a higher law, walk a more elevated road, and be a better disciple of Christ.

The Enemies of Peace

The ravages of hunger in Africa, the brutality of hate in the Middle East, and the ethnic struggles across the globe remind us that the peace we seek will not come without effort and determination. Anger, hatred, and contention are foes not easily subdued. These enemies inevitably leave in their destructive wake tears of sorrow, the pain of conflict, and the shattered hopes of what could have been. Their sphere of influence is not restricted to the battlefields of war but can be observed altogether too frequently in the home, around the hearth, and within the heart. So

soon do many forget and so late do they remember the counsel of the Lord: "There shall be no disputations among you. . . .

"For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

"Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away."¹

As we turn backward the clock of time, we recall that some 65 years ago a desperately arranged peace, a conference of peace, convened in the Bavarian city of Munich. Leaders of the European powers assembled even as the world tottered on the brink of war. Their purpose, openly stated, was to pursue a course which they felt would avert war and maintain peace. Mistrust, intrigue, a quest for power doomed to failure that conference. The outcome was not "peace in our time," but rather war and destruction to a degree not previously experienced. Overlooked, or at least set aside, was the hauntingly touching appeal of one who had fallen in an earlier war. He seemed to be writing in behalf of millions of comrades—friend and foe alike:



Perhaps we stray from the path which leads to peace and find it necessary to pause, to ponder, and to reflect on the teachings of the Prince of Peace and determine to incorporate them in our thoughts and actions.

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.²*

Are we doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past? The famed statesman William Gladstone described the formula for peace when he declared: “We look forward to the time when the power of love will replace the love of power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.”

The Peace of God

World peace, though a lofty goal, is but an outgrowth of the personal peace each individual seeks to attain. I refer not to the peace promoted by man, but peace as promised of God. I speak of peace in our homes, peace in our hearts, even peace in our lives. Peace after the way of man is perishable. Peace after the manner of God will prevail.

We are reminded that “anger doesn’t solve anything. It builds nothing, but it can destroy everything.”³ The consequences of conflict are so devastating that we yearn for guidance—even a way to ensure our success as we seek the path to peace. What is the way to obtain such a universal blessing? Are there prerequisites? Let us remember that to obtain God’s blessings, one must do God’s bidding. May I suggest three ideas to prompt our thinking and guide our footsteps:

1. Search inward;
2. Reach outward; and
3. Look heavenward.

First: Search inward. Self-evaluation is always a difficult procedure. We are so frequently tempted to gloss over areas which demand correction and instead dwell endlessly on our individual strengths. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) counseled us: “The price of peace is righteousness. Men and nations may loudly proclaim, ‘Peace, peace,’ but there shall be no peace until individuals nurture in their souls those principles of personal purity, integrity, and character which foster the development of peace. Peace cannot be imposed. It must come from the lives and hearts of men. There is no other way.”⁴

Elder Richard L. Evans (1906–71) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles observed: “To find peace—the peace within, the peace that passeth understanding—men must live in honesty, honoring each other, honoring obligations, working willingly, loving and cherishing loved ones, serving and considering others, with patience, with virtue, with faith and forbearance, with the assurance that life is for learning, for serving, for repenting, and improving. And God be thanked for the blessed principle of repenting and improving, which is a way that is open to us all.”⁵

The place of parents in the home and family is of vital importance as we examine our personal responsibilities in this regard. A distinguished group met in conference to examine the increase of violence in the lives of individuals, particularly the young. Some observations from their deliberations are helpful to us as we examine our priorities:

“A society that views graphic violence as entertainment . . . should not be surprised when senseless violence shatters the dreams of its youngest and brightest. . . .

“. . . Unemployment and despair can lead to desperation. But most people will not commit desperate acts if they have been taught that dignity, honesty and integrity are more important than revenge or rage; if they understand that respect and kindness ultimately give one a better chance at success. . . .

“The women of the anti-violence summit have hit on the solution—the only one that can reverse a downward

spiral of destructive behavior and senseless pain. A return to old-fashioned family values will work wonders.”⁶

So frequently we mistakenly believe that our children need more things, when in reality their silent pleadings are simply for more of our time. The accumulation of wealth or the multiplication of assets belies the Master’s teachings:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”⁷

One evening I saw large masses of parents and children crossing an intersection in Salt Lake City en route to a large arena to see a production of *Beauty and the Beast*. I actually pulled my car over to the curb to watch the gleeful throng. Fathers, who I am certain were cajoled into going to the event, held tightly in their hands the small and clutching hands of their precious children. Here was love in action. Here was an unspoken sermon of caring. Here was a rearrangement of time as a God-given priority.

Truly peace will reign triumphant when we improve ourselves after the pattern taught by the Lord. Then we will appreciate the deep spirituality hidden behind the simple words of a familiar hymn: “There is beauty all around When there’s love at home.”⁸

Second: Reach outward. Though exaltation is a personal matter, and while individuals are saved not as a group but indeed as individuals, yet one cannot live in a vacuum. Membership in the Church calls forth a determination to



serve. A position of responsibility may not be of recognized importance, nor may the reward be broadly known. Service, to be acceptable to the Savior, must come from willing minds, ready hands, and pledged hearts.

Occasionally discouragement may darken our pathway; frustration may be a constant companion. In our ears there may sound the sophistry of Satan as he whispers, “You cannot save the world; your small efforts are meaningless. You haven’t time to be concerned for others.” Trusting in the Lord, let us turn our heads from such falsehoods and make certain our feet are firmly planted in the path of service and our hearts and souls dedicated to follow the example of the Lord. In moments when the light of resolution dims and when the heart grows faint, we can take comfort from His promise: “Be not weary in well-doing. . . . Out of small things proceedeth that which is great. Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind.”⁹

During one year, the Primary organization conducted an effort to have the children become better acquainted with the holy temples of God. This frequently entailed a visit to the temple grounds. The laughter of small children, the joy of unfettered youth, and the

World peace, though a lofty goal, is but an outgrowth of the personal peace each individual seeks to attain. I refer not to the peace promoted by man, but peace as promised of God. I speak of peace in our homes, peace in our hearts, even peace in our lives.



As we look heavenward, we find it comforting and satisfying to communicate with our Heavenly Father through prayer, that path to spiritual power—even a passport to peace.

exuberance of energy displayed by them gladdened the heart of this observer. As a loving teacher guided a boy or girl to the large door of the Salt Lake Temple and the little one reached out and up to touch the temple, I could almost see the Master welcoming the little children to His side and could almost hear His comforting words: “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.”¹⁰

Third: Look heavenward. As we do, we find it comforting and satisfying to communicate with our Heavenly Father through prayer, that path to spiritual power—even a passport to peace. We are reminded of His Beloved Son, the Prince of Peace, that pioneer who literally showed the way for others to follow. His divine plan can save us from the Babylons of sin, complacency, and error. His example points the way. When faced with temptation, He shunned it. When offered the world, He declined it. When asked for His life, He gave it.

On one significant occasion, Jesus took a text from Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the

opening of the prison to them that are bound”¹¹—a clear pronouncement of the peace that passeth all understanding.

Frequently, death comes as an intruder. It is an enemy that suddenly appears in the midst of life’s feast, putting out its lights and its gaiety. Death lays its heavy hand upon those dear to us and, at times, leaves us baffled and wondering. In certain situations, as in great suffering and illness, death comes as an angel of mercy. But to those bereaved, the Master’s promise of peace is the comforting balm which heals: “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.”¹² “I go to prepare a place for you . . . ; that where I am, there ye may be also.”¹³

How I pray that all who have loved then lost might know the reality of the Resurrection and have the unshakable knowledge that families can be forever. One such was a Major Sullivan Ballou, who, during the time of the American Civil War, wrote a touching letter to his wife—just one week before he was killed in the Battle of Bull Run. With me, feel the love of his soul, his trust in God, his courage, his faith.

“July 14, 1861

“Camp Clark, Washington

“My very dear Sarah:

“The indications are very strong that we shall move in a few days—perhaps tomorrow. Lest I should not be able to write again, I feel impelled to write a few lines that may fall under your eye when I shall be no more. . . .

“I have no misgivings about, or lack of confidence in the cause in which I am engaged, and my courage does not halt or falter. . . . I am . . . perfectly willing . . . to lay down all my joys in this life, to help maintain this Government. . . .

“Sarah my love for you is deathless, it seems to bind me with mighty cables that

nothing but Omnipotence could break; and yet my love of Country comes over me like a strong wind and bears me unresistibly on with all these chains to the battle field.

“The memories of the blissful moments I have spent with you come creeping over me, and I feel most gratified to God and to you that I have enjoyed them so long. And hard it is for me to give them up and burn to ashes the hopes of future years, when, God willing, we might still have lived and loved together, and seen our sons grown up to honorable manhood, around us. I have, I know, but few and small claims upon Divine Providence, but something whispers to me—perhaps it is the wafted prayer of my little Edgar, that I shall return to my loved ones unharmed. If I do not my dear Sarah, never forget how much I love you, and when my last breath escapes me on the battle field, it will whisper your name. Forgive [me] my . . . faults, and the many pains I have caused you. How thoughtless and foolish I have often times been! How gladly would I wash out with my tears every little spot upon your happiness. . . .

“But, O Sarah! if the dead can come back to this earth and flit unseen around those they loved, I shall always be near you; in the gladdest days and in the darkest nights . . . *always, always*, and if there be a soft breeze upon your cheek, it shall be my breath, as the cool air fans your throbbing temple, it shall be my spirit passing by. Sarah do not mourn me dead; think I am gone and wait for thee, for we shall meet again.”¹⁴

Our Message of Peace

The darkness of death can ever be dispelled by the light of revealed truth. “I am the resurrection, and the life,” spoke the Master. “He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”¹⁵

Added to His own words are those of the angel, spoken to the weeping Mary Magdalene and the other Mary as they approached the tomb to care for the body of their Lord: “Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.”¹⁶

Such is our message. He lives! And because He lives all shall indeed live again. This knowledge provides the

peace for loved ones of those whose graves are hallowed resting places in Flanders fields, where the poppies blow in springtime, and for those who rest in countless other locations, including the depths of the sea. “Oh, sweet the joy this sentence gives: ‘I know that my Redeemer lives!’ ”¹⁷ ■

NOTES

1. 3 Nephi 11:28–30.
2. John McCrae, “In Flanders Fields,” in *The Best Loved Poems of the American People*, sel. Hazel Felleman (1936), 429.
3. L. Douglas Wilder, quoted in “Early Hardships Shaped Candidates,” *Deseret News*, 1 Dec. 1991, p. A2.
4. “Purposeful Living,” *Listen, A Journal of Better Living*, Jan.–Mar. 1955, 19.
5. In Conference Report, Oct. 1959, 128.
6. “Family Values in a Violent Society,” *Deseret News*, 16 Jan. 1994, p. A12.
7. Matthew 6:19–21.
8. “Love at Home,” *Hymns*, no. 294.
9. D&C 64:33–34.
10. Mark 10:14.
11. Isaiah 61:1; see Luke 4:17–20.
12. John 14:27.
13. John 14:2–3.
14. Quoted in Geoffrey C. Ward, *The Civil War* (1990), 82–83.
15. John 11:25–26.
16. Luke 24:5–6.
17. “I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” *Hymns*, no. 136.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

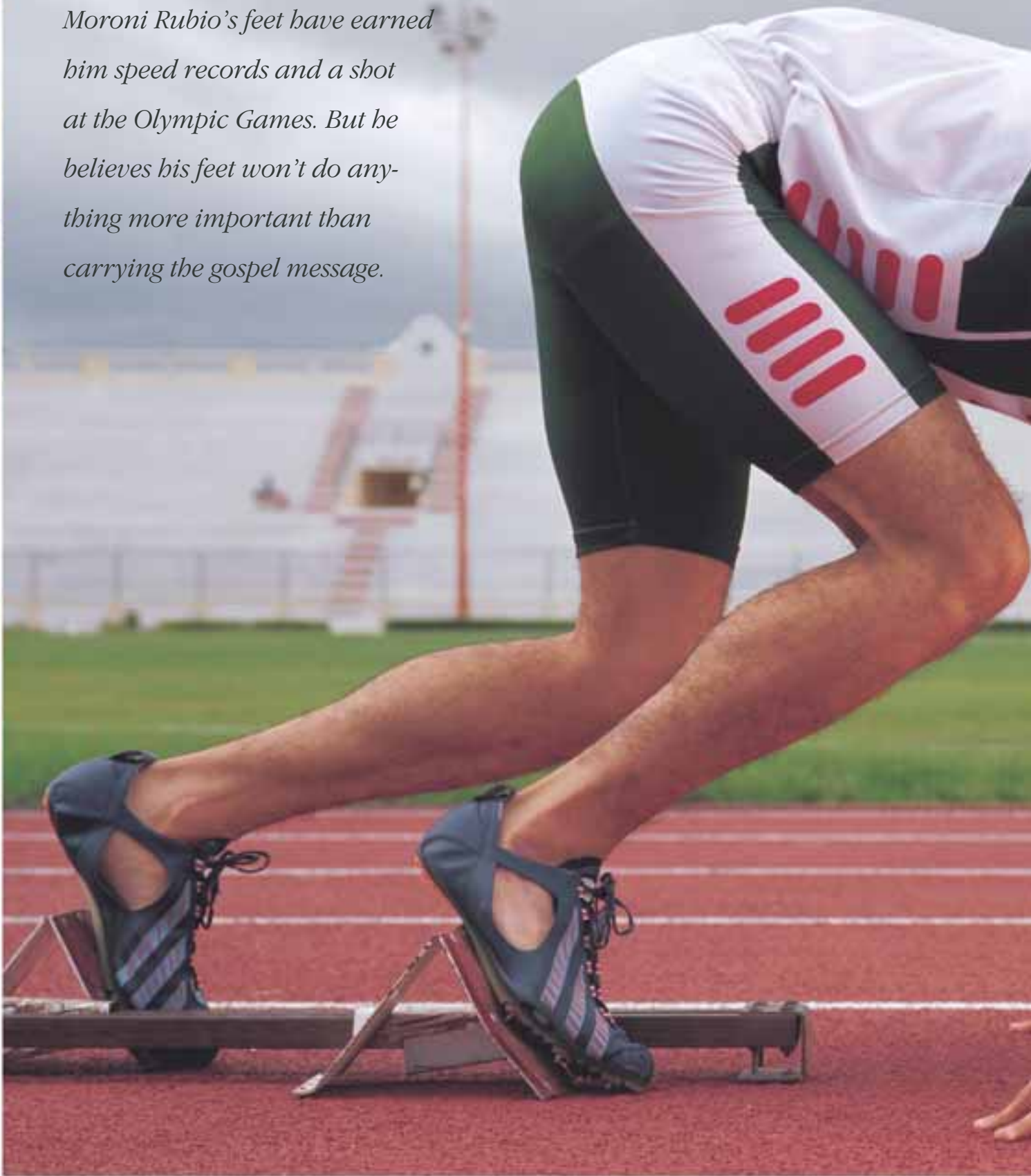
After prayerful preparation, share this message using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. A few examples follow:

1. Show a newspaper with current headlines about troubles in the world, and ask family members if they have ever felt fear because of these problems. Talk about ways in which the Savior can help us find peace and overcome fear despite the troubles in the world.

2. Ask a child or youth in the family if he or she has ever needed help because of someone who was being unkind or because things were not going well at school. Ask family members to share ways the Savior might help.

3. Has someone you teach lost a loved one to death? Bear your testimony of the Savior’s Resurrection and its effect on all of us, or if appropriate, have that individual share his or her testimony with others in the family.

Moroni Rubio's feet have earned him speed records and a shot at the Olympic Games. But he believes his feet won't do anything more important than carrying the gospel message.



BY ADAM C. OLSON
Church Magazines

Moroni Rubio was only 16 when he earned the number one ranking among sprinters in Mexico, after breaking records in the 100- and 200-meter sprints. That same year, 2002, he took first place in the 100 meters at the Central American

Junior Championships and was named athlete of the year in the state of Yucatán.

His dreams are pinned on his feet, which are expected to carry him all the way to the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China. But even if, for some reason, his feet don't take him to the Olympics, they will have already accomplished a great work.

His feet have put his unique name in the spotlight, bringing him numerous missionary



After setting records in the 100- and 200-meter sprints in his division, Moroni Rubio faces high expectations for his athletic career.

MORONI'S FEET

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CRAIG DIMOND,
EXCEPT AS NOTED; BORDER
PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM C. OLSON



Despite a hectic schedule that includes school, church, training, and more, Moroni enjoys playing the guitar and being with his family.

opportunities. Because of Moroni's success, he's been on television a number of times—each time with his name right there on the screen.

"I'm asked about my name a lot," says Moroni, a priest in the Mérida México Lakin Stake. "It's a great opportunity to talk about the gospel. And when I race, the members watching always know I'm a member too—by my name. I think it's something they're proud of."

His coaches have always told him he has a beautiful stride. But for Moroni, having "beautiful feet" is just as important—remembering Isaiah's words about missionaries: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings" (Isaiah 52:7).

Making the Sacrifice

Getting where he is now hasn't been easy. He's a sprinter with a marathon schedule. Moroni is off to school early. After school there's just enough time to wolf down a snack before heading off to training.

By the time he's home, at around 8:00 P.M., he barely has time to eat

dinner and do homework. Then it's off to bed. Keeping up with Moroni isn't a challenge just on the track.

"It's a sacrifice," Moroni says. "A lot of times I want to do other things, like hang out with my friends or play the guitar. But there's no time."

The Juggling Runner

As Moroni tries to juggle his training schedule with homework, family, church, and friends, the scripture about a man running "faster than he has strength" takes on more than one meaning for him.

Like many Latter-day Saint teens, Moroni has had to be careful not to overload himself by doing too much. From his experience as a runner, Moroni knows that you can hurt yourself when you push too hard. As King Benjamin told his people, "It is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength" (Mosiah 4:27).

But to Moroni that scripture isn't an excuse to stay in his comfort zone; it's a challenge to increase his strength. When he began competing in the 100 meters at age 14, his top time was 11.9 seconds. Through

growth and training, he has increased his strength and improved his time. Now Moroni's best time in the 100 meters is 10.46 seconds—the Mexican record in the junior (minor) division.

"It's the consistency in training," he says, "every day without quitting. I know I have limits, but they can change. On the track there are times when I think I can't make it, but stretching that much farther is part of the sacrifice to get better."

Or in King Benjamin's words: "And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize" (Mosiah 4:27). That lesson hasn't been lost on Moroni off the track.



"Trials that once seemed impossible aren't necessarily," Moroni says. "The Lord will never give us challenges we can't overcome. We can overcome them even if at first we think we can't. Never giving up is how we grow and get better. In the end, the sacrifices are worth it."

Fans in the Family

Moroni says that one of his greatest supports during trials—both on and off the track—is his family. He appreciates their support. They appreciate how he doesn't think he's better than they are because of

all the attention he is receiving. After all, they have their own talents.

His sister, Joycy, 20, has always been at the top of her class in school. Álvaro Jr., 19, is a talented artist and singer. Steven, 14, is energetic and also excels at running. And Marianna, 10, "will be great in business," says her father, Álvaro. "Even if they're not national champions in something, they can still have the satisfaction of having done their best."

In fact, Moroni says *he* looks up to *them*, especially to his older brother, Álvaro Jr., now serving in the México Puebla Mission.

"I've always known that without God's help I'd be nothing. He gave me the talent," says Moroni. "I always pray for His help. My life would be so much more difficult without the teachings of the gospel."

Feet Shod with the Gospel of Peace

Once Moroni's feet have helped him spread the gospel through track and field, he hopes they'll help him spread the gospel in the mission field.

"I believe the things I'm doing as a runner are important to the Lord," says Moroni. "But serving a mission is more important than running. Serving a mission is one of my goals, independent of whatever else happens in my athletic career."

So Moroni the sprinter would become Moroni the missionary—having his "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (D&C 27:16).

And just like that, Moroni will trade in his track shoes for his tracting shoes. ■



Moroni's brilliance on the track (below left) has put him in the public eye at an early age (above) and brought opportunities to share the gospel even before he has traded his track shoes for tracting shoes.



RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPHY AT TRACK EVENTS, COURTESY OF THE RUBIO FAMILY

Be One of the Greatest



What can youth do today to become the kind of missionaries Heavenly Father expects them to be tomorrow?

In a conversation with Church magazines, Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Elder Charles Didier of the Presidency of the Seventy explained that there are many things that can help you be part of “the greatest generation of missionaries.”¹ You’re probably doing some of them already.

Obey the Promptings of the Spirit

“If ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach” (D&C 42:14).

It is essential that the greatest generation of missionaries have the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Having the Spirit is absolutely necessary to missionary work. We may share our beliefs or explain the doctrine, but it is the Spirit that touches hearts and converts people.

“A missionary must be living so that the Spirit can prompt him or her,” Elder Richard G. Scott tells Church magazines.

But recognizing and obeying the promptings

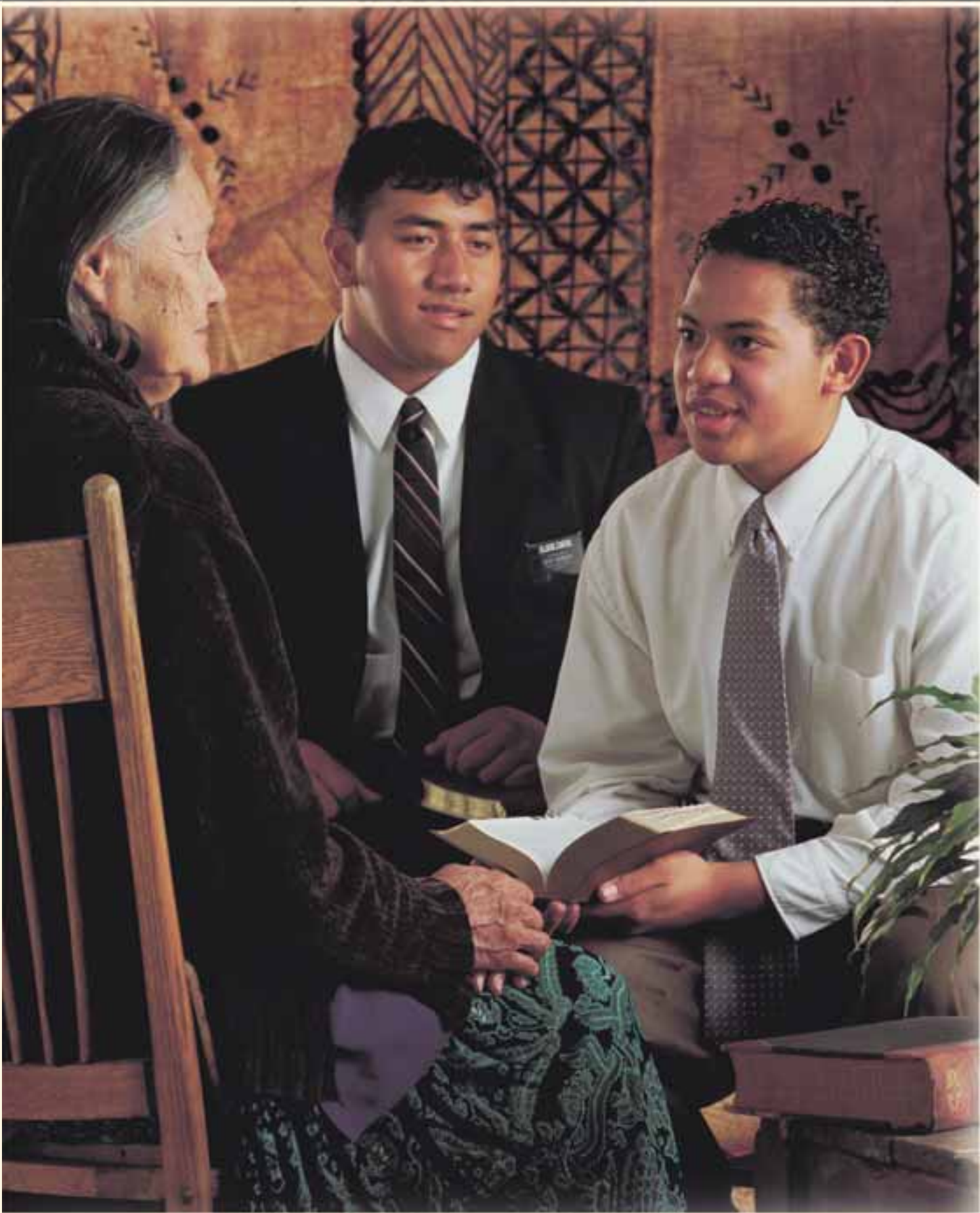
of the Holy Ghost aren’t things missionaries learn automatically at the Missionary Training Center (MTC). They have to be learned by experience, beginning as early as possible.

We also need to learn early on that if we disobey the promptings of the Holy Ghost, we sin and our ability to receive the guidance of the Holy Ghost is diminished (see Mosiah 2:36; Helaman 4:24).

“Young people preparing for missions must stay as far away from the boundaries of sin as they can,” says Elder Scott. “That gives them the fullest happiness as they prepare; it assures them the greatest capacity to be led by the Spirit.”

When we make mistakes, sincere repentance is necessary for us to enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost again. Unfortunately some sins will keep you from taking your place in the greatest generation of missionaries.

“There are some activities that will rule youth out from the privilege of being



missionaries,” Elder Scott says. “They may have repented, but if they’ve done certain things, they are going to be asked to just get on with their lives.”

Obtain the Word

“Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men” (D&C 11:21).

Have you ever heard the saying “You can’t draw water from an empty well”? Obviously, a well isn’t much use without any water in it.

The same goes for missionaries. What good is a missionary who has nothing to say? The Holy Ghost can’t bring to your memory a scripture that will touch someone’s heart if you haven’t studied the scriptures yourself. And you won’t be able to testify about the blessings that come from keeping the Sabbath day holy if you haven’t been living that commandment.

“Teaching by the Spirit means there needs to be an investment of time and effort,” Elder Scott says. “It isn’t saying, ‘Well, I’m just going to go out there and wait for the Spirit to tell me what to do.’ You have to store the gospel—especially the message of the Restoration—in your mind and heart.”

Before entering the MTC, missionaries should have read and gained a testimony of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. Prospective missionaries should understand the significance of the Atonement, the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel, priesthood authority, living prophets, and the ability to receive revelation. They should have developed a prayerful relationship with God.

“Before we can declare the word, we must obtain the word” (see D&C 11:21), Elder Charles Didier explains to Church magazines. “Some think that obtaining the word is going to happen in the mission field. It is very difficult to acquire a spiritual background based on the scriptures in the mission field because a mission is so demanding.”

TEACH WITH THE SPIRIT



“The sequence of steps to possessing the power of God in teaching the gospel is to first seek to obtain the word; then comes understanding through the Spirit, and finally the power to convince.

“How do you obtain the Spirit? ‘By the prayer of faith,’ says the Lord. Therefore, you must pray with sincerity and real intent. Pray for increased faith. Pray for the Spirit to accompany your teaching. Ask the Lord for forgiveness. Your prayers must be

offered in the same spirit and with the same fervor as were the prayers of Enos in the Book of Mormon. . . .

“To obtain the Spirit, you will have to *search the scriptures* daily. The Book of Mormon tells us about some of the most successful missionaries who have gone forth to preach the gospel—Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni—the four sons of Mosiah. They were men of God who had prepared themselves to do the work.”

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), “Keys to Successful Member-Missionary Work,” *Tambuli*, Apr. 1991, 4–5; see *Ensign*, Sept. 1990, 4–5.





That kind of spiritual background comes from personal prayer and scripture study, obedience to the principles of the gospel, and attendance at Church meetings and Mutual. Seminary and the scripture mastery program are also priceless aids in understanding the gospel.

“We really wish and pray that the missionary would come with that kind of preparation,” Elder Didier says, “so we can add and supplement instead of creating a knowledge that is not there.”

Start Sharing Today

“I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor” (D&C 88:81).

One of the best ways to learn to share the gospel tomorrow is to share it today.

“Everyone can do something,” Elder Didier says. “There are so many different ways to do missionary work. Write a letter; share a Church video; give pass-along cards to friends. Youth can fellowship or help in the activation process. If the youth can start thinking about missionary work now, when they go into the mission field, they will have so much the advantage because they have done it before.”

“Going out and working with the full-time missionaries is another way youth can prepare and learn to be more responsive to the Spirit,” says Elder Scott. “Teaching and testifying with the missionaries, in

Attending Church meetings, seminary, and Mutual is priceless in helping you build the gospel foundation you need as a missionary.

You can prepare for your mission by sharing the gospel with your friends.

Write a letter; share a Church video; give a pass-along card.

quorum meetings, or to their friends will help them feel the guidance of the Spirit. Those are all wonderful preparatory experiences.”

Just be warned: once you start, you might not be able to stop.

“Once you begin, missionary work is exciting,” Elder Scott says. “It’s stimulating. It’s not a burden. It is a thrilling experience.”

What to Look Forward To

“Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your

minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man” (D&C 84:85).

The Church is adjusting its approach to missionary work to emphasize teaching by the Spirit and focusing on individual needs.

“The curriculum has not changed,” says Elder Didier. “Missionaries still have the same six discussions. What we’re asking is for the missionary to prepare an outline during personal and companion study, personalized for who will be taught that day.”



THE GREATEST GENERATION OF MISSIONARIES



“These are ‘perilous times.’ We battle literally for the souls of men. The enemy is unforgiving and relentless. He is taking eternal prisoners at an alarming rate. And he shows no sign of letting up.

“... And so, as the people of Ammon looked to their sons for reinforcement in the war against the Lamanites, we look to you, my young brethren of the Aaronic Priesthood. We need you. Like Helaman’s 2,000 stripling warriors, you also are the spirit sons of God, and you too can be endowed with power to build up and defend His kingdom. We need you to

make sacred covenants, just as they did. We need you to be meticulously obedient and faithful, just as they were.

“What we need now is the greatest generation of missionaries in the history of the Church. We need worthy, qualified, spiritually energized missionaries. . . .

“... We don’t need spiritually weak and semicommitted young men. We don’t need you to just fill a position; we need your whole heart and soul. We need vibrant, thinking, passionate missionaries who know how to listen to and respond to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Greatest Generation of Missionaries,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 47.



TWO THOUSAND STRIPLING WARRIORS, BY ARNOLD FRIEBERG

“They’re going to teach the investigators according to the investigator’s needs,” says Elder Scott. “And every investigator is different.”

Missionaries are now being encouraged to explain the gospel in their own words, and they can adapt the order in which they present gospel principles in the discussions.

“Missionaries aren’t just memorizing one message to be given all the time, like turning on a tape player,” says Elder Scott. “They are to fill their minds and hearts with the basic doctrine, the supporting scriptures, and how that relates to their own experiences that they can call upon. We now have missionaries who are much better equipped to introduce individuals to the magnificent message of the Restoration.”

In the MTC, missionaries are learning in their native languages how to prepare outlines, how to teach with their own words, and how to teach by the Spirit. Those who must learn other languages spend much of their time learning the content of the discussions in their native language.

“That means that when missionaries get to the mission field, a companion is much more important in helping

them with their continued study of a language and in beginning to adapt what they have learned to be able to teach portions of the message,” Elder Scott says.

You Can Do It

You can take your place among the greatest generation of missionaries the Church has ever had. It will take effort and dedication. It will take faith and sacrifice. Becoming the greatest generation of missionaries tomorrow begins with being the greatest generation of youth today. It is well within your grasp.

“Most of today’s teenagers have extraordinary capacity and spiritual acuity,” says Elder Scott. “The world is getting worse, but our capacity to teach the gospel is improving. And these youth are going to be part of that well-prepared group who go out and have an exciting time in the mission field, forging a path that will help them from now to eternity as they bring families and individuals securely into the kingdom of God on earth.” ■

NOTE

1. See M. Russell Ballard, “The Greatest Generation of Missionaries,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 46–49; see also Gordon B. Hinckley, “To Men of the Priesthood,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 56–59.



About Patriarchal Blessings

To receive a patriarchal blessing, you must (1) prepare for it by drawing closer to Heavenly Father through prayer, repentance, scripture study, and Church attendance; (2) meet with the bishop to determine your readiness; and (3) receive from your bishop a recommend for a patriarchal blessing.

What is it? How do I get one? Why is it important? Here are answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about patriarchal blessings.

Many members of the Church begin thinking about receiving their patriarchal blessing during their teenage years. The following information can help you understand and prepare to receive your patriarchal blessing.

What is a patriarchal blessing?

A patriarchal blessing has two main purposes. First, the patriarch will be inspired to declare your lineage—the tribe of Israel to which you belong. Second, guided by the spirit of prophecy, the patriarch will pronounce blessings and may also provide promises, cautions, or admonitions that apply specifically to you. Your patriarchal blessing may

point out certain things you are capable of achieving and blessings you can receive if you exercise faith and live righteously.

Why is lineage important?

Every member of the Church belongs to one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Those who aren't literal descendants are "adopted" into the house of Israel through baptism. Knowing your lineage can be a helpful guide in your life, because belonging to one of the twelve tribes brings the blessings and missions specific to each tribe. The blessings Jacob gave his sons (the heads of each of the tribes) can be found in Genesis 49.

Who may give a patriarchal blessing?

Patriarch is actually an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood, just like elder or high priest, and a patriarch is called and ordained specifically to give patriarchal blessings. You will receive your blessing from the patriarch in your stake or one nearby if your



A STAR TO FOLLOW

“A patriarchal blessing from an ordained patriarch can give us a star to follow, which is a personal revelation from God to each individual. If we follow this star, we are less likely to stumble and be misled. Our patriarchal blessing will be an anchor to our souls, and if we are worthy, neither death nor the devil can deprive us of the blessings pronounced. They are blessings we can enjoy now and forever.”

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Priesthood Blessings,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 63.

stake doesn't have a patriarch. If you live where there are no stake patriarchs, your bishop or branch president will know how to help you make arrangements to receive a blessing. If you are a direct descendant of someone who is a patriarch (such as your grandfather), you may receive your blessing from him even if he doesn't live in your stake.

Who may receive a patriarchal blessing?

All worthy members of the Church are entitled to and should receive a patriarchal blessing regardless of how long they have been members.

How old do I have to be for a blessing?

There is no set age. You should be old enough to appreciate the sacred nature of the blessing.

How is the blessing given?

The patriarch will place his hands on your head and give the blessing through inspiration. It will be revealed direction for you. The blessing will then be transcribed so that you can have a written copy to study throughout your life. The Church will also keep a copy of your blessing in case you ever lose yours.

How do I get a patriarchal blessing?

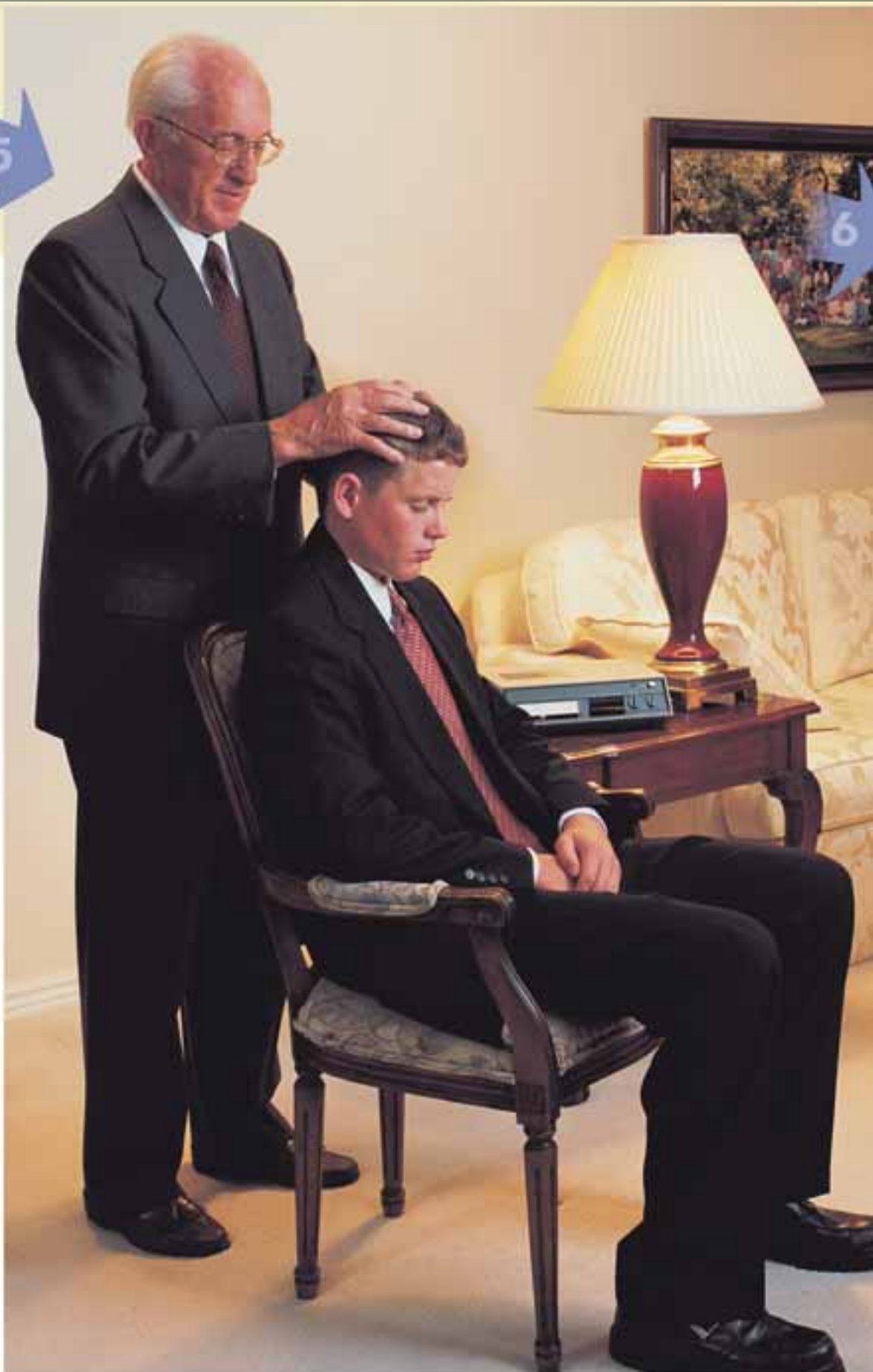
Make an appointment for an interview with your bishop. He will determine your readiness and worthiness and either give you a recommend or help you prepare to receive one. After receiving your recommend, you may contact the patriarch to schedule an appointment. Ask your bishop or the patriarch who may accompany you to your



A BLESSING FULFILLED

“Sometimes someone will worry because a promise made in a patriarchal blessing is not yet fulfilled. . . . That does not mean that the blessing will go unfulfilled. It is well to know that things happen in the Lord’s due time, not always in ours. Things of an eternal nature have no boundaries. From the premortal existence to our existence beyond the veils of death, our life is an eternal life.”

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Stake Patriarch,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 45.





blessing, such as your parents. And bring your recommend to the appointment.

How do I know if I'm ready?

The desire to receive a patriarchal blessing should come from a desire to know and live God's will for you. Curiosity or pressure from others isn't the right reason to get a blessing. The bishop will help determine if you are ready for the blessing.

How can I prepare?

You should do everything possible to draw closer to the Lord. Prayer, fasting, scripture study, meditation, and repentance can help. Concerns about worldly things should be left behind for such a sacred occasion.

What should I wear?

You should wear Sunday clothes.

When will the promises in my blessing be fulfilled?

Occasionally patriarchal blessings reveal things from our pre-earth life. But mostly

they are guides for present and future living. Because blessings are eternal in nature, they may include possibilities beyond mortal life.

Will all the promises in my blessing be fulfilled?

All blessings are based on your faithfulness and the Lord's timing. Blessings may also be fulfilled in a variety of ways throughout your life, depending on your growth, capacity, and circumstances.

Should I let others read my blessing?

Your blessing is personal, between you and Heavenly Father. You might share your blessing with family members or others who are close to you. But blessings should be guarded and never compared with those of others.

A patriarchal blessing can be of great value throughout your life. Preparing for and living worthy of the promises in your blessing can bring you closer to your Heavenly Father in this life and help you return to Him in the next. ■

After receiving your recommend, you should (4) contact the patriarch to schedule an appointment and (5) receive your blessing. The recorded blessing will be (6) transcribed, and copies will be (7) mailed to (8) Church headquarters for safe-keeping and to (9) you to help guide you throughout your life.

Worthy

OF MY BLESSING?

As I walked down the hall from his office, my bishop's last question was on my mind.

I had my recommend, but something kept bothering me. Had I really been forgiven of the things I had done so long ago? Would my bishop think badly of me?

BY RACHEL MURDOCK

After attending a fireside given by our stake patriarch, I was excited to receive my patriarchal blessing.

I found out that to receive my patriarchal blessing, I needed to have an interview with my bishop. I called the executive secretary, and he set the appointment for after Mutual the next week.

The church was nearly empty when I walked down the hall to the bishop's office. I knocked on the door, and he let me in. We did the "How is school?" conversation; then he asked what he could do for me. He seemed pleased that I wanted to get a patriarchal blessing.

We talked about what a patriarchal blessing is, what it means to receive one, and if I thought I was ready. Then he asked about my personal worthiness. Did I obey the Word of Wisdom, attend my Church meetings, and

have a testimony of the gospel? It felt good to honestly and wholeheartedly answer yes to his questions, even though I felt I was far from perfect.

Then the bishop asked a final question, "Is there anything in your past that should have been cleared up with your priesthood leaders but hasn't been?"

I said no, got my recommend, and left—ready to make my appointment with the patriarch. As I walked down the dark hall, that last question started to weigh on my mind. Was there anything in my past?

A couple of visits I had made to a friend's house when I was very young came to mind. I had been uncomfortable with some games we played there. I had never done anything similar again. Still, I had wondered several times whether or not those small innocent infractions were something I needed to talk





My bishop told me I didn't have to worry about my concerns anymore. I felt so joyful as I walked out of his office the second time.

to the bishop about. Since I hadn't really done anything seriously wrong, I figured I would forget about it. Apparently, I had not forgotten.

If I was going to get only one patriarchal blessing in my life, I didn't want a cloud hanging over it. So I turned around and headed back to the bishop's office with my heart in my throat. I didn't want to be laughed at or have my concerns brushed aside. I forced myself to knock on the bishop's door again.

I could tell he was surprised to see me. I spilled out the story, much too quickly and without a lot of clarity. He didn't laugh or brush aside my concerns. Instead, he listened carefully, asked a few questions about then and now, and asked about the repentance I had done privately with the Lord. Then he said, "I think you can go ahead and get your blessing and not worry about this anymore."

I felt clean and joyful as I walked out of his office the second time. I felt like I could float as I bounced down the hallway. I knew I was

clean. I had been cleared by my priesthood leader of an uneasy feeling I had carried for several years.

I carried that feeling of cleanliness with me to the patriarch's home the evening I received my blessing. As he said his first words, "The Lord is pleased that you chose to keep His commandments as a way of showing your love for Him," I began to cry. I truly felt the Lord was speaking to me and that my life, as imperfect as it was, was pleasing to Him.

I have learned I can always go to my priesthood leaders if I ever have a question about my worthiness. I have learned how much they want to help. They don't think badly of me when I am less than perfect, and they don't think it's a waste of time to discuss any problem, major or minor. They are almost as happy as we are when we get that wonderful feeling of joy that comes from being forgiven. ■

Rachel Murdock is a member of the Janesville Ward, Madison Wisconsin Stake.

Feeling the Love of the Lord through Obedience

Prayerfully select and read from this message the scriptures and teachings that meet the needs of the sisters you visit. Share your experiences and testimony. Invite those you teach to do the same.

President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“Why are we such a happy people? It is because of our faith, the quiet assurance that abides in our hearts that our Father in Heaven, overseeing all, will look after His sons and daughters who walk before Him with love and appreciation and obedience. We will ever be a happy people if we will so conduct our lives” (“What Are People Asking about Us?” *Liabona*, Jan. 1999, 85; *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 72).

How Can You Find the Strength to Be Obedient?

President Spencer W. Kimball

(1895–1985): “When we are inclined to think it is vain to serve the Lord, we should stir our faith, believe in the rich promises of God, and obey—and patiently wait. The Lord will fulfill all his rich promises. . . . To the faithful, lavish rewards are offered. Blessings beyond one’s understanding will come. . . . Great as are the blessings in mortality which follow righteousness, they are dwarfed beside those awaiting in the world to come” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 305–6).

Elder Henry B.

Eyring of the Quorum of the

Twelve Apostles: “You will need the help of heaven to keep the commandments. You will need it more and more as the days go on. . . . But you can bring the protective powers of heaven down on you by simply deciding to go toward the Savior, to wait on him” (*To Draw Closer to God* [1997], 98).

How Has Obedience Blessed Your Life?

Mosiah 2:41: “Ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. . . . They are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.”

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the

Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We can . . . know, through obedience, how much God loves us as his immortal children. It happens just as President Brigham Young said it would: ‘How shall we know that we obey [God]? There is but one method by which we can know it, and that is by the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord witnessing unto our spirit that we are His,

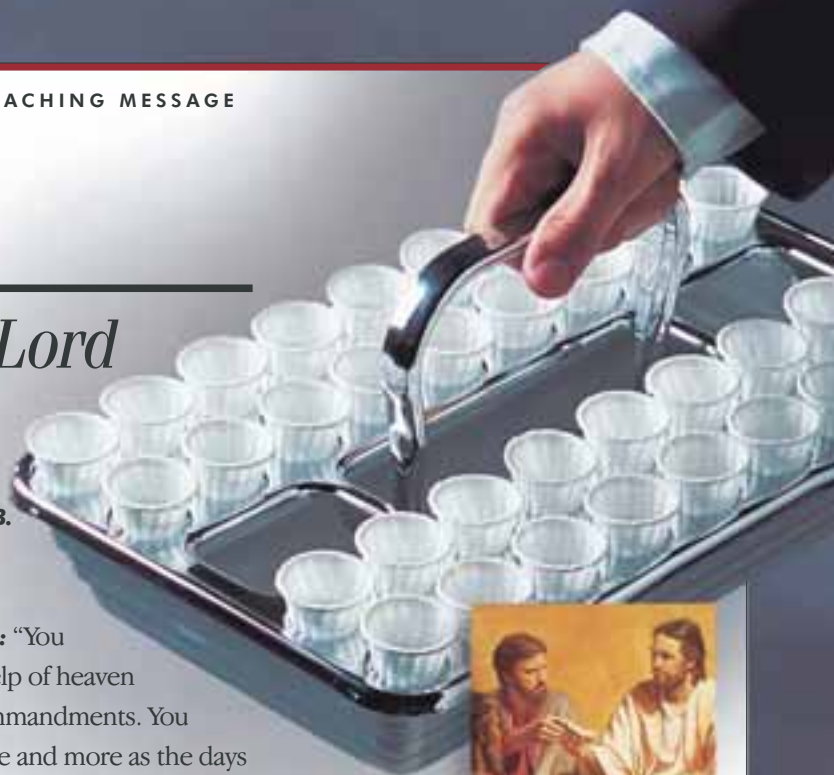
that we love Him, and that He loves us.

It is by the spirit of revelation we know this’ (*Deseret News Semi-Weekly*, 26 Nov. 1867, n.p.). If we can get that witness for ourselves . . . , then we can cope with and endure well whatever comes” (“The Pathway of Discipleship,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1998, 7).

Susan W. Tanner, Young Women

general president: “Each week we renew our baptismal covenants to take His name upon us, to ‘always remember him,’ and to ‘keep his commandments’ (see D&C 20:77). We are steadfast in Christ when we do these things, and our spirits are lifted and our hearts are filled with love. . . . Covenants enlarge our hearts and allow us to feel the ‘love of God and of all men’ (2 Nephi 31:20)” (“Steadfast in Our Covenants,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 101–2).

John 15:10: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.” ■





Oh, How We Need Each Other!

Heavenly Father has provided His daughters a haven from the harshness of the world.

BY BONNIE D. PARKIN
Relief Society General President

On 17 March 1842 the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society—the Lord’s organization for women. Relief Society is important to the Lord. I know that. He provided women a safe haven from the harshness of the world when He gave us Relief Society. From the beginning our association together and our direction from priesthood leaders have helped us come unto Christ. There was no greater cause then; there is no greater cause today.

Relief Society was not man-made or woman-made. It

was, as President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) explained, “divinely made, divinely authorized, divinely instituted, divinely ordained of God to minister for the salvation of the souls of women and of men.”¹ There is no other organization for women that has such a place in the Lord’s kingdom.

So the question is, do we value this divine organization? Do we value our membership in Relief Society? Do we value Relief Society as individual sisters?

We Need Each Other

When asked to share one phrase that described how she felt about Relief Society, a sister in her 80s wrote: “Relief Society has been, and is, a divine university for women. Even though I received a college degree, I credit Relief Society for enlightening my whole being with a most valued and meaningful education. Certainly it has blessed my life with eternal perspective.”²

Regardless of age, do we see ourselves as part of the sisterhood of Relief Society? Sister Marjorie Hinckley said: “Oh, how we need each other. Those of us who are old need you who are young. And, hopefully, you who are young need some of us who are old. It is a sociological fact that women need women. We need deep and satisfying and loyal friendships with each other.”³ We need each other, and Relief Society needs to be a safe place where women care for each other, where they nurture each other and

come to understand each other’s hearts as they hear one another testify of Christ.

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has cautioned us not to drift from the cause of Relief Society: “Too many sisters . . . think that Relief Society is merely a class to attend. The . . . sense of *belonging* to the Relief Society rather than just attending a class must be fostered in the heart of every woman.” And then he makes this earnest assignment: “Sisters, you must graduate from *thinking* that you only *attend* Relief Society to *feeling* that you *belong* to it!”⁴

Belonging is more than having your name on a roll. Both individually and collectively as sisters of Relief Society, we are called to make a difference in these six ways:

- Build faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and teach the doctrines of the kingdom.
- Emphasize the divine worth of each sister.
- Exercise charity and nurture those in need.
- Strengthen and protect families.



***I love Relief Society!
It has helped define
me as a woman. I am
who I am because of
good women I have
associated with in
Relief Society.***





Through Relief Society we can nurture each other and grow closer to Christ.

- Serve and support each sister.
- Help sisters become full participants in the blessings of the priesthood.⁵

These are the objectives of Relief Society. They show the vastness of our purpose and the breadth of our mission,⁶ and they define us, setting us apart from all other associations.

The Contributions of Young Adult Sisters

Let me share an experience of a Relief Society sister who made a difference and exemplified the objectives of our organization.

This young adult sister, who was teaching English language classes in Japan, found herself on the playground surrounded by a group of Japanese children who were full of questions. “Do you like Japanese or American kids better?” “Do you eat sushi?” “How do you say *basketball* in English?” Amid the commotion, the young Relief Society sister felt someone tapping her arm. She turned around to see a little girl with pigtails and glasses. “I bent

down to look her in the face and waited for what was sure to be some trivial question,” she says. “It was as if all the commotion stopped when she asked in a soft, almost timid voice, ‘Do you know Jesus?’ I was stunned by such a poignant and important question. I smiled and felt amazing love as I told her, ‘Yes, yes, I know Jesus.’”⁷

Dear young adult sisters, you know Jesus. And with that knowledge you bring a clarity, a freshness, and an energy that our sisterhood needs. We value your membership in Relief Society, and you bless us with your faith in the Savior and in His work. An older sister described you in these words: “We are spiritually nourished as we observe you younger, vibrant women who not only have so much vigor and vitality but also who are spiritually mature, with tremendous inner strength of character and testimony—just beautiful to behold. We count our blessings because you are the ones who reassure us and give such faith and ‘a perfect brightness of hope’ for the future”⁸ (see 2 Nephi 31:20).

What Can We Give?

On the 100th anniversary of Relief Society in 1942, the First Presidency issued a message stating, “We ask our Sisters of the Relief Society never to forget that they are a unique organization in the whole world, for they were organized under the inspiration of the Lord.” And then they reminded us, “No other women’s organization in all the earth has had such a birth.”⁹

I wonder if we have somehow forgotten the uniqueness, the divineness of our organization. I wonder if we have not become too casual about our membership. Sisters, we





can't let that happen. We must prize our Relief Society and our sisters. The Lord counseled Emma Smith, the first president of Relief Society, "Lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better" (D&C 25:10). Wise words in 1830; wise words for us today.

President Gordon B. Hinckley said to us as a Relief Society general presidency that "our women need fellowship with one another in an environment that will bolster their faith. That's the work of Relief Society."

For many years Relief Society was part of the National Council of Women in the United States. Shortly after Sister Belle Spafford was called as the Relief Society general president, she said to President George Albert Smith (1870–1951) that going to the meetings in New York was costly and of little benefit. "President Smith gently chastised [Sister Spafford], 'Do you always think in terms of what you get? Don't you think it's well to think in terms of what you have to give?'"¹⁰

Sisters, what do you bring to Relief Society? What are you willing to share? Do you view Relief Society as a place to go on Sundays because you have nowhere else to go?

Do you view it as a place to give as well as to get? Would we value our membership in our beloved society more if we lost ourselves in giving?

With a giving mentality, we would prepare for Sunday lesson discussions in order to make a contribution. We would faithfully attend home, family, and personal enrichment meeting because we had something to offer—maybe just a word of encouragement to the sister sitting next to us. We would use our visits with each other to witness of the Lord's truth as we discuss the Visiting Teaching Message. The value we place on our membership in Relief Society should be evident in all we do and say.

One sister shared an experience she had with her mother at a community sewing class they attended together: "As we worked, my mother just sat. One woman said, 'Margaret, you're not doing anything.' My mother paused and then shared how we had spent the last several days at the doctor, that she had a tumor on her back. All the women in the group put their work aside and looked at her. One group member said, 'Oh, Margaret, can we fast and pray for you? We'll do that as a group,' not even thinking that half the

FAR LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT CASEY, POSED BY MODEL; LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG DIMOND; RIGHT: PAINTING BY HOWARD POST



The value we place on our membership in Relief Society should be evident in all we do and say.

women were not members of the Church. The teacher looked at me and said, ‘What do we do when we fast and pray?’ I explained that we set aside the things of this mortal experience and turn ourselves to the Lord, seeking divine assistance. The teacher stood there a moment and then said, ‘I can do that.’”¹¹

A group of God’s daughters met together; they exercised charity and nurtured one another. A Relief Society sister, sure of who she was, showed her faith in the Savior as she invited all to fast and pray. These women made a difference.

Devote Yourself to Relief Society

I love Relief Society! It has helped define me as a woman. I am who I am because of good women I have associated with in Relief Society—women who have encouraged me, who have loved me, who have believed in me. Such women include my mother, my grandmother, and a dear sister named Pauline

Tholmander. Pauline was in her 60s; I was in my early 30s. She strengthened me through her love of the Savior. It was clear in every way that she loved Jesus Christ. When I bore testimony, Pauline was there to tell me her spirit was stirred. When I served in a calling, she was there to share with me my success or failure. I needed that in my 30s and 40s. There just aren’t enough Paulines in this life. If there were, we would all feel accepted, friendshipped, included, and loved. I wanted to be like her, and I still do.

I invite you to devote yourself to Relief Society. Work at it. Organize and participate and sustain this great work we have been given by God. Trust each other. Lift each other spiritually in your thoughts, teachings, and discussions. Show charity and love—not by assignment but from the heart.

Relief Society should be a safe place where we feel the love of the Lord in our lives as we learn to strengthen families, exercise charity, and value our covenants. And when we value sacred covenants, we value our membership in an organization, in a church, that will bring us to Christ. Dear sisters, oh, how we need each other! ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith* (1998), 184.
2. Personal letter.
3. In Virginia H. Pearce, ed., *Glimpses into the Life and Heart of Marjorie Pay Hinckley* (1999), 254–55.
4. “The Relief Society,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 73.
5. See *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* (1998), 193.
6. See “As Sisters in Zion,” *Hymns*, no. 309.
7. Personal letter.
8. Personal letter.
9. As quoted in Boyd K. Packer, “The Circle of Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 111.
10. As quoted in Jill Mulvay Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Women of Covenant: The Story of Relief Society* (1992), 336.
11. Personal letter.



Comforted in My Distress

Following my divorce, my children and I found solace in simple gospel practices.

BY COLLEEN M. PATE

I had been married for 18 years when my temple marriage ended in separation and then divorce. How could my family and I survive spiritually and emotionally? During this difficult time, the basic building blocks of a Christ-centered home became our fortress and defense. Here is how using these familiar, basic gospel practices gave us support and comfort, binding us to each other and helping us to know more fully the love of the Savior.

The Loving Miracle of Family Home Evening

As the waves of uncertainty pounded on our door during and after the divorce, our commitment to family home evening became more vital than ever. Regardless of whether or not all of us felt like attending, we pushed through and held an “official” family home

evening each week. Sometimes emotional tirades preceded the event, but once the opening hymn began, the Spirit was evident and usually all was calm.





By leaning on the Savior through simple gospel practices, we can continue to find strength for each moment, each hour, and each day of our lives.

Even those who refused to join the group would leave their bedroom doors open, allowing the sweet sounds of hymns, prayers, and scriptures to do their holy work. By the time we began singing the closing hymn, I would glance around from the piano bench and often see all my children sitting together—a loving miracle and a testimony of the spirit that comes only when we follow the counsel of the prophet.

The Comforting Power of Music

During this difficult time, I developed the habit of sitting down at the piano at the end of each day and, with one hand, plunking out favorite hymns and Primary songs. I would play “Our Savior’s Love,” “When He Comes Again,” “I Feel My Savior’s Love,” “I Am a Child of God,” and many others, always ending with “Abide with Me; ’Tis Eventide.” This nightly ritual became a comfort to my family. No matter what the day had been like, if Mom sat down at that keyboard and played some hymns, it seemed all was right with the world—or at least more bearable.

One day when I felt I had had all I could

take, I sent the children into the house and sat in the car to have a good cry. After I had calmed down and prayed, I went inside. As I opened the door, I heard the soft notes of one of my favorite hymns. My son was at the keyboard, playing hymns to soothe and comfort me in my distress, as I regularly did for him and his sisters.

The Vital Anchor of the Scriptures

During this trying time, the scriptures were a vital anchor for our spiritual health and progress. Although we didn’t read them together every day, they were interwoven into our daily life and conversations. We turned to them during controversies or conflicts, for confirmation of our choices, and for direction in our lives. After discussing feelings or concerns, we would often share a verse of scripture or part of a conference talk to fortify, validate, or comfort each other. Our well-worn sets of the standard works became almost an extension of our hands and hearts.

One evening as I crawled into bed, I reached for my scriptures and opened them



but found I couldn't focus my eyes to read. After a full day of school, two jobs, homework—and my usual four hours of sleep—I was quite literally out of energy. Calling to my daughter who was up finishing her homework, I asked her to read my scriptures to me. What a special moment was the sweet ministering of that beloved daughter. I don't recall what she read, but I will never forget her love and tenderness as she tucked me into bed that night—as I had done so many times for her.

The Unity of Prayer

Kneeling for morning and evening prayer not only brought our family together in one room, but it also brought us together spiritually. Prayer gave us a way to quell upset feelings, express love, share our burdens, and reunite as a group to face the world. Prayer turned our attention to the Lord, focused our energy as a family, and reinforced our strength. No matter what we faced individually that day, we each knew, nothing doubting, that we

loved and supported each other and would help one another in any way we could. I cherish the memory of times we did not know what to do, but we silently reached out, held hands, and began to pray. After these sacred prayers we always felt strengthened by His love for whatever we had to face—ostracism from friends, consternation in court, or a quandary with the checkbook. We always kept going; prayer kept us going.

Strength for Each Moment

During times of trial and transition, enduring to the end becomes a matter of enduring day by day, hour by hour, and moment by moment. I do not know what the next trial or transition will be. But I do know that by leaning on the Savior through simple—but profound—gospel practices, we can continue to find strength for each moment, each hour, and each day of our lives. ■

Colleen M. Pate is a member of the West Valley Second Ward, West Valley Utah Stake.

It Wasn't a Sacrifice



The Lord taught:
“Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

BY CASSANDRA LIN TSAI

When I was a young woman, my world was my family and friends. But when I found the gospel of Jesus Christ, much of this world was lost to me. Friends teased me because I lived the Word of Wisdom, honored the Sabbath, and tried to keep the commandments. Schoolmates cut off friendships with me. My parents at first refused to give me permission to be baptized, and my father even stopped speaking to me. For a young girl, such personal losses might be considered

quite a sacrifice. But God knew that these “sacrifices” for His Church and kingdom would in reality bring not loss but gain.

The Lord taught: “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal” (John 12:24–25). We are accustomed to defining our losses as sacrifice and our increases as gain. But often our losses are actually the beginning of what will later be a great harvest.

A famous doctor once visited a dejected and despondent old woman. He found that she was alone and separated from the world but that she also had a beautiful greenhouse where she raised African violets. The doctor gave the woman a prescription. She was to subscribe to her church’s newsletter, and whenever there was a baptism, marriage, sickness, or death, she was to send an African violet. Following the doctor’s instructions, the old woman gave away hundreds of potted plants. At her death the newspaper headline read, “The Queen of African Violets Passes Away and

Is Mourned by Thousands.” What turned this dejected old woman into someone loved by so many? It was giving to others, not keeping for herself.

Sometimes what we must give up is not a possession but a cherished dream. Growing up in Taiwan, I had always dreamed of going to school in England. After receiving a university degree and studying in the United States, I returned home and made arrangements to continue my studies in England. At this same time I received a calling in the Relief Society. At first I planned to accept the calling for a short time—just until I left for England. Then after much consideration, I decided to postpone my studies abroad for a year.

It was during this year when I was “sacrificing” my studies in England that an amazing blessing came into my life. One day as I was walking by a bulletin board at church, I saw a notice that the Church’s Translation Department was seeking to hire a Chinese language supervisor. I felt the Holy Ghost prod me to apply, but I hesitated. The year was almost up, and it was time for me to go to England. But the Spirit encouraged me, and I applied and was hired.

For me, working as a language supervisor

for the Church is not just a job. It is a great privilege and blessing. But I could never have received this blessing if I had not been willing to give up my dream of studying in England.

Do we sometimes hold onto our one grain of wheat, not willing to impart it, so that in the end it remains just a single grain? Or do we trust that, planted and cultivated, this single grain can become fruit? Giving up friends, possessions, or dreams can certainly be a trial. But I have learned that, with faith in God’s plan for us, we can confidently plant our grain of wheat, trusting in the bountiful harvest to come. ■

Cassandra Lin Tsai is a member of the Taipei Second Ward, Taipei Taiwan Central Stake.



I could never have received some blessings if I had not been willing to give up my dream, trusting in the harvest to come.

LEFT: ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT T. BARRETT

“Find the Missionaries for Me”

By Luis Roberto Ramos de Sá Filho

In 1998 my father was suffering from a serious illness. A year earlier his leg had been amputated just above the knee. This resulted in various circulatory problems and a great deal of pain and infection. Finally the doctors determined that a portion of his femur—the thighbone—

would also have to be amputated. We spent many days in deep concern and sadness.

Since my hometown is small and did not have the resources to treat such a serious health problem, my father went to a hospital in Marília, Brazil, where my sister lives, to be tested and receive aggressive treatment. Nothing

seemed to help, however, and many days passed. I went to Marília to be with my parents, and we all sought to strengthen and comfort each other.

My parents were members of the Church, but I wasn't. At times I had even acted against the Church and had denied the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. But every time I went to visit my father in the hospital, he spoke to me about only one thing: “Luisinho, find the missionaries for me! I need a blessing.” I had searched for the missionaries, but

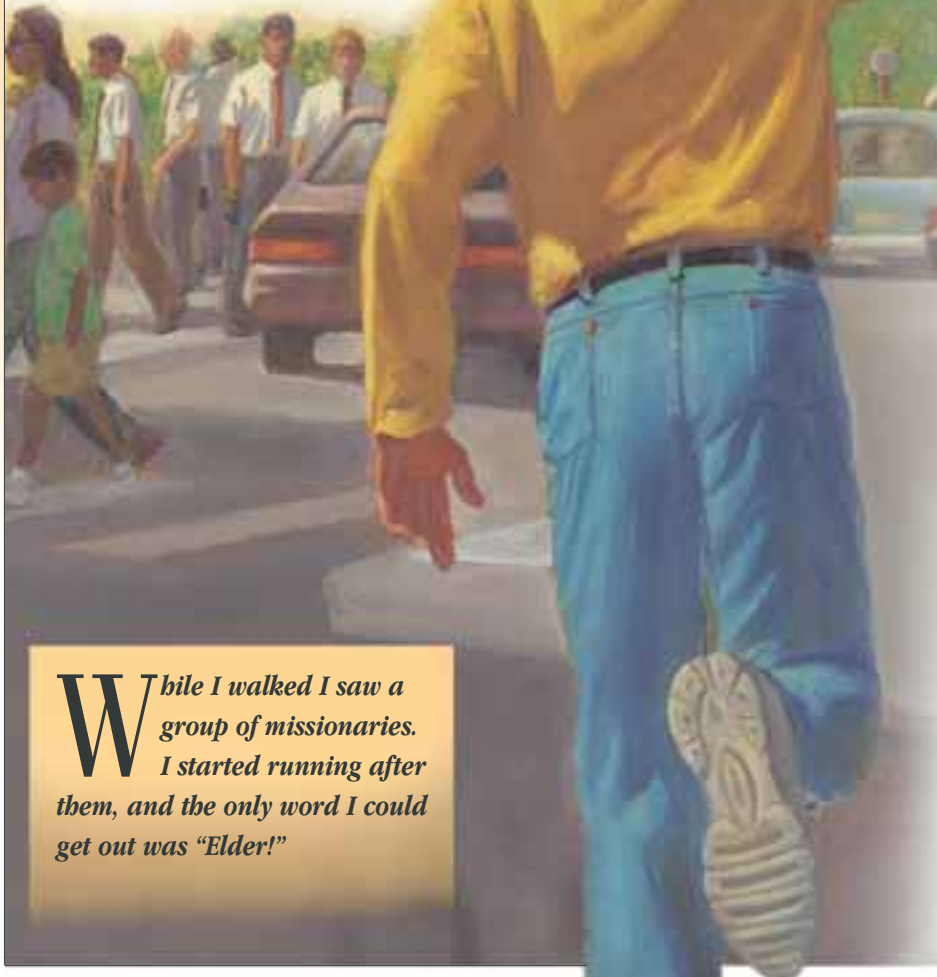
I couldn't find them. Now time was getting short.

The day before he was to have surgery, I went to visit him again. That day we were particularly apprehensive. We knew the treatment had not been effective, and the next morning my father would have an X ray to determine how high the doctor would have to amputate.

That day my father asked something different. He was sitting on his bed, putting on his prosthesis so he could go for a walk with my mom through the corridors of the hospital, checking on his friends who had had surgery that morning. As he stood up, he said, “Luisinho, go buy me some water please.”

I immediately went down the stairs and outside to search for a bottle of water. While I walked I saw a group of

While I walked I saw a group of missionaries. I started running after them, and the only word I could get out was “Elder!”



missionaries down the street. I forgot about the water. I started running after them, and the only word I could get out was “Elder!” They stopped, and I managed to explain my father’s situation.

When my mother and I left the hospital later that day, we saw Elder Alves and his companion enter to visit my father. And that night we received a telephone call from my father. He told us that the mission president had also been there, and my dad had finally received the blessing he wanted so much.

We spent the night wondering what would be the result of the X ray the following morning. Nonetheless, something comforted us.

The next morning we awoke to the sound of the telephone. It was my father. “Come and get me,” he said. “I am free to go.” Joy overcame us as he explained that the nurse and doctor who examined him couldn’t understand what had happened. “What did you do during the night that caused your X ray to come out so clean and your bone so perfect?” they asked.

When I remember that day, I feel more and more that the priesthood is real and that it is on the earth once again. Within three months, I had received a testimony and was baptized. Later I served in the Brazil Rio de Janeiro North Mission, sharing my testimony and my love for the things that I know are true. ■

Luis Roberto Ramos de Sá Filbo is a member of the Avaré Branch, Botucatu Brazil District.

A Perpetual Education Fund Loan Changed Our Lives

By Kim Citlalpilli Sánchez Aldana Camacho

I had always dreamed that I would study something relating to medicine. And as a missionary I learned that the Lord always prepares the way for His children to achieve what He desires them to do.

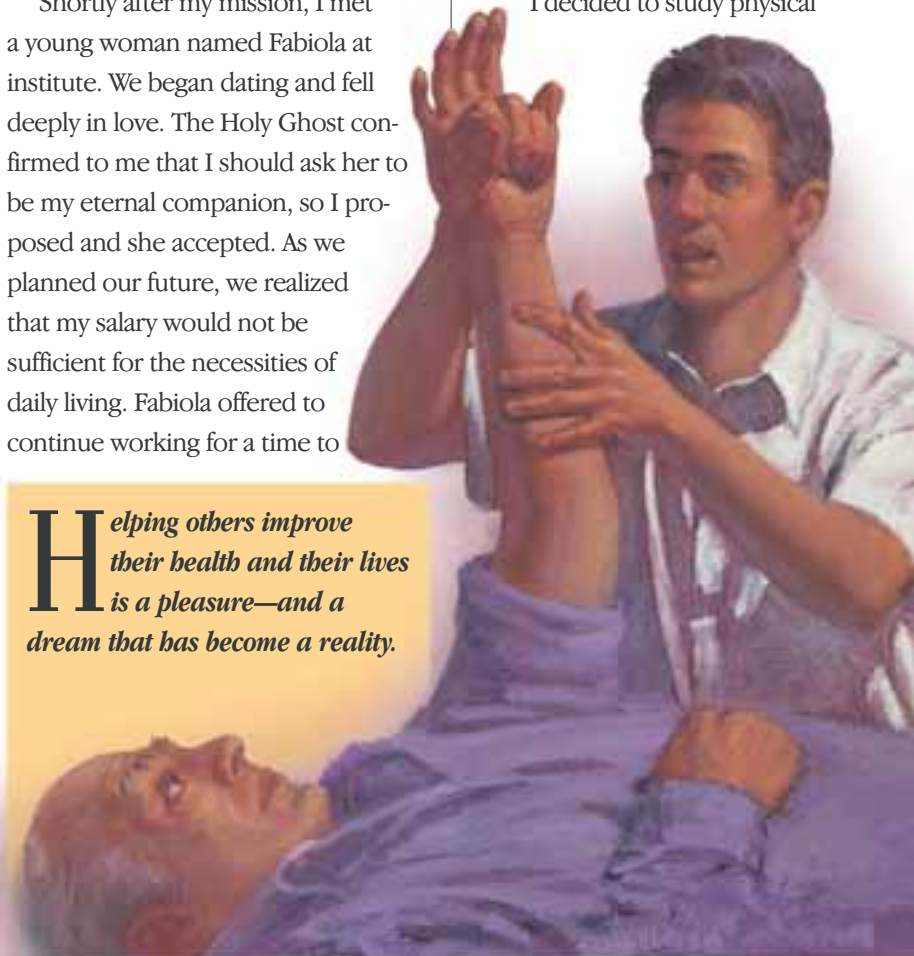
Shortly after my mission, I met a young woman named Fabiola at institute. We began dating and fell deeply in love. The Holy Ghost confirmed to me that I should ask her to be my eternal companion, so I proposed and she accepted. As we planned our future, we realized that my salary would not be sufficient for the necessities of daily living. Fabiola offered to continue working for a time to

support me as I finished school. But that would take quite a bit of time, and we wanted to have a family. So we prayed to Heavenly Father for His help. We wanted to do His will.

During my mission I had heard President Gordon B. Hinckley speak about the Perpetual Education Fund. As a returned missionary, I had attended some meetings at the institute about the PEF program. My eyes were opened and my hopes encouraged; I knew it was a program that could help my future family progress. So I spoke with Fabiola, and we set goals regarding my education.

I decided to study physical

Helping others improve their health and their lives is a pleasure—and a dream that has become a reality.



therapy. I wanted to wait a while to fill out my PEF application, but my fiancée insisted I do it right then. I submitted my loan request in December 2001, and also that month—on 22 December—Fabiola and I were sealed in the Mexico City temple. My loan was approved in January 2002, and I started school soon after.

One day when I was making a tuition payment, I met the director of my school. During our conversation I mentioned that I was a member of the Church and explained the PEF program to him. He told me he knew some Latter-day Saints and they were good people. He also said he had had some LDS students.

After I had attended one month of classes, the director invited me to finish my major early by taking double classes, graduating in 14 months instead of 24. I explained to him that I would not be able to pay the extra tuition until the next year when I renewed my loan, but he told me that my word was good enough since I was a Latter-day Saint. So again I was blessed. I began taking more classes, even though this required more studying and more hours in class, while continuing my part-time job.

I was amazed as I attended school how the Lord blessed me by increasing my knowledge. As part of my education I have helped people who had back problems, scoliosis, sprains, sciatica, and neck pain. Helping others improve their health and their lives through rehabilitation therapy is a

pleasure—and a dream that has become a reality.

Everything is going well. I am elders quorum president in my ward. By the time I graduated in April 2003, I had taken all the required steps to have my own practice, and Fabiola and I were expecting our first child.

I know that the Lord has established the PEF and that this program helps us to be self-reliant. With my new employment I can better provide for my family, serve in the Church, bless the lives of others, and pursue further studies at the university.

Our lives have changed thanks to the Church and the PEF program. I know that the lives of many young people can change if they will follow this inspired program. ■

Kim Citlalpilli Sánchez Aldana Camacho is a member of Las Rosas Ward, México City México Villa de las Flores Stake.

Alone in the Dark

By Trisa Martin

Sometimes it takes a challenging experience to help us realize that if we put our trust in the Lord, He will support us in our trials (see Alma 36:3).

This principle was reinforced in my heart some years ago when our little family stayed for seven months in the North African country of Tunisia, where my husband, Keith, did research for his doctoral degree.

As students on a tight budget, we had no phone and no television. Our home was a tiny fifth-floor apartment in El Menzah, a suburb of the capital city of Tunis, and our daily routine was simple: Keith studied at the national library while I stayed home with our baby boy, David.

As far as our Church involvement went, we *were* the Church in Tunis. Each Sunday, Keith administered the sacrament and we read the scriptures. We sang our favorite hymns and listened to conference tapes. Then we finished with a lesson from Keith's priesthood manual.

Although we met some wonderful people and made some good friends, there were still times when I felt alone and even fearful. One of those times was when I returned home from grocery shopping to find that we had no electricity. A thin blue envelope had been shoved under the door, and inside the envelope was a letter written in French and Arabic. When Keith got home he translated the letter. To our dismay, we discovered that the previous tenants had failed to pay their electricity bill and that we were now responsible for it. We wouldn't have lights until the bill was paid.

We used candles over the weekend, and on Monday morning we rode the bus to the electric company. After we paid the bill, we were assured that within two days the lights would be turned on.

But would two days be soon enough? Suddenly I realized that

Keith's night class was on Tuesday. He had to attend to keep his scholarship, which meant that little David and I would be alone in the apartment. Solitude was difficult even under normal conditions. What if David and I ended up being all alone in the darkness with only a few candles? Even thinking about it frightened me.

Monday passed, and we still had no electricity. On Tuesday afternoon, Keith returned from studying to find that the people from the electric company still had not come. We discussed our options, and finally Keith said, "I feel we should pray."

With humble hearts we asked for help. After we finished, Keith hugged

me and said, "Everything's going to be all right. The lights will be turned on by tonight."

I still felt skeptical, but I depended on his faith. By 4:45 that afternoon, however, doubts filled my mind. After a silent prayer, I again felt a peaceful assurance. Then at 4:55 the people from the electric company arrived to turn on the lights.

Experiences like this increased

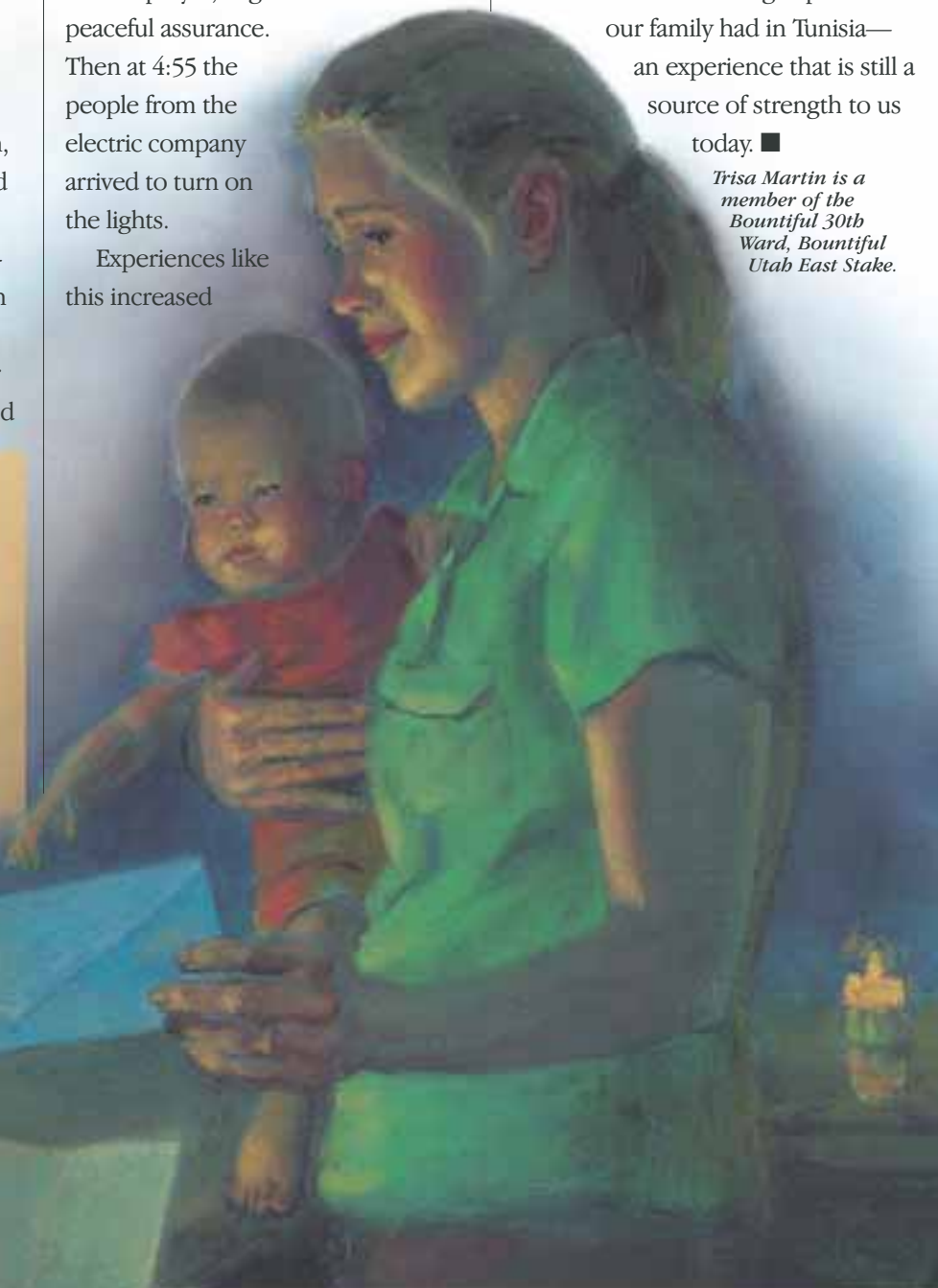
my faith and helped me know that I was not alone. During the months of our stay in Tunisia, I depended on the power of prayer often. I am grateful to Heavenly Father for His watchful care and love, and I am also grateful

for the faith-building experience

our family had in Tunisia—
an experience that is still a
source of strength to us
today. ■

*Trisa Martin is a
member of the
Bountiful 30th
Ward, Bountiful
Utah East Stake.*

I returned home to find that we had no electricity. A thin blue envelope had been shoved under the door, and inside was a letter written in French and Arabic.



A TEMPLE-MOTIVATED PEOPLE



It is the Lord Himself who, in His revelations to us, has made the temple the great symbol of our discipleship with Him.

**BY PRESIDENT HOWARD W. HUNTER
(1907–95)**
Fourteenth President of the Church

The gospel proclaimed to the world by the Latter-day Saints is the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored to the earth in this dispensation and is for the redemption of all mankind. The Lord Himself has revealed what is essential for the salvation and exaltation of His children. One of these essentials is that temples are to be erected for the performance of ordinances that cannot be performed in any other place.

When this is explained to people from all over the world who come and look at our temples, the question these people most frequently ask is, what are the ordinances that are performed in temples?

In response, we often first explain the ordinance known as baptism for the dead. We note that many Christians believe that at the time of death, our status before the Lord is determined for all eternity, for did not Christ say to Nicodemus, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom

of God”? (John 3:5). Yet we know that many people have died without the ordinance of baptism, and thus, according to Christ’s statement to Nicodemus, they would be eliminated from entering into the kingdom of God. This raises the question, is God just?

The answer is, of course God is just. It is evident that the Savior’s statement to Nicodemus presupposes that baptisms may be done for those who have died who have not been baptized. Latter-day prophets have told us that baptism is an earthly ordinance that can be performed only by the living. How then can those who are dead be baptized if only the living can perform the ordinance? That was the theme of the Apostle Paul’s writing to the Corinthians when he asked this question:

Portrayed in a scene likely in fall 1835, the Prophet Joseph Smith (center) assists Joseph and Brigham Young (top) with window installation in the Kirtland Temple, the first of the latter-day temples. Oliver Cowdery (left) and Sidney Rigdon (right) assisted in the temple’s preparations.



Doing work for others is accomplished in two steps: first, by family history research to ascertain our progenitors, and second, by performing the temple ordinances to give them the same opportunities afforded to the living.



“Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” (1 Corinthians 15:29).

In fact, as we study ecclesiastical history, we find that baptism for the dead was practiced by the early Christians. There was vicarious work for the dead at that time, and there is today. Indeed, vicarious work is not something new or strange. We remember that the Savior Himself in a vicarious manner atoned for the sins of all mankind. Today, baptisms are again performed by the living in behalf of individuals who have died, as is also the laying on of hands for the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost for these same deceased people. These ordinances for the deceased, however, are performed only in the house of the Lord.

The endowment is another ordinance performed in our temples. It consists of two parts: first, a series of instructions, and second, promises or covenants that the person receiving the endowment makes—promises to live righteously and comply with the requirements of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The endowment is an ordinance for the great blessing of the Saints—both living and dead. Thus it is also an ordinance performed

by the living in behalf of deceased individuals; it is performed for those for whom baptismal work has already been performed.

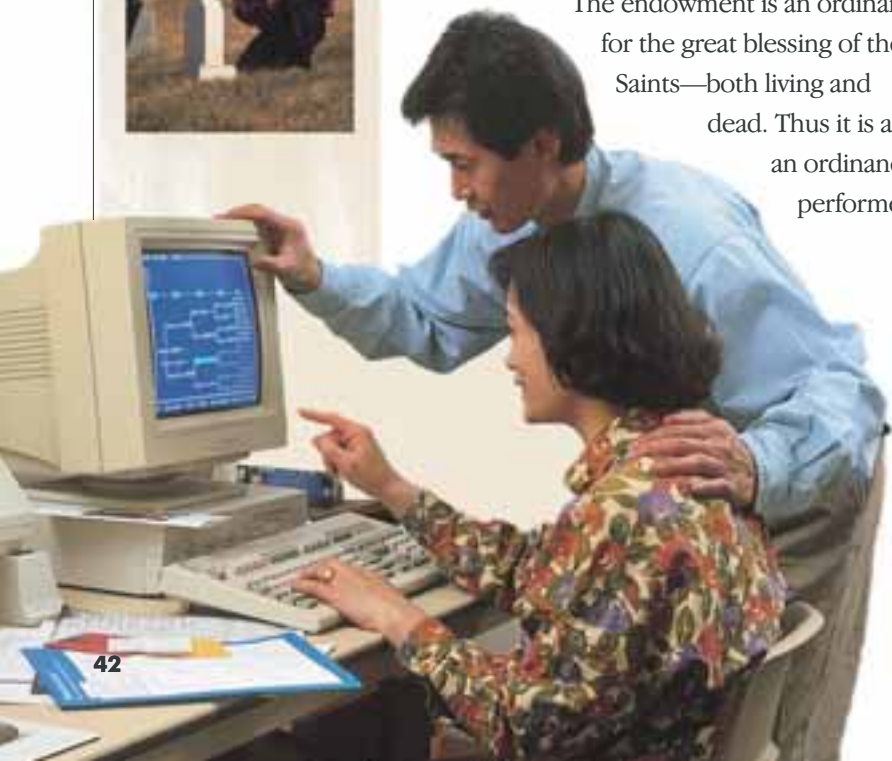
Another temple ordinance is that of celestial marriage, where wife is sealed to husband and husband sealed to wife for eternity. We know, of course, that civil marriages end at death, but eternal marriages performed in the temple may exist forever. Children born to a husband and wife after an eternal marriage are automatically sealed to their parents for eternity. If children are born before the wife is sealed to her husband, there is a temple sealing ordinance that can seal these children to their parents for eternity, and so it is that children can be sealed vicariously to parents who have passed away.

In the ordinances of the temple, the foundations of the eternal family are sealed in place. The Church has the responsibility—and the authority—to preserve and protect the family as the foundation of society.

All of these priesthood temple ordinances are essential for the salvation and exaltation of our Father in Heaven’s children.

Doctrine and Covenants section 137 records a vision given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple. In that vision, he saw his brother Alvin, who had departed this life, and his parents. The voice of the Lord came to him and said that “all who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God” (D&C 137:7).

Section 138 records a divine manifestation given to President Joseph F. Smith [1838–1918] that also pertains to the work of redemption of the dead. President Smith had been pondering our Lord’s visit to the spirit world as he read the First Epistle of Peter and



reflected upon the verse that states, “For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (1 Peter 4:6).

A vision then unfolded to President Smith. That vision is recorded in section 138. President Smith saw that “the Lord went not in person among the wicked and the disobedient who had rejected the truth, to teach them;

“But behold, from among the righteous, he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and

accomplish the priesthood temple ordinance work necessary for our own exaltation; then we must do the necessary work for those who did not have the opportunity to accept the gospel in life. Doing work for others is accomplished in two steps: first, by family history research to ascertain our progenitors, and second, by performing the temple ordinances to give them the same opportunities afforded to the living.

Furthermore, the dead are anxiously waiting for the Latter-day Saints to search out their names and then go into the temples to officiate

Temple baptismal fonts are placed on the backs of oxen, which signify the tribes of Israel. Today, baptisms are performed in these fonts by the living in behalf of individuals who have died.



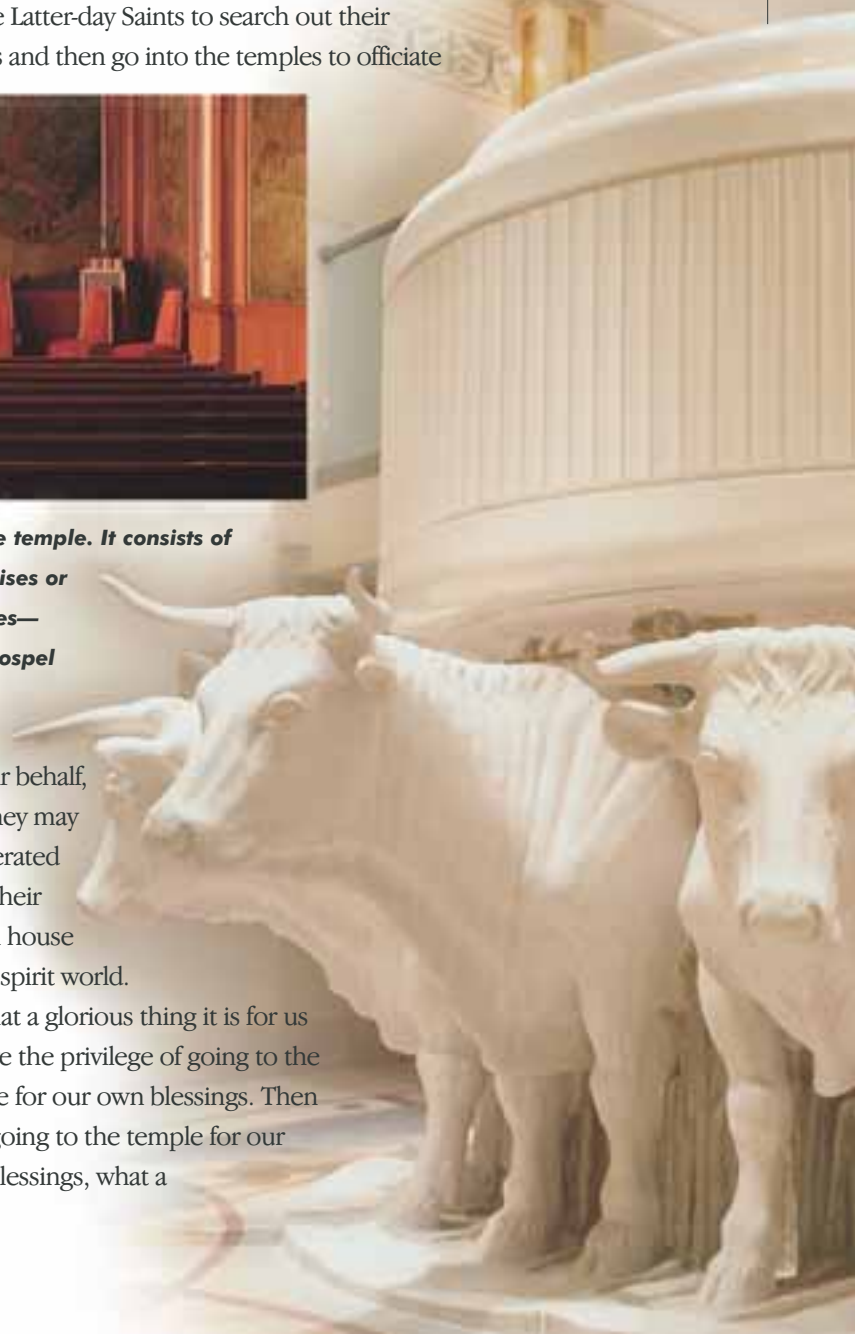
The endowment is one of the ordinances performed in the temple. It consists of two parts: first, a series of instructions, and second, promises or covenants that the person receiving the endowment makes—promises to live righteously and in compliance with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness, even to all the spirits of men; and thus was the gospel preached to the dead” (D&C 138:29–30).

Surely we on this side of the veil have a great work to do. For in light of all the above-noted facts about temple ordinances, we can see that the building of temples has deep significance for ourselves and mankind, and our responsibilities become clear. We must

in their behalf, that they may be liberated from their prison house in the spirit world.

What a glorious thing it is for us to have the privilege of going to the temple for our own blessings. Then after going to the temple for our own blessings, what a





glorious privilege to do the work for those who have gone on before us. This aspect of temple work is an unselfish work. Yet whenever we do temple work for other people, there is a blessing that comes back to us. Thus it should be no surprise to us that the Lord does desire that His people be a temple-motivated people.

The Great Symbol of Our Membership

It is the Lord Himself who, in His revelations to us, has made the temple the great symbol for members of the Church. Think of the attitudes and righteous behaviors that the Lord pointed us toward in the counsel He gave to the Kirtland Saints through the Prophet Joseph Smith as they were preparing to build a temple. This counsel is still applicable:

“Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God” (D&C 88:119). Are these attitudes and behaviors indeed reflective of what each of us desires and seeks to be?

We have no record that temples were built in either the Old or New World during the long period of apostasy before the gospel of Jesus Christ was restored in these latter days. The priesthood, which is essential to temple ordinances, did not exist upon the earth. After the Restoration of the gospel through a prophet of the Lord, raised up for that very purpose, and the establishment of The Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, temples were again erected according to divine commandment.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie [1915–85] of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said:

“The inspired erection and proper use of temples is one of the great evidences of the divinity of the Lord’s work. . . . Where there are temples, with the spirit of revelation resting upon those who administer therein, there the Lord’s people will be found; where these are not, the Church and kingdom and the truth of heaven are not” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 781).

Let us consider some of the promises connected to the temple that the Lord has given us. Consider the lifestyle we must live in order to be beneficiaries of these promises:

“And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it;

“Yea, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God.

“But if it be defiled I will not come into it, and my glory shall not be there; for I will not come into unholy temples.

“And, now, behold, if Zion do these things she shall prosper, and spread herself and become very glorious, very great, and very terrible.

“And the nations of the earth shall honor her, and shall say: Surely Zion is the city of our God, and surely Zion cannot fall, neither be moved out of her place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there;

“And he hath sworn by the power of his might to be her salvation and her high tower.

“Therefore, verily, thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion—THE PURE IN HEART; therefore, let Zion rejoice” (D&C 97:15–21).

What promises to us as a people! What a symbol for us—as individuals, as families, and as a people—to be known before the Lord as the pure in heart!

Consider the majestic teachings in the great dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, a prayer the Prophet Joseph Smith said was given to him by revelation. It is a prayer

that continues to be answered upon us individually, upon us as families, and upon us as a people because of the priesthood power the Lord has given us to use in His holy temples.

“And now, Holy Father,” pleaded the Prophet Joseph Smith, “we ask thee to assist us, thy people, with thy grace . . . that we may be found worthy, in thy sight, to secure a fulfillment of the promises which thou hast made unto us, thy people, in the revelations given unto us;

“That thy glory may rest down upon thy people. . . .

“We ask thee, Holy Father, that thy servants may go forth from this house armed with thy power, and that thy name may be upon them, and thy glory be round about them, and thine angels have charge over them;

“And from this place they may bear exceedingly great and glorious tidings, in truth, unto the ends of the earth, that they may know that this is thy work, and that thou hast put forth thy hand, to fulfil that which thou hast spoken by the mouths of the prophets, concerning the last days. . . .

“We ask thee to appoint unto Zion other stakes . . . that the gathering of thy people may roll on in great power and majesty, that thy work may be cut short in righteousness. . . .

“And may all the scattered remnants of Israel, who have been driven to the ends of the earth, come to a knowledge of the truth, believe in the Messiah, and be redeemed from oppression, and rejoice before thee. . . .

“Remember all thy church, O Lord, with all their families, and all their immediate connections, with all their sick and afflicted ones, with all the poor and meek of the earth; that the kingdom, which thou hast set up without hands, may become a great mountain and fill the whole earth; . . .

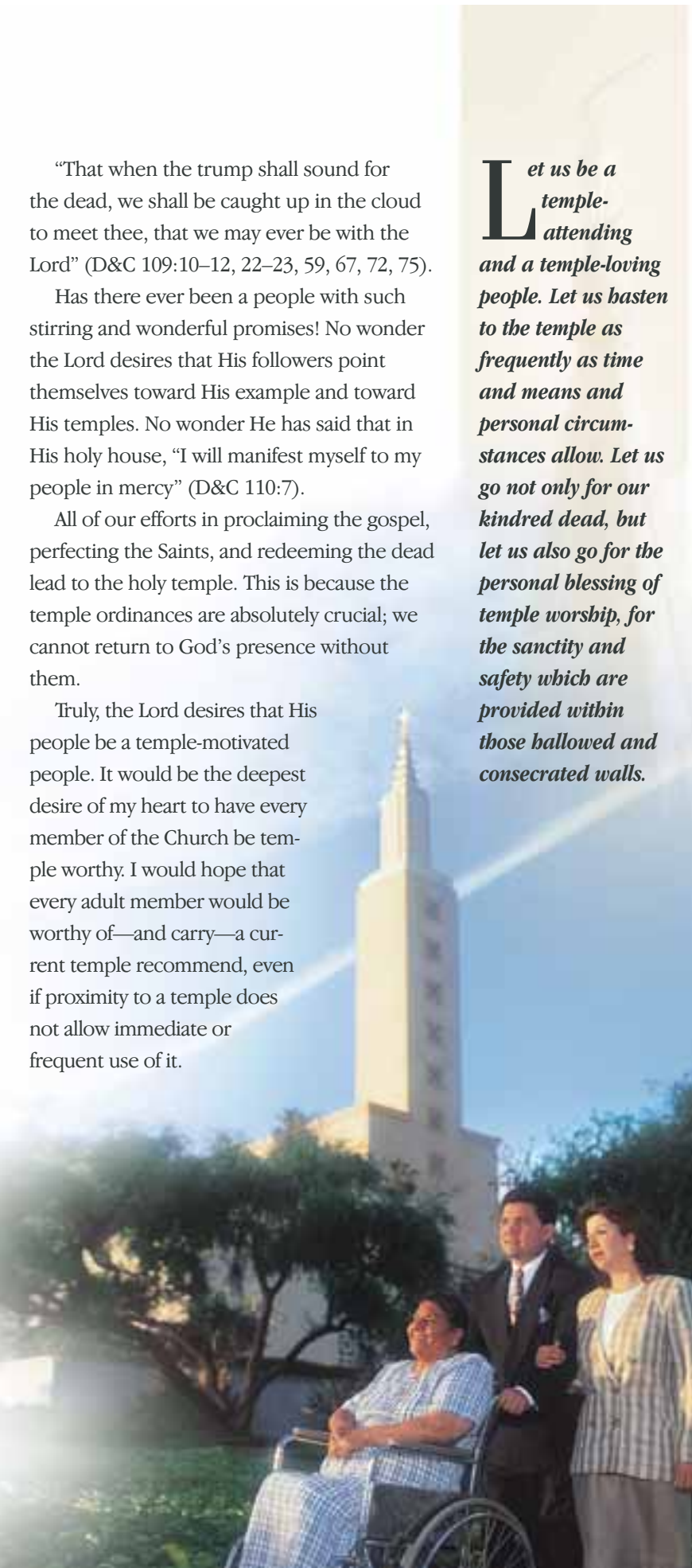
“That when the trump shall sound for the dead, we shall be caught up in the cloud to meet thee, that we may ever be with the Lord” (D&C 109:10–12, 22–23, 59, 67, 72, 75).

Has there ever been a people with such stirring and wonderful promises! No wonder the Lord desires that His followers point themselves toward His example and toward His temples. No wonder He has said that in His holy house, “I will manifest myself to my people in mercy” (D&C 110:7).

All of our efforts in proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead lead to the holy temple. This is because the temple ordinances are absolutely crucial; we cannot return to God’s presence without them.

Truly, the Lord desires that His people be a temple-motivated people. It would be the deepest desire of my heart to have every member of the Church be temple worthy. I would hope that every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend, even if proximity to a temple does not allow immediate or frequent use of it.

Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and means and personal circumstances allow. Let us go not only for our kindred dead, but let us also go for the personal blessing of temple worship, for the sanctity and safety which are provided within those hallowed and consecrated walls.



Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple. And let us teach them more earnestly and more comfortably the things we can appropriately say about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it.

Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and means and personal circumstances allow. Let us go not only for our kindred dead, but let us also go for the personal blessing of temple worship, for the sanctity and safety which are provided within those hallowed and consecrated walls. The temple is a place of beauty; it is a place of revelation; it is a place of peace. It is the house of the Lord. It is holy unto the Lord. It should be holy unto us.

Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple. And let us teach them more earnestly and more comfortably the things we can appropriately say about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it. Teach them about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Have them plan from their earliest years to go there and to remain worthy of that blessing.

It is pleasing to the Lord for our youth to worthily go to the temple and perform vicarious baptisms for those who did not have the opportunity to be baptized in life. It is pleasing to the Lord when we worthily go to the temple to personally make our own

covenants with Him and to be sealed as couples and as families. And it is pleasing to the Lord when we worthily go to the temple to perform these same saving ordinances for those who have died, many of whom eagerly await the completion of these ordinances in their behalf.

To have the temple indeed be a symbol unto us, we must desire it to be so. We must live worthy to enter the temple. We must keep the commandments of our Lord. If we can pattern our life after the Master, and take His teaching and example as the supreme pattern for our own, we will not find it difficult to be temple worthy, to be consistent and loyal in every walk of life, for we will be committed to a single, sacred standard of conduct and belief. Whether at home or in the marketplace, whether at school or long after school is behind us, whether we are acting totally alone or in concert with a host of other people, our course will be clear and our standards will be obvious.

The ability to stand by one's principles, to live with integrity and faith according to one's belief—that is what matters. That devotion to true principle—in our individual lives, in our homes and families, and in all places that we meet and influence other people—that devotion is what God is ultimately requesting of us. It requires commitment—whole-souled, deeply held, eternally cherished commitment to the principles we know to be true in the commandments God has given. If we will be true and faithful to the Lord's principles, then we will always be temple worthy, and the Lord and His holy temples will be the great symbols of our discipleship with Him. ■

For original article text, see Tambuli, Nov. 1994, 2-7; Liahona, May 1995, 2-7; Ensign, Oct. 1994, 2-5; Feb. 1995, 2-5.



Letter from the First Presidency

*The First Presidency sent the following letter, dated 11 March 2003,
to priesthood leaders to be read in sacrament meeting.*

“We are grateful for the increased availability of temples worldwide and invite adult members to have a current temple recommend and visit the temple more often. Where time and circumstances permit, members

are encouraged to replace some leisure activities with temple service.

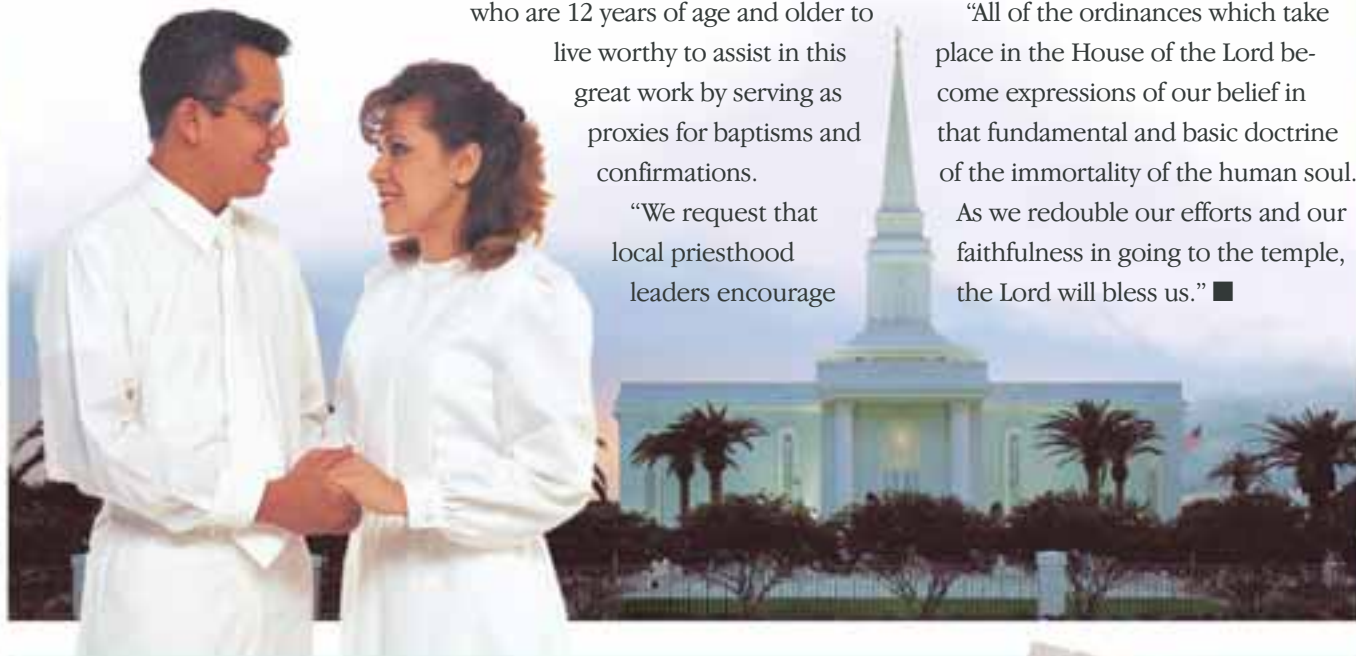
“Millions of our ancestors have lived upon the earth without receiving the benefit of temple ordinances. We particularly encourage newer members and youth of the Church who are 12 years of age and older to live worthy to assist in this great work by serving as proxies for baptisms and confirmations.

“We request that local priesthood leaders encourage

temple-worthy members to consider ways in which more frequent day-time temple attendance could occur. Home and visiting teachers may wish to arrange transportation for those who need it, particularly during the daytime.

“All of the ordinances which take place in the House of the Lord become expressions of our belief in that fundamental and basic doctrine of the immortality of the human soul.

As we redouble our efforts and our faithfulness in going to the temple, the Lord will bless us.” ■



From the Distribution Center

Did you know that *Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (item no. 35863) is available in many languages? This booklet is published to provide helpful information about temples and their importance to members of the Church. It can help parents teach their children about the temple and can also help members planning to attend the temple for the first time prepare for sacred covenants and ordinances. Contact your local distribution center or your ward or branch leaders for ordering and price information.



Did You Know?



Baptisms of Latter-day Prophets

Did you know that President Gordon B. Hinckley was the first latter-day Church President to be baptized in a baptismal font in a Latter-day Saint meeting-house? It's true. He was baptized on 28 April 1919 in the First Ward, Salt Lake Liberty Stake. Here are some interesting facts about the baptisms of the other 14 Church Presidents.

Church President	Baptism Date	Baptism Location
Joseph Smith	15 May 1829	Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania
Brigham Young	14 April 1832	A millpond near Mendon, New York
John Taylor	9 May 1836	A stream near Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Wilford Woodruff	31 December 1833	An icy stream near Richland, New York
Lorenzo Snow	19 June 1836	Chagrin River, Kirtland, Ohio
Joseph F. Smith	21 May 1852	City Creek, Salt Lake City, Utah
Heber J. Grant	2 June 1864	A wagon box in Salt Lake City, Utah
George Albert Smith	6 June 1878	City Creek, Salt Lake City, Utah
David O. McKay	8 September 1881	Spring Creek near Huntsville, Utah
Joseph Fielding Smith	19 July 1884	Probably in City Creek, Salt Lake City, Utah
Harold B. Lee	9 June 1907	Bybee Pond near Clifton, Idaho
Spencer W. Kimball	28 March 1903	Hog-scalding tub in Thatcher, Arizona; he was later baptized in Union Canal, Thatcher, Arizona, because of concerns about the propriety of the tub baptism
Ezra Taft Benson	4 August 1907	Logan River Canal, Whitney, Idaho
Howard W. Hunter	4 April 1920	Natorium swimming pool, Boise, Idaho

PHOTOGRAPHY OF HOWARD W. HUNTER, SPENCER W. KIMBALL, GORDON B. HINCKLEY, AND EZRA TAFT BENSON AS YOUNG BOYS COURTESY OF LDS CHURCH ARCHIVES; PHOTOGRAPH OF REPLICA OF GRANDIN BUILDING PRINTING PRESS; ORGANIZATION OF THE RELIEF SOCIETY, BY DALE KILBOURN

It Happened in March

Following are a few significant events that happened in Church history during the month of March.

26 March 1830: The Book of Mormon became available to the public when printing of the first copies was completed by E. B. Grandin in Palmyra, New York.

17 March 1842: The Prophet Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society in Nauvoo, Illinois.

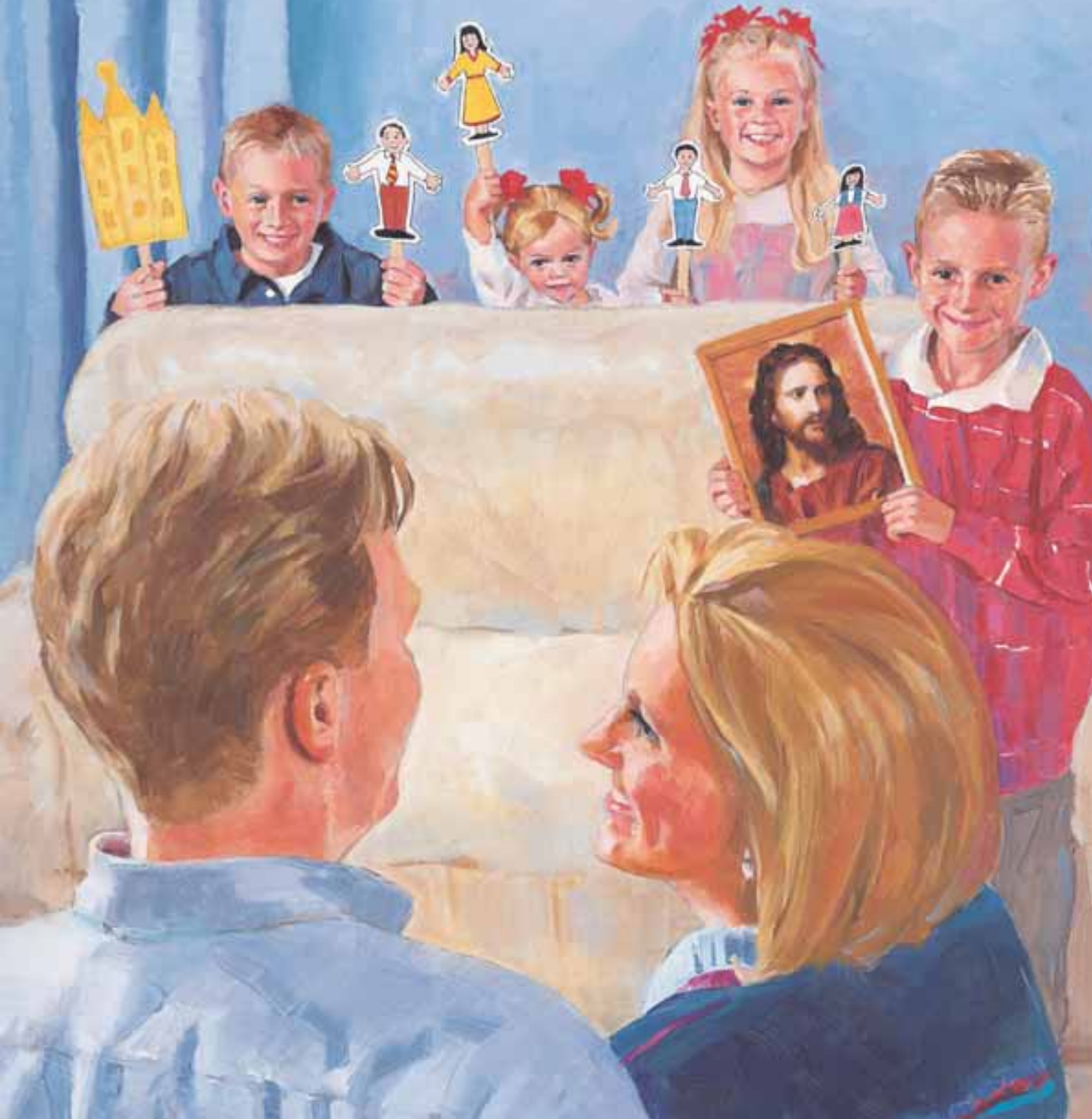


Leadership Tip

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: "You can be a leader. You must

be a leader, as a member of this Church, in those causes for which this Church stands. Do not let fear overcome your efforts. . . . Fear comes not from God but from the evil one. The adversary of all truth would put into your heart a reluctance to make an effort. Cast that fear aside and be valiant in the cause of truth and righteousness and faith" ("Words of the Living Prophet," *Liabona*, June 1998, 26).

the Friend



COME LISTEN TO
A PROPHET'S VOICE

Spring Cleaning

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY



President Hinckley invites us to know the joy of being clean.

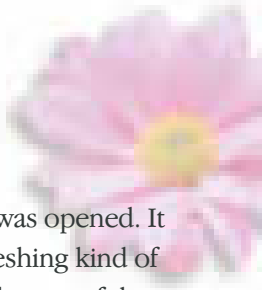
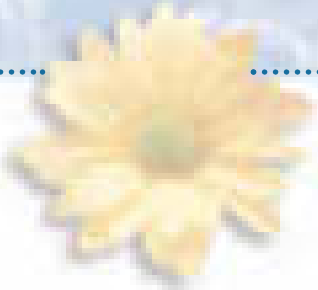
When I was a boy living in Salt Lake City, most homes were heated with coal stoves. Black smoke belched forth from almost every chimney. As winter came to a close, black soot and grime were everywhere, both inside and outside of the house.

There was a ritual through which we passed each year—not a very pleasant one, as we viewed it. It involved every member of the family. It was known as spring cleaning. When the weather warmed after the long winter, a week or so was [declared to be] cleanup time. It was usually when there was a holiday and included two Saturdays.

My mother ran the show. All of the curtains were taken down and laundered. Then they were carefully ironed. The windows were washed inside and out, and oh, what a job that was in that big two-story house.

Wallpaper was on all of the walls, and Father would bring home numerous cans of wallpaper cleaner. It was like bread dough, but it was a





pretty pink in color when the container was opened. It had an interesting smell, a pleasant, refreshing kind of smell. We all pitched in. We would knead some of the cleaning dough in our hands, climb a ladder, and begin on the high ceiling, and then work down the walls. The dough was soon black from the dirt it lifted from the paper. It was a terrible task, very tiring, but the results were like magic. We would stand back and compare the dirty surface with the clean surface. It was amazing to us how much better the clean walls looked.

All of the carpets were taken up and dragged out to the backyard, where they were hung over the clothesline, one by one. Each of us boys would have what we called a carpet beater, a device made of light steel rods with a wooden handle. As we beat the carpet, the dust would fly, and we would have to keep going until there was no dust left.

We detested that work. But when all of it was done, and everything was back in place, the result was wonderful. The house was clean, our spirits renewed. The whole world looked better.

This is what some of us need to do with our lives. Isaiah said: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes” (Isaiah 1:16).

Our bodies are sacred. They were created in the image of God. They are marvelous, the crowning creation of Deity. I cannot understand why anyone would knowingly wish to injure his body. And yet it happens around us every day as [people] drink alcoholic beverages and use illegal drugs. What a scourge these are.

Stay away from alcohol. Do not get entrapped with illegal drugs. They could destroy you.

Be clean in mind, and then you will have greater control over your bodies. Unclean thoughts lead to unclean acts.

The Lord has said, “Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly.” And with this He has given a promise: “Then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God” (D&C 121:45).

You cannot, you must not, be led into the vicious trap of immoral behavior.

Be clean in language. There is so much of filthy, sleazy talk these days.

Be clean in dress and manner.

I urge you to be courteous, to be respectful, to be honest, to be young [people] of integrity.

God bless us to walk with clean hands and pure hearts and be worthy of His smile. ●

From an April 1996 general conference address.



CLEAN AGAIN

BY SHEILA E. WILSON

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).



One day Lincoln’s friends told him that they had pretended to put money into the school’s pencil machine. They told the secretary that they didn’t get a pencil, and she gave them one. Lincoln decided to give it a try.

At recess Lincoln sat on a bench and looked at his free pencil. He felt very sad inside. He wanted to do what was right. He told the secretary what he had done and gave her the pencil. Lincoln felt better.

Have you ever done something wrong and wished you could make it right? Heavenly Father wants us to return to live with Him, but no unclean person can live with Him (see Moses 6:57). Heavenly Father knows that everyone will make mistakes, so He has given us a way to become clean again. We must repent.

Jesus Christ suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross to pay the price for our sins. He suffered so we would not have to suffer if we repent (see D&C 19:16). Because Jesus Christ paid for our sins with His suffering, when we do our part by repenting and not making the same mistake again, we can be clean again.

Mobile Activity

1. Mount page F5 on heavy paper; then carefully cut out the pieces of the mobile.
2. Draw or glue a picture of yourself on the back of the square piece.
3. Fold along the dotted lines, glue the backs of the two oval pieces together, and punch holes where indicated.
4. Use string to connect each piece (see illustration). Tie a loop at the top; then tie a knot at the bottom.

5. Once a day, read a scripture listed under a picture of the Savior.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Write each word of Article of Faith 1:3 on a wordstrip. Post the wordstrips in the wrong order, leaving out the “Atonement” wordstrip. Sing a song or hymn about the Savior. Review Article of Faith 1:3. Display the wordstrips, and act dismayed that something is wrong. Tell the children you are going to need their help. While the pianist plays softly, let children exchange two wordstrips to “fix” the article so it is in order. When the article is complete (except for the “Atonement” wordstrip), tell them something is still wrong. Add the “Atonement” wordstrip. Repeat the Article of Faith together. Liken this experience to how we can repent to correct something but we need the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Ask the children to share how the Atonement blesses their lives.

2. Display five boxes or envelopes with the following scriptures inside: (1) Mosiah 3:16; (2) Matthew 9:35; (3) John 13:15; (4) 2 Nephi 9:21; (5) Jacob 4:11. Have the children pretend they accidentally broke a very valuable object. How would they feel? What if they couldn’t afford to pay for it? Explain that your earthly father and mother would help you because they love you. They tell you that if you are truly sorry, are obedient, and pay what you can, they will help you by paying the difference. When we break a commandment, we also need someone to help us. Jesus Christ paid for our sins and made it possible for us to repent and return to our Heavenly Father. Write on the board “What Jesus Did for Us and Why.” Talk about and list the following: (1) He atoned for Adam’s sin so little children can be saved; (2) He gave us the gospel so we can live with Him; (3) He showed us how to live so we can be happy; (4) He suffered for our sins so we can be forgiven; (5) He died and was resurrected so we can be resurrected. Divide the children into groups. Let each group open one of the boxes or envelopes, and match the scripture with one of the listed items. ●



**“I am the way”
(John 14:6).**

**I CAN
REPENT AND
LIVE WITH
HEAVENLY
FATHER**



**“I am the way”
(John 14:6).**

*Jesus Christ
is my Savior.
He atoned for
my sins.*

Matthew 26:17-35

John 12:13

Luke 18:16

Matthew 7:28-29

Matthew 3:13-17

Luke 2:40

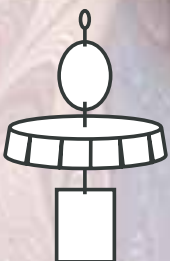
Luke 2:1-16

John 14:6

Luke 23:32-46

Luke 22:41-44

Illustration



A Wildflower and a Prayer

BY GAYLE M. CLEGG

Second Counselor in the
Primary General Presidency

Have you ever felt alone? When our daughter Tina was six years old, our family went to live in Brazil. None of our family knew how to speak Portuguese, and it was especially hard for Tina to learn. We decided to put her in pre-school with four-year-olds, even though she should have been starting first grade. We hoped that being with younger children would help her feel more comfortable and make it easier to learn Portuguese.

But Tina was as foreign to the other children as they were to her. Each day was a struggle for her, and each day she returned home from school very sad.

One day some children were particularly unkind to her. At recess a few children even threw rocks at her, bullying her and laughing rudely. Tina was scared and hurt. She decided that she wouldn't go back to class.

Sitting alone while the playground emptied, she remembered what we had taught her about loneliness. She remembered that Heavenly Father is always close to His children and that she could speak to Him at any time. He would understand the language of her heart. In a corner of the playground, she

bowed her head and said a prayer. Tina didn't know exactly what to say, so she asked that her father and mother could be with her to protect her.

A Primary song came into her mind:

*I often go walking in meadows of clover,
And I gather armfuls of blossoms of blue.
I gather the blossoms the whole meadow
over;*

*Dear mother, all flowers remind me of you.
("I Often Go Walking," Children's
Songbook, 202)*

As Tina opened her eyes, she noticed one little flower growing between the cracks of the concrete. She picked it up and put it into her pocket. Her troubles with the other children did not disappear, but she walked back into the school, feeling that her parents were with her.

You may sometimes feel alone. You may have a hard time learning something. Sometimes others may be unkind to you. But Heavenly Father is always near you, even though you cannot see Him. He loves you, and He wants you to pray to Him when you feel lonely or afraid. Then He can send His Spirit to comfort you, just as He comforted Tina on that lonely day. ●

Adapted from an April 2002 general conference address.



Sister Clegg teaches that while you may sometimes feel alone, Heavenly Father is always near you, even though you cannot see Him.



Repentance and the Atonement

Heavenly Father knew that we could not be perfect as mortals, so He chose Jesus Christ, who is perfect, to be our Savior.

To help explain what the Savior has done for us, President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, told the story of a man who borrowed a great deal of money. He bought

something he had always wanted. But when the bill came due, he could not afford to pay it. He knew that his creditor would take away his possessions as payment and throw him in jail.

Then the man's friend came to rescue him. The friend asked, "If I pay your debt, will you accept me as your creditor?" The man gratefully agreed, and his friend told him, "You

will pay the debt to me and I will set the terms. It will not be easy, but it will be possible."

Because the friend was willing and able to pay, the creditor received the money that was fairly owed him. At the same time, the man was able to keep his possessions and not go to jail. (See "The Mediator," *Ensign*, May 1977, 54–55.)

Like the friend in the story, Jesus

offers to pay our "debts." He overcame death so that we can all be resurrected, and He suffered for our sins so that we don't have to suffer if we repent (see D&C 19:16). In return, He asks us to follow certain "terms," or rules—to repent and keep the commandments. As we do so, Jesus makes it possible for us to return to Heavenly Father someday. ●

Family Home Evening Activities and Ideas

1. To remind yourself to follow Jesus' example, cut out these two pages along the solid lines. Fold to form a booklet (see illustrations).

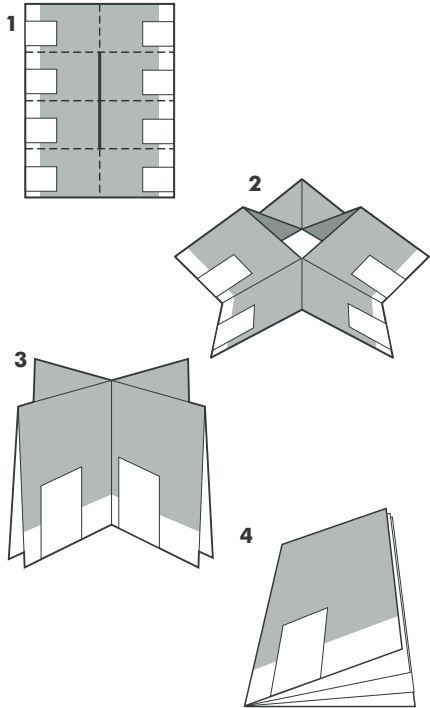
2. In family home evening or when you give a talk in Primary, use the pictures of Jesus to tell about His life. Use the pictures of modern children to describe



of modern children to describe ways we can follow the Savior's example.

3. For a family home evening activity, discuss each of the pictures in the booklet you made. Then have each family member cut and fold a piece of paper to form a booklet like the one below. Have each family member write or draw pictures on each page of ways he or she can follow the Savior (for example, studying the scriptures, attending church, or helping someone).

ILLUSTRATIONS



ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL MANN AND ROBERT T. BARRETT



The Beginning of a Testimony



From an interview with Elder Steven E. Snow of the Seventy, currently serving in the Africa Southeast Area Presidency; by Hilary M. Hendricks

“No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 12:3).

I was born in St. George, Utah, where my ancestors settled in 1861. My great-great-great-grandfather was Erastus Snow, an Apostle when Brigham Young was President of the Church. My parents and grandparents spoke often of the pioneers and their sacrifices. They encouraged me to honor the family name, to know who I was, and to choose the right.

My father owned a dry-cleaning business, and I started helping him when I was about five years old. I swept the floor and prepared clothes hangers for hanging pants. Summer temperatures in St. George often rise well above 100° F (38° C). Standing over a steam press in August was my motivation to go to law school. Remembering those days kept me at my studies. My brothers and sister and I also helped our grandparents with their cows, horses, and furniture store. I learned to work hard, and I played sports—especially baseball and football.

Right: As a 12-year-old (on the left) Little League baseball player.



At age 5.





Top: As a missionary in the North German Mission. Above: Elder Snow with his wife, Phyllis, and their family on the day of their son Garrett's wedding.

The day after my baptism, I was confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It was a fast and testimony meeting, and I decided, for the first time ever, to bear my testimony. As I spoke, a wonderful, warm feeling filled my heart. It was a confirmation of the Spirit that joining the Church was the right thing to do. That warm feeling was the beginning of my small testimony, which grew as I grew older. I know that children can gain testimonies of their own and that even small testimonies are enough to help us choose the right.

Now I serve in southeastern Africa. Many Church members in Africa have been recently baptized. They are pioneers. A testimony burns brightly in their hearts. It is common for families to walk to church, up to an hour and a half each way. Families who live farther away save money all week to pay taxi fares.

African children are very reverent in sacrament meeting and Primary. They like to listen to lessons given by their teachers, and they like to sing songs. A favorite hymn is "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet"

(*Hymns*, no. 19). Saints in Africa love President Gordon B. Hinckley very much. They bear fervent testimony that he is a prophet and that Joseph Smith restored the gospel to the earth.

Most wards and branches meet in buildings you would immediately recognize as Latter-day Saint meetinghouses. But Saints in Rustenburg, South Africa, met in a warehouse while they waited for their new chapel to be completed. When I visited their sacrament meeting, I noticed that the warehouse had spaces between the roof and the walls to let air come in from outside. As we began to sing the opening hymn, birds flew in and perched on the rafters. They sang right along with us. During the sacrament hymn, the birds sang again.

In every country, you children of the Church are blessed to have Primary. Attending Primary each week helps you learn about the gospel so you can gain a testimony of your own. By coming to church, listening to your parents, praying, reading the scriptures, and keeping Heavenly Father's commandments, you will be worthy to feel the Holy Ghost. He will testify to you, as He testified to me and to the Saints in Africa, that President Hinckley is a prophet of God and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. ●

Primary children in Africa love President Hinckley and bear fervent testimony of him.





FROM THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Achieving a Goal



Mother,
I want to join a baseball
team.

As a boy, Heber J. Grant helped his mother sweep, wash dishes, and keep house. He had never played sports like other boys his age.

Throw the ball over
here, sissy!

At first Heber had to play with boys much younger than he was because he couldn't pitch very well. His teammates made fun of him.

Instead of getting upset, Heber set a goal.

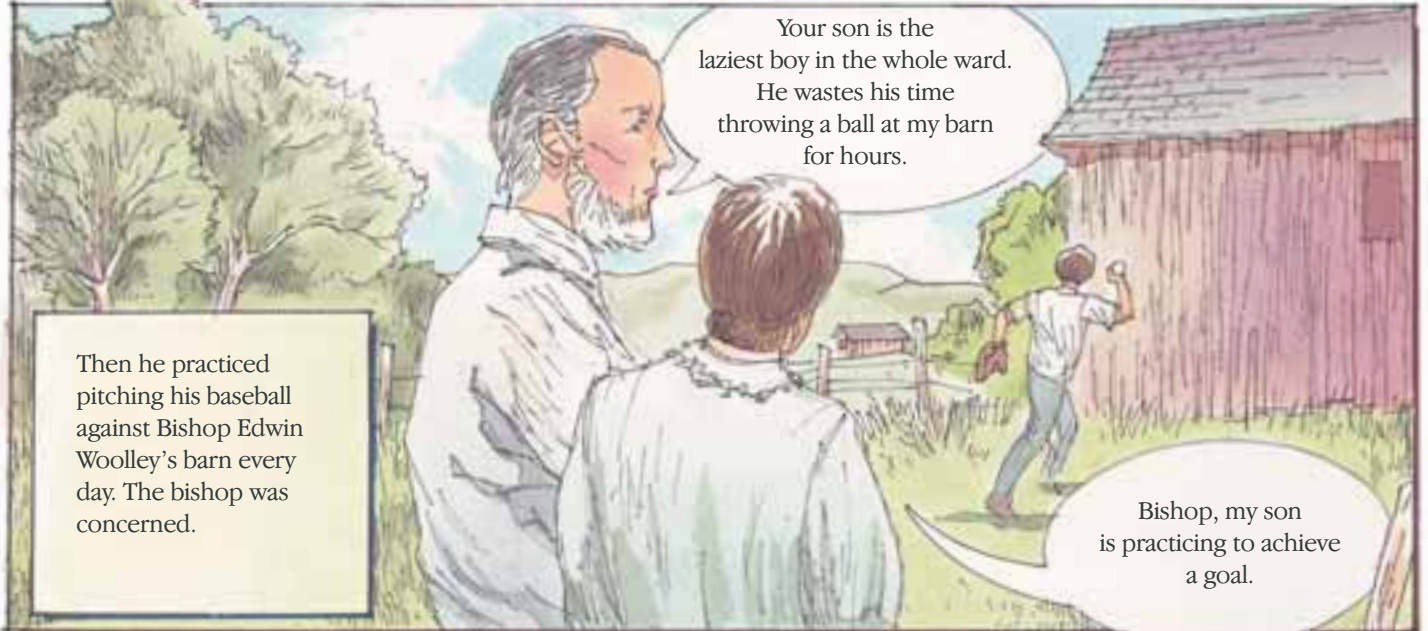
Someday I will play on a
championship team!

Heber shined men's boots to earn money until he had saved up enough to buy his own baseball.



Your son is the laziest boy in the whole ward. He wastes his time throwing a ball at my barn for hours.

Then he practiced pitching his baseball against Bishop Edwin Woolley's barn every day. The bishop was concerned.



Bishop, my son is practicing to achieve a goal.

Heber's hard work finally paid off. He joined a team that went on to win the championship in the states of California, Colorado, and Wyoming.

Adapted from Bryant S. Hinckley, Heber J. Grant: Highlights in the Life of a Great Leader (1951), 37-38.



Mary Jane Listens



"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27).

BY MARY ANN SNOWBALL

Based on a true story

Hurry faster!" Mary Jane's friends cried as they ran down the street. "I'm coming. I'm coming," Mary Jane yelled back, bending to put one more rock into the bulging pocket of her light blue apron.

For a nine-year-old girl in Wales in 1846, Latter-day Saint missionaries coming to town meant excitement. She and her friends had heard many terrible stories about the "Mormons." Surely such people deserved to be pelted with stones.

As the three girls rounded a corner, they heard music. A small crowd was singing a familiar hymn. Mary Jane was a good singer, so she joined in after she caught her breath. She didn't know all the words, but she enjoyed humming the melodies.

As the singing ended, Mary Jane followed the elders' example and knelt to pray. One by one, the rocks fell from the pocket of her apron. When the



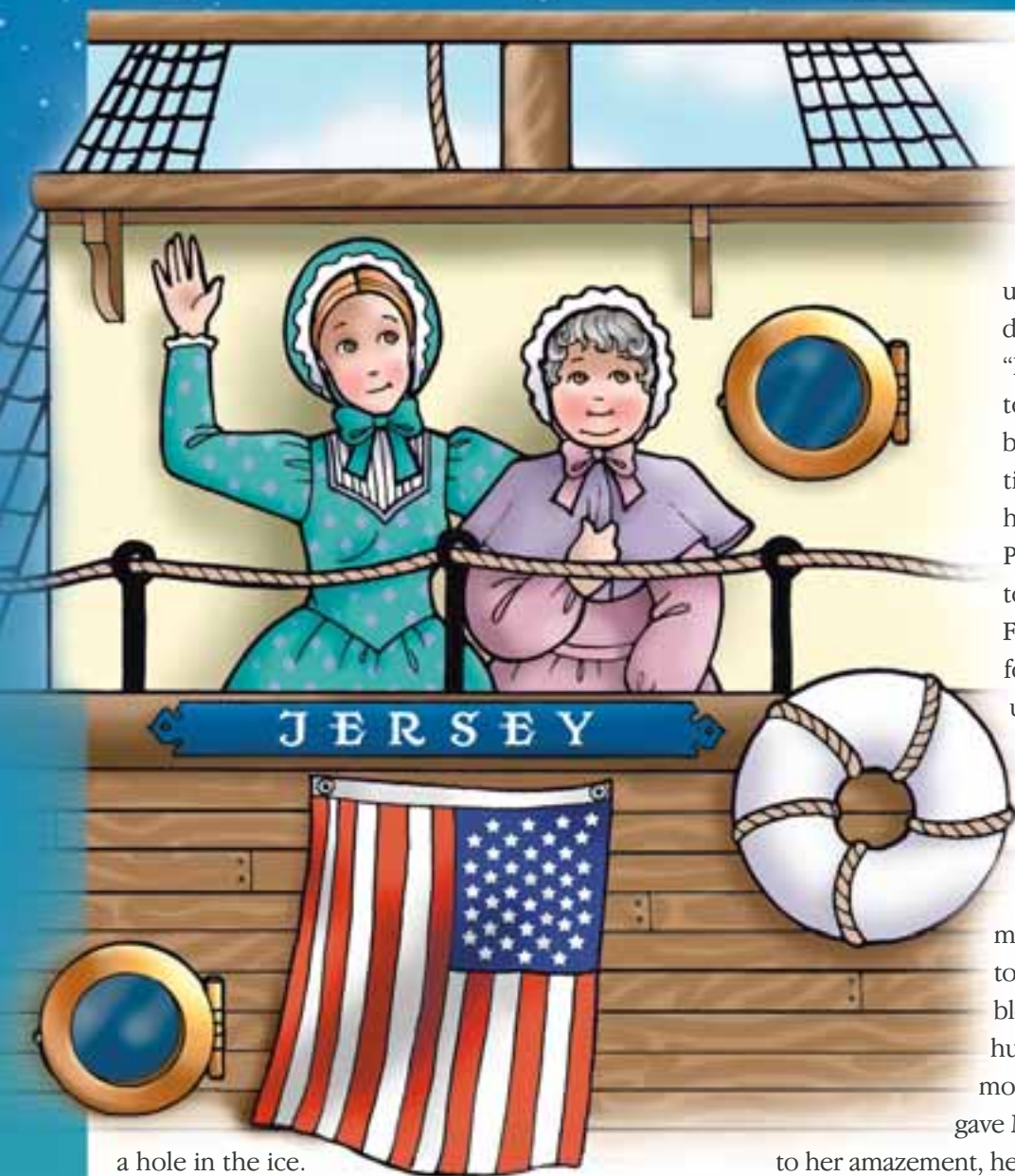
prayer ended, Mary Jane's friend picked up the rocks. "Let's get them!" she said.

"No," Mary Jane said quietly. "I want to listen to what they're saying."

She turned her eyes toward the missionaries and listened carefully. One of the elders said that a prophet named Joseph Smith had seen Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, in a grove of trees. Another explained why we are born on this earth. As Mary Jane listened, her friends slipped through the crowd and ran off to play. When the elders finished preaching, Mary Jane walked slowly home, thinking about all she had heard.

As the days passed, Mary Jane kept listening to the elders. She loved what she was learning about Heavenly Father. Her mother did not. She was so opposed to what the missionaries taught that she sometimes hid Mary Jane's clothes or denied her food so she would stop going to church.

But Mary Jane loved the gospel more than ever. She had learned to pray, and her prayers for a testimony were answered. She wanted to be baptized. Finally on a cold December night, she was baptized in a frozen river. The elders had to use an ax to cut



a hole in the ice.

Even though Mary Jane's body was very cold that night, her heart was warm. She knew that she had made the right decision.

But she was sad because her mother could not



"The Lord trusts His true disciples. He sends prepared people to His prepared servants. You have had the experience, as have I, of meeting people where you were sure the meeting could not have been by chance."

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "A Child and a Disciple," *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2003, 31.

understand the true gospel. Every day, Mary Jane knelt to pray.

"Heavenly Father, I am so glad to be a member of the Church, but I want my mother to be baptized too," she said. "Please help her to understand the message. Please let something happen to help her accept the gospel." For three years Mary Jane prayed for her mother. She never gave up hope.

When Mary Jane was 13 years old, her mother became seriously ill with a disease that settled in her foot. It was very painful.

One day Mary Jane said to her mother, "Why don't I ask the elders to come and give you a priesthood blessing?" Because her foot was hurting so much, Mary Jane's mother finally agreed. The elders gave Mary Jane's mother a blessing, and

to her amazement, her foot immediately stopped hurting. Mary Jane knew her prayers had been answered.

Soon afterward her mother started going to Church meetings. It wasn't long before she also joined the Church. Mary Jane was happier than she had ever been.

When Mary Jane was 17 years old, she and her mother sailed to America on the ship *Jersey* and then traveled on to Utah. For the rest of her life, Mary Jane followed the Savior as she had been taught on a street corner in Wales. She was always grateful that she had listened to the elders that day. She was especially glad that when she was nine years old she had decided not to throw the rocks that had fallen from the pocket of her light blue apron. ●

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Come to the House of the Lord, by Grant Romney Clawson

“The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob” (Micah 4:1–2).



“All of the ordinances which take place in the House of the Lord become expressions of our belief in that fundamental and basic doctrine of the immortality of the human soul. As we redouble our efforts and our faithfulness in going to the temple, the Lord will bless us.” See “Letter from the First Presidency,” p. 47; see also President Howard W. Hunter, “A Temple-Motivated People,” p. 40.