

Liahona



**Strengthening Family
in Family Home
Evening, p. 32**

**Reasons for
Revelation, p. 8**

Love at Home, p. F12

Liahona



ON THE COVER

Front: Photograph by Robert Casey, posed by models. Back: Photograph by Welden C. Andersen, posed by models.



THE FRIEND COVER

Photograph by Richard M. Romney.



SEE "EIGHT REASONS FOR REVELATION," P. 8

FOR ADULTS

- 2 First Presidency Message: In Opposition to Evil
President Gordon B. Hinckley
- 20 Compassion for Those Who Struggle *Name withheld*
- 25 Visiting Teaching Message: Feeling the Love of the Lord through Generosity
- 26 Teaching as the Savior Taught *Elder Walter F. González*
- 32 Family Home Evening Suggestion Box
- 36 The Link in the Chain *Eva Fry*
- 38 Putting Family First in Ukraine
Marina Mikbailovskaya and Benjamin Gaines
- 42 Latter-day Saint Voices
 - Our Secret Angels *Mary Bartschi*
 - Courage to Pray *Dalnei de Assunção de Castro*
 - What about Agabus? *Eric Hendershot*
 - Death Is a New Beginning *Claudia Yolanda Ortíz Herrera*
- 48 Comment

FOR YOUTH

- 7 Not Really Homeless *Loucas Soares Nobre*
- 8 Eight Reasons for Revelation *Elder Dallin H. Oaks*
- 13 Poster: Elevate Your Thoughts
- 14 Now I Understand *Fábio Henrique N. da Silva*
- 16 The First Latter-day Missionary *Ryan Carr*
- 30 The Gift and Guide *Elder Jorge L. del Castillo*
- 47 Did You Know?

THE FRIEND: FOR CHILDREN

- F2 Come Listen to a Prophet's Voice: A Treasure Map
President Thomas S. Monson
- F4 Sharing Time: I Will *Sheila E. Wilson*
- F6 The Well Boxes *Jens Kristoffersen*
- F9 Fun Page
- F10 From the Life of President Heber J. Grant:
Called to Serve
- F12 Poster Article: Love at Home
- F14 Making Friends: Sha-Lei Kamauu of
Ewa Beach, Hawaii *Richard M. Romney*

SEE "THE WELL BOXES," P. F6



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Family Home Evening Ideas



**"Teaching as the Savior
Taught,"** p. 26: Elder Walter F.

González discusses three types of questions the Savior asked to help His listeners understand and apply His message. Try to incorporate one question from each of these three categories in your next family home evening lesson. See if this effort increases family members' participation in your lesson.

"Death Is a New Beginning," p. 46: Death is something each family deals with at one time or another. If you feel inspired to do so, discuss the purpose of death in God's plan, its timing, and the possible reasons God sometimes does not answer prayers in the way we want Him to.

"Eight Reasons for Revelation," p. 8: Elder Dallin H. Oaks lists eight purposes of revelation. Ask family members to relate experiences from their own lives or from the lives of others regarding any of these purposes of revelation.

"The First Latter-day Missionary," p. 16: Samuel Smith, a brother of the Prophet Joseph, used the Book of Mormon as a missionary tool. Because of one copy he placed, Brigham Young, who became second

President of the Church—and Heber C. Kimball, who became

a counselor in the First Presidency—eventually became members of the Church. Talk with your family about the power of the Book of Mormon. Encourage family members to read it and gain a witness of its truth for themselves. Invite them to do as Samuel Smith did—share the Book of Mormon with others.

"Love at Home," p. F12: This article reminds us that we establish families in love and maintain them through work and service. Use ideas from this article to reinforce this principle in family home evening.

TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE

F= <i>The Friend</i>	Obedience, F6
Adversity, 42	Parenthood, 2
Book of Mormon, 14, 16	Plan of salvation, 42
Church history, 16, 47	Prayer, 42
Compassion, 20	Preparation, F2
Conversion, 7, 14, 42	Primary, F4
Courage, 2, 42	Prophets, 47, F10
Death, 42	Repentance, 2, 20
Endurance, 36	Revelation, 8, 30
Family, 2, 32, 36, 38, 42, F4, F12, F14	Same-sex attraction, 20
Family home evening, 1, 2, 32	Scripture study, 42
Generosity, 25	Self-mastery, 2, 13
Happiness, F2	Service, 42
Heritage, F2	Standards, 2
Holy Ghost, 8, 30, F6	Teaching, 1, 26, 32
Home teaching, 6	Testimony, 14
Jesus Christ, 25, 26	Virtue, 13
Love, 25, F4, F12	Visiting teaching, 25
Missionary work, 16, 42, F10	Word of Wisdom, 30
	Work, F4, F12
	Worldwide Church, 38, F14



In Opposition to Evil

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

One evening I picked up the morning paper, which I had not previously read, and thumbed through its pages. My eyes stopped on the theater ads, so many of them an open appeal to witness that which is debauching, that which leads to violence and illicit sex.

I turned to my mail and found a small magazine which lists the television fare for the coming week and saw titles of shows aimed in the same direction. A news magazine lay on my desk. This particular issue was devoted to the rising crime rate. Articles in the magazine spoke of additional billions for increased police forces and larger prisons.

The flood of pornographic filth, the inordinate emphasis on sex and violence are not peculiar to North America. The situation is as bad in Europe and in many other areas. The whole dismal picture indicates a weakening rot seeping into the very fiber of society.

Legal restraints against deviant moral behavior are eroding under legislative enactments and court opinions. This is done in the name of freedom of speech, freedom of the

press, freedom of choice in so-called personal matters. But the bitter fruit of these so-called freedoms has been enslavement to debauching habits and behavior that leads only to destruction. A prophet, speaking long ago, aptly described the process when he said, "And thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell" (2 Nephi 28:21).

On the other hand, I am satisfied that there are millions upon millions of good people in this and in other lands. For the most part, husbands are faithful to wives, and wives to husbands. Their children are being reared in sobriety, industry, and faith in God. Given the strength of these, I am one who believes that the situation is far from hopeless. I am satisfied that there is no need to stand still and let the filth and violence overwhelm us or to run in despair. The tide, high and menacing as it is, can be turned back if enough of the kind I have mentioned will add their strength to the strength of the few who are now effectively working. I believe the challenge to oppose this evil is one from which



Let our voices be heard. I hope they will not be shrill voices, but I hope we shall speak with such conviction that those to whom we speak shall know of the strength of our feeling and the sincerity of our effort.

members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as citizens, cannot shrink.

I should like to suggest four points of beginning in our efforts to oppose the tide of evil.

The first: Begin with yourself. Reformation of the world begins with reformation of self. It is a fundamental article of our faith that “we believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, [and] virtuous” (Articles of Faith 1:13).

We cannot hope to influence others in the direction of virtue unless we live lives of virtue. The example of our living will carry a greater influence than will all the preaching in which we might indulge. We cannot expect to lift others unless we stand on higher ground ourselves.

Respect for self is the beginning of virtue in men. That man who knows that he is a child of God, created in the image of a divine Father and gifted with a potential for the exercise of great and godlike virtues, will discipline himself against the sordid, lascivious elements to which all are exposed. Said Alma to his son Helaman, “Look to God and live” (Alma 37:47).

It is a matter of more than passing interest that the Lord, as He spoke to the multitude on the mount, included this marvelous declaration: “Blessed

are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).

A wise man once said, “Make of yourself an honest man, and there will be one rascal fewer in the world.”

And it was Shakespeare who put into the mouth of one of his characters this persuasive injunction: “To thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.”¹

I should like to give to all men and women who may read these words a challenge to lift their thoughts above the filth, to discipline their acts into examples of virtue, to control their words so that they speak only that which is uplifting and leads to growth.

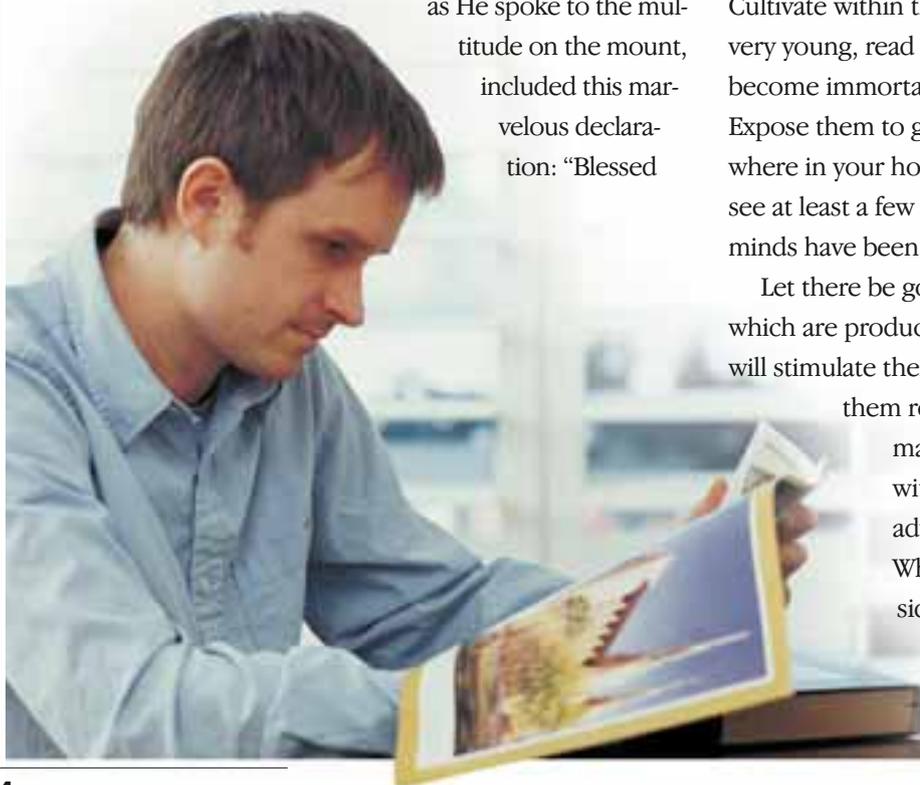
And now my second point of beginning: A better tomorrow begins with the training of a better generation.

This places upon parents the responsibility to do a more effective work in the rearing of children. The home is the cradle of virtue, the place where character is formed and habits are established. Family home evening is the opportunity to teach the ways of the Lord.

You know that your children will read. They will read books, and they will read magazines and newspapers. Cultivate within them a taste for the best. While they are very young, read to them the great stories which have become immortal because of the virtues they teach. Expose them to good books. Let there be a corner somewhere in your house, be it ever so small, where they will see at least a few books of the kind upon which great minds have been nourished.

Let there be good magazines about the house, those which are produced by the Church and by others, which will stimulate their thoughts to ennobling concepts. Let

them read a good family newspaper that they may know what is going on in the world without being exposed to the debasing advertising and writing so widely found. When there is a good movie in town, consider going to the theater as a family. Your very patronage will give encouragement to those who wish to produce this type of entertainment. And use





who believes that we should earnestly and sincerely and positively express our convictions to those given the heavy responsibility of making and enforcing our laws. The sad fact is that the minority who call for greater liberalization, who peddle and devour pornography, who encourage and feed on licentious display

that most remarkable of all tools of communication, television, to enrich their lives. There is so much that is good, but it requires selectivity. Let those who are responsible for any efforts to put suitable family entertainment on television know of your appreciation for that which is good and also of your displeasure with that which is bad. In large measure, we get what we ask for. The problem is that so many of us fail to ask and, more frequently, fail to express gratitude for that which is good.

Let there be music in the home. If you have teenagers who have their own recordings, you will be prone to describe the sound as something other than music. Let them hear something better occasionally. Expose them to it. It will speak for itself. More appreciation will come than you may think. It may not be spoken, but it will be felt, and its influence will become increasingly manifest as the years pass.

Now my third point of beginning: The building of public sentiment begins with a few earnest voices. I am not one to advocate shouting defiantly or shaking fists and issuing threats in the faces of legislators. But I am one

make their voices heard until those in our legislatures may come to believe that what they say represents the will of the majority. We are not likely to get that which we do not speak up for.

Let our voices be heard. I hope they will not be shrill voices, but I hope we shall speak with such conviction that those to whom we speak shall know of the strength of our feeling and the sincerity of our effort. Remarkable consequences often flow from a well-written letter and a postage stamp. Remarkable results come of quiet conversation with those who carry heavy responsibilities.

Declared the Lord to this people:

“Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great.

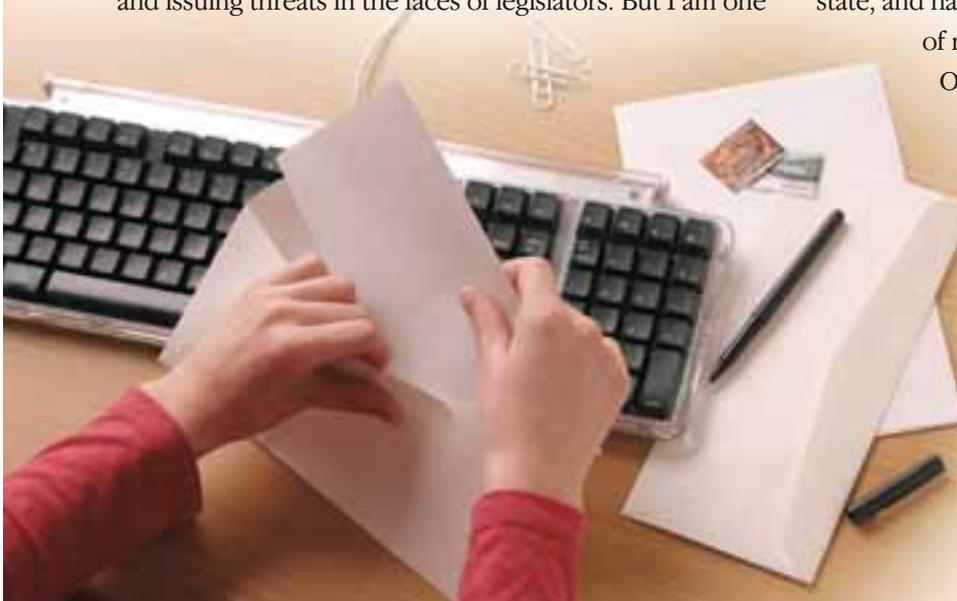
“Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind” (D&C 64:33–34).

This is the essence of the matter—“the heart and a willing mind.” Speak to those who enact the regulations, the statutes, and the laws—those in government on local, state, and national levels and those who occupy positions of responsibility as administrators of our schools.

Of course, there will be some who will slam the door, some who will scoff. Discouragement may come. It has always been thus.

Edmund Burke, speaking on the floor of the House of Commons in 1783, declared concerning the advocate of an unpopular cause:

“He well knows what snares are spread about his path. . . . He is traduced and abused for his supposed motives.



He will remember that obloquy is a necessary ingredient in the composition of all true glory: he will remember . . . that calumny and abuse are essential parts of triumph.”²

The Apostle Paul, in his defense before Agrippa, gave an account of his miraculous conversion while on the way to Damascus, declaring that the voice of the Lord commanded him to “rise, and stand upon thy feet” (Acts 26:16).

I think the Lord would say to us, “Rise, and stand upon thy feet, and speak up for truth and goodness and decency and virtue.”

Finally, my fourth point of beginning: Strength to do battle begins with enlisting the strength of God. He is the source of all true power.

Declared Paul to the Ephesians:

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

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

1. Ask family members if any of them have ever spoken out for good entertainment in the community. Have they discussed the subject with friends and associates? Ask them to brainstorm what they might do to support entertainment that is uplifting.

2. Read the quotation from *Hamlet* shared by President Hinckley, “To thine own self be true . . .,” and then the latter part of D&C 121:45, beginning with “Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly.” Ask family members how we are being true to ourselves when we maintain virtuous thoughts and what the scripture means for us as individuals when it says, “Then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God.”

3. Read the quotation from Edmund Burke. Talk about the costs of courage; emphasize the benefits of speaking out for a righteous cause.

4. Ask family members to suggest some ways they as individuals can heed President Hinckley’s call to begin now in the fight against evil in society.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:10–13).

The tide of evil flows. Today it has become a veritable flood. Most of us, living somewhat sheltered lives, have little idea of the vast dimensions of it. Billions of dollars are involved for those who pour out pornography, for those who peddle lasciviousness, for those who deal in perversion, in sex and violence. God give us the strength, the wisdom, the faith, the courage as citizens to stand in opposition to these and to let our voices be heard in defense of those virtues which, when practiced in the past, made men and nations strong, and which, when neglected, brought them to decay.

God lives. He is our strength and our helper. As we strive, we shall discover that legions of good men and women will join with us. Let us begin now. ■

NOTES

1. *Hamlet*, act 1, scene 3, lines 78–80.
2. Quoted in John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (1956), vi.



NOT REALLY HOMELESS

*Through a member's good works
I found a home in the true gospel
of Jesus Christ.*

BY LOUCAS SOARES NOBRE

When I was 12 years old, my mother died, leaving my father with six children. There were few educational opportunities in our area, and many people were satisfied with a fourth-grade education. But I wasn't. I held on to a dream of finishing my studies.

My opportunity came when I moved to the city of Santarém, Brazil, at age 17. My father arranged for me to live with some people he knew, and I began taking a few classes. My work barely paid for the school materials I needed.

During my first year there, the people I lived with asked me to affiliate with their church.

I repeatedly refused their request. The third year came, and I still hadn't joined their church. Then one day they asked me to find another place to live. I was devastated.

The next day I didn't go to work or to school. I remembered my stepmother's friend who lived close by and resolved to talk to her.

When I arrived, Maria Jose welcomed me. After I explained my situation, she asked that I go and get my things and come stay at her home. There seemed to be something extraordinary about her kindness.

After a few days, as she was preparing food, she told me that missionaries from her church were coming to eat lunch. Her goodness made me curious about her beliefs.

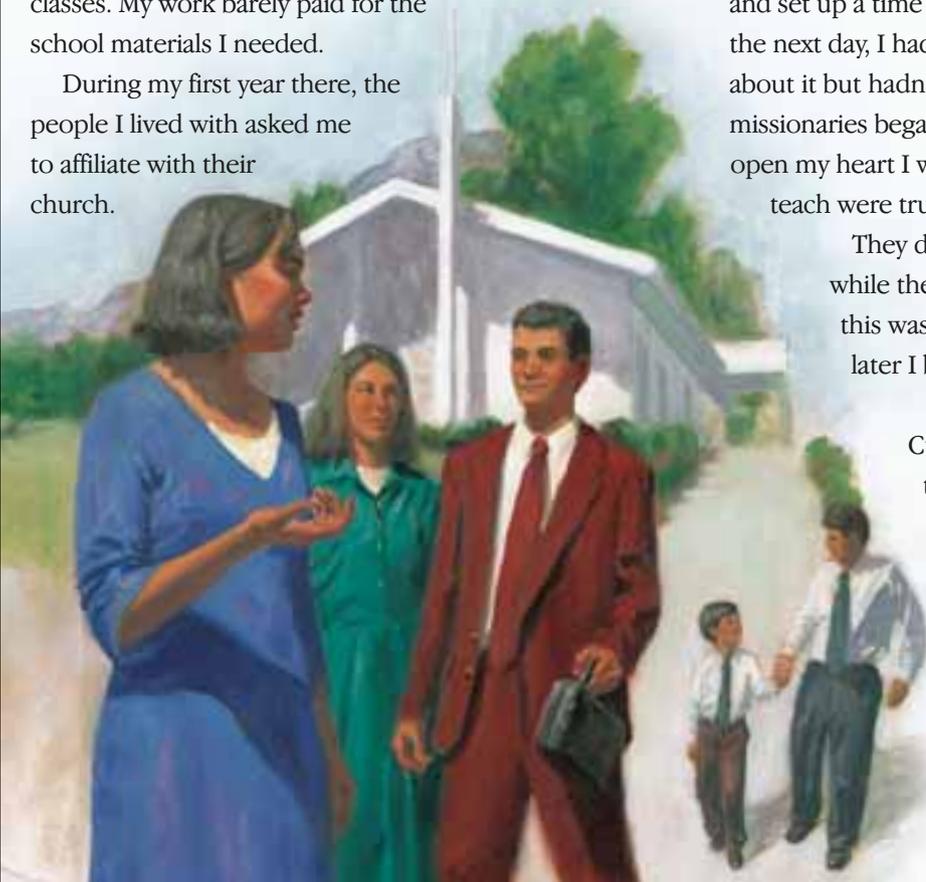
I spoke with Elder Riggs and Elder Marcio during lunch and set up a time to hear a discussion. By the appointment the next day, I had read the Book of Mormon and prayed about it but hadn't felt anything unusual. But before the missionaries began, they promised me that if I would open my heart I would know that the things they would teach were true.

They didn't need to say anything more, because while they spoke I knew by a strong feeling that this was the Church of Jesus Christ. Three weeks later I became a member.

I later served full time in the Brazil Curitiba Mission. I love this gospel and the opportunity I had to do for others the same work those missionaries did for me.

I couldn't join one church—even when my decision left me homeless. But in finding a home and a Christlike friend, I found the true Church of Jesus Christ. ■

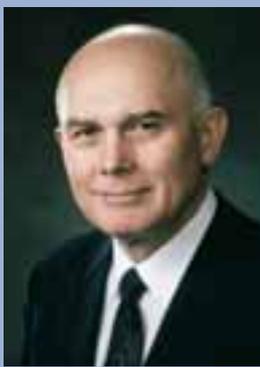
Loucas Soares Nobre is a member of the Tapajós Branch, Santarém Brazil Pará District.



8 Reasons for Revelation

BY ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



I know that God lives and that revelation to His children is a reality.

As a young girl, my grandmother Chasty Olsen Harris was tending some children who were playing in a dry riverbed near their home in Castle Dale, Utah. Suddenly she heard a voice that called her by name and directed her to get the children out of the riverbed and up on the bank. It was a clear day, and there was no sign of rain. She saw no reason to heed the voice and continued to play. The voice spoke to her again, urgently. This time she heeded the warning. Quickly gathering the children, she made a run for the bank. Just as they reached the bank, an enormous wall of water, originating with a cloudburst in the mountains many miles away, swept down the canyon and roared across where the children had played.

Revelation is communication from God to man. It can occur in many different ways. Some prophets, like Moses and Joseph Smith, have talked with God face to face. Some persons have had personal communication with

angels. Other revelations have come, as Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described it, “through the dreams of sleep or in waking visions of the mind.”¹

In its more familiar forms, revelation or inspiration comes by means of words or thoughts communicated to the mind (see Enos 1:10; D&C 8:2–3), by sudden enlightenment (see D&C 6:14–15), by positive or negative feelings about proposed courses of action, or even by inspiring performances, as in the performing arts. As President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has stated, “Inspiration comes more as a feeling than as a sound.”²

Purposes for Revelation

Search your own experience. You have already received revelations, and you can receive more revelations because communication from God to men and women is a reality.

President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) declared that it is “the grand privilege of every Latter-day Saint . . . to have the manifestations of the spirit every day of our lives.”³

As I review the following eight purposes of revelation, I hope you will recognize the extent to which you have already received revelation or inspiration and resolve to cultivate this spiritual gift for more frequent use in the future.

1. *The **testimony** or witness of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ and that the gospel is true is a revelation from God.*

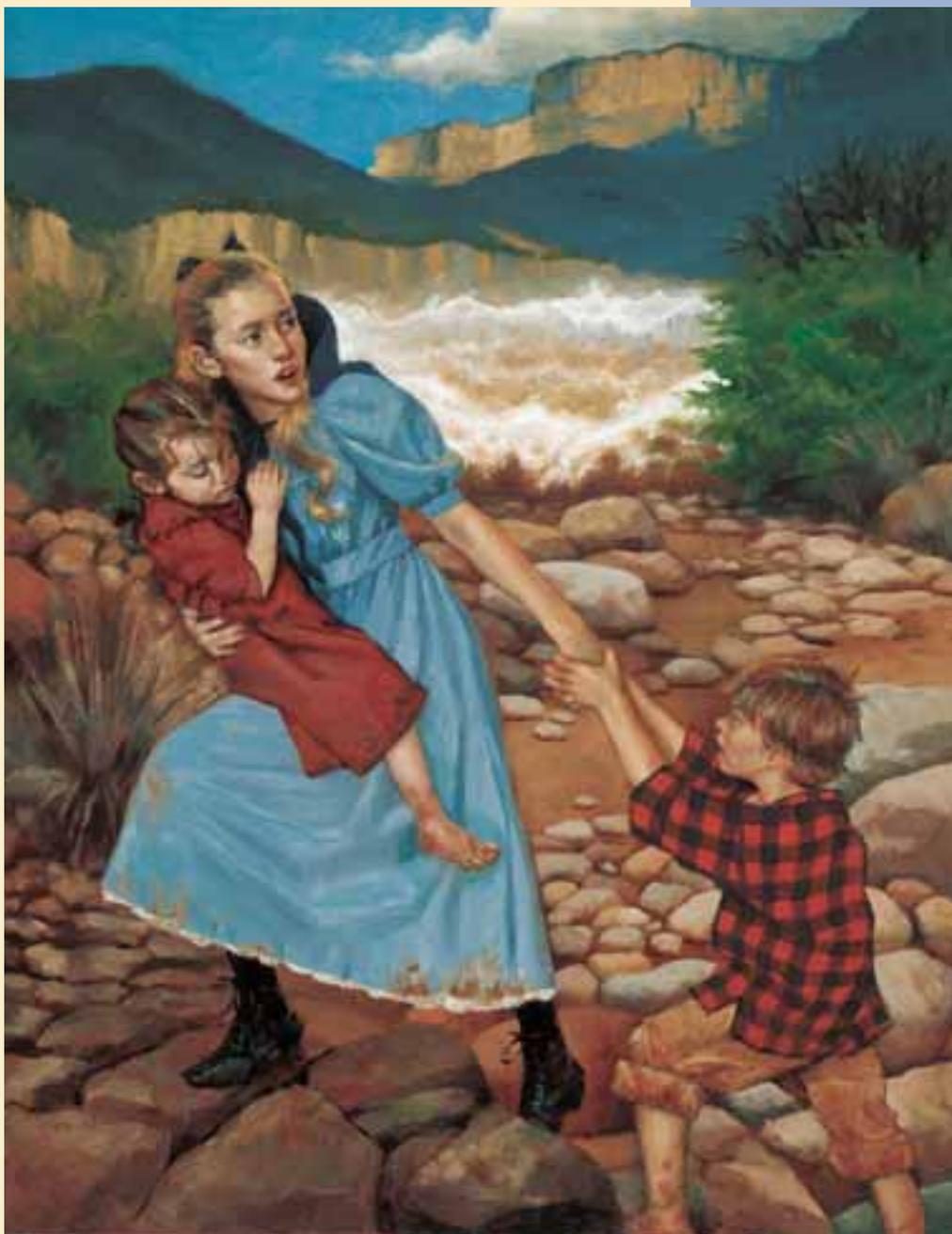
When the Apostle Peter affirmed that Jesus Christ was the Son of the living God, the Savior called him blessed, “for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:17).

2. ***Prophecy** is another purpose or function of revelation.*

Speaking under the influence of the Holy Ghost and within the limits of his or her responsibility, a person may be inspired to predict what will come to pass in the future. The one who holds the office of the prophet, seer, and revelator prophesies for the Church, as when Joseph Smith prophesied concerning the American Civil War (see D&C 87) and foretold that the

Saints would become a mighty people in the Rocky Mountains.⁴ Prophecy is part of the calling of a patriarch. Each of us is also privileged occasionally to receive prophetic revelation illuminating future events in our lives, like a Church calling we are to receive.

As a young girl, my grandmother—and the children she was tending—would have been lost except for impelling revelation.



ILLUSTRATED BY JUSTIN KINZ

3. *A third purpose of revelation is to give **comfort**.*

Such a revelation came to the Prophet Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail. After many months in deplorable conditions, he cried out in agony and loneliness, pleading for the Lord to remember him and the persecuted Saints. The comforting answer came:

“My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

“And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes” (D&C 121:7–8).

In that same revelation the Lord declared that no matter what tragedies or injustices should befall the Prophet, “Know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good” (D&C 122:7).

A revelation of comfort can also come in connection with a blessing of the priesthood, either from the words spoken or simply from the feeling communicated in connection with the blessing.

Another type of comforting revelation is the assurance received that a sin has been forgiven. This revelation, which comes when a person has completed all the steps of repentance, gives assurance that the price has been paid, that God has heard the repentant sinner, and that his or her sins are forgiven.

4. *Closely related to the feeling of comfort is the fourth purpose or function of revelation, to **uplift**.*

At some time in our lives each of us needs to be lifted up from a depression, from a sense of foreboding or inadequacy, or just from a plateau of spiritual mediocrity. Because it raises our spirits and helps us resist evil and seek good, I believe that the feeling of uplift that is communicated by reading the scriptures or by

enjoying wholesome music, art, or literature is a distinct purpose of revelation.

5. *The fifth purpose of revelation is to **inform**.*

This may consist of inspiration giving a person the words to speak on a particular occasion, such as in the blessings pronounced by a patriarch or in sermons or other words spoken under the influence of the Holy Ghost. The Lord commanded Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon to lift up their voices and speak the thoughts that



would be put into their hearts, “for it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say” (D&C 100:6; see also D&C 84:85; 124:97).

In other circumstances, needed information is communicated by the quiet whisperings of the Spirit. A child loses a treasured possession, prays for help, and is inspired to find it; an adult has a problem at work, at home, or in family history research, prays, and is led to the information necessary to resolve it; a Church leader prays to know whom the Lord would have him call to fill a position, and the Spirit whispers a name. In all of these examples, familiar to each of us, the Holy Ghost acts in His office as a teacher and revelator, communicating information and truths for the edification and guidance of the recipient.

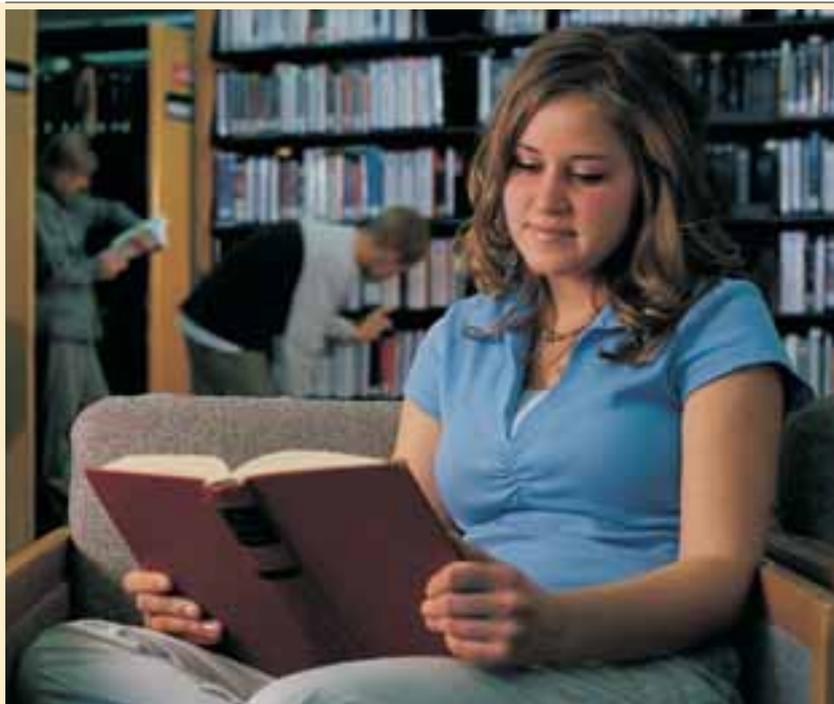
6. *The sixth type or purpose of revelation is to **restrain** us from doing something.*

The revelation that restrains is one of the most common forms of revelation. It often comes by surprise, when we have not asked for revelation or guidance on a particular subject. But if we are keeping the commandments of God and living in tune with His Spirit, a restraining force will steer us away from things we should not do.

7. *A common way to seek revelation is to propose a particular course of action and then to pray for inspiration to **confirm** it.*

The Lord explained the confirming type of revelation when Oliver Cowdery failed in his efforts to translate the Book of Mormon:

“Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.



“But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right” (D&C 9:7–8).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles stressed our responsibility to do all that we can before we seek a revelation: “We’re expected to use the gifts and talents and abilities, the sense and judgment and agency with which we are endowed. . . . We’re expected to do everything in our power that we can, and then to seek an answer from the Lord, a confirming seal that we’ve reached the right conclusion.”⁷⁵

8. *The eighth purpose or type of revelation consists of those instances where the Spirit **impels** a person to action.*

This is not a case where a person proposes to take a particular action and the Spirit either confirms or restrains. This is a case where revelation comes when it is not being sought and impels some action not proposed. This type of revelation is obviously less common than other types, but its rarity makes it all the more significant.

Revelation comforted the Prophet Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail: “My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment.” Closely related to the feeling of comfort is the feeling of uplift—communicated by reading the scriptures or enjoying wholesome music, art, or literature.



Where we are living in tune with the Spirit and seeking its guidance, we can be sure that we will receive the guidance we need to attain our goal. The Lord will not leave us unassisted when a choice is important to our eternal welfare.

Except for this type of impelling revelation, my grandmother and the children she was tending would have been lost in the river.

When You Don't Receive Revelation

Before concluding, I will suggest a few ideas about revelations that are not received.

First, we should understand what can be called the principle of “responsibility in revelation.”

When one person purports to receive revelation for another person outside his or her own area of responsibility—such as a Church member who claims to have revelation to guide the entire Church or a person who claims to have a revelation to guide another person over whom he or she has no presiding authority according to the order of the Church—you can be sure that such revelations are not from the Lord.

We do not always receive inspiration or revelation when we request it. Sometimes we are delayed in the receipt of revelation, and sometimes we are left to our own judgment. We cannot force spiritual things. It must be so. Our life's purpose to obtain experience and to develop faith would be

frustrated if our Heavenly Father directed us in every act, even in every important act. We must make decisions and experience the consequences in order to develop self-reliance and faith.

Even in decisions we think very important, we sometimes receive no answer to our prayers. This does not mean that our prayers have not been heard. It means only that we have prayed about a decision that, for one reason or another, we should make without guidance by revelation. Perhaps we have asked for guidance in choosing between alternatives that are equally acceptable or equally unacceptable.

Similarly, the Spirit of the Lord is not likely to give us revelations on matters that are trivial.

If a matter appears of little or no consequence, we should proceed on the basis of our own judgment. If the choice is important for reasons unknown to us, the Lord will intervene and give us guidance. Where we are living in tune with the Spirit and seeking its guidance, we can be sure that we will receive the guidance we need to attain our goal. The Lord will not leave us unassisted when a choice is important to our eternal welfare.

I know that God lives and that revelation to His children is a reality. I pray that we will be worthy and willing and that He will bless us to grow in this principle of revelation. ■

From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University on 29 September 1981; printed in Tambuli, Dec. 1983; New Era, Sept. 1982.

NOTES

1. *The Articles of Faith*, 12th ed. (1924), 229.
2. “Prayers and Answers,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 20.
3. In Conference Report, Apr. 1899, 52.
4. See *History of the Church*, 5:85.
5. “Agency or Inspiration—Which?” in *Speeches of the Year, 1972–73* (1973), 108, 113.

LIFT YOUR THOUGHTS



CHOOSE TO ELEVATE YOUR
THOUGHTS TO A HIGHER LEVEL.
(See Philippians 4:8.)

NOW I Understand

BY FÁBIO HENRIQUE N. DA SILVA

I first learned about the Church in June 1995, when I was 13 years old. I had always had the desire to know where I came from and where I would go when I died, but I had never sought the answers in any religion. I thought I would learn these things in time.

One night some friends and my older brother and I gathered to talk. While we talked, two missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints passed by us. The topic of our conversation changed to religion. My cousin said she was hearing the discussions from the missionaries and finding it very interesting. She told us about the Book of Mormon and someone named Joseph Smith. When she said, “Book of Mormon,” I was interested and asked to see the book. She said, “If any of you want to see the book, the missionaries will be at my house tomorrow. You can get a copy from them.” That was exactly what my brother and I did.

At the appointed time we were there to hear the discussion. We asked many questions. I felt so good hearing that message,

When I heard about the Book of Mormon, I was intrigued. When I prayed about it, the Spirit told me it was true.

and I was certain that what those missionaries said was true. The Spirit testified to me of the truthfulness of their words. On that same night my brother and I received a copy of the Book of Mormon.

After that, the missionaries came to our home and gave us the first discussion. Then came the invitation: “Will you pray to Heavenly Father to know if the Book of Mormon is true?” We both agreed to do it.

On the first night I prayed before sleeping, but I was so tired that I fell asleep without waiting for a response. On the second night I prayed again, but I didn’t receive an answer. The next night I prayed once again. I wanted to feel what the missionaries had taught me: “Your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right” (D&C 9:8). I prayed and waited, but I didn’t receive a response. Still, I went to bed certain that one day I would receive it.

The next day was the first Sunday of the month, and we went to church. It was then that it happened. During class I began to feel something I had never felt before—

something that made me feel so happy. When sacrament meeting began I had a desire to bear my testimony, but I didn't have the courage. However, I was certain that the Book of Mormon was true.

My brother and I accepted the gospel without reluctance. We had testimonies of the Book of Mormon, and we knew that everything else the missionaries taught us would be true too.

We needed these testimonies to remain strong in the Church, for we faced many trials. My mother would not allow us to be baptized, but she did not stop us from going to church. We faithfully attended church and seminary. I also suffered persecution at school from people I thought were my friends. It was difficult, but these experiences strengthened my testimony.

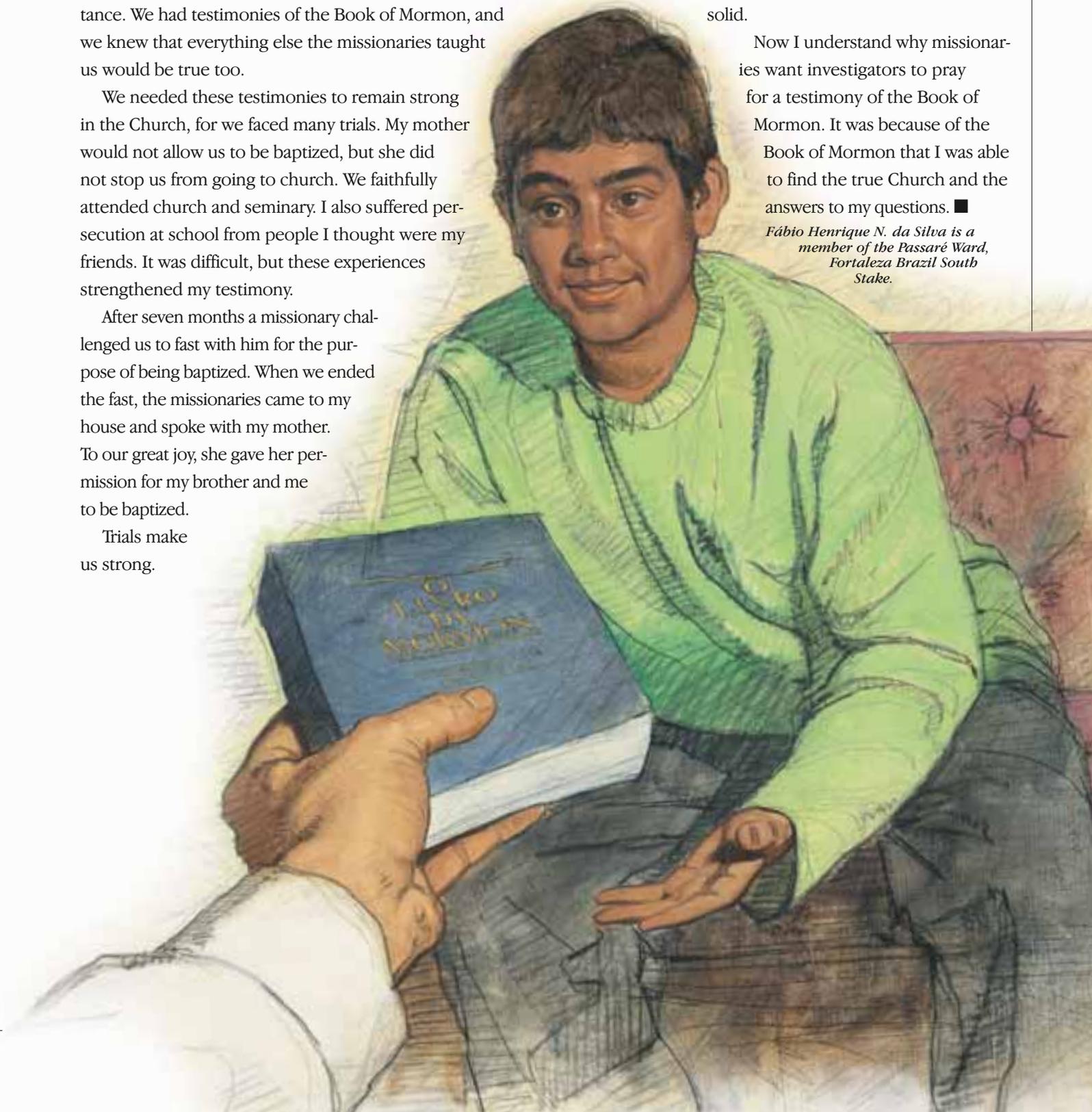
After seven months a missionary challenged us to fast with him for the purpose of being baptized. When we ended the fast, the missionaries came to my house and spoke with my mother. To our great joy, she gave her permission for my brother and me to be baptized.

Trials make us strong.

My brother and I are still strong in the Church. We have both served full-time missions. When I read the Book of Mormon, when I go to church, when I attend institute, when I pray to Heavenly Father, when I fast, when I keep the commandments, my testimony remains solid.

Now I understand why missionaries want investigators to pray for a testimony of the Book of Mormon. It was because of the Book of Mormon that I was able to find the true Church and the answers to my questions. ■

Fábio Henrique N. da Silva is a member of the Passaré Ward, Fortaleza Brazil South Stake.



The First Latter-day Missionary

BY RYAN CARR
Church Magazines



The first latter-day missionary didn't know it at the time, but his efforts ended up bringing the Church two of its greatest leaders.

What if you had to go on a mission alone—no companion, no training at the Missionary Training Center, no missionary lessons to teach from, and only your testimony, the Spirit, and the Book of Mormon to help you? How would you do?

Samuel Smith—the first official missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—did just that. Samuel, the Prophet Joseph's younger brother, was 22 at the time of his first mission. As he walked alone into towns near Palmyra, New York, he carried only a knapsack full of copies of the recently printed Book of Mormon.

As Samuel was growing up, the Smiths studied the Bible and had family prayers. During his teenage years, Samuel knew the Restoration was in progress. In the evenings he gathered with his family to hear Joseph talk about the plan of salvation and “the great and glorious things which God had manifested to him.”¹

When Samuel was 21, he went to Harmony,

Pennsylvania, where his brother Joseph and Oliver Cowdery were translating the Book of Mormon. On 15 May 1829, just days before Samuel arrived, Joseph and Oliver had received the Aaronic Priesthood from John the Baptist and had baptized each other with that newly conferred authority.

In Harmony, Joseph showed Samuel part of the Book of Mormon that he had translated and “labored to persuade him concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which was now about to be revealed in its fulness.”

Joseph wrote that Samuel wasn't “very easily persuaded of these things,” so Samuel “retired to the woods, in order that by secret and fervent prayer he might obtain of a merciful God, wisdom to enable him to judge for himself. The result was that he obtained revelation for himself.”²

On 25 May 1829 Samuel was baptized, the third person in this dispensation—following Joseph and Oliver—to receive that ordinance. Later that year Samuel was one of the Eight Witnesses privileged to examine the

gold plates. The next spring, on 6 April 1830, he was one of the six original members when the Church was formally organized. Others were also working to share the gospel, but in June 1830, Joseph set Samuel apart to be the Church's first officially called missionary.

Into the Mission Field

The first day of his mission, Samuel walked 25 miles (40 km). He visited four homes, but no one wanted to buy

a copy of the Book of Mormon. Hungry, tired, and discouraged, he stopped that night at an inn. Samuel asked the innkeeper if he would like to buy a copy of the Book of Mormon.

"I do not know," said the innkeeper. "How did you get hold of it?"

"It was translated by my brother, from some gold plates that he found buried in the earth," Samuel explained.

"You liar! Get out of my house—you shan't stay one



ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT T. BARRETT



In 1830 the Prophet Joseph's younger brother Samuel visited a farmhouse in New York, where he testified to Rhoda Greene (Brigham Young's sister) of the recently printed Book of Mormon.

minute with your books," said the innkeeper. So the Church's first missionary slept that night under an apple tree on the cold, damp ground.³

The next morning Samuel gave a copy of the Book of Mormon to a poor widow who fed him breakfast. Then he walked 8 miles (13 km) and shared the Book of Mormon with John Greene, a Methodist minister, who took it only to see if others he knew might be interested in buying a copy. Mr. Greene's wife, Rhoda, was Brigham Young's sister, but Brigham had not yet been introduced to the Church.

When Samuel returned to the Greens' home in two weeks, he learned that Mr. Greene hadn't found anyone who was interested in the Book of Mormon. So Samuel agreed to return in a few months. When he did, Mr. Greene wasn't home, but Mrs. Greene told Samuel that she had read the book "and was much pleased with it." The

Spirit prompted Samuel to leave the book with her. She was so grateful "she burst into tears." Samuel then "explained to her the most profitable manner of reading the book . . . which was, to ask God, when she read it, for a testimony of the truth of what she had read, and she would receive the Spirit of God, which would enable her to discern the things of God."⁴

Later Mrs. Greene urged her husband to read the Book of Mormon too. He did, and they were soon baptized.

Converting a Future Prophet

In 1830 Samuel also sold a copy of the Book of Mormon to Brigham Young's brother: Phinehas (or Phineas) Young, a Methodist preacher. When he first met Samuel, Phinehas was returning home on horseback from his preaching circuit. He had stopped at a farm for dinner. As he and the family were visiting, a young man, dressed in rough clothes,

entered the room. Book in hand, the young man said to Phinehas, “There’s a book, sir, I wish you to read.”

“Pray, sir, what book have you?” Phinehas asked.

“The Book of Mormon, or, as it is called by some, the Golden Bible.”

“Ah, so then it purports to be a revelation?” Phinehas asked.

The young man opened the book to the testimonies of the Three and Eight Witnesses and said, “Here is the testimony of the witnesses to the truth of the book.”

Phinehas read their testimonies. When Phinehas looked up from his reading, the young man said, “If you will read this book with a prayerful heart and ask God to give you a witness, you will know the truth of the work.”

Phinehas promised to read the book. Then he asked the young man’s name.

“My name is Samuel H. Smith.”

Phinehas had seen that name! “Then you are one of the witnesses.”

“Yes,” Samuel said. “I know the book is a revelation from God, translated by the power of the Holy Ghost, and that my brother, Joseph Smith, Jr., is a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator.”

After arriving home Phinehas told his wife, “I have got a book here called the Book of Mormon, and it is said to be a revelation, and I wish to read it and make myself acquainted with its errors, so I can expose them to the world.”

True to his promise, he read the Book of Mormon—twice in two weeks. Rather than finding any errors, he became convinced the book was true. On Sunday, when



CONVERSION TO THE BOOK OF MORMON

“Conversion to [the Book of Mormon] is conversion to

Christ, because this book contains the words of Christ. . . .

“Additionally, conversion to this inspired book is conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ, because it contains the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . .

“Finally, conversion to the Book of Mormon is conversion to the divine, prophetic calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith. [The Book of Mormon] is the divine evidence of the truthfulness of Joseph Smith’s calling.”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Book of Mormon: The Heart of Missionary Proselyting,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2002, 14.



his congregation asked for his opinion of the book, “he defended it for ten minutes, when suddenly the Spirit of God came on him with such force that in a marvelous manner he spoke at great length on the importance of it. . . . He closed by telling the people that he believed the book.”⁵

That summer, the Young family, including Brigham, and their friends the Kimbells read the Book of Mormon and believed it.

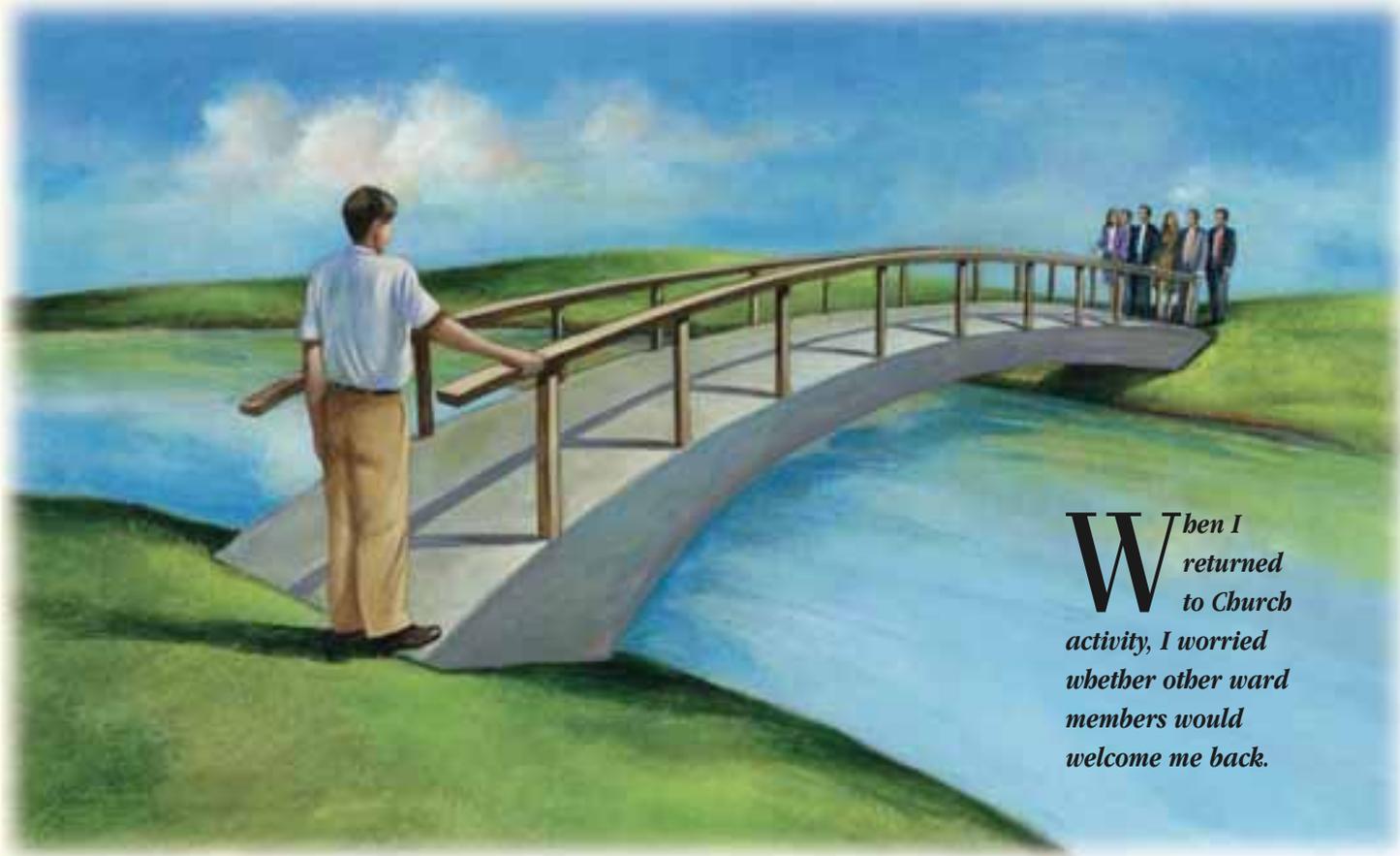
Fill Your Knapsack

The first official latter-day missionary baptized no one and shared only a few copies of the Book of Mormon. Samuel didn’t know then that two of those copies would bring into the Church many faithful members, including Brigham Young, who presided over the Church from 1844 to 1877, and Heber C. Kimball, an Apostle from 1835 to 1868.

Like Samuel, you can fill your knapsack with copies of the Book of Mormon. Then share them, along with your testimony. As Samuel’s brief mission shows, you may not always know who will be touched by reading the Book of Mormon. But you can count on Moroni’s promise: if people pray sincerely about the Book of Mormon, God “will manifest the truth of it unto [them], by the power of the Holy Ghost” (Moroni 10:4). ■

NOTES

1. Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley (1958), 82.
2. *History of the Church*, 1:44.
3. The description of Samuel Smith’s first mission comes from *History of Joseph Smith*, 168–71, 187–88.
4. *History of Joseph Smith*, 187.
5. The description of Phinehas Young’s experience comes from S. Dilworth Young, “*Here Is Brigham . . .*” (1964), 50–52.



When I returned to Church activity, I worried whether other ward members would welcome me back.

Compassion for Those Who Struggle

Friendship and compassion can strengthen those dealing with same-sex attraction.

NAME WITHHELD

The inspiring account of Hannah in the Old Testament depicts the travails of one temporarily deprived of normal family relationships by her inability to bear a child. Mocked by her husband's other wife

“because the Lord had shut up her womb,” Hannah “was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore” (1 Samuel 1:6, 10). The footnote to this scripture explains that the phrase “bitterness of soul” means not anger or cynicism but sadness and grief.

There are those in the Church today who also feel a “bitterness of soul” because they do not fully experience the joys of family life.

This is not so because of infertility. Neither is it because they have not had a suitable opportunity to marry. They are unable as yet to have families of their own because of sexual orientation.

They are those brothers and sisters in the Church with same-sex attractions who are conscientiously striving to live the commandments. They are those who reject trendy beliefs that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle option. They are those who, recognizing we are not named by what tempts us, eschew the label “gay” to take upon them the name of Christ instead.

I am one of them.

Magnified through Endurance

For those of us facing this challenge, the only way to live a life of righteousness is to delay or go without something for which most human hearts hunger: the kind of partnership and completeness that is found in a marriage relationship. In the moments of searing loneliness this reality brings, I find compensating companionship in the enveloping arms of the Savior and His Atonement. During such times, the Savior’s words “My grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Corinthians 12:9) take on a profound new meaning.

It is a distressing duality to yearn to follow Christ and His teachings about marriage and family while being unable to do so because of inharmonious sexual attractions. When I despair I take comfort from what the Lord promises in Doctrine and Covenants 58:2–3:

“Blessed is he that keepeth my commandments, whether in life or in death; and he that is faithful in tribulation, the reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven.

“Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation.”

Here I hope to explain through my experience the challenges and needs of many of the Church members enduring same-sex attraction, that perhaps increased understanding and compassion from friends, family, and

Church members will be a sustaining bulwark in our defenses against giving in to temptation.

The Choice Is in the Response, Not in the Temptation

It is not often that Saints with same-sex attraction make their challenge known to others. For me, this struggle is one only the Lord, my bishop, and a few close and understanding friends need to know.

However, at times family and ward or branch members will discern that one harbors these attractions. If others have such perceptions of me, I am grateful that in my Church associations I have never experienced jokes and gossip that make light of a struggle where a soul’s destiny hangs in the balance. As Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has stated, “Persons . . . struggling with the burden of same-sex attraction are in special need of the love and encouragement that is a clear responsibility of Church members.”¹

Ours is often a hidden conflict for fear of being seen as “deviants” who have chosen these attractions. For most Latter-day Saints who struggle with this challenge, nothing could be further from the truth. As one author has written: “Why would someone who has a strong conviction of the divine origins of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints choose to engage in a wrenching conflict with that testimony . . . ? Same-sex desires create a very difficult challenge for Church members and are seldom chosen. The trial befalls even the valiant ones.”² Our choice is in deciding whether to defy or succumb to temptation, not in whether to have the temptation itself.

Conversely, the doctrine of agency contradicts worldly attempts to justify homosexual behavior because of supposed biological or physiological causes. Elder Oaks said: “Once we have reached the age or condition of accountability, the claim ‘I was born that way’ does not excuse actions or thoughts that fail to conform to the commandments of God. We need to learn how to live so that a weakness that is mortal will not prevent us from achieving the goal that is eternal.”³

Surely He who asks rhetorically, “Is any thing too hard for the Lord?” (Genesis 18:14) can help us master same-sex attraction.

The Fears That Come with Repentance

When I first made the decision to repent of homosexual activity, I greatly feared how the bishop would react. Would he act disgusted or angry? Would I be made to feel worse than I already did over having sinned?

Anxious about disclosing such a personal struggle, I delayed the repentance process for many months. When I did finally meet with my bishop, instead of burdening me with more guilt, he beckoned me back to the fold with words as inviting as Alma’s: “If ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, can ye feel so now?” (Alma 5:26). The bishop’s calm and spiritual reaction to my confession made it easier to go to him later on, knowing I would be loved and helped. His Christlike approach aided in my repentance.

Equal to my fears of going to the bishop were my feelings of unworthiness to be at church with people who were living good lives and had not indulged in the sins I had committed. I was sure the first Sunday I returned to church that everyone would see right into my soul and know what I was guilty of and the feelings I was struggling with.

Instead, my anxieties were put to rest when members of the ward welcomed me back with loving fellowship. Repentance would have been much more difficult if I had gone from being a less-active member to a less-included member of the ward.

Supportive and loving Latter-day Saint friends and family are vital in the repentance process. When I first sought such support from a few longtime friends by revealing my struggle, I worried they would reject me. Yet just as the Savior would never reject someone because of his or her temptations, neither have my friends abandoned me because of my weakness. If they ever felt disappointment in learning of my temptations and mistakes, they replaced those feelings with the kind of charity President Ezra Taft

Benson (1899–1994) described: “I have in my heart a love for all of God’s children. I have no ill feeling toward any human being. With you, *I hate sin, but I love the sinner*. We all have need to repent.”⁴

When I feel overwhelmed by my situation, I am truly blessed to have these friends who will listen and encourage. They strengthen my resolve to endure to the end. The words that comforted and uplifted the Prophet Joseph Smith also comfort and uplift me: “Thy friends do stand by thee, and they shall hail thee again with warm hearts and friendly hands” (D&C 121:9).

Temptation Is Not Transgression

Some assume that all those with same-sex tendencies are morally depraved. Yet, as I often have to remind myself, because of my repentance and my earnest efforts to live the commandments I am as worthy as other righteous Latter-day Saints to serve in callings and in the temple, to take the sacrament, to give talks and lessons in church, and to hold the priesthood. As President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has said, “If you do not act on temptations, you need feel no guilt.”⁵

Contrary to being morally deficient, many of us are developing spiritual muscles through the calisthenics of adversity.⁶ This is a fight that can forge a profound closeness with Heavenly Father and the Savior because victory hinges on our ability to rely on Them completely. For me, these words of the Savior have personal meaning: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick” (Matthew 9:12).

Some may be gripped by other temptations—alcohol, tobacco, pornography, gambling, or other serious sins. If not tempted by major transgression, we all nevertheless are tempted every day. And we do not think people facing large or small temptations are immoral just because they are tempted. Elder Oaks reminds us: “We should always distinguish between sinful *acts* and inappropriate *feelings* or potentially dangerous *susceptibilities*. We should reach out lovingly to those who are struggling to resist temptation.”⁷

I am blessed to associate with people who view me by my true character, not by superficial stereotypes. In doing so they follow the Savior's example: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

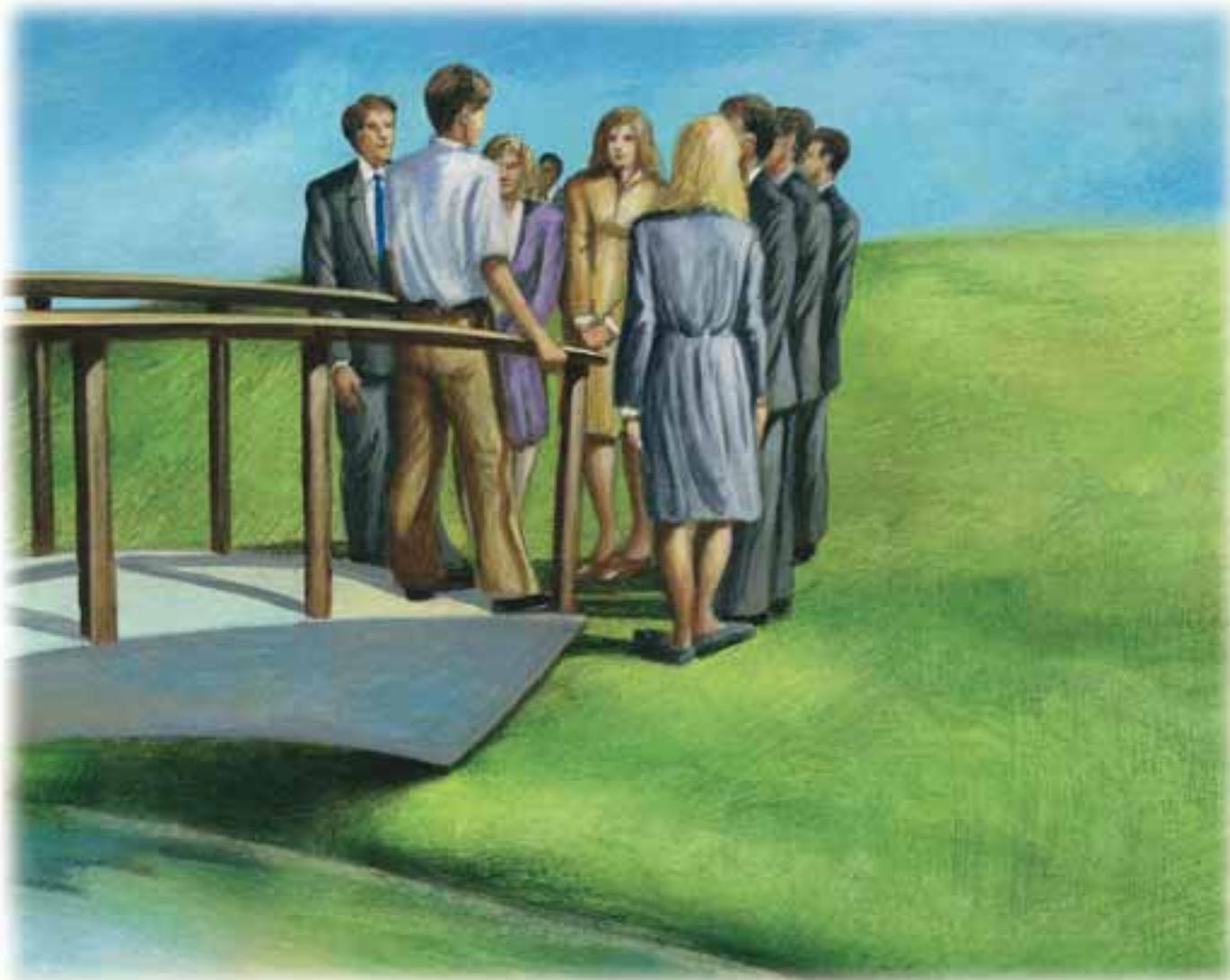
Regardless of the nature of our temptations, everyone must rely upon the Savior's Atonement to build the bridge that takes us back to our Father in Heaven. No one can do it alone.

The Individuality of Timing

One of the most uncomfortable moments I face as I work to overcome same-sex attraction is when a Church or family member queries as to why I am not yet married. Worse, however, is hearing the dreaded words "I have the perfect person for you to date."

For some, dating members of the opposite sex may be a welcome way to work past inappropriate attractions. For others like me,

Supportive
Latter-day
Saint friends
have been a positive
influence and have
helped me make
good choices.



dating may not be comfortable just now. Pushing dating on me has the unintended consequence of aggravating the pain and frustration I may feel. I hope to one day sufficiently curb my attractions to make the first tenuous steps toward dating. But I have to be allowed to do so without others imposing either timetables or dating partners upon me.

Some may say that same-sex attraction can be “cured” simply through dating and marriage. But President Gordon B. Hinckley has dispelled this notion: “Marriage should not be viewed as a therapeutic step to solve problems such as homosexual inclinations or practices, which first should clearly be overcome with a firm and fixed determination never to slip into such practices again.”⁸

The ability of individuals with same-sex desires to date and marry depends on their progress made with the Lord’s help in overcoming these attractions—an effort that is neither easy nor quick. Your patience with this process will greatly magnify our own. Contrary to the impression given by the popular media, many individuals have successfully overcome their same-sex attractions.⁹ For others, this may be a lifelong test¹⁰ to prove their willingness to do as the Savior said—to “deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me” (Matthew 16:24).

Helping Singles Avoid Solitude

Of greater value than matchmaking services of friends and Church members are the time and companionship many so freely offer. Married couples who embrace me within their social circles by including me in family home evenings or other activities help sustain me during periods of temptation and loneliness. They exemplify the Savior’s admonition to cast a wide net of inclusion:

“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

“And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?” (Matthew 5:46–47).

The most wrongheaded thought I occasionally experience is feeling left out of the Church’s teachings on family and marriage. Time spent interacting with families allows

me to feel I have a part in the doctrine on family. In sharing their time, families fulfill the decree of discipleship that we are to be “willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light” (Mosiah 18:8).

Time with righteous friends and their families also helps make the difference in my making correct choices. When I am feeling most alone is when I am most tempted to look for improper companionship. Associating instead with gospel-oriented families helps me choose the better course and gives me a taste of family blessings that someday can be mine through my faithfulness.

Sorrow Replaced by Joy

Whether you know or only sense that a righteous friend or family member is dealing with same-sex attraction, rest assured by virtue of his or her discipleship that he or she is not content to be facing these temptations. Please do not confuse temptation with transgression.

Our Father in Heaven and our Savior know our needs and can help those of us facing this challenge endure to the end. They accomplish this in part through true disciples who are willing to offer their time, understanding, and compassion. As we are thus strengthened in our righteous resolves and as we are obedient to the Savior’s teachings, our “bitterness of soul” will be replaced by joy and hope like that which Hannah felt when her prayers at last were answered (see 1 Samuel 2:1). We then will be better able to successfully meet the tests of this life and find our way home. ■

NOTES

1. “Same-Gender Attraction,” *Liabona*, Mar. 1996, 24; *Ensign*, Oct. 1995, 14.
2. Erin Eldridge, *Born That Way?* (1994), 33.
3. *Liabona*, Mar. 1996, 18; *Ensign*, Oct. 1995, 10.
4. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (1988), 75; emphasis added.
5. “Ye Are the Temple of God,” *Liabona*, Jan. 2001, 87; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 74.
6. See Neal A. Maxwell, “Enduring Well,” *Liabona*, Apr. 1999, 12; *Ensign*, Apr. 1997, 8; see also “Becoming a Disciple,” *Ensign*, June 1996, 15.
7. *Liabona*, Mar. 1996, 21; *Ensign*, Oct. 1995, 12.
8. “Reverence and Morality,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 47.
9. See, for example, Robert L. Spitzer, “Can Some Gay Men and Lesbians Change Their Sexual Orientation? 200 Participants Reporting a Change from Homosexual to Heterosexual Orientation,” *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, Oct. 2003, 403–17.
10. See Boyd K. Packer, *Liabona*, Jan. 2001, 87; *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 74.

Feeling the Love of the Lord through Generosity

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.

How Have You Experienced the Generosity of the Lord?

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Among the perfect attributes of our living God, one that is and will be a great blessing to us, is His generosity. Important though it is, this quality is one that tends to be less noted.

“God’s generosity is associated with divine gladness, such as is evoked when His children keep His commandments. He is quick to bless and is delighted to honor the faithful (see D&C 76:5). God’s generosity is expressed also in His long-suffering, His being always ready to respond when His children are inclined to ‘feel after Him’ (see Acts 17:27; D&C 112:13)” (*If Thou Endure It Well* [1996], 39).

President John Taylor (1808–87):

“If we have life, or health, or possessions; if we have children, and friends and homes, if we have the light of truth, the blessings of the everlasting gospel, the revelations of God, the holy priesthood, with all its blessings

and government and rule, all these and every true enjoyment that we possess come from God. We do not always realize this, but it is nevertheless true that to God we are indebted for every good and perfect gift” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* [2001], 175).

How Can You Express Generosity?

2 Corinthians 9:7: “According as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president: “When Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society, he called us to ‘relieve the poor’ and ‘to save souls’ [*History of the Church*, 5:25]. When we fulfill this mandate, we are living welfare. . . . The Lord’s Storehouse—where ‘there is enough and to spare’—is [symbolically] what the Lord has placed in each of us (D&C 104:17). It is one woman making a difference for another. It is one sister offering to listen or talk with a sister who may be lonely. It is a sister developing a close friendship with the sister she visit teaches. It is you and me with our strengths, our skills, and our talents blessing the life of another.

“We choose what we give to the Lord’s Storehouse from what He has given us. Sisters, do you see the abundance we have to draw upon? What gifts have you been given that you can bring to the Lord’s Storehouse?” (“Welfare, the Crowning Principle of a Christian Life,” BYU Women’s Conference, 1 May 2003, 3).

President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency: “Be generous in your giving, that you yourselves may grow. Don’t give just for the benefit of the poor, but give for your own welfare. Give enough so that you can give yourself into the kingdom of God through consecrating of your means and your time. Pay an honest tithing and a generous fast offering if you want the blessings of heaven. I promise every one of you who will do it that you will increase your own prosperity, both spiritually and temporally. The Lord will reward you according to your deeds” (“The Blessing of the Fast,” *Tambuli*, Dec. 1982, 4; see *Ensign*, July 1982, 4). ■



Teaching as the Savior Taught



As we make an effort to teach as the Savior taught, we become more like Him.

The Savior used memory questions, reasoning questions, and questions for the heart. We can use them also.

BY ELDER WALTER F. GONZÁLEZ
Of the Seventy

Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am” (3 Nephi 27:27). This invitation from the Savior to become as He is reaches into all aspects of our lives, including our responsibility as teachers of the gospel. We can learn to become better teachers not only from His precepts but also from the way He taught.

The Savior used a variety of approaches to touch the lives of those around Him. Notice, for example, the way He asked questions. Among the questions the Savior asked were those that probed the memory of His listeners, those intended to provoke reasoning, and those directed to His followers’ feelings.

Memory Questions

On a certain occasion a lawyer, an interpreter of the law, asked the Lord what he should do to inherit eternal life. The Savior responded to this question with other questions, saying: “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” (Luke 10:26).

The answer was found in the lawyer’s memory. Once he answered correctly, the Savior reinforced the individual by saying, “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live” (Luke 10:28).

On another occasion, “Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat” (Matthew 12:1). Then the Pharisees said that His disciples were breaking the law of the Sabbath. The Savior responded with questions aimed at the Pharisees’ memory:

“Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;

“How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not



lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?" (Matthew 12:3–4).

Questions that jog the memory of others are probably the easiest for us to use. These questions tend to show how well class members know the letter of the law. As a new young member, I assumed that these were the kind of questions teachers should ask. Therefore, I tried to acquire some knowledge of historical events—names, dates, places, and so forth. This was a good thing to do, because most of the questions in school and in the Church were memory questions, intended to give class members an opportunity to participate in the lesson. These were good questions, but they did not have a strong impact on my behavior or on my becoming more like Him. It is important to note that the Savior also used other kinds of questions to help His listeners in the quest to become as He is.

Reasoning Questions

When the lawyer asked the question “Who is my neighbour?” the Savior related the parable of the good Samaritan and afterward asked, “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?” (Luke 10:29, 36).

This question made the lawyer and other listeners reason to find an answer. This kind of question makes us rely on our ability to discover knowledge. Questions such as “What do you think of . . . ?” or “What is your opinion about . . . ?” or “Why . . . ?” can help us understand one another (see D&C 50:22). Consider the following examples from the Savior’s teaching:

“*How think ye?* if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?” (Matthew 18:12; emphasis added).

“*But what think ye?* A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard” (Matthew 21:28; emphasis added).

Sometimes rhetorical questions—questions asked with

no answer expected—can also help increase understanding between the one preaching and the one listening. In the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord said:

“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?”

“And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?” (Matthew 5:46–47).

My wife remembers how her life was touched by a question the missionaries asked. She had an extensive religious background, and one day her brother invited her to hear the missionaries. After teaching doctrine, they directed a question at her reasoning: “Why do you think The



The Savior asked a question that allowed the disciples to express their own feelings: “But whom say ye that I am?”

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true Church?” The thoughts this question inspired affected her in such a way that a few seconds later her feelings were also touched. Tears came to her eyes on answering that question, and the Spirit testified to her, thus deepening the conversion process she experienced.

Questions for the Heart

Each of us has been asked questions that help us express our feelings. We also know that we will not express our feelings unless we feel confident they will not be criticized. Such was the case when the Savior directed questions to His listeners’ hearts.

In the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, the Savior asked His disciples, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” The disciples answered that some were saying He was John the Baptist; others said Jeremias or one of the prophets.

Then the Savior asked a question that allowed the disciples to express their own feelings: “*But whom say ye that I am?*”

Simon Peter shared his feelings: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Our Master reinforced the answer of the chief Apostle by saying, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 16:13–17; emphasis added).



During another teaching opportunity after Martha's brother Lazarus had died, the Savior first testified of Himself by saying, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Then He directed a question to Martha's heart: *"Believest thou this?"*

Martha was able to express her feelings: "Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (John 11:25–27; emphasis added).

We know that "when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men" (2 Nephi 33:1). Appropriate questions directed to the heart can invite the Spirit into any teaching situation.

At a recent family gathering a family member told of a question a missionary asked that had touched her heart. After teaching the first discussion, this missionary simply asked her, "How did you feel about our teachings?" This question created an excellent and edifying conclusion for the discussion.

Questions that allow people to express their feelings might include: "Why do you believe . . . ?" or "How do you feel about . . . ?" or "Have any of you had an experience with . . . ?" All teachers need to understand

that when feelings are expressed, we are standing on sacred ground. Feelings should not be demanded, but when shared willingly, they should always be respected and never criticized in any way.

Learn of Him

The Savior is the exemplary teacher from whom we can learn to teach in our homes, in the Church, and in the community. As He said to the Nephites, "Behold I am the light; I have set an example for you" (3 Nephi 18:16). Or as He explained to His disciples, "Ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do" (3 Nephi 27:21).

An excellent exercise in our schooling to become Christlike is observing the kind of questions we ask others in formal and informal teaching settings. Asking questions to retrieve information will teach us about others' knowledge. Asking questions that cause others to reason will help them discover truths. Asking questions that allow others to express feelings will take us onto sacred ground in the conversion and edifying of those we love. As we make an effort to teach as He taught, we become more like Him. ■

The Savior is the exemplary teacher from whom we can learn to teach in our homes, in the Church, and in the community. As He said to the Nephites, "Behold I am the light; I have set an example for you."

The GIFT and GUIDE

BY ELDER JORGE L. DEL CASTILLO

Area Authority Seventy
South America South Area



Cultivating the Holy Ghost as our guide can protect us as well as lead us to a testimony of the truth.

Where I grew up, just outside Buenos Aires, Argentina, soccer is very popular. When I was 10 or 11 years old, the boys in my neighborhood would get together to play in an empty lot on a corner where the truck and bus traffic was heavy.

One day as I sat on my bike at the curb watching some older boys play, I heard a voice say, “Jorge, scoot over.” I looked around, but there wasn’t anyone there with me. I was alone.

But I paid attention. I moved my bike just around the corner of the lot and went on watching the game from the curb of the other street. No more than a minute later, two trucks collided in the intersection and slid into the curb where I had been standing.

If I had stayed there, they would have smashed me. But someone told me—and I know who it was—that I should move just around the corner.

As members of the Church of Jesus Christ, we are blessed to have the gift of the Holy Ghost. If we will obey His promptings, we will be protected—not just physically, as I was at the soccer game, but spiritually as well. Doing what is right isn’t always as easy as pedaling your bike a few feet, but cultivating the Holy

Ghost as our guide can protect us as well as lead us to a testimony of the truth.

Standing Firm

As a teen I studied in a technical school for young men. It was hard to be a member of the Church in an atmosphere where there were other beliefs or no beliefs at all. Being the only member in school was difficult because I felt alone; I felt different. My classmates were relatively good, but many didn’t share my principles.

I remember well one time when they wanted to get me to smoke. They didn’t say it directly. Instead, one of them lit a cigarette while we were in our classroom waiting for the professor. We weren’t supposed to smoke inside the school.

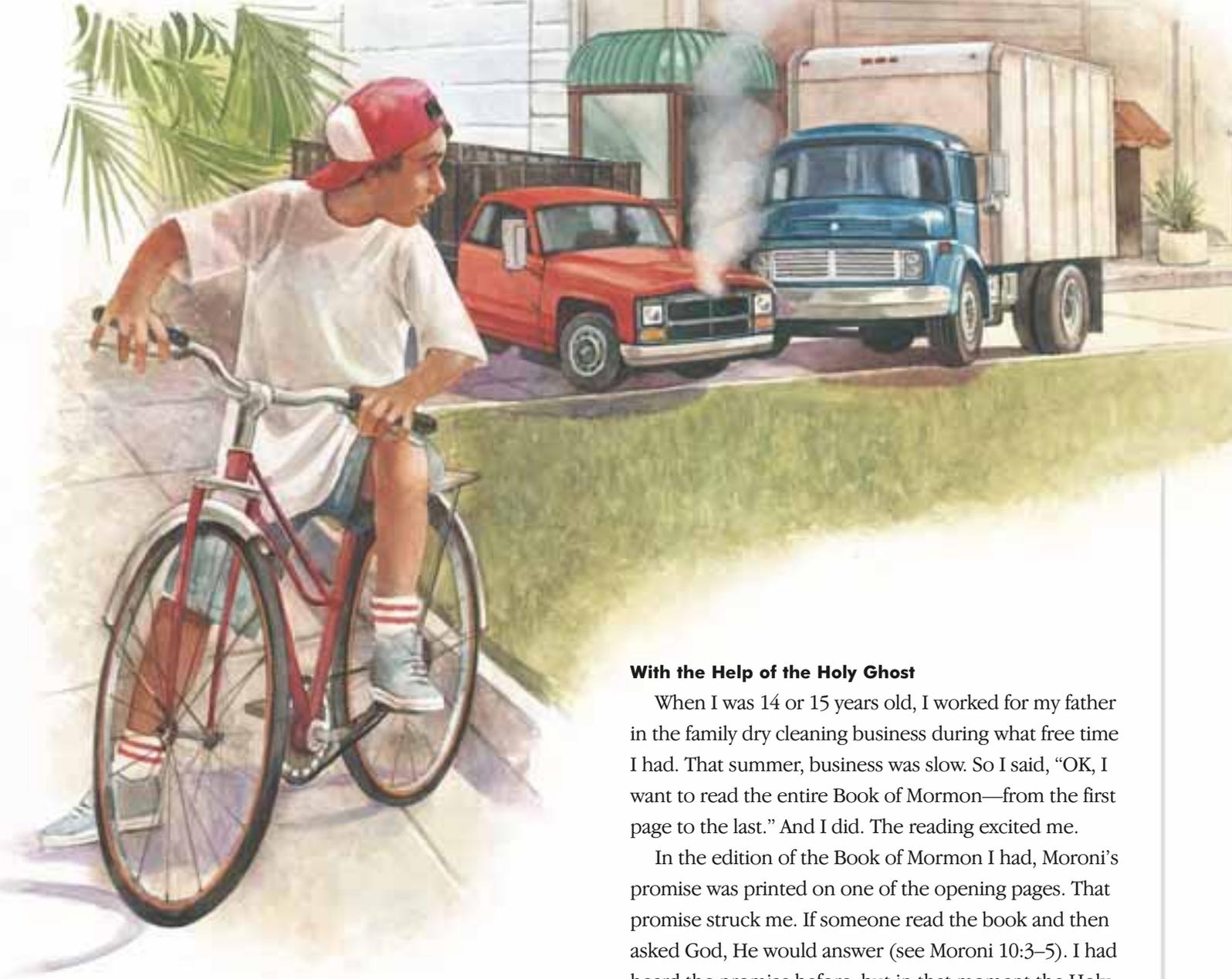
I was sitting in the back. The guys at the front of the room lit the cigarette, and they each took a puff and passed it on. Everyone was watching to see it get to me. Finally the guy in front of me took a puff and turned around.

I didn’t take the cigarette.

He said, “Come on. Go ahead.”

“No, I’m not going to smoke.”

He took the cigarette and put it to my



mouth. So I hit him. He hit me back. Then almost everyone in the room started to fight, though we quickly calmed down before the professor got there.

Now I'm not saying that was the right way to respond, but I was only 13. I didn't know how to respond. I just knew no one was going to make me smoke.

After class I found the boy I had hit and asked his forgiveness. With some emotion, he told me, "No, I'm the one who needs to ask your forgiveness."

If I had lowered my standards, would the Holy Ghost have stayed with me? Or would I have lost my guide?

By choosing the right, I allowed the Holy Ghost to be my companion. With Him as my guide, I had help making the right decisions, and my testimony was strengthened.

With the Help of the Holy Ghost

When I was 14 or 15 years old, I worked for my father in the family dry cleaning business during what free time I had. That summer, business was slow. So I said, "OK, I want to read the entire Book of Mormon—from the first page to the last." And I did. The reading excited me.

In the edition of the Book of Mormon I had, Moroni's promise was printed on one of the opening pages. That promise struck me. If someone read the book and then asked God, He would answer (see Moroni 10:3–5). I had heard the promise before, but in that moment the Holy Ghost impressed it upon my heart.

After finishing the last page of the book, I knelt in a small private room at work and prayed to Heavenly Father. And through the Holy Ghost I received the testimony I sought. From the tip of my toes to the last hair on my head, I felt that the Book of Mormon was the word of God and that Joseph Smith was a prophet.

As the years have passed I have had other sacred experiences with the Holy Ghost, but I have always remembered these first experiences. The Holy Ghost has helped me make good decisions. He guided me as I tried to live the gospel. He guided me in my decision to serve a mission. He guided me in finding a wonderful spouse—one of the most important decisions anyone will make in this life.

If you will strive to live worthy of His companionship, the Holy Ghost will guide you too. ■

Family Home Evening SUGGESTION BOX



These once-in-a-while ideas for family home evening can add variety to your Monday nights.

Like most of us, Matthew and Judy Morrise of the West Hills Ward, Beaverton Oregon Stake, are always looking for new ideas for family home evening lessons and activities. The *Family Home Evening Resource Book* (item no. 31106) is the mainstay, but other ideas are also welcome. While looking through the resource book, Judy Morrise came across an idea calling for the use of a suggestion box.

“This seemed like a good way to find out how our children felt about family home evening,” says Sister Morrise. “I made the box and placed it on a shelf where I knew the children would see it. Imagine my delight when after a few days I found notes from my six-year-old and eight-year-old daughters. They wanted to use the family home evening ideas they saw monthly in the *Friend* magazine. We gave it a try, and within the next two months each girl gave a short lesson that included an opening song, scripture references, a story, and an activity. Of course, we ended with treats.”

The suggestion box worked for the Morrises. Following is a “suggestion box” for you, full of family home evening ideas and testimonies gathered from readers. As you read these suggestions, choose some that best fit your situation and give them a try.

Feast upon the Scriptures

The scriptures are a ready source of family home evening lessons. When Sister Fortunata Mandalari of the Reggio Calabria Branch, Calabria Italy District, took a vacation to visit her daughter’s family, she turned to the scriptures for a family home evening lesson.

“I prepared a piece of paper for each of the seven family members,” she says, “and I wrote on it: ‘For the next family home evening, come prepared with your favorite scripture and a comment. You will have five minutes.’”

“On Monday, when we sat down at the table, there was already a peaceful feeling. I knew everything was going to go well. Each family member spoke of a different scripture, and everyone had a chance to speak up and learn from one another. We were so happy with this format that we used it for the remainder of my vacation.

“After I returned home, my daughter told me that her family still enjoys this approach for family home evening. Everyone studies, speaks, and listens. There is no time for boredom.”

Pray for Inspiration

Susan Wolf, now of the Vashon Branch, Seattle Washington Stake, remembers when she received inspiration for a special family home evening. “We had just moved, and I was expecting a new baby,” says Sister Wolf. “With two preschoolers, I wanted to find a family home evening on the topic of preparing children for a new sibling. Nothing I read seemed quite right. So I prayed. My great desire was for our children to realize that having more children in our family did not equate to less love for them. And I wanted to emphasize that Jesus Christ is the source of all love. As I got up from my knees, an idea occurred to me.

“That Monday evening after singing and having an opening prayer, I handed each child a paper cup. I poured water into each cup and asked, ‘What happens if I run out of water?’ My son answered, ‘You go to the sink and fill up the pitcher, Mommy.’

“I explained, ‘We are going to have a new baby, and Mommy will be much busier. I won’t have as much time to play with you. But Mommy won’t run out of love for you. Do you know why?’

“This time my son and his three-year-old sister looked thoughtful but didn’t have an answer. I said, ‘I’ll just pray to Heavenly Father, and Jesus will fill up my heart with more love. So everyone in the family will have all the love they need.’ My children broke into happy smiles, as did my husband. The feelings in our hearts confirmed

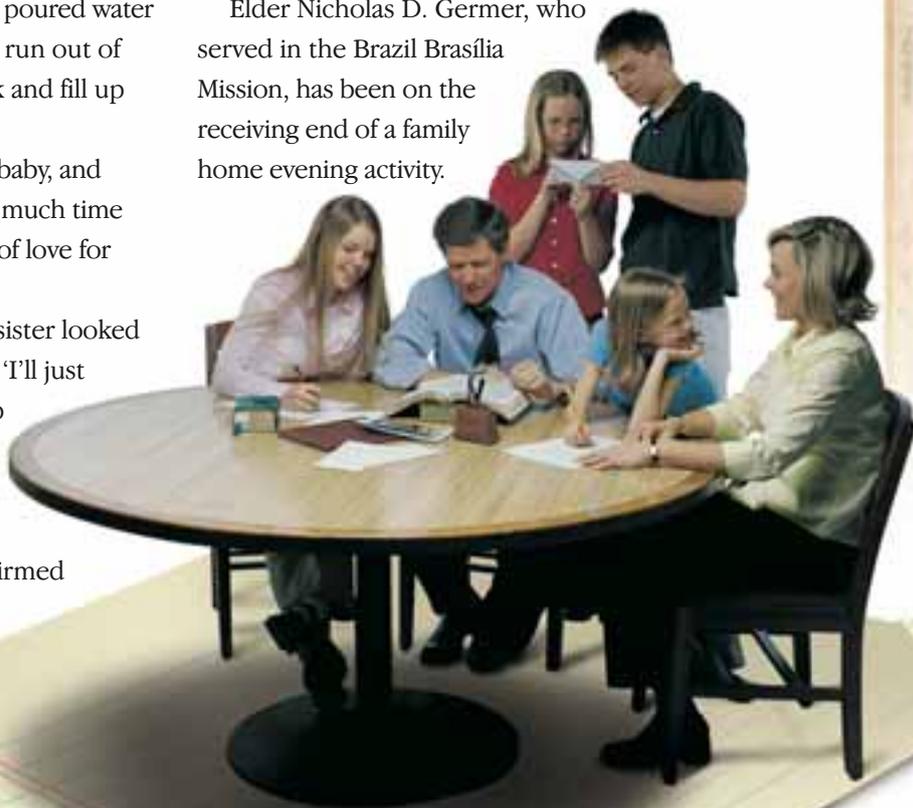
the presence of the Holy Ghost bearing testimony of the truth that God is love.

“My daughter, now 23, recently repeated word for word this family home evening lesson of years ago. That was a testimony to me that even a very small child can be spiritually taught when love is the subject and Jesus Christ is the source.”

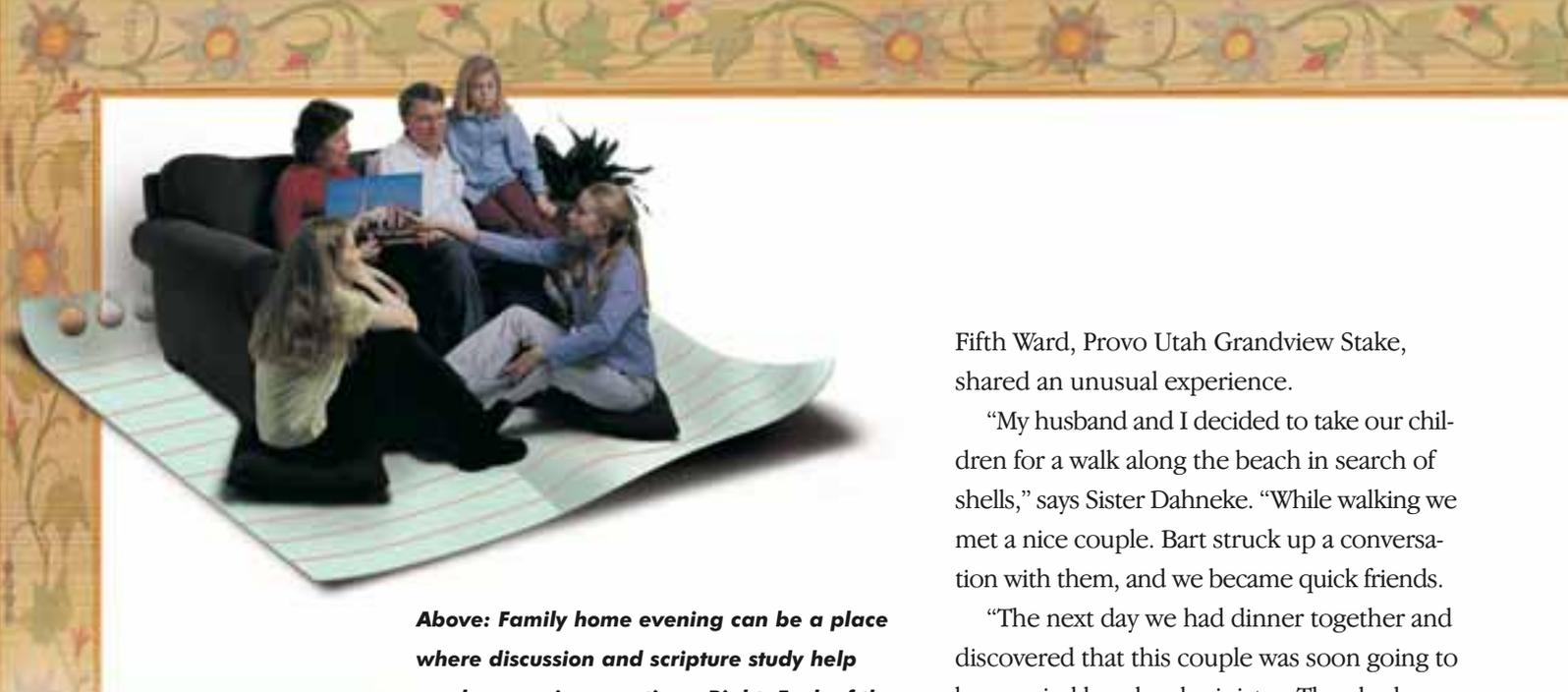
Write to the Missionaries

Even though she was 90 years old, Aletha Gilbert of the Lakeview Ward, Bountiful Utah Central Stake, loved to invite her family over for family home evening. Before her death in 2002, Aletha wrote of these special home evenings: “I make sure I have a supply of pens or pencils, writing paper, and envelopes. Sometimes I address the envelopes in advance. We each write a message to missionaries in the family and ward. What fun! Everyone likes this idea—the one who sends it and the one who receives it.”

Elder Nicholas D. Germer, who served in the Brazil Brasília Mission, has been on the receiving end of a family home evening activity.



Families can relax together as they write letters or prepare packages for missionaries.



Above: Family home evening can be a place where discussion and scripture study help resolve pressing questions. Right: Each of the Church magazines has suggestions on how specific articles can be used for a family home evening lesson.

When you hold family home evening week after week, lesson after lesson, some Monday evenings may seem like failures and others may exceed your greatest hopes. But it's consistency that is essential.

He writes: "I received three letters from members of a family that I knew before my mission. They wrote the letters during a family home evening, and the three-year-old daughter even got help from her father to write to me. I could feel their love and will never forget these letters."

Another family has a new idea for writing to missionaries. They spread out a large piece of paper. Then each family member takes a colored marker and writes a message in a circle, pattern, or other fun and interesting way. The young children frame off a section and draw a picture. Then they fold up the paper and mail it in a large envelope. Missionaries can hang this "banner" on their walls and enjoy it for weeks.

Draw upon Life Experiences

When your family shares an experience that results in gospel questions, family home evening can be a place where discussion and scripture study help resolve pressing questions.

During a family vacation, the Bart and LeAnne Dahneke family of the Grandview

Fifth Ward, Provo Utah Grandview Stake, shared an unusual experience.

"My husband and I decided to take our children for a walk along the beach in search of shells," says Sister Dahneke. "While walking we met a nice couple. Bart struck up a conversation with them, and we became quick friends.

"The next day we had dinner together and discovered that this couple was soon going to be married by a local minister. They had no family with them, so they invited us to serve as witnesses. We agreed.

"The wedding was held on a beautiful beach as the sun was setting over a calm, clear ocean. The bride and groom were radiant as they held hands and made the promise to love, honor, and respect each other. My children were happy for our new friends, but they had a lot of questions about the wedding ceremony. So our next family home evening was on eternal marriage.

"We talked about the importance of eternal marriage as found in D&C 132:15, 19. We taught our children about the importance of living their lives so they are worthy to go to the temple to be sealed for eternity. We felt the inspiration of the Holy Ghost as we talked about the beauty of a temple marriage and its eternal sealing power, compared to an earthly wedding and its 'until death do us part' promise.

"Drawing upon this shared experience provided a powerful foundation to teach the gospel principles surrounding eternal marriage. Our children were receptive because they had experienced firsthand the wedding on the beach. We were motivated because we know firsthand the joys of temple marriage. The result was a powerful family home evening."

Use Church Magazines

“You don’t have to be a child to enjoy the activities in the children’s section of the *Liabona*,” says Martha Mabel Martínez of the Caleta Olivia Ward, Comodoro Rivadavia Argentina Stake. “Our family consists of my father, my mother, and me—their grown daughter. It used to be very difficult for us to hold family home evening, but ever since we started using the children’s section, everything has improved—especially the good spirit we feel when we’re together. Sometimes other members of our family just happen to come by, and they participate too and are just as enthusiastic about family home evening as we are.”

Ideas for family home evening are found in all Church magazines—on page 1 of the *Liabona*, on the “Making the Most of This Issue” page in the *Ensign*, on the “What’s in It for You” page in the *New Era*, and on the “Guide to the *Friend*” page in the *Friend*. A family home evening can also be built around a subject from the topic index found in each Church magazine. Linked to each topic are stories or articles found in that issue. It is easy to read a story or article together and then discuss a particular topic.

Be Consistent

When you hold family home evening week after week, lesson after lesson, some Monday evenings may seem like failures and others may exceed your greatest hopes. But it’s consistency that is essential.

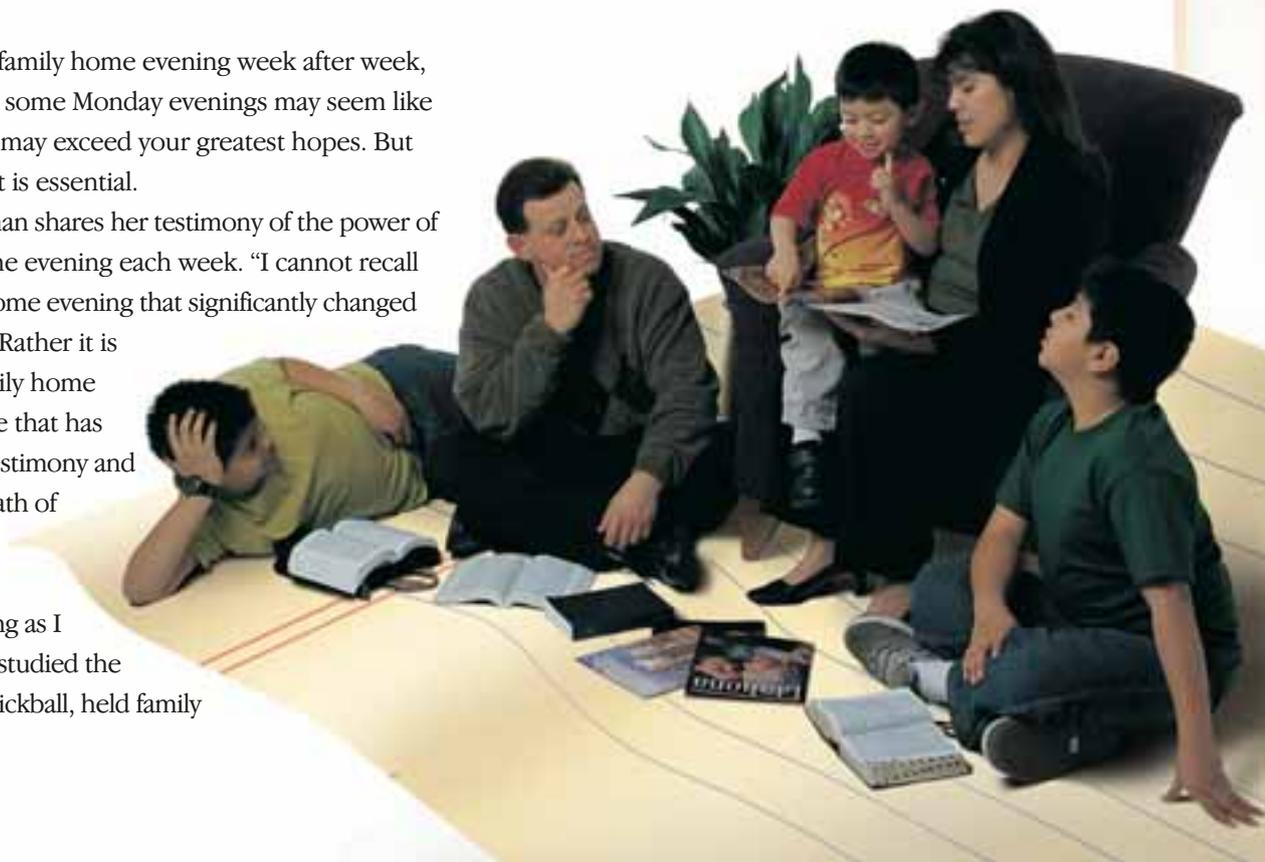
One young woman shares her testimony of the power of holding family home evening each week. “I cannot recall one single family home evening that significantly changed my life,” she says. “Rather it is my memory of family home evenings as a whole that has strengthened my testimony and led me down the path of truth. We spent each Monday night as a family for as long as I can remember. We studied the scriptures, played kickball, held family

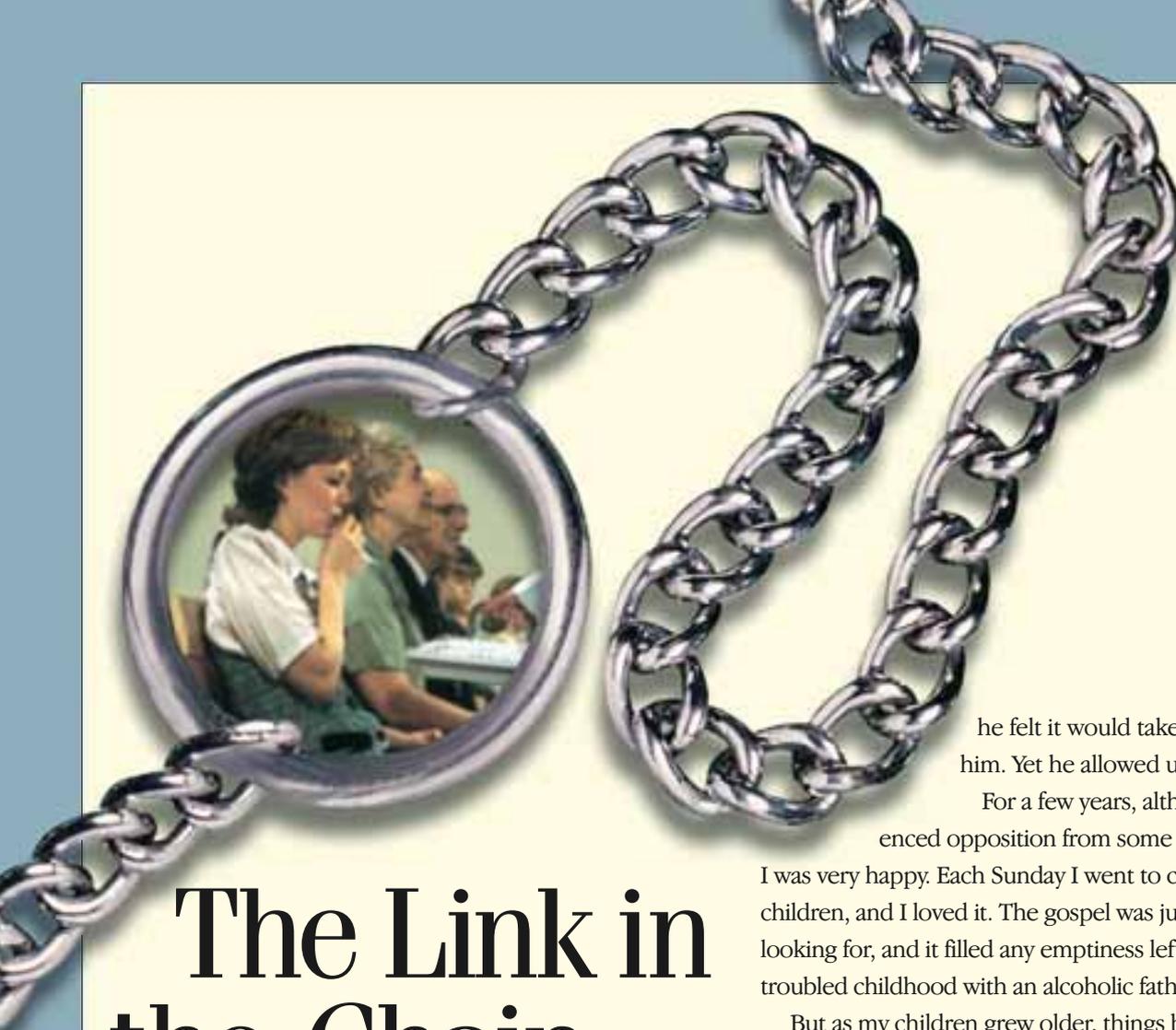
councils, played games, and learned to love and respect one another despite our individual faults and weaknesses. My father eagerly tried to instill in us a love for the gospel and the happiness that could be ours if we obeyed the commandments.

“By the time I turned 14, I refused to go to church, but family home evenings continued. My father continued to have hope for me. Eventually family home evening became my only link to the gospel of Jesus Christ. I headed down the wrong path and made several mistakes, but somewhere deep inside my heart I knew that the gospel was true and that nothing I did could change that fact.

“At the age of 18, I knew I had to make a decision: Would I follow the Savior or would I follow the world? I could not serve two masters. I chose to follow the Lord and through repentance returned to full Church activity. I believe it was the determination of my father to continue to hold family home evening—even though I chafed against it—that made the difference.

“Now my husband and I hope to help instill a love of the Savior and His Church in our children through, of course, regular family home evening.” ■





The Link in the Chain

When my children chose not to attend church with me, it broke my heart, and I wondered if I could continue my own Church activity.

BY EVA FRY

In 1970 I joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I was well prepared: I did not use alcohol, smoke cigarettes, or drink tea or coffee. I had quit all those things when I realized it was time for me to change my life and find a church where I could take my children.

My conversion had begun after my sister-in-law developed a favorable opinion of the Church and arranged for me to receive the Church magazines. I later read the Book of Mormon, and I recognized its truthfulness. My three children and I were baptized shortly thereafter. My husband was not keen on this new life his family was living, because

he felt it would take us away from him. Yet he allowed us to attend.

For a few years, although I experienced opposition from some family members, I was very happy. Each Sunday I went to church with my children, and I loved it. The gospel was just what I was looking for, and it filled any emptiness left over from my troubled childhood with an alcoholic father.

But as my children grew older, things began to change. They wanted to be boating with their dad on Sundays rather than sitting in meetings. All of a sudden I found myself going to church alone. I was hurt. I would drive to church, sit by myself, cry, and go back home again.

Finally I told my stake president I was going to quit attending church because it was breaking up my family. He counseled me to ask Heavenly Father if that was what He wanted me to do. I accordingly went home to fast and pray, and I received my answer. My mind was impressed with the following words: "You are the link in the chain. If you break the link, everything will be lost." These words sank deep into my heart, and I made a commitment that I would continue my activity in the Church.

It was hard for me to go alone because I was very shy, and I realized my children had been my security blanket. Once again, I took my problem to the Lord. This time I felt impressed to draw closer to my ward family. So I would go to church, look for someone else who was alone, and force myself to speak to that person. Over the years my fear has left me, and now I have many friends in my ward.

KEEP THE CHAIN UNBROKEN



"I thought of an experience I had long, long ago. In the summer we lived on a farm. We had a little old tractor. There was a dead tree I wished to pull. I

fastened one end of a chain to the tractor and the other end to the tree. As the tractor began to move, the tree shook a little, and then the chain broke.

"I looked at that broken link and wondered how it could have given way. I went to the hardware store and bought a repair link. I put it together again, but it was an awkward and ugly connection. The chain was never, never the same.

"As I sat . . . pondering these things, I said to myself, 'Never permit yourself to become a weak link in the chain of your generations.' It is so important that we pass on without a blemish our inheritance of body and brain and, if you please, faith and virtue untarnished to the generations who will come after us.

"You young men and you young women, most of you will marry and have children. Your children will have children, as will the children who come after them. Life is a great chain of generations that we in the Church believe must be linked together."

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Keep the Chain Unbroken," in *Brigham Young University 1999–2000 Speeches* (2000), 108–9.

My commitment to faithfully attend church has also paid off. One by one my children have returned to the Church, and all three are active. They are raising my nine grandchildren in the gospel, and each one is walking in righteousness.

My mother and sister have been converted also. My sister's husband is a bishop, and two of her children have served missions. My son also served a mission, and a grandson is currently serving. Our family is very close, and although my husband has not yet joined the Church, he has grown in many ways.

I thank Heavenly Father every day for my blessings and for the happiness and joy I experience in my family. I am so grateful I took to heart the answer to my prayer: "You are the link in the chain." ■

Eva Fry is a member of the Valley Center First Ward, Escondido California Stake.



Putting Family First in Ukraine

Saints in Kharkov, Ukraine, work to strengthen their families despite many obstacles.

BY MARINA MIKHAILOVSKAYA AND BENJAMIN GAINES

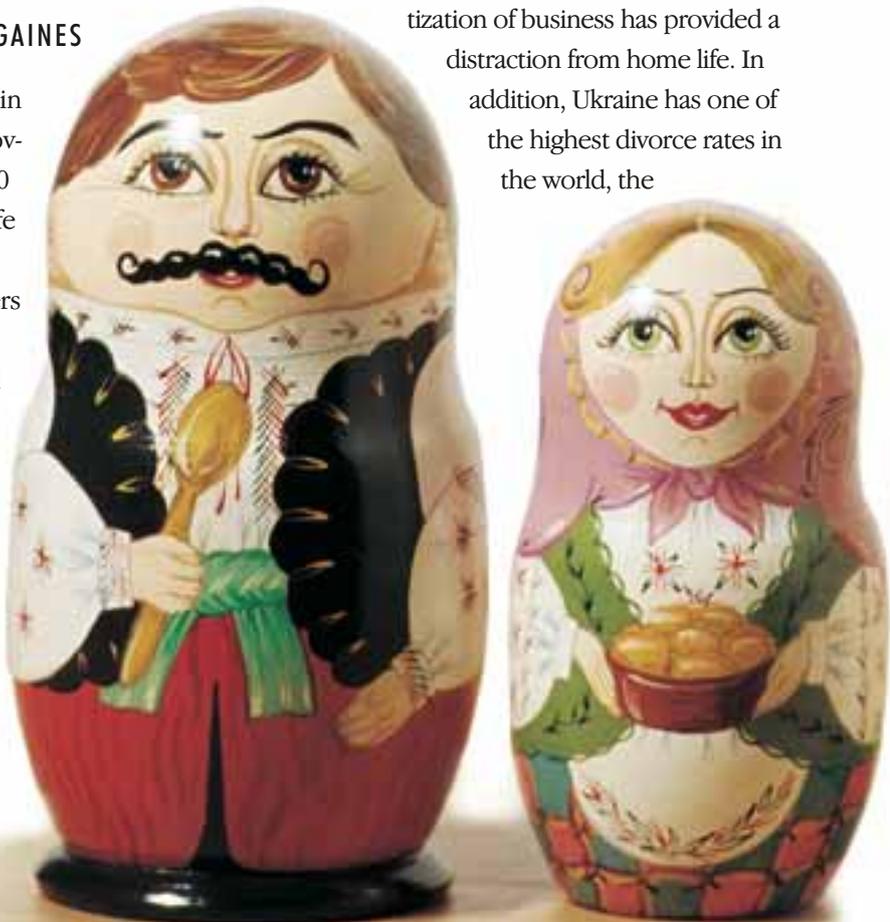
On the morning of 19 August 1991, families in Ukraine woke up to startling news: The government they had lived under for nearly 70 years had suddenly ceased to exist. In an instant, life changed forever.

Dmitry Mikulin from Kharkov, Ukraine, remembers well both that morning and the disorienting days that followed. “We went to sleep in one country and woke up in another,” he says. “Almost immediately, people began to experience real freedom in many facets of life.”

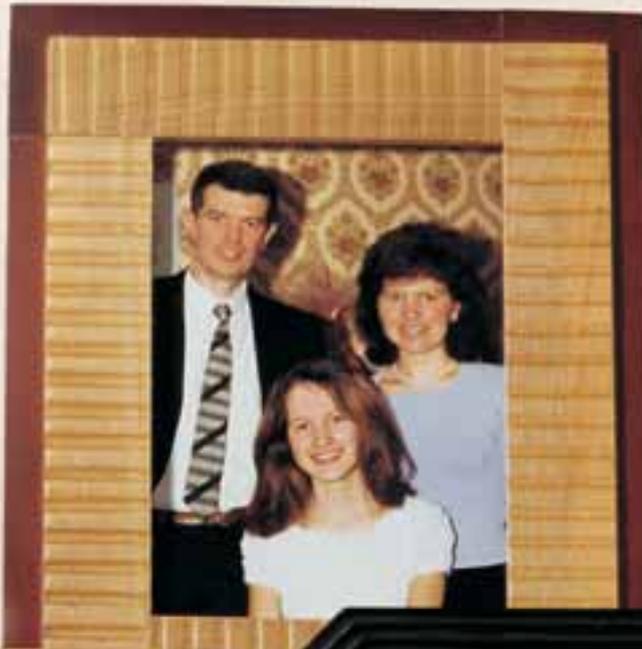
Many viewed the freedom to believe in God as a great blessing. Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicated the land of Ukraine for the preaching of the restored gospel on 12 September 1991. A year later missionaries first came to Kharkov, Ukraine’s second largest city. And in January 1993, a branch was organized in the residential Alekseyevka area of town.

In his dedicatory prayer, Elder Packer asked “that the people [in Ukraine] will be blessed with food and clothing and shelter.” Obtaining these

necessities has been a challenge for most citizens of Ukraine. Many have had to work long hours at the expense of family time. For others, the opportunity to grow rich through privatization of business has provided a distraction from home life. In addition, Ukraine has one of the highest divorce rates in the world, the



The Chervyakov (left), Mikulin (far left), and Yemtsov (below) families are helping to make family a priority in Ukraine.





number of out-of-wedlock births is increasing, and more couples are choosing to have one child or to remain childless. Somehow, for many citizens of Ukraine, the family has seemed to lose much of its significance.

But Latter-day Saints in Kharkov say the Church has helped restore their faith in the family. Dmitry, a returned missionary who recently moved from Kharkov to Moscow and now serves as second counselor in the Russia Moscow South Mission presidency, is one of these valiant Saints. He was sealed to his mother and father in the Freiberg Germany Temple in April 2000 and to his wife, Viktoriya, in the Stockholm Sweden Temple in August 2003.

“When we heard of the restored gospel, it gave us hope, a strong foundation, and faith in eternal life for our family,” he says. “Those problems that once seemed important became insignificant. Priorities in the family changed; values and the feelings of confidence and protection appeared.”

Dmitry’s father, Sergey, is currently Kharkov district president. He adds, “Our Church is the only place where people learn the truth about the family.”

Because of this fact, members of the Alekseyevka Branch are committed to building on eternal principles to strengthen families, not just their own but also other families who are striving to be in the world but not of the world (see John 17:11–14). The “family first” attitude has helped many here to achieve happiness in home life despite those distractions inherent in modern Ukraine. For Saints in Alekseyevka, the family and eternal goals permeate everything they do.

Stand Ye in Holy Places

Vitaly Yemtsov served in the Soviet army on the East German side of the Berlin Wall in 1988. “I had a normal childhood,” Brother Yemtsov says, “but when I lived in Germany, I saw how families suffered under a foreign government. I felt bad for them. Soldiers often treated them harshly. After that experience, I wanted to have a better family life than those I saw, better even than the family in which I grew up.”

After his service in the army, Vitaly Yemtsov and a childhood friend became dissatisfied with the spiritual emptiness they felt and dedicated themselves to finding the truth. Both quickly accepted the restored gospel just months after the Church was introduced in Kharkov. “When I met the missionaries, I finally found spiritual food, especially for the family,” he says. “I found what is lacking all around us.”

However, faith does not free Brother Yemtsov and his wife, Lyudmila, from the family-threatening pressures and challenges of life. Within 18 months, both left well-paying jobs that required too much sacrifice of family time. Both found new jobs offering comparable salaries. Even so, everyday life often makes it difficult to focus on the family. Brother Yemtsov works nine hours a day, six days a week painting and repairing cars. Sister Yemtsova until recently worked as a warehouse manager. She now works at a care center for the elderly. In addition, Vitaly serves as branch president and as an institute teacher, and Lyudmila is district Young Women president.

Like others in their country, the Yemtsovs continually face challenges stemming from influences that subtly work against the family. Brother Yemtsov often feels isolated at work as the only employee who neither smokes nor drinks. “Everyone was surprised when I told them that I don’t do any of that,” he says. “Some considered me crazy in the beginning. Most respect me for it though.”

Alcoholism is a serious problem in Ukraine; some people do not know anyone who does not drink. Smoking is almost as widespread, especially among youth. Pornographic images are visible on advertisements and are for sale on almost any street corner.

“There is temptation everywhere,” says Sister Yemtsova. “Satan works diligently here. But the Spirit works diligently

too. We find that it is not just how much time we spend together as a family but also what we do during that time that is important. And we make it a priority to do things that strengthen our bond.” For example, they say that family prayer and scripture study have become crucial, daily reminders of the importance of family happiness.

“The Lord said, ‘Stand ye in holy places,’ ” says Brother Yemtsov (D&C 87:8). “We try to make our home our own holy place so time spent together here will bring us closer.”

Choosing What Is Important

If he so chose, Aleksandr Chervyakov could have it all materially. Nine years ago he founded his own food technology company. Clients come from all over Ukraine and even Russia to take advantage of his firm’s services. “Without the Church, I could have easily become one of those people who works all the time and earns more than enough money but lacks the blessings of a loving eternal family,” Brother Chervyakov admits.

Fortunately, when two young missionaries asked if he would like to know more about Jesus Christ, he said yes. He and his wife, Lyudmila, and daughter, Inna, were baptized in 1995. Since then he has reduced his time at work so that he can nurture relationships within his family as well as serve in the Church. He has been the branch president and is currently second counselor in the branch presidency. The Chervyakovs were sealed in the temple in August 1997.

“One thing that has helped us keep our priorities in order has been family home evening,” says Aleksandr. “It’s so easy to forget what is truly important. Monday nights provide a great opportunity to forget about everything that is not important and to concentrate on our family.”

He says of their family home evening activities: “We always read from the scriptures or from the *Liabona*. If there

are any family-related issues, we discuss them. Right now the question is, Which university will Inna enter when she graduates next year? We have been discussing that a lot lately. And we have fun. I think it’s a great secret of life that being with one’s family is fun. Sometimes we even dance.”

Sharing the Truth

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: “We believe that the family is the basic unit of society. You can’t have a strong community without strong families. You can’t have

a strong nation without strong families—the father, the mother, the children as one unit working together. Now the family is falling apart all over America, all over the world. If we can just cultivate good, wholesome family life among our members, I don’t worry very much about the future of this Church.”¹

Unfortunately, many families are struggling. However, there is tremendous hope because of the dedication of the Saints. Few people in Ukraine know the eternal principles that lead to happiness in the family, but the number is growing. As members live these teachings, their friends and family notice. Opportunities are abundant to share the peace members experience at home because of their diligence in establishing a house of God.

President Hinckley noted: “If we live the gospel, people will come into the Church. They will see the virtue of our lives, and they will be attracted to the message we have to teach. That message places great emphasis on the family.”² And it is a message the Saints in Kharkov have embraced. ■

Marina Mikbailovskaya is a member of the Alekseyevka Branch, Kharkov Ukraine District. Benjamin Gaines is a member of the Belmont First Ward, Cambridge Massachusetts Stake.

NOTES

1. From an interview with Ignacio Carrión, *El País*, 7 Nov. 1997; quoted in “Family Home Evening,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Mar. 2003, 5.
2. Quoted in *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Mar. 2003, 5.



The Alekseyevka Branch

Our Secret Angels

By Mary Bartschi

For a couple of weeks I had been noticing a small tremor in my right hand. I persuaded myself it was only stress. Raising seven children can be a challenge, but when five of those children have multiple disabilities, life can be overwhelming at times. My schedule was filled with doctors' appointments,

therapies, daily medication routines, and the constant challenge of helping children struggle with seizures, mental retardation, bipolar disorder, and congenital heart disease.

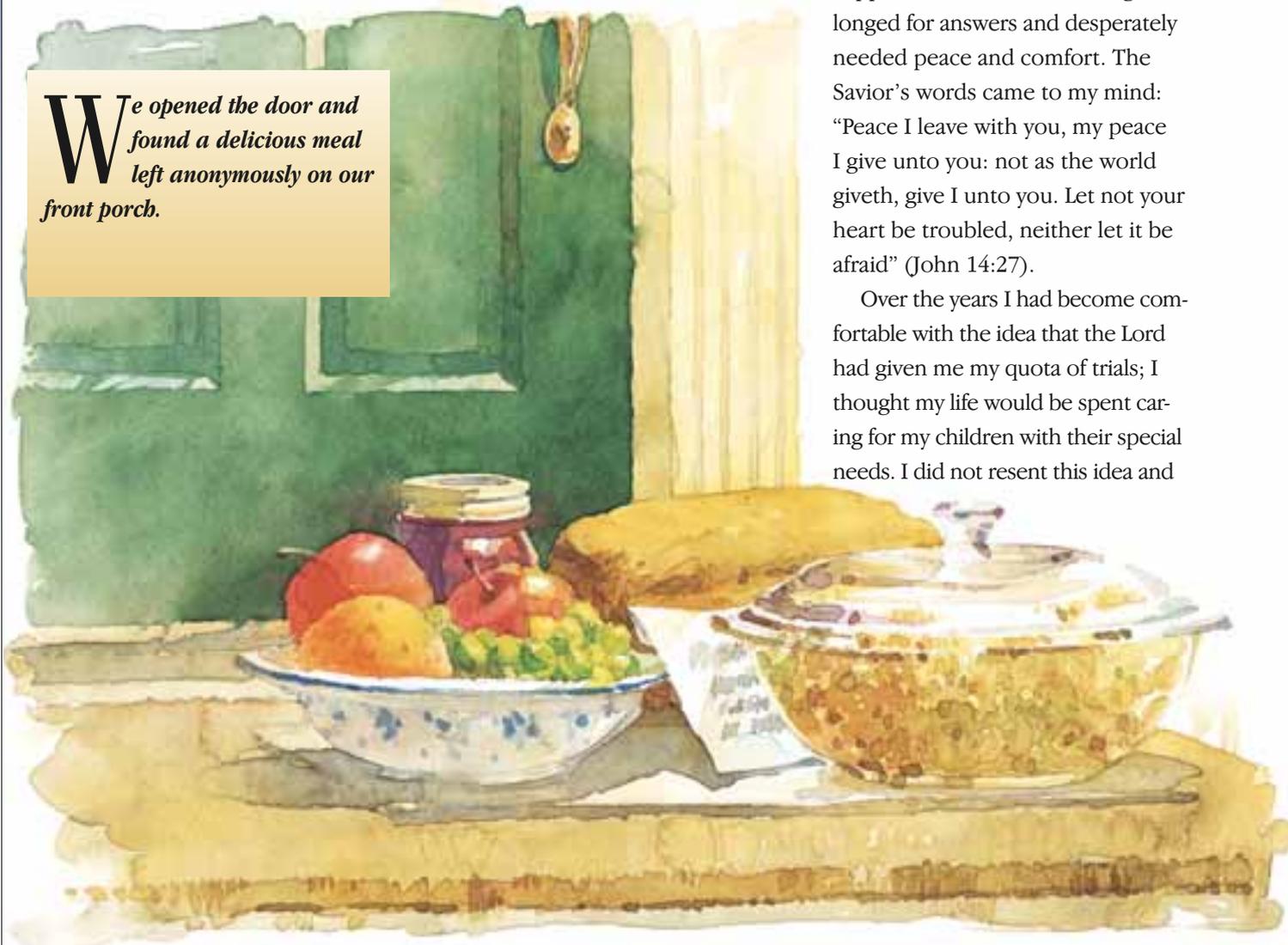
My husband, Ron, had recently been called as bishop of our ward. We were grateful for his opportunity to serve and prayed daily that he

would be able to bless the lives of those in our ward. Little did I realize that we would be the ones receiving the blessings.

Finally, I could ignore the tremor no more and sought medical help. As I left the doctor's office that day, my life had changed forever. Parkinson's disease was the diagnosis. Questions and fears flooded my mind. How would the disease progress? How would I care for my family? How would I continue to support Ron in his new calling? I longed for answers and desperately needed peace and comfort. The Savior's words came to my mind: "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" (John 14:27).

Over the years I had become comfortable with the idea that the Lord had given me my quota of trials; I thought my life would be spent caring for my children with their special needs. I did not resent this idea and

We opened the door and found a delicious meal left anonymously on our front porch.



Courage to Pray

By Dalnei de Assunção de Castro

even felt great peace and joy as I looked to my future. We had accepted the challenges and disabilities of both our sons, along with raising our two beautiful daughters. We even felt the strong desire to add to our family by adopting three more children with special needs. Each time we entered the adoption process, we experienced miracles as we were guided through each step of the way. There have been tremendous challenges but also tremendous blessings.

In the weeks following my diagnosis I often found myself on my knees, pleading with the Lord. I learned that Parkinson's is a progressive disease and that I would continue to lose control of my muscles. The more I read, the more frightened I became. I spent many sleepless nights. I also felt an impression from the first words of the diagnosis that there would be no miracles to remove this trial from me and that I needed to learn something from this experience. I felt so alone and wondered if the Lord was displeased with me, if He still loved me.

Then one night, as Ron was getting ready to go to Mutual, there was a knock at our door. We opened the door and found a delicious meal left anonymously on our front porch. A loving note stated that every week on this night a dinner would arrive. As I tasted the goodness of this delicious meal, not only was my body fed, but my spirit also. I realized I am not alone and the Lord does love me. I tasted again of the sweet peace

It seemed the year 1987 would never arrive. This was the year I would turn 18 and be able to serve in the Brazilian Air Force. When I could, I enlisted and dedicated myself entirely to serving my country.

After a Church leader challenged us to share the gospel, I decided to seek out someone who might be interested in the Church. After many frustrating attempts and feeling somewhat discouraged, I was reading the scriptures in my bunk when I noticed another serviceman kneeling in reverent prayer.

I decided to inquire about his religious affiliation. His response was like a ray of sunshine. He told me he had observed my lack of inhibition in praying at mealtime and before bed. He had always had the desire to pray but had never found the courage. Finally, he resolved to do it, even though he didn't know exactly what he would say in his prayer.

I asked him, "Would you like to learn how to say a prayer?" His response was a very definite yes. That night I taught him in essence the six missionary discussions and bore my testimony. The Spirit testified clearly to the two of us that it was all true.

The weeks passed, and he accepted my invitation to go to church. He

began hearing the discussions from the missionaries and participating in ward activities.

One day during lunch, after saying a prayer, he looked into my eyes and said, "I have decided. I want to be baptized." His words were like the



resounding of a cannon in my heart. I was surprised and happy, and he added to that when he said, "And I want you to baptize me." Then it was too much. Unable to contain my tears, I embraced him, and he said to me, "Thank you, my friend."

With the passing of time, we sent in our missionary applications, and he actually ended up leaving on a mission before I did. Today we are far from one another, but we have a strong link that will unite us beyond this mortal life. He married in the temple and has a beautiful family.

I am thankful for the inspired leader who challenged me to share the gospel with those around me and to be an example for others. ■

Dalnei de Assunção de Castro is a member of the Santa Clara Branch, São José Brazil Stake.

He has promised us. I was grateful for these dear secret angels who honored their baptismal covenants “to mourn with those that mourn” and “comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:9). I knew that through the ministering of these “earthly angels” I would find the strength to make it through each day.

It has now been more than three years since we found that first dinner. Every Mutual night since then we have received a wonderful meal, always left anonymously on our front porch. Ward boundaries have changed, and people have moved in and out of our ward. But the meals continue to come. Often I have struggled with a particularly difficult day, forgetting it is our “Secret Angels Day.” And then the doorbell rings, and I find another delicious gift of love.

My disease continues to progress, and there are still many unanswered questions. But I know I am not alone. I have felt the peace that comes from trusting the Lord and accepting His will. I know that many of the trials we encounter in this life are for our good and help turn our weaknesses into strengths. I also know that we do not have to bear our trials alone. The Lord always answers our prayers, but often the answers come through those who are willing to serve and be His “secret angels.” ■

Mary Bartschi is a member of the Continental Ranch Ward, Tucson Arizona North Stake.

What about Agabus?

By Eric Hendershot

While serving a mission in England, one morning I read Acts 11:28, which briefly mentions a prophet named Agabus who prophesied of a famine that eventually came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. At the time I didn’t give the seemingly insignificant verse much thought.

Two days later my district leader, Elder Gallafent, telephoned and said he wanted to do a companion exchange the next day. The next morning my companion and I took a bus to Southampton, where we met Elder Gallafent and his companion, Elder Langston. I set out contacting people door-to-door with Elder Langston while the other two drove back to Winchester.

Our morning had been uneventful until we knocked on a certain door just before lunch. The woman who answered the door was a neighbor visiting from the house next door. I soon learned that the woman who lived there was in the living room within reach of my voice.

When I announced we were missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the woman in the living room yelled that she was of another faith and knew all about the “Mormons” and wasn’t interested in learning more. When I replied that everyone should be interested in a living prophet on the

earth, she cried, “That’s not so! There are no prophets on the earth! Jesus Christ was the last prophet.”

Then something strange happened. A question came to my mind: “What about Agabus?”

I immediately called out, “What about Agabus?” There was a long pause. Then the woman responded, “Who’s Agabus?”

“A prophet who lived after Christ and who prophesied of a famine that came to pass,” I said.

She asked me, “Where did you read that—in your Mormon Bible?”

“No,” I replied, “in the book of Acts, chapter 11, verse 28.”

“Show me,” came the skeptical voice. The neighbor let us enter, and Elder Langston and I made our way down a small hallway into the living room, where a woman in her 40s was seated on the sofa.

I opened to the scripture and handed her the Bible. After she finished reading, she didn’t know what to say. I told her of the living prophet on the earth at that time, President David O. McKay (1873–1970). I testified of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Spirit was so powerful that I knew she could feel it.

Elder Langston and I left two copies of the Book of Mormon—one for this woman and one for her neighbor. I walked away feeling like I was floating on air. I was sure she

would be baptized. Why else would I have remembered Agabus?

The following Sunday at church, I rushed up to Elder Gallafent and Elder Langston and asked, “Did you go back? What happened? Tell me!”

They told me they had gone to her home to give her the first discussion but were turned away. She returned the Book of Mormon we had given her.

I couldn’t believe it. I sat through church wondering why I would receive such a wonderful prompting and then have it result like this. I was terribly discouraged, but I tried to put it out of my mind.

The next Sunday as I walked into the church foyer, Elder Langston ran up to me with an ear-to-ear grin.

“Remember that woman we left the Book of Mormon with?” he asked.

“Of course,” I replied.

He then reminded me that we had left two copies of the Book of Mormon—one with the woman and one with her neighbor. The neighbor had never taken her copy home. So, without the knowledge of the woman of the house, her daughter had begun to read that copy and wanted to know more about the Church.

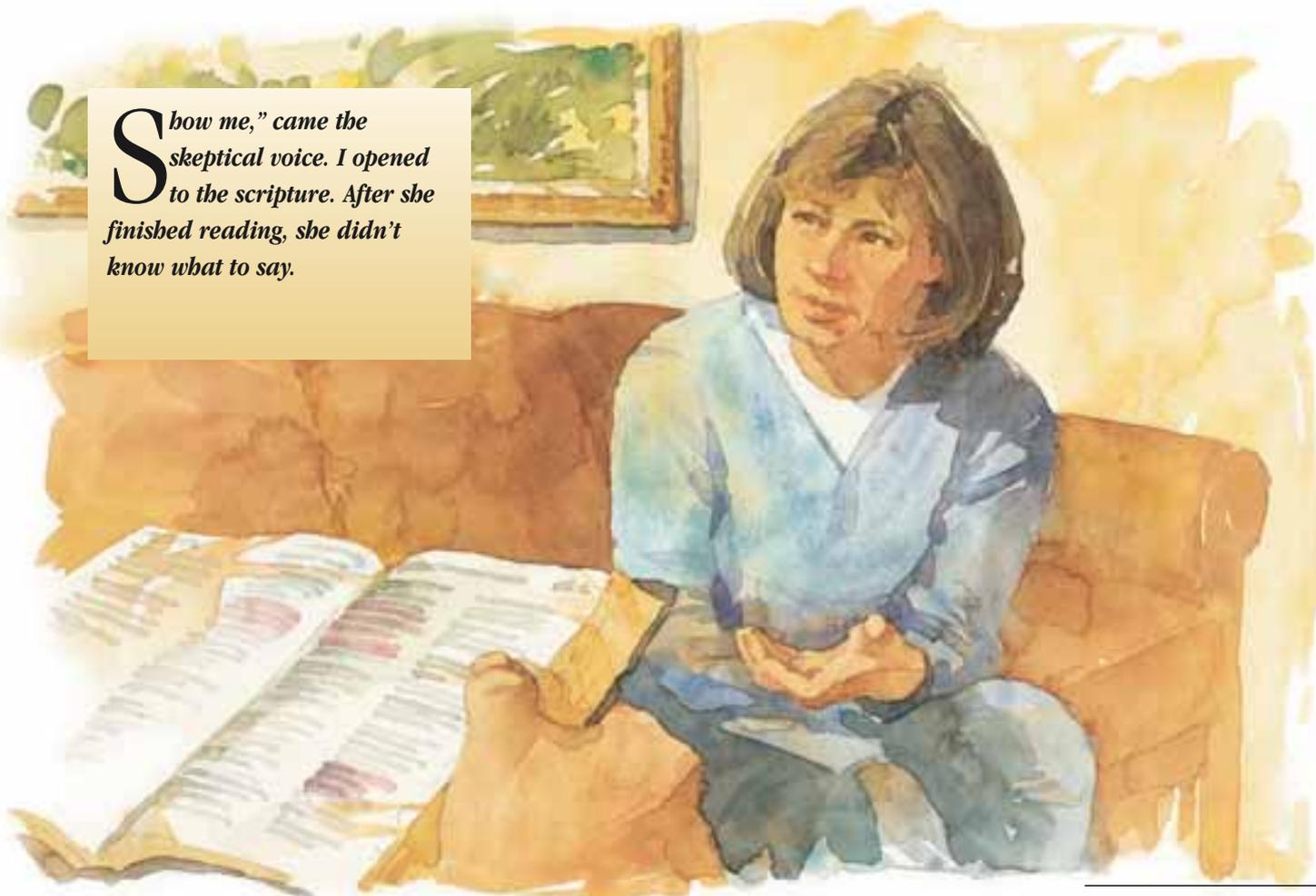
The woman eventually took the missionary discussions with her

daughter, and both were baptized.

As I look back more than 30 years and recall the question that came to me, “What about Agabus?” I am reminded of another scripture: “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26). I am grateful that as a missionary I was able to have the Spirit bring to my remembrance the significance of Agabus. The Holy Ghost truly was my teacher that day. ■

Eric Hendershot is a member of the Green Valley First Ward, St. George Utah Green Valley Stake.

Show me,” came the skeptical voice. I opened to the scripture. After she finished reading, she didn’t know what to say.



Death Is a New Beginning

By Claudia Yolanda Ortíz Herrera

My parents were baptized on 18 August 1978. I was 5 years old; my sister, Noelia, was just 5 months old; and my brother, Luis, was born 11 years later. We were sealed in the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple in June 1988. I can still remember the beautiful scene: we were dressed in white, uniting our family into eternity.

We were a stable, united, and active family, and our lives seemed perfect. But even when we stay close to the commandments, have testimonies of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and Their work, and aspire to achieve exaltation, adversity will come.

In January 1999 my father had a serious accident and was admitted to intensive care, where he was able to breathe only with the help of a respirator. He suffered hematomas, which caused swelling of the brain.

When the rest of the family learned of his condition, we immediately went to the hospital. As a physician, I knew the outlook was dim. Nevertheless, we fasted, prayed, and trusted in our Heavenly Father to restore my father so that soon, despite any aftereffects or the treatments he might need, he would come home again and be the wonderful guide and protector he had always been. As we fasted and prayed, I felt my faith grow stronger, and I anxiously waited for him to open his eyes and start to recover.

Visits from our inspired bishop were a constant strength during this trial. He gave my father a priesthood blessing, and we waited for a change.

Since my father did not improve,



The bishop gave us a copy of “Tragedy or Destiny” and urged us to ask God what plans He had for my father.

we began to wonder if our pleadings were really in accordance with Heavenly Father’s will. One night the bishop, after giving us blessings, talked to us about the plan of salvation and told us that when someone is blessed to recover, he or she will live if not appointed unto death (see D&C 42:48). He also gave us a copy of “Tragedy or Destiny” (see *Improvement Era*, Mar. 1966, 178–80, 210–17), a talk by President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985). The bishop urged us to ask God what plans He had. After we said good-bye to the bishop, I decided with much sorrow to follow his counsel. I was

able to learn that my father’s time on earth had come to an end.

Complications arose, and my father’s condition deteriorated even more. His natural strength abated before our eyes, and we knew that this was a confirmation of what was going to happen. I worried that my pain at losing him would become so great I would lose my faith and vision and not be able to endure. But that isn’t what happened.

Never before had the wonderful plan of happiness had the meaning it now had in my life. I was able to feel a peace that tempered my emotions. It opened my eyes and mind and enabled me to understand to a limited extent the greatness, glory, and majesty of life and the importance of this brief time on earth.

The time came to tell my father, “Until we meet again.” Nine days after the accident, he died. I was with him as he reached the end of his earthly existence, but now I had a different understanding. I was able to feel how sweetly our Heavenly Father loves us and how He prepares the necessary opportunities for us to become as He is.

My confidence is complete that the day will come, if we endure to the end, when through the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we will rise clothed in glory, immortality, and eternal life. Death is just a new beginning. ■

Claudia Yolanda Ortíz Herrera is a member of the Victorias Ward, Guatemala City Guatemala Las Victorias Stake.

Did You Know?



The Extra Miles

After months of planning, the young men of the Barnstaple Branch, Plymouth England Stake, left for their camp three days early. No, they didn't read their calendars wrong. They decided that, instead of taking the usual car ride, they and their Young Men president would walk the 65 miles (105 km) to camp in stormy weather. The hike took the young men along

roads, paths, and rugged Dartmoor countryside.

The trek was such a success that the stalwart hikers decided to do it again some months later. This time they walked the 130 miles (209 km) from Young Men's camp in Redruth, arriving home in Bideford six days later. Needless to say, most of the young men have completed the Duty to God hiking requirements.

It Happened in September

22 September 1827: Joseph Smith received the gold plates from the angel Moroni.

12 September 1830: Elmina Shepard Taylor, the first president of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, was born in New York.



Follow the Prophets

The challenges you face have been addressed by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The next time you need guidance, look to them for help. You can find their counsel given at general conference and in the

Church magazines at www.lds.org. Click on the world map in the upper right corner of the home page. Then select a language.

30 September 1949: General conference was broadcast on television for the first time.

4 September 1950: The first early-morning seminary was organized.

27 September 1976: President Spencer W. Kimball dedicated the first buildings at the Provo Missionary Training Center.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE BARNSTAPLE BRANCH; CONFERENCE PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH AND PHOTOGRAPH OF ELMINA SHEPARD TAYLOR COURTESY OF LDS CHURCH ARCHIVES; PHOTOGRAPH OF RECEIVING THE GOLD PLATES BY ELDON K. LINSCHOTEN, FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD



The Bread of Life

I left on a mission in order to give people the bread of life and the love of Jesus Christ. I have learned about Him, and now I receive and will continue to receive His grace and blessings.

*Sister Svetlana Bashkina,
Russia Moscow Mission*

Liahona Helped a Great Deal

I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the *Liabona*. During my years serving a mission, the *Liabona* helped me a great deal. I love to read it.

*Boris Nkodia,
BaCongo Ward,
Brazzaville Republic of Congo Stake*



"It's Just Hair"

I loved the story by Juli Housholder, "It's Just Hair," in the August 2003 issue. If I were in Juli's shoes, I would

be asking God, "Why me?" But Juli is a model of strong faith in Jesus Christ, and I think she is a courageous woman. She is beautiful with or without hair. Articles such as this give me strength and a sense of direction. I love reading them.

*Donna Sanchez,
Naga First Ward,
Naga Philippines Stake*

I Had Forgotten the Lord

Every time I attend my Church meetings, I feel a great desire to go every week, but for various reasons I don't. I find plenty of excuses. I'm a carrier of HIV, and my life has gotten pretty complicated. It gets more complicated every day. But the article by Juli Housholder, "It's Just Hair," gave me the strength I needed to get organized and set some new goals.

The same thing happened to me that happened to Juli. I lost almost all my hair—in my case because of the strong medications I've had to take to keep me alive. But her testimony really woke me up, and now I'm getting back on the path. I had lost sight of my goal, which is to return to the presence of my Heavenly Father. I'm just now starting to realize that because of my illness I had forgotten the Lord.

Thanks for the testimonies you publish from members all across the world and for the talks by our leaders.

Name withheld



Call for Home Teaching and Visiting Teaching Experiences

Have you had an experience that would inspire other members to be better home teachers or visiting teachers? How have your home teachers or your visiting teachers blessed your life? If you would like to share a true story with other readers, please send it to Home and Visiting Teaching, *Liabona*, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA; or e-mail to cur-liahona-imag@ldschurch.org.

the Friend



A Treasure Map

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON

First Counselor in the First Presidency



President Monson offers three pieces of an eternal treasure map.

When I was a boy I enjoyed reading *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson. I also saw adventure movies where several individuals had separate pieces of a well-worn map which led the way to buried treasure if only the pieces could be found and put together.

The Savior of the world spoke of treasure. In His Sermon on the Mount He declared:

“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” (Matthew 6:19–21).

The promised reward was not a treasure of ivory, gold, or silver. The Master spoke of riches within the grasp of all—even joy unspeakable here and eternal happiness hereafter.

[I would like to give you] three pieces of your treasure map to eternal happiness.

First, learn from the past. Each of us has a heritage—whether from pioneer forebears, later converts, or others who helped to

shape our lives. This heritage provides a foundation built of sacrifice and faith. Ours is the privilege and responsibility to build on such firm and stable footings.

Second, prepare for the future. It is necessary to prepare and to plan so that we don't fritter away our lives. Without a goal, there can be no real success. Our journey into the future will not be a smooth highway which stretches from here to eternity. Rather, there will be forks and turnings in the road, to say nothing of the unanticipated bumps. We must pray daily to a loving Heavenly Father, who wants each of us to succeed in life.

Third, live in the present. Sometimes we let our thoughts of tomorrow take up too much of today. Daydreaming of the past and longing for the future may provide comfort but will not take the place of living in the present. This is the day of our opportunity, and we must grasp it.

Your treasure map is now in place:
Learn from the past, prepare for the future, live in the present.

I conclude where I began. From our Lord and Savior: “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21). ●

From an April 2003 general conference address.





FREE SPACE

**I
WILL**

- Be kind
- Participate in family activities
- Say thank you
- Happily do my chores
- Share
- Pray for my family
- Respect others' property
- Be patient
- Hug a family member
- Give a compliment
- Work with my family
- Be a cheerful helper
- Be happy
- Say I'm sorry
- Obey the prophet
- Listen to others
- Be a good example
- Show love for my family
- Forgive others
- Plan a family home evening
- Read the scriptures
- Strengthen my family
- Follow Jesus Christ
- Honor my parents

I WILL

BY SHEILA E. WILSON

“Successful . . . families are established and maintained on principles of . . . respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, Oct. 1998, 24; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).



“Do you have a rope?” the man in the boat called out. The man’s family had been fishing when their boat motor stopped. They had no way of getting to shore. Weldon’s dad steered his boat closer. Weldon’s brothers got a long rope and threw one end to the man. When the rope was securely tied to both boats, Weldon’s dad slowly towed the man’s family and their boat to shore.

Looking at the rope, Weldon asked his mom, “Is our rope strong enough to pull the boat?”

“Look closely at the rope,” Mom replied. Weldon could see the rope was made of lots of individual strands twisted together. “When all the strands work together, the rope is strong—just like our family,” Mom said.

Weldon asked, “What do we do to make our family strong?” Mom said he was strengthening their family each time he answered, “I will,” and happily did his assigned jobs or was kind to his brothers and sister.

What are you doing to make your family strong? Do you show love for each family member? Do you answer, “I will!” when asked to help? An important way to have a happy family is to do things together, whether working in the garden or taking a trip.

You can contribute to the happiness in your home. When asked who will help, you can answer, “I will!”

“I Will” Game

To prepare: Remove page F4, and mount it on heavy paper. Cut out the game board and circles. Make additional game boards for family members. Fill in the blank squares on the boards by writing in each square the words found on a different circle (be sure to write the

words in different places on each board). Place the circles in a small sack. You will need several small game pieces for each player (buttons, coins, or beans). Place a game piece on the center (free) square of your boards.

To play: Pick a circle from the sack and read it. If a player has the phrase on his or her game board, he or she may cover that square with a game piece. The first player to cover five squares in a row—horizontally, vertically, or diagonally—calls out, “I will!”

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Invite the children to draw pictures of giving service to a family member or of working and helping at home. Tape the pictures together, and place them in a roller box (see Teaching, No Greater Call [1999], 178–79). (The front of the box could be made to look like a house.) Sing a song or hymn about families, and roll the pictures for the Primary to see. At the end of the song, invite the child whose picture is showing in the box and two other children to come up and act out ways they can be happy helpers in their home. Let the Primary guess what they are doing. Repeat so more children can participate.

2. On a large strip of paper, write “Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful . . . families are established and maintained on principles of . . . respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.” Cut the sentences into individual words. Hide the words before Primary. Invite the children to look for the words and work together to arrange them. Just as they worked together to arrange the sentences, it is also important to work together in our families. Hold up a wordstrip that says, “I strengthen my family when I _____.” Fill in the blank with a short phrase (for example, wash the dishes, rake the leaves, take care of the baby, say kind words, clean my room). Then hand the wordstrip to a child, and have him or her repeat everything you said, then add his or her own suggestion. The child then passes the wordstrip to the next person, with each person continuing to repeat what has been said and adding to it. ●

The Well Boxes

“The Holy Ghost . . . shall . . . bring all things to your remembrance” (John 14:26).

BY JENS KRISTOFFERSEN

A true story

When I was a boy growing up in Denmark, my friends and I liked to play tag. But one day we grew tired of playing the same old game, so we sat down and tried to think of something new and exciting to do.

“Let’s go to the harbor,” one friend suggested. “We can look at the boats and watch the fishermen.”

We all liked that idea, so we hopped on our bikes. Sure enough, there was a lot more action there! Sailors washed their boats while other fishermen cleaned and sold fish. Until the fish were sold, they were kept alive in well boxes—floating crates with small holes to allow water to flow in and out. The boxes bobbed between the boats and bumped into each other as the waves rushed in.

It wasn’t long before we were bored of just watching.

“Let’s play tag,” a friend suggested.

“Again?” another boy groaned.

My friend pointed to the well boxes with a sly grin. “Out there.”

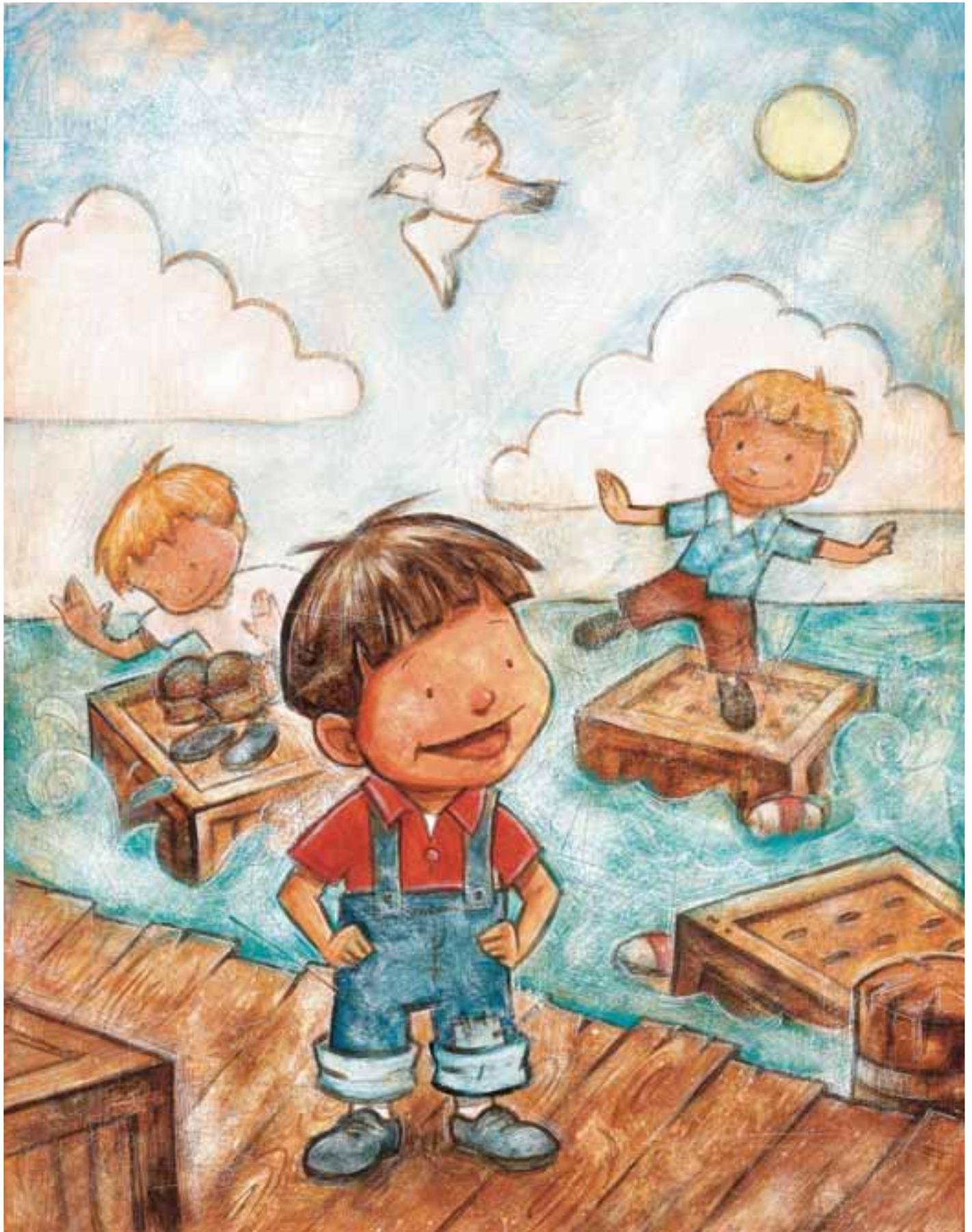
Soon we were all leaping from box to box, which was much more exciting than playing tag at home. The slippery boxes jostled with each incoming wave. One time I fell off and landed with a splash. Sputtering seawater, I pulled myself back onto a crate and leaped onto another one. My foot broke right through it! Fish nibbled at my toes. It tickled, and I shrieked in laughter.

“Hey, you boys!” a gruff voice called. I looked up to see an angry fisherman coming toward us. “Get away from those well boxes before you break them. If you don’t get out of here, I’ll tell your parents!”

We scrambled back to shore, took off our wet socks and tied them to our bicycle handlebars, and took off. Our clothes dried in the wind as we pedaled home.

My clothes may have dried, but the smell of fish gave me away. When I walked in the door, Mother took one sniff and asked what had happened.

“I went to the harbor with my friends. I was playing on a well box, and I slipped and fell in the water,” I admitted.



ILLUSTRATED BY GERALD ROGERS



“Remembrance . . . comes through the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Remembrance and Gratitude,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 12.

To my surprise, Mother’s eyes filled with tears. “Jens, you must never play there again. Think of what could have happened! You could have been hurt or even drowned.” She hugged me tight. “I would be so sad, Jens. What would I do without you? You must promise never to play there again.” I gave Mother my word.

But a few weeks later, my friends came over and invited me to go with them to the harbor. Remembering the fun we’d had last time, I got on my bike and followed them. I forgot all about the promise I had made to my mother.

“You’re it!” A friend tagged me and jumped onto a bobbing well box.

I was about to chase him when suddenly I saw my mother’s face, just as if she were right in front of me, her eyes filled with tears. My heart stopped. I had broken my promise!

“I have to go home now,” I called to my friends.

“What?” one of them whined. “Why? We just got here.”

“I have to go home,” I repeated, climbing onto my bike.

My friends complained and tried to coax me into staying, but I wouldn’t listen. One by one, they all headed for home too.

I put my bike away as quietly as possible and went to my room. I felt sick with shame that I had gone where I had promised Mother I would not go.

After a while Mother came into my room. “I can tell something is bothering you, Jens. What’s wrong?”

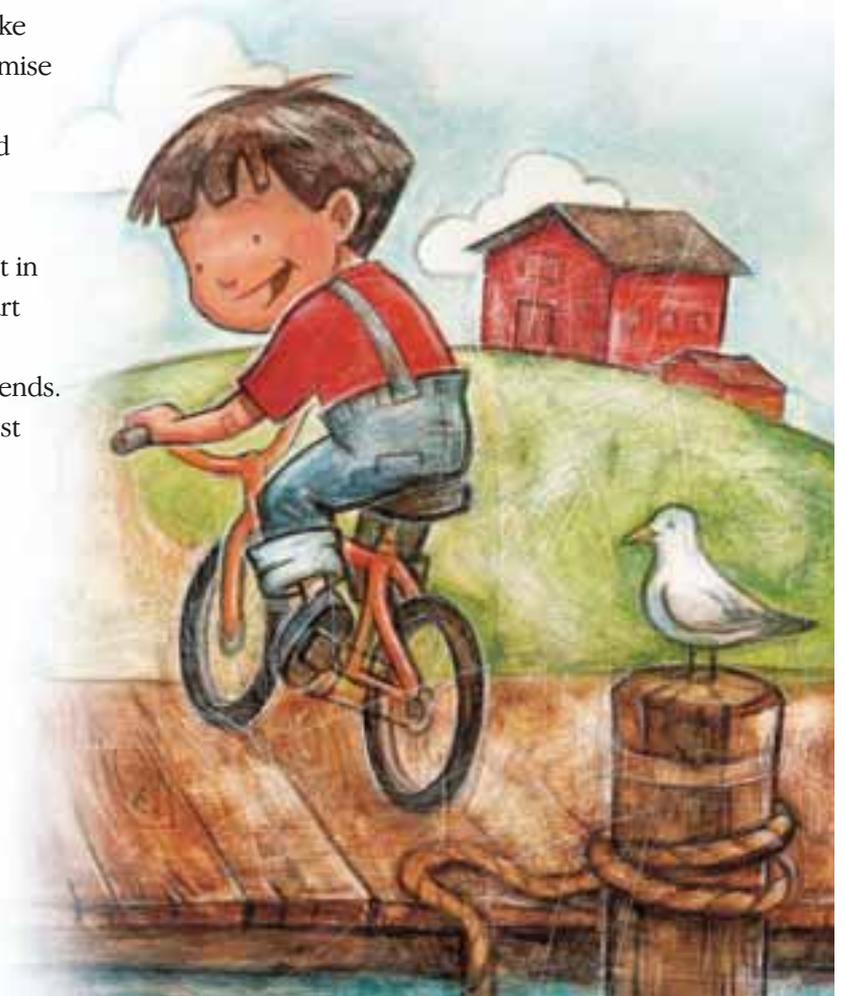
Lowering my head, I said quietly, “I went

to the harbor with my friends today. I forgot that I had promised you I wouldn’t. But as soon as I got there, I remembered. I came right home. So did my friends. Mother, I’m sorry I forgot!”

When I looked up, Mother was beaming. “Jens! I’m so happy you remembered. Because you did, you set an example for your friends and none of you were hurt.”

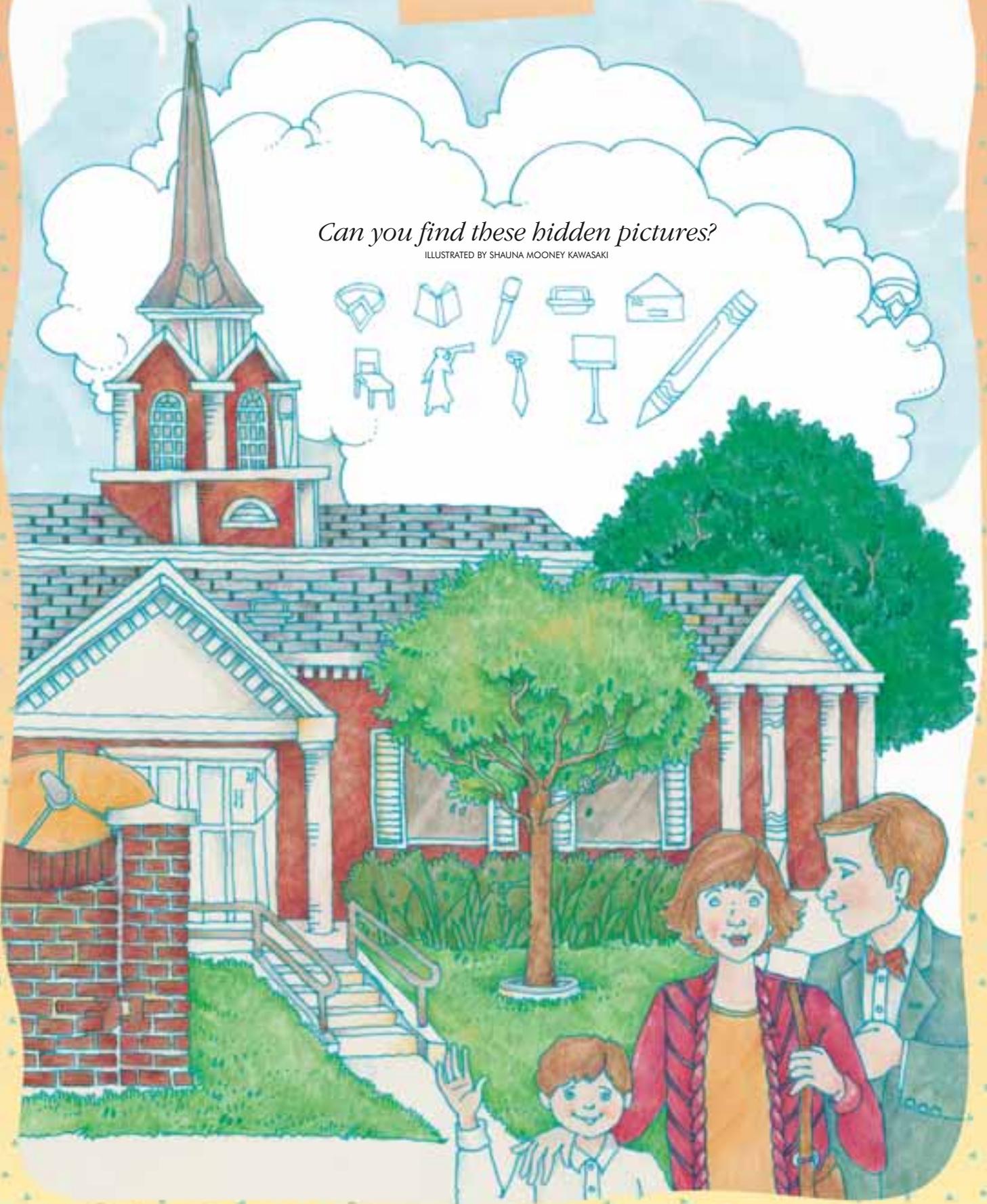
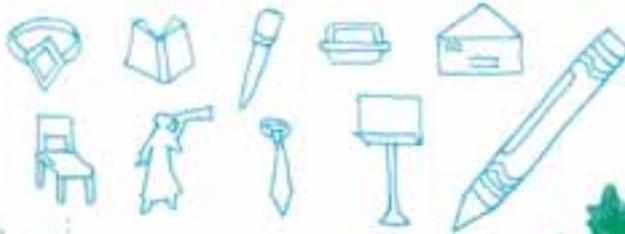
A while later she brought me a glass of milk and a piece of freshly baked cake. Mother made the best cake in the whole world. I was grateful for the warm treat—but more grateful for the warmth of remembering to do right. ●

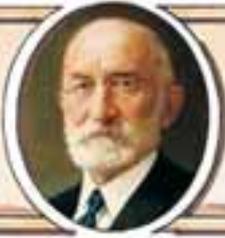
Jens Kristoffersen is a member of the Horsens Branch, Aarhus Denmark Stake.



Can you find these hidden pictures?

ILLUSTRATED BY SHAUNA MOONEY KAWASAKI



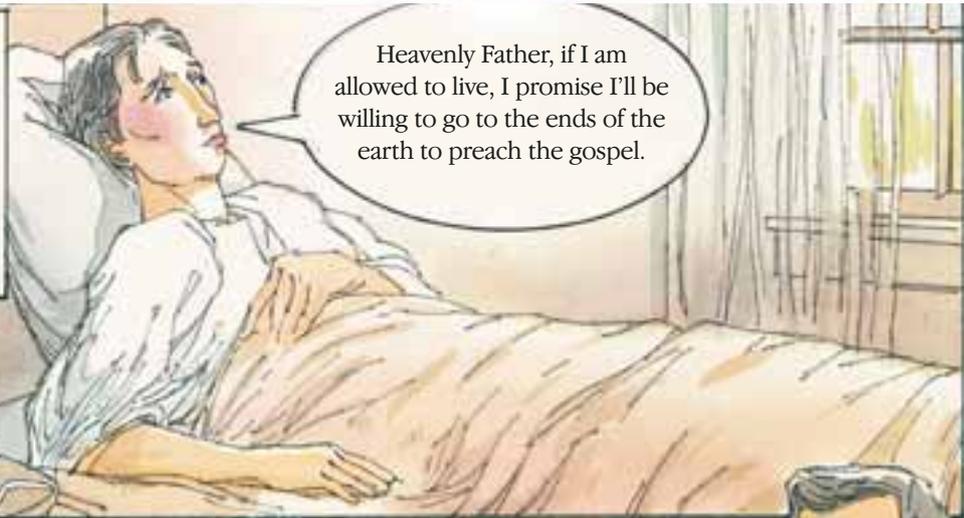


FROM THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Called to Serve

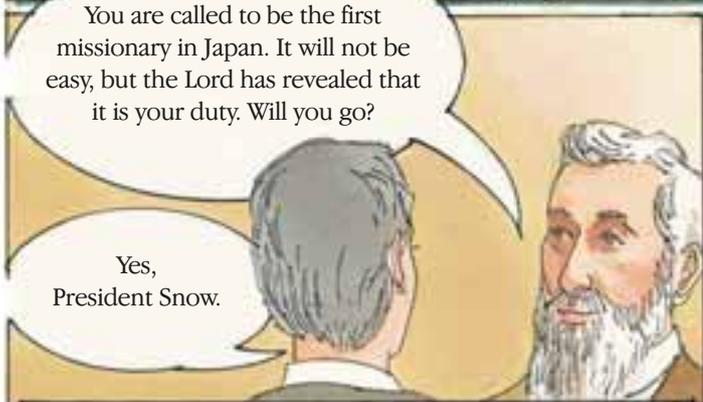


As a young man, Heber J. Grant became seriously ill. He feared that he would die.



Heavenly Father, if I am allowed to live, I promise I'll be willing to go to the ends of the earth to preach the gospel.

You are called to be the first missionary in Japan. It will not be easy, but the Lord has revealed that it is your duty. Will you go?



Yes, President Snow.



Heber recovered, and in 1901 he was able to keep his promise when President Lorenzo Snow called him as a missionary.

Heber and his companions first needed to get permission to preach in the country. They were interviewed in newspapers and magazines. They gave a good impression, and they were eventually given permission to preach.

Heber served in Japan for two years but saw very few people baptized and never learned the language very well. One day when he was discouraged, he went into the woods to pray.



If it is Thy will, when my mission in Japan is finished, I would like to serve a mission in Europe.

ILLUSTRATED BY MIKE ENGLE

Three days later, Heber was called home to Utah by President Joseph F. Smith.

Welcome home, Elder Grant. But you won't be here long—your next call is to serve as president of the European Mission.

Emigrants from here are happier in Utah than anywhere else in the United States. As long as I am king, your people will have religious freedom here.

While in Europe, Heber met King Oscar of Sweden and Norway.

Heber J. Grant served as a missionary for five years. When he came home, he didn't stop preaching the gospel. He traveled to stake conferences and taught Church members about the importance of the Word of Wisdom and many other principles of the gospel.

Adapted from Presidents of the Church (Church Educational System student manual, 1979), 72–74.

Love at Home

“Successful . . . families are established and maintained on principles of . . . respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” Liahona, Oct. 1998, 24; Ensign, Nov. 1995, 102).

You can strengthen your family as you learn, play, serve, and work together. Sister Barbara B. Smith, Relief Society general president from 1974 to 1984, said: “Remember that a family established in love . . . is maintained through work and service. A home is strengthened by work when workers receive respect” (“A Safe Place for Marriages and Families,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 84).

Working together in your home helps you to be responsible and to be grateful for the work others do for you. Serving your family members shows that you love them. Sharing talents or hobbies and participating in fun activities with your family teaches you more about your family members.

We can learn about working, serving, and playing together in family home evening. Prophets have promised us that our families will grow stronger when we use this time to study gospel principles and enjoy being together.

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) taught: “Families must spend more time together in work and recreation. Family home evenings should be scheduled once a week as a time for recreation, work projects, skits, songs around the piano, games, special refreshments, and family prayers. . . . This practice will bind

a family together, in love, pride, tradition, strength, and loyalty” (“Fundamentals of Enduring Family Relationships,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 60). ●

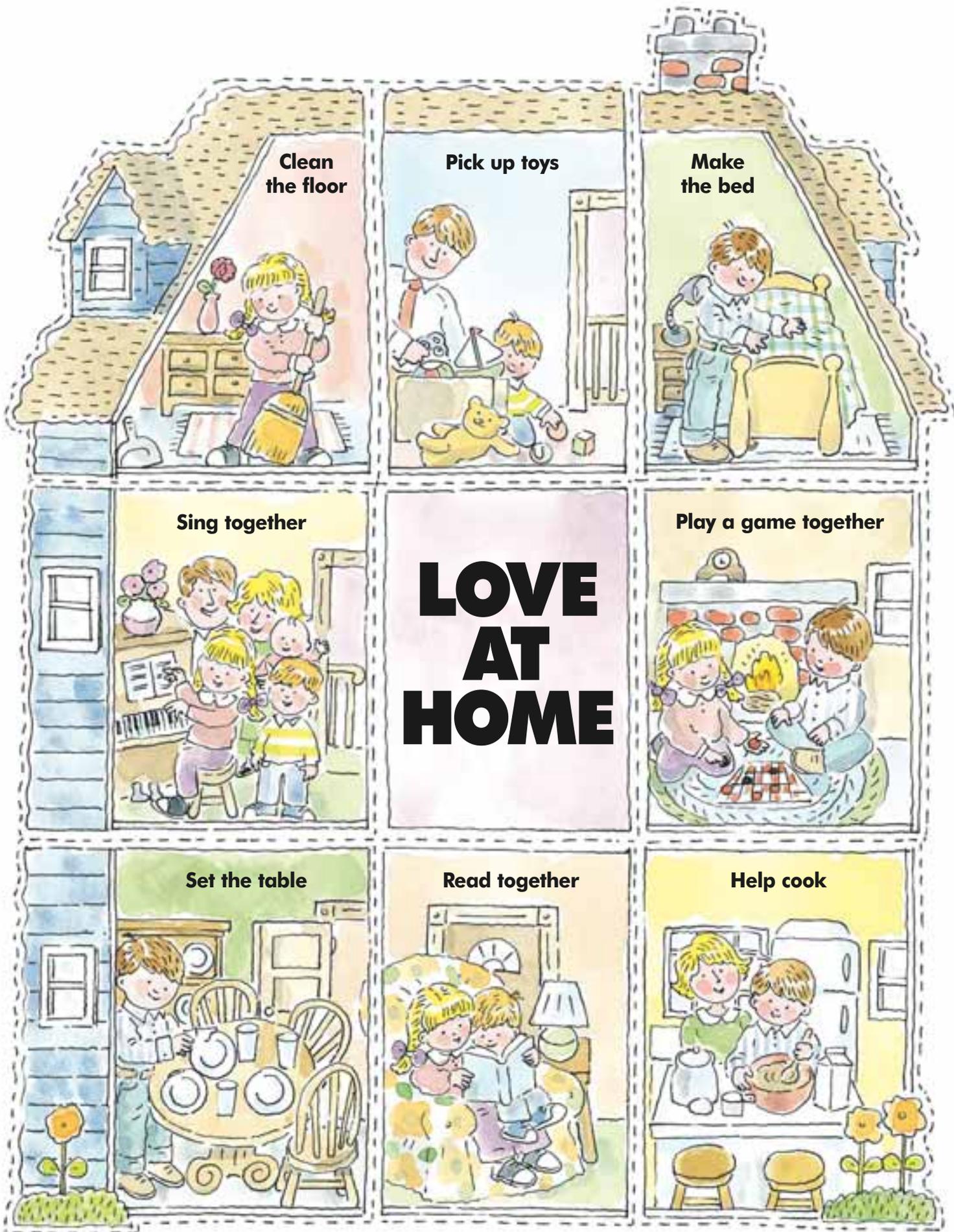
Family Home Evening Activities and Ideas

1. Mount page F13 on heavy paper. Cut out the house along the dotted lines; then cut the house into pieces along the dotted lines. Mix the pieces up, and put the house back together again. Every time you put a piece in the right place, think about what the person in the picture is doing to help his or her family.

2. For a family home evening activity, sing songs and hymns about home and family. Choose words that are repeated in the songs and hymns for the following activity. For example, each time you sing the word *help*, you could have everyone think of one thing he or she can do to help the family. When you sing the word *love*, think of how you can show love for family members. Every time you sing the word *home*, add another piece to the puzzle. Keep singing until you finish the puzzle. Then take turns sharing your thoughts about helping and loving your family.

3. For a family home evening lesson or Primary talk, discuss the statement by Sister Barbara B. Smith. How can you show respect for your family members?

Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied, traced, or printed out from the Internet at www.lds.org. Click on the world map in the upper right corner of the home page. Then select a language.



Clean the floor

Pick up toys

Make the bed

Sing together

Play a game together

LOVE AT HOME

Set the table

Read together

Help cook

Sha-Lei loves dancing and music. During summer vacation she practices hula from 4 to 12 hours every day except Sunday.



Sha-Lei Kamauu

of Ewa Beach, Hawaii

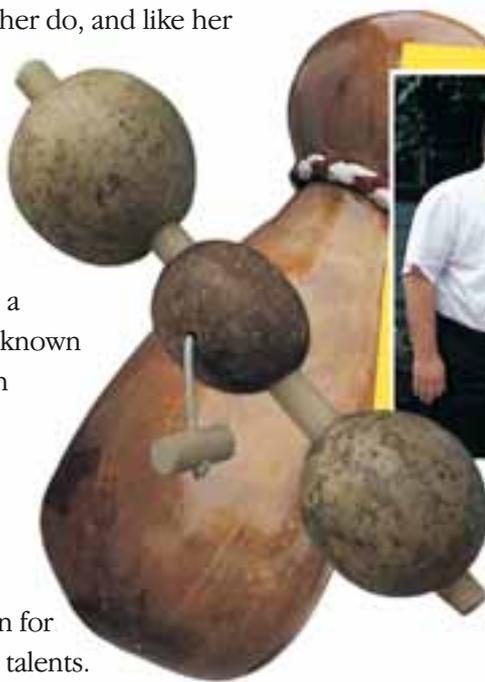
BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY
Church Magazines

Lots of young children love to dance. But eight-year-old Sha-Lei Kamauu of Ewa Beach, Hawaii, enjoys it so much that during summer vacation she practices from 4 to 12 hours every day except Sunday.

Of course, if you came from the family that Sha-Lei does, you would probably be a dancer too. Sha-Lei performs the hula, the traditional dance of Hawaii, just like her mother and grandmother do, and like her great-grandmother, her great-great-grandmother, and her great-great-great-grandmother did. That is six generations of hula dancers. And most of them have been hula teachers too. What's more, her father is a descendant of one of the best-known Latter-day Saint hula dancers in Hawaii—Iolani Luahine.

Sha-Lei's grandparents Howard and Olana Ai are both *kuma hula* (hula teachers) at their own *balau hula* (hula school). They are widely known for helping students develop their talents.

For example, Grandpa Howard's boys' team has won the first-place international hula trophy nine years in a row. Grandma Olana teaches principles along with the dances—principles like beginning practice with prayer, always dressing modestly, and honoring your mother and father. For her and her students, hula is a way to express gratitude for God's creations and love and appreciation for others.



A family collection of musical instruments shows the great love of Hawaiian culture Sha-Lei shares with her grandparents, parents, and her brother, Chaz.

Sha-Lei and her brother, Chaz, 10, take hula lessons from their grandparents. They also spend a lot of time visiting Grandma and Grandpa at their home. They play with the extended family’s pet, Ginger the dog. They admire the collection of Hawaiian musical instruments, and when Grandpa brings two or three of the instruments down from the shelf, they all perform an impromptu concert. At other times they join their parents and grandparents in singing hymns around the piano. That’s another thing about Sha-Lei’s family—they know a lot about music.

They also know a lot about Hawaii. In addition to teaching voice and ukulele lessons, Sha-Lei and Chaz’s parents teach Hawaiian studies at schools on Hickam Air Force Base. So the children know a lot about the history and culture of the islands where they live. Sha-Lei was recently baptized, and she is pleased to tell people that Liliuokalani, the last queen of Hawaii, was also a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “Baptism is important,” Sha-Lei says. “It means I have promised to always remember Jesus Christ and that I should be a good example of someone who follows His teachings.”

Sha-Lei is also happy to tell people her full name: Sha-Lei Elizabeth Kanaiokeanoie Kiowao’o Nu’uanu Lindsey Kamaau. One of the reasons her parents gave her the Hawaiian part of her

name was to remind her of the place they were living when she was born. It means “the beauty of the misty rains from Nu’uanu.” Sha-Lei can also tell you that her family has ancestors of 13 different nationalities—Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan, Native American, Spanish, Scottish, Dutch, Irish, Welsh, Belgian, English, Danish, and Chinese. Doing family history work can be particularly exciting when your last name is Kamaau!

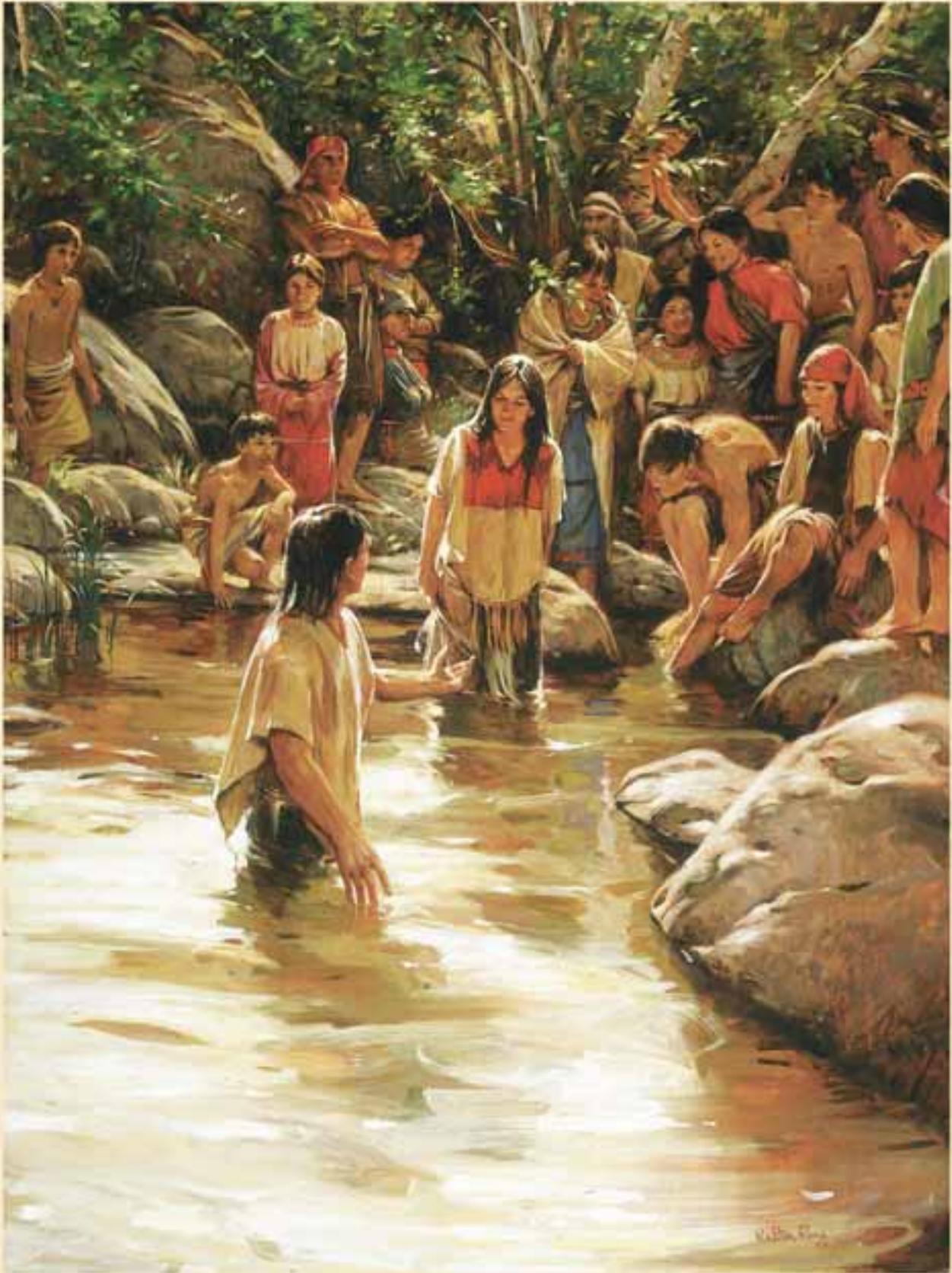
Sha-Lei also likes family home evening. As her mother explains, “We love being together, and we spend so much time together that we don’t just have family home evening, we have family home life!”

“Mom and Dad are always telling us about how they got married in the temple,” Sha-Lei says. “I always think, ‘I want to be married there too!’” As for Chaz, he says he will go to the temple too—first to do baptisms for the dead starting at age 12, then as he prepares to serve a mission when he turns 19.

But for now, the family is content to be playing music together; singing at Church meetings; learning about the gospel, the temple, ancestors, history, customs, and worthwhile traditions; and enjoying dancing the hula together—maybe for six generations more. ●



Grandma Olana teaches more than dancing—she also teaches principles and standards. Sha-Lei and Chaz enjoy playing with Ginger the dog. Sha-Lei is part of the sixth generation of her family to dance the hula.



FROM BY THE HAND OF MORMON. © WALTER RANE. MAY NOT BE COPIED

Come into the Fold of God, by Walter Rane

Upon learning about baptism, the people of Alma “exclaimed: This is the desire of our hearts. . . . And they were in number about two hundred and four souls; yea, and they were baptized in the waters of Mormon” (Mosiab 18:11, 16).



The home is the cradle of virtue, the place where character is formed and habits are established,” explains President Gordon B. Hinckley. “Family home evening is the opportunity to teach the ways of the Lord.” See “In Opposition to Evil,” p. 2, and “Family Home Evening Suggestion Box,” p. 32.