

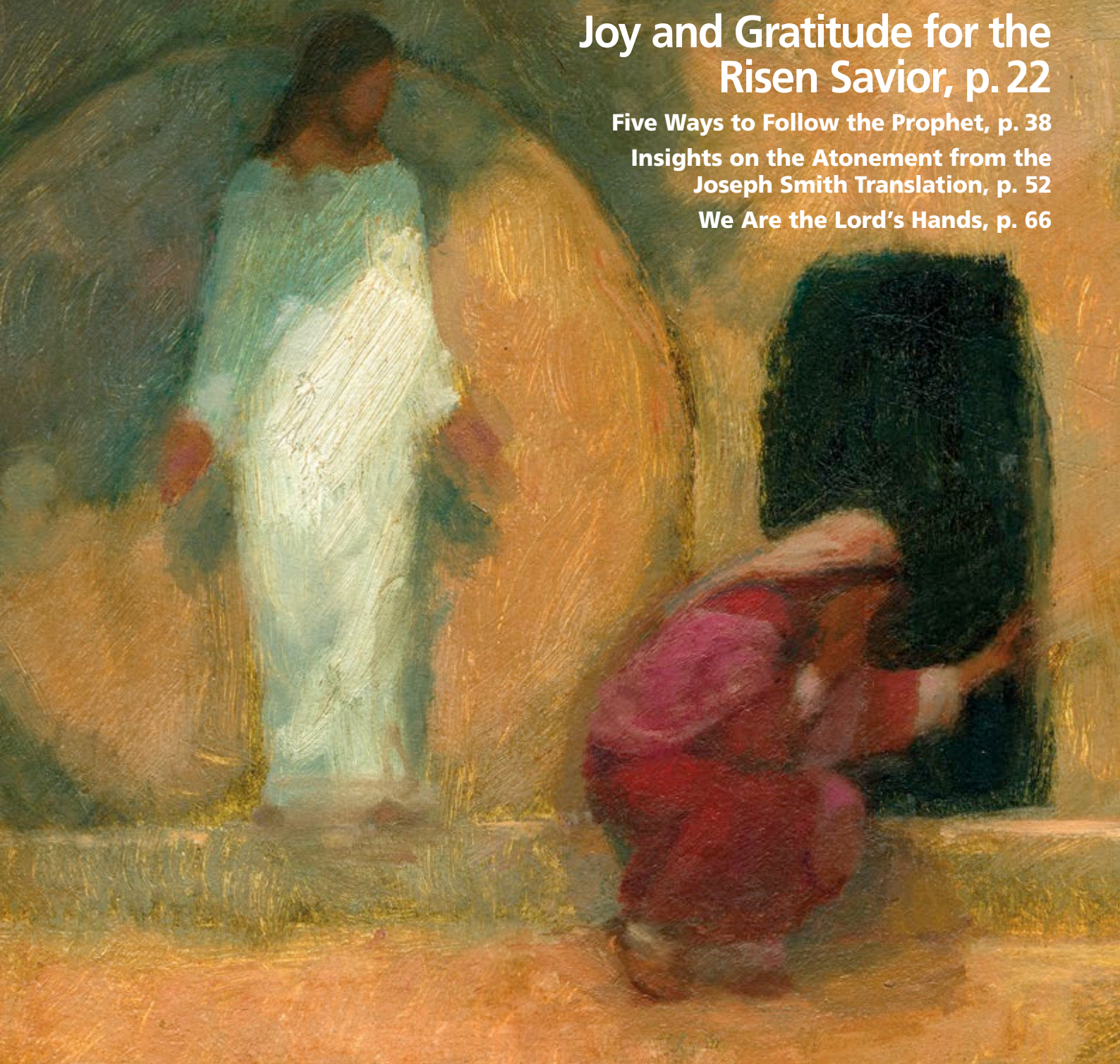
Ensign

**Joy and Gratitude for the
Risen Savior, p. 22**

Five Ways to Follow the Prophet, p. 38

**Insights on the Atonement from the
Joseph Smith Translation, p. 52**

We Are the Lord's Hands, p. 66





*"Can a woman forget
her sucking child,
that she should not
have compassion
on the son of her
womb? yea, they
may forget, yet will
I not forget thee.*

*"Behold, I have graven
thee upon the palms
of my hands."*

Isaiah 49:15-16

Contents April 2014

Volume 44 • Number 4



4

MESSAGES

FIRST PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

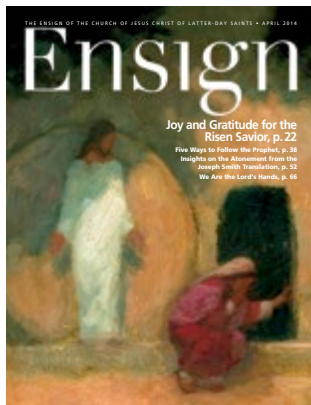
- 4 A Firmly Set Anchor**
President Dieter F. Uchtdorf

VISITING TEACHING MESSAGE

- 7 The Divine Mission of Jesus Christ:
Savior and Redeemer**

ON THE COVER

Front: *Garden Tomb*, by J. Kirk Richards, may not be copied. Inside front cover: Photo illustration by John Luke.



YOUNG ADULT FEATURES

- 10 If Your Eye Be Single to My Glory**
Katherine Nelson and Heidi McConkie
Being a modest person requires more than just the right clothes.
- 14 Young Adult Profiles: Conversion and Sacrifice in Finland**
Melissa Zenteno
What is it like to be a faithful young adult in Finland? One young man shares his culture and his faith.
- 16 Lasting Happiness**
Craig P. Wilson
Find out what traits happy people have in common.

FEATURES

- 22 Special Witnesses Testify of the Living Christ**
Members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles testify of the Savior.

- 28 Using the Plan of Salvation to Answer Questions**
The plan of salvation can help us answer some of life's fundamental questions.

- 32 Covenants: Two-Way Promises with God**
LaRene Porter Gaunt
We increase in spiritual power with each covenant we make with God.

- 38 Follow the Prophet**
Elder William R. Walker
We should learn these five lessons from the personal example of President Thomas S. Monson.

- 42 Pioneers in Every Land: The Philippines—Spiritual Strength upon the Isles of the Sea**
Despite natural disasters and economic hardship in the Philippines, the Saints have witnessed marvelous growth there.





62

48 Beyond the Bubblegum Machine

Amy Schauers

I wasn't being blessed in the ways I thought I deserved to be.

52 The Atonement of Jesus Christ: Insights from the Joseph Smith Translation

Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible enhances our understanding of the Savior's suffering, death, and Resurrection.

58 The Blessings of Perseverance

Elder Claudio D. Zivic

Persevering in the things that matter requires constant effort, but it also yields countless blessings.

62 Celebrate Nurturing

Rosemary Thackeray

Women's capacity to nurture can help them better understand and relate to one another, whatever their circumstances.

66 We Are the Lord's Hands

Neil K. Newell

Saints from Brazil, Ecuador, the Philippines, and Russia show what it means to minister to those in need.

70 A Visit from Milton

Merle Lester

When I set out to find Grandma's relatives, I didn't realize I was embarking on an unforgettable family history adventure.

74 The Passover Supper

The first Passover prefigured Jesus Christ's sacrifice and showed what it means to be God's covenant people.



76

DEPARTMENTS

3 Family Home Evening Ideas

8 Old Testament Prophets: Moses

76 Latter-day Saint Voices

80 Until We Meet Again: Finding Hope in the Future
Stan Pugsley



70

Ensign

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

April 2014 Volume 44 • Number 4

The First Presidency: Thomas S. Monson, Henry B. Eyring, Dieter F. Uchtdorf

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Family Home Evening Ideas

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are some examples.



“Special Witnesses Testify of the Living Christ,” page 22: Prior to family home evening, make a copy of the article and cut it

into 15 segments (one for each General Authority). Begin family home evening by reading aloud one of the testimonies from the article. Then you could have each family member choose another testimony from the article to read to the family. Consider discussing how we are all called to share our testimonies with others, and then share your own feelings about the Savior. Invite family members to ponder ways they can increase their knowledge and testimonies of Jesus Christ. You could conclude by singing “I Know That My Redeemer Lives” (*Hymns*, no. 136).

PICTURE GAME

Our family sometimes plays a picture game that adds great teaching moments to our family home evenings. We print out images from LDS.org or cut them out of the Church magazines and then place them in a large manila envelope. During family home evening, we take turns choosing a picture from the envelope, telling the rest of the family about it, and then putting the picture back in the envelope. This game has helped our family learn more about the Savior and His Church, and the interesting variety of comments from family members often invites a sweet spirit into our home.

Melanie Ashland, Missouri, USA

“Follow the Prophet,” page 38:

Consider sharing with your family the story about President Monson that Elder Walker

tells at the beginning of the article. What does the story teach about priorities in our lives? You may want to discuss each of the five ways Elder Walker suggests we can follow President Monson’s example. Perhaps you can set a family goal to incorporate one or more of the suggestions during the coming week. You might want to conclude by watching the Mormon Messages for Youth video “Dare to Stand Alone,” which features an inspiring example of courage from President Monson’s life (lds.org/youth/video/dare-to-stand-alone).

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DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

We welcome donated submissions showing the gospel of Jesus Christ at work in your life. Please submit articles through ensign.lds.org. Authors whose work is selected for publication will be notified.



**By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf**

Second Counselor
in the First Presidency

A FIRMLY SET Anchor

Not long ago I had the opportunity to sail on a great ship along the marvelous coast of Alaska, USA. While the captain prepared for the ship's overnight stay in a remote pristine bay, he carefully evaluated the location and circumstances, such as the sequence of the tides, depth of the waters, and distance from dangerous obstacles. When satisfied, he dropped anchor so that the ship would remain safe and firmly anchored, allowing the passengers an opportunity to marvel at the spectacular beauty of God's creations.

As I was looking at the coastline, I began to realize that the ship was drifting almost imperceptibly with the slightest amount of wind and underlying current. Nevertheless, the ship stayed firmly and persistently within a fixed circle defined by the length of the anchor line and the strength of the anchor.

The captain had not kept the anchor stored on the ship, ready to be lowered only if a storm should approach. No, he had anchored the vessel as a preventive measure and protected the ship from moving into unsafe waters or slowly drifting aground while passengers and crew felt safe.

As I was contemplating this scene, it occurred to me that if this wasn't an opportunity for a parable, I had never piloted an airplane.

Why We Need Anchors

The purpose of an anchor is to keep a ship safe and secure at a desired location or to help control the ship during bad weather. However, to accomplish these vital

purposes, just having an anchor is not enough. The anchor must be solid, dependable, and used properly at the right time and place.

Individuals and families need anchors as well.

Adversity can come as a great storm to blow us off course and threaten to cast us against the rocks. But sometimes we are also in danger when everything appears to be safe—the winds soft and the waters smooth. In fact, we can be in the greatest danger when we are drifting and movement is so slight that we scarcely notice it.

The Gospel Is Our Anchor

Anchors must be solid, strong, and well maintained to be ready when needed. In addition, they must be attached to a foundation capable of bearing the weight of opposing forces.

Of course, the gospel of Jesus Christ is such an anchor. It was prepared by the Creator of the universe for a divine purpose and designed to provide safety and guidance to His children.

What is the gospel, after all, besides God's plan to redeem His children and bring them back into His presence?

Knowing that it is in the nature of all things to drift, we must firmly set our anchors on the bedrock of gospel truth. They must not be lightly lowered onto the sands of pride or barely touching the surface of our convictions.

This month we have an opportunity to hear from God's servants in a general conference of the Church. Their words, joined with the scriptures and the promptings of the Spirit,



provide a secure and steady bedrock foundation of eternal values and principles to which we can attach our anchors so we can remain steadfast and secure amid the struggles and trials of life.

The ancient prophet Helaman taught, “It is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall” (Helaman 5:12).

The Value of Firmly Set Anchors

Life has a way of testing our anchors and tempting us to drift. Nevertheless, if our anchors are correctly placed in the rock of our Redeemer, they will hold—no matter the force of the wind, the strength of the tide, or the height of the waves.

Of course, a ship is not designed to remain stationary in a harbor but rather to raise anchor and sail the seas of life. But that is a parable for another time.

For now, I take comfort in knowing that the anchor of the gospel and the rock of our Redeemer will keep us steady and secure.

Such an anchor will keep us from drifting into danger and misfortune. It will allow us the glorious opportunity to enjoy the incomparable beauties of the ever-changing and sublime scenery of life.

Life is beautiful and worth living. Wind, storm, and prevailing currents may tempt us to drift into dangers seen or unseen, but the gospel message and its divine power will keep us on our path back to the safe harbor of our Heavenly Father.

Let us, therefore, not only *listen* to the talks of the April general conference but also *apply* their messages as a firmly set anchor to our daily lives.

May God bless and guide us in this significant and essential endeavor! ■

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

Consider discussing the importance of anchors in the context of Lehi’s family sailing to the promised land (see 1 Nephi 18). You might point out 1 Nephi 18:11–15, a time when Nephi is bound, the Liahona ceases to work, and the ship is driven by violent storms. What consequences do we face when we are not securely anchored in the gospel? You might also point out 1 Nephi 18:21–22 and discuss how we can find safety by turning to the Savior.

Conference and Me

By Sarah Deeks



I used to think general conference weekend was long and boring, but as time has passed, I have come to love and look forward to it. General conference weekend can be spiritually recharging, but it is easy to let these feelings fade when normal life continues on Monday. Some of the following ideas have helped me continue to get as much from conference as possible.

I prepare myself for conference by writing down questions, and then I make notes as my questions are answered. Afterward, I like to download the conference addresses and music from LDS.org and put them on an MP3 player so I can listen to a talk or hymn as I go about my daily routine.

I also love to study the conference issue of the *Liahona*. I highlight and make notes in the margins of my personal copy. By the time the next conference rolls around, my magazine is well used. My family sometimes studies the messages together in family home evening.

Keeping the spirit we felt during conference with us and continuing to learn from the messages requires work, but doing this has been a great blessing for me. I have received so much strength and guidance in times of need by studying the messages from general conference, and I know that these messages are inspired.

The author lives in Toronto, Canada.

CHILDREN

Set Your Anchor

What will keep you anchored to the gospel? Draw a line from the rope in the boy's hand to the items that President Uchtdorf said are safe places to set your anchor.



Prayerfully study this material and seek to know what to share. How will understanding the life and mission of the Savior increase your faith in Him and bless those you watch over through visiting teaching? For more information, go to reliefsociety.lds.org.

The Divine Mission of Jesus Christ: Savior and Redeemer

This is part of a series of Visiting Teaching Messages featuring aspects of the mission of the Savior.

Among the most significant of Jesus Christ's descriptive titles is Redeemer," said Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Redeem means to pay off an obligation or a debt. Redeem can also mean to rescue or set free as by paying a ransom. . . . Each of these meanings suggests different facets of the great Redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ through His Atonement, which includes, in the words of the dictionary, 'to deliver from sin and its penalties, as by a sacrifice made for the sinner.'"¹

Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, said: "Heavenly Father . . . sent His Only Begotten and perfect Son to suffer for our sins, our heartaches, and all that seems unfair in our own individual lives.

" . . . One woman who had been through years of trial and sorrow said through her tears, 'I have come to realize that I am like an old 20-dollar



bill—crumpled, torn, dirty, abused, and scarred. But . . . I am still worth the full 20 dollars.' This woman knows that she . . . was worth enough to [God] to send His Son to atone for her, individually. Every sister in the Church should know what this woman knows."²

From the Scriptures

2 Nephi 2:6; Helaman 5:11–12; Moses 1:39

NOTES

1. D. Todd Christofferson, "Redemption," *Ensign*, May 2013, 109.
2. Linda K. Burton, "Is Faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ Written in Our Hearts?" *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 114.



Faith, Family, Relief

From Our History

The New Testament includes accounts of women who exercised faith in Jesus Christ, learned and lived His teachings, and testified of His ministry, miracles, and majesty.

Jesus said to the woman at the well:

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not . . .

"I know that [the Messiah] cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

"Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."

She "then left her waterpot" and bore testimony of Him in the city. (See John 4:6–30.)

What Can I Do?

1. How can we show gratitude to the Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ?
2. How can we partake of the blessings of our Savior's atoning sacrifice in our lives?

MOSES

“So great was Moses that even Christ is described as a Prophet like unto this ancient leader of Israel’s hosts.”¹ —Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

I was born in Egypt at a time when my people, the Israelites, were in bondage. Fearing the growing number of Israelite slaves, Pharaoh ordered all male Israelites to be slain at birth. To protect me, my mother hid me for three months after my birth before placing me in a basket among the Nile’s reeds. Pharaoh’s daughter discovered me and raised me as her son.²

When I was grown, I left Egypt and lived in the land of Midian. There I found favor with Jethro, a shepherd and a priest, and married his daughter Zipporah. From Jethro, I received the Melchizedek Priesthood.³

One day while I tended Jethro’s flock, the Lord appeared to me in a burning bush and called me to deliver the children of Israel from slavery.⁴

I returned to Egypt and told Pharaoh to free the Lord’s people, but instead he increased their burdens. The Lord sent a series of plagues upon the Egyptians, but Pharaoh hardened his heart and still refused to free the Israelites. The final plague was a destroying angel that killed the firstborn son of every family in Egypt. The Israelites were protected from the destroying angel by spreading

the blood of an unblemished lamb on their door mantel and by remaining indoors. Through me, the Lord instituted the Feast of the Passover as an ordinance to help the Israelites remember this miracle every year.⁵

This final plague caused Pharaoh to relent and free the Israelites. But Pharaoh later hardened his heart and sent his armies after the departing Israelites. The Lord blessed me with the power to

part the Red Sea, and we escaped on dry ground while the sea flooded Pharaoh’s army.⁶

The Lord then led us through the wilderness in a cloud by day and a



MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES © PROVIDENCE COLLECTION; MOSES PARTING THE RED SEA, BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; MOSES AND THE TABLETS, BY JERRY HARSTON; MOSES CALLS AARON TO THE MINISTRY, BY HARRY ANDERSON; MOSES AND THE BRASS SERPENT, BY JUDITH A. MEHR

pillar of fire by night. He sustained us with water, manna, and quail.⁷

I climbed up Mount Sinai, where I remained for 40 days and received the Ten Commandments from the Lord. When I returned from the mountain, the Israelites had turned away from God and forged a golden calf to worship. They were no longer worthy to receive the law God gave me, so I broke the tablets containing it. I returned to the mountain, where the

Lord gave me the lesser law that is called after my name—the law of Moses.⁸

In the wilderness the Lord revealed to me the designs to build a tabernacle, or portable temple. We carried the tabernacle with us in our travels so we could worship in it. In the tabernacle, the people received ordinances and I spoke to the Lord “face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.”⁹ The Lord also showed me how to craft the ark of the covenant, a holy relic that rested in the most sacred section of the tabernacle, the Holy of Holies.¹⁰

When the Lord sent “fiery serpents” to chastise the Israelites, I was commanded to make a serpent of brass and raise it high on a pole so that all who were bitten by the serpents could look to it and be healed. But because of their pride and the simplicity of the

task, many would not look and therefore perished.¹¹

The Lord caused the Israelites to wander in the wilderness for 40 years before allowing them to enter the promised land.¹² I did not enter but was “taken up by the Spirit” unto the Lord.¹³ ■

NOTES

1. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (1966), 515; see also Deuteronomy 18:15–19.
2. See Exodus 1; 2:1–10.
3. See Exodus 2:11–22; Doctrine and Covenants 84:6.
4. See Exodus 3; 4:1–17.
5. See Exodus 5–12; Ezekiel 45:21.
6. See Exodus 14.
7. See Exodus 13:21–22; 15:22–27; 16; 17:1–7.
8. See Exodus 24:18; 31:18; 32; 34.
9. Exodus 33:11.
10. See Exodus 25–29; 40:21.
11. See Numbers 21:6–9; 1 Nephi 17:41; Alma 33:19–20.
12. See Numbers 14:33–34.
13. Alma 45:19.

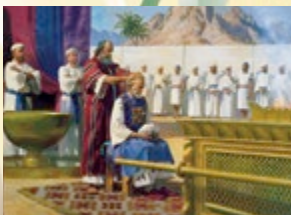
FACT BOX: MOSES

Writings of Moses: In addition to the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price, Moses authored the first five books in the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Premortal role: selected to preside over a dispensation (see Abraham 3:22–23)

Mortal roles: led the Israelites out of Egypt; received the law on Mount Sinai (see Exodus 12; 20)

Postmortal roles: appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration, giving priesthood keys to Peter, James, and John (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Transfiguration,” scriptures.lds.org); appeared in the Kirtland Temple in Ohio, USA, on April 3, 1836, restoring the keys of the gathering of Israel to Joseph Smith (see D&C 110:11)



How can living modestly in language, behavior, and appearance help us radiate light and glorify God?

If Your Eye Be Single to

My Glory

By Katherine Nelson and Heidi McConkie

In the premortal Council in Heaven, when Jesus Christ volunteered to be our Savior, He said to the Father, “Thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2).

The Lord has always set the example of glorifying the Father. During His mortal ministry, the Savior never drew attention to Himself but rather pointed His followers to the Father, teaching, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me” (John 12:44). In attitude, appearance, word, and deed, the Savior taught us about the importance of modesty.

In their dedication to follow the Savior, the young adults quoted in this article reflect on their inward and outward expressions of modesty and share how their commitment to glorify God has shaped their character and guided their actions.

Glorify God and Radiate Light

We better recognize how modesty glorifies God when we understand

what modesty really is. *True to the Faith* explains: “Modesty is an attitude of humility and decency in dress, grooming, language, and behavior. If you are modest, you do not draw undue attention to yourself. Instead, you seek to ‘glorify God in your body, and in your spirit’ (1 Corinthians 6:20).”¹

As we learn to exhibit modesty as the Savior did, we welcome the Spirit into our lives, fulfilling the promise that “if your eye be single to [God’s] glory, your whole [body] shall be filled with light” (D&C 88:67). As you read how other young adults understand modesty, you can consider how to increase your own spiritual light by making adjustments to improve your inward commitment to and outward expression of modesty.

Be Modest in Language and Behavior

“Your words and actions can have a profound influence on you and on others. Express yourself through clean, positive, uplifting language and in actions that bring happiness to those around you. Your efforts to be modest in word and deed lead to increased guidance and comfort from the Holy Ghost.”²

Dar’ja Sergeevna Shvydko of Volgograd, Russia, explains that we are modest in our speech as we treat others with respect and use “softness of voice and calm expression of our thoughts without using coarse or inappropriate words.” Modest language is free from gossip, taunts, ridicule, and sarcasm. It never belittles others or



inflates egos; it simply shows kindness to and recognizes the divinity of all of Heavenly Father's children.

Our speech should also show respect for the Godhead: "Avoid the filthy language and the casual, irreverent use of the Lord's name that are so common in the world. . . . The irreverent nature of such language . . . impairs [our] ability to receive the

"Modesty is an attitude of humility and decency in dress, grooming, language, and behavior. If you are modest, you do not draw undue attention to yourself."

quiet promptings of the Holy Ghost."³

Just as immodest speech such as gossip and ridicule can damage relationships, modest speech cultivates a deeper commitment to God and, as Kelly Prue of Utah, USA, explains, "increases our capacity to build positive relationships with others. Our modest speech helps us bring out the very best in others."

Modesty in language and modesty in behavior go hand in hand. "It's

important to be modest in language and behavior because that shows who you are and what you value," says Mike Olsen of Utah. People notice when words and actions are not aligned.

Our language that uplifts others and glorifies God should be accompanied by complementary actions. Through acts of service and kindness, we demonstrate that our commitment to uplift others and honor God runs deeper than our words. Our examples of discipleship in word and deed can be an influence for good.

"I really appreciate modesty in behavior and speech," says Carrie Carlson of Colorado, USA. "There is something so delightful in someone who is humble and doesn't do things for the motivation of getting attention. Those who speak modestly become powerful vessels for the Lord."

Be Modest in Dress and Appearance

"Modesty [in dress] helps bring out the best in us by helping us focus on the spiritual instead of the natural man," says Paul Cave of Utah. By dressing modestly, we encourage others to get to know us and appreciate us for our personality and character rather than how we look.

The way we dress not only signals to others how they should treat us, but it also affects how we view and treat ourselves. "We learn from the gospel that our body is a gift from God," says Luis Da Cruz Junior of Brazil. "Our bodies

help us progress and become as our Father is. For this reason it is important to dress modestly. By so doing, we show God and others that we have respect for this gift and for others."⁴

Carrie explains, "Immodest clothing is intended to portray the body as a physical object that is detached from a spirit with personality and character. Being modest, even though it has cost me more money sometimes and definitely more time, has helped me to learn that my body is the vessel of a precious spirit with divine potential and destiny, begotten and reared by Heavenly Parents. It deserves much more care and respect than the world would give it."

True to the Faith teaches: "In addition to avoiding [immodest clothing], you should avoid extremes in clothing, appearance, and hairstyle. In dress, grooming, and manners, always be neat and clean, never sloppy or inappropriately casual."⁵ In the way we clothe and present ourselves, we communicate our respect for God, for ourselves, and for others.

Commit to Consistency

As we try to follow gospel standards of modesty, we show our commitment through consistency: abiding by the Lord's commandments at all times rather than when it is convenient.

True commitment is always rooted in gospel principles. Anthony Roberts of Utah explains, "Modesty is a state

of mind, a desire to walk daily in an understanding of the gospel and the plan of salvation.” As we immerse ourselves in the gospel, our conversion can deepen and increase our desire to live gospel principles.

Understand Your Divine Nature

Consistently practicing modesty helps us understand and appreciate



our birthright, and knowledge of our divine nature can inspire us to be more modest. Raffaella Ferrini of Florence, Italy, explains, “Modesty blesses my life because it helps me feel like a special daughter of my Heavenly Father, and that knowledge, in turn, makes me want to be modest.”

Allowing the world to define who we are can damage our self-esteem. Julianna Auna of Utah describes her experience: “Before I gained a

testimony of the principle of modesty, I was in an unhappy and spiritually unsafe place. Letting the world define me was depressing and spiritually crippling because the world’s obsession with temporal, physical things is cruel and relentless. Once I decided not to listen to the world and to let my relationship with God define me instead, life became easier, freer, and happier.” When we seek approval from Heavenly Father instead of the world, we will find greater joy in life and greater motivation to be modest.

Live a Modest Life

“Modesty is expressed in everything that we do: our speech, our outward appearance, our conduct, and even the places we visit,” says Galina Viktorovna Savchuk of Novosibirsk, Russia. Modest living is closely connected to our commitment to the gospel and our relationship with God.

True modesty is a combination of both behavior and attitude. Working to improve either our behavior or our mindset will help us improve the other. Being modest in our behavior and appearance without developing a lifelong commitment prevents us from receiving the full blessings of living modestly. And believing ourselves to be modest people without following through with our actions is self-deception.⁶

In the context of modesty, to say our eyes are single to the glory of

God means that we are externally and internally committed to living modestly. Just as the eye must be pointed toward God, our outward appearance and actions must be consistent with the principles of modesty. But only directing the eye toward God does not make it single to His glory; it must be focused on Him. Likewise, modest dress and grooming must be accompanied by a vision of eternal principles.

As we turn our eyes toward God, we will be able to more easily focus our vision on Him. Likewise, as we focus our vision on God, our eyes will be naturally drawn in His direction.

As we strive to live modestly, we will feel the Spirit’s influence increase in our lives. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: “Modesty is fundamental to being worthy of the Spirit. To be modest is to be humble, and being humble invites the Spirit to be with us.”⁷ With the Spirit guiding our thoughts and actions, our eyes will become single to the glory of God and we will be full of light. ■

Katherine Nelson lives in Utah, USA. Heidi McConkie lives in Delaware, USA.

NOTES

1. *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 106.
2. *True to the Faith*, 108.
3. *True to the Faith*, 108.
4. See *True to the Faith*, 107.
5. *True to the Faith*, 107.
6. See Lynn G. Robbins, “What Manner of Men and Women Ought Ye to Be?” *Ensign*, May 2011, 103.
7. Robert D. Hales, “Modesty: Reverence for the Lord,” *Ensign*, Aug. 2008, 34.

Finland

Conversion and Sacrifice in

By Melissa Zenteno

A few miles off the coast of Helsinki, Finland, is the sea fortress of Suomenlinna, built in the 18th century to fortify against invaders. Stretching across six islands, this stronghold represents the steadfast determination of the Finnish people.

But Finnish members visit a different building when they travel to their capital. The Helsinki Finland Temple is a physical symbol of their conversion and the protection they receive from living the gospel.

For Niilo Kervinen, a 24-year-old young adult from Rovaniemi, Finland, the 10-hour train ride to Helsinki is a small price to pay for the blessing of serving in the temple.

Before the dedication of the Helsinki Finland Temple in October 2006, Niilo and other members of his ward had to travel to the Stockholm Sweden Temple or to the Copenhagen Denmark Temple. “The trips would usually take a week during the summer vacation,” he remembers.

Traveling by bus and sleeping in tents on those trips are some of the best memories he has.

Yet having a temple in his native land is a wonderful blessing. “When they announced the Helsinki Temple, I was so happy,” Niilo says. “The dedicatory prayer still resonates in my heart each time I go inside.”

This love for the temple sets Niilo apart from his friends. “Finns work hard and enjoy being active but leave little time for spiritual things in their life,” he explains. Although Niilo says he has always been blessed with good friends, as he grew older the distinction between how his friends lived and how he was taught to live became clearer. It was this difference that caused Niilo to seek his own testimony when he was 17. “I had to make a decision of where to stand and who to be,” he says. “With the blessings of the Lord and with the guidance of family and good friends, I got a stronger testimony of the Church.”

What is it like to be a faithful young adult in Finland? One young man shares his culture and his faith.

In speaking of conversion, Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “I promise that as we come to a knowledge of the truth and are converted unto the Lord, we will remain firm and steadfast and never fall away.”¹ Although traveling to Helsinki requires time and money, Niilo is committed to being a disciple of Christ. And for Niilo, that is no sacrifice at all. ■

NOTE

1. David A. Bednar, “Converted unto the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2012, 109.



MORE ABOUT NIILLO

What do Finns typically eat?

Some of my favorite dishes include salmon soup and reindeer meat with mashed potatoes. We also eat a lot of rye bread.

What do you do for fun?

I like to snowboard, watch movies, or just enjoy a walk outside. I served my mission in Japan, so I study Japanese when I can.

What is dating like in Finland?

We don't have a strong culture of dating. People generally ask someone out only after they already have a considerable amount of interest for them. Here, dating isn't a mechanism to get to know someone. There are faithful young adults here, even if there aren't many members. Sometimes young adult members travel long distances to go on a date with a person they met at a young single adult dance.

THE CHURCH IN FINLAND

4,715 Latter-day Saints
15 wards
15 branches
2 stakes
1 mission
1 temple,

BY THE NUMBERS

5,250,000 people (as of January 2012)
187,888 lakes
179,584 islands
2.2 million saunas

dedicated on October 22, 2006

FACTS

Capital: Helsinki
Language: Finnish (Suomi)





Lasting Happiness

By Craig P. Wilson

In the Book of Mormon we read, “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25). We also read in Mosiah 2:41 that we “should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.”

Underscoring the principles found in these scriptural passages, President David O. McKay (1873–1970) taught that “happiness is the purpose and design of existence. ‘Men are that they might have joy.’ Virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping

The gospel teaches us that we are all created for a happiness that endures. How can more of us achieve it?

the commandments of God lead to a happy life; those who follow that path are not long-faced and sanctimonious, depriving themselves of the joys of existence.”¹

We often use the word *happy* to describe a momentary mood, feeling, or emotion. Although characterizing these bursts of positive emotion in this way may not be inaccurate, the Lord

and His prophets present a broader view of happiness: it is both the reason for our existence and something we can experience in a much more lasting, constant, and enduring way. Happiness can be a state of being.

Though the gospel teaches that all of humanity is engineered for lasting happiness and that virtually all are built to act with the end motive of happiness in mind, many seem to struggle to attain the state of being for which we were created. Why? Does living in an imperfect world, with all its difficulties and challenges, loom as too big a barrier, blocking us from this “blessed and happy state”?

Researchers in the field of positive psychology have dedicated much time and energy to answering such questions. As one writer has observed, “[Positive psychology]





Wants versus Needs
When we purchase something we want but don't really need, we experience a short-term feeling of satisfaction (a "chocolate high"), followed by a relatively swift return to our earlier satisfaction level.

asks, What makes people happy? What makes communities strong? What can we do to help our children, and ourselves, to pursue lives that have meaning and purpose?"² Consequently, positive psychologists have identified several traits or factors that are shared by truly happy individuals. Not surprisingly, what these researchers continue to discover through their studies are principles that have always been a part of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Following are some of the traits that seem to be common among those who lead happy, meaningful lives.

Satisfaction with Meeting Basic Needs

Happy people are content with having their basic needs met.

Researchers have found that across cultures around the world, being able to obtain such basics as food, shelter, and clothing (and to acquire perhaps "a little bit more") produces high levels of long-term satisfaction in people. Spending money beyond those basic needs, however, does not generally increase the level of long-term satisfaction. For example, one study reported that the average life-satisfaction level for the Inughuit people of northern Greenland was virtually indistinguishable from that of American billionaires, despite the enormous difference in material possessions and wealth.³ How could that be? Doesn't it make sense that the more we spend on ourselves, the more satisfied we'll be?

In actuality, the answer is no. Studies have consistently shown that when we purchase something we want but don't really need, we generally experience a short-term feeling of satisfaction (a "chocolate high"), followed by a relatively swift return to our earlier satisfaction level. In other words, just about everything we buy that we do not really need is rapidly taken for granted. Living on such a consumer treadmill, with its short-term highs, runs counter to our well-being and can divert us from

experiencing sustained happiness.

Avoiding consumerism is related to a fundamental principle of provident living, expressed by Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "When faced with the choice to buy, consume, or engage in worldly things and activities, we all need to learn to say to one another, 'We *can't* afford it, even though we want it!' or 'We *can* afford it, but we don't *need* it—and we really don't even want it!'"⁴

Appreciation for Simplicity

Even when they live in a materialistic society, happy people are not ruled by the often mistaken idea that "more is better."

I once heard an interesting analogy that helps describe why the notion that "more is better" is often wrong. Imagine choosing your two favorite pieces of music and having the opportunity to listen to one and then the other. If asked to rate each of your listening experiences on a scale from 1 to 10, you would likely give both of them a solid 10, meaning each was highly enjoyable. However, if you decided to play both pieces at the same time, guided by the idea that "more is better," your listening experience would undoubtedly not add up to a 20 or even a 10. In fact, the experience would likely just produce irritating noise!

This phenomenon of finding

that more is often not better was expressed by one researcher this way: “When there are too many competing demands on our time and attention, our ability to be present is diminished—and with it, our ability to appreciate and enjoy the experience.”⁵

The evidence strongly suggests that in contrast to getting caught up in the culture of “wanting it all,” the practice of simplifying our lives can lead to greater financial peace and overall well-being. Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has extolled the virtue of simplicity as a means to “obtain relief from the stresses of life.”⁶ He has also taught: “One of the better ways to simplify our lives is to follow the counsel we have so often received to live within our income, stay out of debt, and save for a rainy day. We should practice and increase our habits of thrift, industry, economy, and frugality.”⁷

Dedication to a Cause

Happy people are involved in something they believe is bigger than themselves.

Whether through involvement in a religious organization or through working in a meaningful job, those who are happiest are able to lose themselves in a worthwhile cause.

Those who find satisfaction in the workplace often describe their daily work as a “calling” rather than a job or even a career. Individuals with a

calling see their work as contributing to the greater good, to something larger than they are.⁸

With this understanding in mind, isn’t it interesting that in the Church we are usually asked to fulfill callings, not perform jobs? One of the great benefits of activity in the Church is the sense that whatever good we do here contributes to our Father in Heaven’s work “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

Use of Personal Strengths

Happy people use their personal strengths to bless the lives of others.

What are our personal strengths? While we might be inclined to think of these as our talents (such as piano playing or woodworking), there are other kinds of personal strengths—what psychologist Martin Seligman calls our “signature strengths.” These include “integrity, valor, originality, and kindness.” They “are moral traits, while talents are nonmoral.”⁹ Dr. Seligman further defines signature strengths as “what *parents wish for their newborn* (‘I want my child to be loving, to be brave, to be prudent’). . . . They would not say they want their child to have a job in middle management.”¹⁰

The more we are able to identify these signature strengths and find creative, meaningful ways to use them to improve life around us, the happier and more fulfilled we will be. To me,

the description of signature strengths aligns closely with the spiritual gifts and “fruit of the Spirit” described in 1 Corinthians 12 and Galatians 5:22–23, as well as in Moroni 10 and Doctrine and Covenants 46. These scriptures teach that spiritual gifts come from God for the benefit of His children. Indeed, the benefit for those who use their gifts to bless others is enhanced happiness.

Commitment to Relationships

Happy people foster close friendships and family relationships.

The Old Testament records an

Is More Really Better?

Imagine choosing your two favorite pieces of music. If you decided to play both pieces at the same time, guided by the idea that “more is better,” the experience would likely produce irritating noise!





Purpose

What purpose would our lives have if they included no challenges but were simply a series of undemanding, “ready-made breakfast” experiences?

interview that the patriarch Jacob had near the end of his life with his son Joseph, during which Jacob spoke of his younger days and of Rachel, his wife (see Genesis 48:3–7). Commenting on this interview, Rabbi Harold S. Kushner has written: “Jacob, coming to the end of his life, is saying, in effect: When I was young, I wanted to change the world. I wanted to be so important that everyone would know my name. I may not have done that, but along the way, I loved someone. I changed her life and she changed mine, and that meant everything. That made it all worthwhile.”¹¹

Positive psychologists might observe that Jacob’s commitment to family relationships undoubtedly improved his level of well-being. “In fact,” say psychologists Ed Diener and Robert Biswas-Diener, “the links between happiness and social contact are so strong that many psychologists think that humans are genetically wired to need one another.”¹²

Although having acquaintances and casual friends can be rewarding, it is the supportive, close relationships that are essential to happiness. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” clearly affirms the importance of creating and maintaining loving family relationships. It also pointedly reminds us that “happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹³

A Sense of Purpose

Happy people focus less on transient, pleasurable pursuits and more on enduring, meaningful ones.

Depression has become increasingly common in all the wealthy countries of the world. Why is this so? Psychologist Martin Seligman suggests that one of the culprits is an “over-reliance on shortcuts to happiness. Every wealthy nation creates more and more shortcuts to pleasure: television, drugs, shopping, loveless sex, spectator sports, and chocolate to name just a few.” Noting what little

effort a ready-made breakfast required of him, he asks, “What would happen if my entire life were made up of such easy pleasures, never calling on my strengths, never presenting challenges? Such a life sets one up for depression.”¹⁴

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has provided a gospel perspective on these matters: “While wholesome pleasure results from much we do that is good, it is not our prime purpose for being on earth. Seek to know and do the will of the Lord, not just what is convenient or what makes life easy. You have His plan of happiness. You know what to do, or can find out through study and prayer. Do it willingly.”¹⁵

One of the great themes of the restored gospel is agency and that “men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness” (D&C 58:27). This is the path to a life of purpose and happiness.

Selflessness

Happy people strive to become more selfless.

Deciding to forget oneself and reach out to others brings immeasurable blessings to the giver. Authors Gary Morsch and Dean Nelson explain that “while the scientific evidence shows we are wired

toward altruism, there is still a choice involved. The beauty of the choice is that, when we choose to serve others, something wonderful happens.”¹⁶ And what kind of wonderful thing might that be? Morsch and Nelson describe what one group experienced after helping repair a building damaged by a hurricane: “They felt their lives *meant something* while they were doing something for someone else. They had helped someone in a concrete way, and it made them feel alive. They didn’t say it made them feel good. Lots of things can do that. This brought them to *life*.”¹⁷

Selflessness
A focus on self is not the path to happiness. Rather, joy is found in surrendering our egos in service to others.



Such descriptions are strikingly similar to the Savior’s teaching that “whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it” (Luke 17:33). Concerning the connection between service and happiness, President Thomas S. Monson has taught: “To find real happiness, we must seek for it in a focus outside ourselves. No one has learned the meaning of living until he has surrendered his ego to the service of his fellowmen. Service to others is akin to duty, the fulfillment of which brings true joy.”¹⁸

“There Could Not Be a Happier People”

The Book of Mormon provides an inspiring account of the people’s condition after the Savior’s visit to the Americas. Here was a haven of Christlike love and consecration in which the people “had all things common among them” (4 Nephi 1:3). Dedicated to living the gospel of Jesus Christ, the people had the love of God in their hearts, so that “there was no contention in the land” and many of the sins usually associated with this world were not found among them. The account then tells us that “surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God” (4 Nephi 1:15–16).

To experience such happiness ourselves is not an unreachable ideal. As we dedicate ourselves to living

the gospel of Jesus Christ, adopting righteous characteristics we observe in the lives of those who lead joyful, meaningful lives, we too can live “after the manner of happiness” (2 Nephi 5:27)—the lasting happiness that God intended for His children. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. David O. McKay, *Pathways to Happiness*, comp. Llewelyn R. McKay (1957), xi.
2. Marilyn Thomsen, “The Pursuit of Happiness,” *The Flame* (magazine of Claremont Graduate University), Summer 2004, 15.
3. See Ed Diener and Martin E. P. Seligman, “Beyond Money: Toward an Economy of Well-Being,” *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, vol. 5, no. 1 (July 2004), 10; see also Robert Biswas-Diener, Joar Vittersø, and Ed Diener, “Most People Are Pretty Happy, but There Is Cultural Variation: The Inughuit, the Amish, and the Maasai,” *Journal of Happiness Studies*, vol. 6, no. 3 (September 2005), 205–26.
4. Robert D. Hales, “Becoming Provident Providers Temporally and Spiritually,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 9.
5. Norbert Schwartz, in Tal Ben-Shahar, *Happier: Learn the Secrets to Daily Joy and Lasting Fulfillment* (2007), 152.
6. L. Tom Perry, “Let Him Do It with Simplicity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 10.
7. L. Tom Perry, “Let Him Do It with Simplicity,” 9.
8. See Ed Diener and Robert Biswas-Diener, *Happiness: Unlocking the Mysteries of Psychological Wealth* (2008), 70–72.
9. Martin E. P. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment* (2002), 134.
10. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, 137, 138.
11. Harold S. Kushner, *Living a Life That Matters* (2002), 153.
12. Diener and Biswas-Diener, *Happiness: Unlocking the Mysteries*, 50.
13. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
14. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, 118.
15. Richard G. Scott, “First Things First,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 8.
16. Gary Morsch and Dean Nelson, *The Power of Serving Others* (2006), 4.
17. Morsch and Nelson, *The Power of Serving Others*, 5–6.
18. Thomas S. Monson, “The Lord’s Way,” *Ensign*, May 1990, 93.



Members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are modern-day prophets, seers, and revelators who stand as “special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world” (D&C 107:23). As such, they have the responsibility to testify of the divinity of Jesus Christ and of His mission as the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

In the quotations that follow, these chosen and commissioned men share their testimonies of the Savior’s Atonement, Resurrection, and living reality.

Special Witnesses Testify of the Living Christ



Jesus Is Our Redeemer

“With all my heart and the fervency of my soul, I lift up my voice in

testimony as a special witness and declare that God does live. Jesus is His Son, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. He is our Redeemer; He is our Mediator with the Father. He it was who died on the cross to atone for our sins. He became the firstfruits of the Resurrection. Because He died, all shall live again. ‘Oh, sweet the joy this sentence gives: “I know that my Redeemer lives!”’ [“I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” *Hymns*, no. 136].”

President Thomas S. Monson, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives!” *Ensign*, May 2007, 25.



I Am a Witness

“I am a witness of the Resurrection of the Lord as surely as if I had been there in the

evening with the two disciples in the house on Emmaus road. I know that He lives as surely as did Joseph Smith when he saw the Father and the Son in the light of a brilliant morning in a grove of trees in Palmyra. . . .

“. . . I so testify as a witness of the risen Savior and our Redeemer.”

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “Come unto Me,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 25.



The Atonement and Salvation

“God the Father is the author of the gospel; it is a key part of God’s plan

of salvation, or plan of redemption. It is called the gospel of Jesus Christ because it is the Atonement of Jesus Christ that makes redemption and salvation possible. Through the Atonement all men, women, and children are unconditionally redeemed from physical death, and all will be redeemed from their own sins on the condition of accepting and obeying the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . .

“Of this I bear witness with all my heart and mind.”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, “Have We Not Reason to Rejoice?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 19, 21.



Jesus Is the Christ

“I know that God is our Father. He introduced His Son, Jesus Christ, to Joseph Smith. I declare to you that I know that Jesus is the Christ. I know that He lives. He was born in the meridian of time. He taught His gospel and was tried. He suffered and was crucified and resurrected on the third day. He, like His Father, has a body of flesh and bone. He made His Atonement. Of Him I bear witness. Of Him I am a witness.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Twelve,” *Ensign*, May 2008, 87.



A Ransom for the Human Family

“[Jesus Christ] is the centerpiece of the eternal plan of the Father, the Savior who was provided as a ransom for mankind. God sent His Beloved Son to overcome the Fall of Adam and Eve. He came to earth as our Savior and Redeemer. He overcame the obstacle of physical death for us by giving up His own life. When He died on the cross, His spirit became separated from His body. On the third day His spirit and His body were reunited eternally, never to be separated again.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Plan of Salvation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 71.



The Central Act of Human History

“[The Savior’s] Atonement was wrought in Gethsemane, where He sweat great drops of blood (see Luke 22:44), and on Golgotha (or Calvary), where His body was lifted up upon a cross over the ‘place of a skull,’ which signified death (Mark 15:22; Matthew 27:33; see also 3 Nephi 27:14). This infinite Atonement would release man from the infinitude of death (see 2 Nephi 9:7). The Savior’s Atonement made the resurrection a reality and eternal life a possibility for all. His Atonement became the central act of all human history.”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Peace and Joy of Knowing the Savior Lives,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2011, 20.



A Sacrifice for Sin

“Jesus Christ endured incomprehensible suffering to make Himself a sacrifice for the sins of all. That sacrifice offered the ultimate good—the pure Lamb without blemish—for the ultimate measure of evil—the sins of the entire world. . . .

“That sacrifice—the Atonement of Jesus Christ—is at the center of the plan of salvation. . . .

“I know that Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son of God the Eternal Father. I know that because of His atoning sacrifice, we have the assurance of immortality and the opportunity for eternal life. He is our Lord, our Savior, and our Redeemer.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Sacrifice,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 19, 22.



The Savior Guides His Church Today

“The Atonement of Jesus Christ was an indispensable part of our Heavenly Father’s plan for His Son’s earthly mission and for our salvation. How grateful we should be that our Heavenly Father did not intercede but rather withheld His fatherly instinct to rescue His Beloved Son. Because of His eternal love for you and for me, He allowed Jesus to complete His foreordained mission to become our Redeemer. . . .

“Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of all mankind, is not dead. He lives—the resurrected Son of God lives—that is my testimony, and He guides the affairs of His Church today.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Atonement and the Value of One Soul,” *Ensign*, May 2004, 85, 86.



Our Hope, Our Mediator, Our Redeemer

“Our security is in [our Heavenly Father] and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. I know that the Savior loves you. He will confirm your efforts to strengthen your testimony so that it becomes a consummate power for good in your life, a power that will sustain you in every time of need and give you peace and assurance in these times of uncertainty.

“As one of His Apostles authorized to bear witness of Him, I solemnly testify that I know that the Savior lives, that He is a resurrected, glorified personage of perfect love. He is our hope, our Mediator, our Redeemer.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Power of a Strong Testimony,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 89.



Drinking the Bitter Cup

“In the Garden of Gethsemane, our Savior and Redeemer did not shrink from drinking the bitter cup of the Atonement [see D&C 19:16–19]. And on the cross He suffered again to do His Father’s will, until at last He could say, ‘It is finished’ [John 19:30]. He had endured to the end. In response to the Savior’s perfect obedience in standing strong, our Heavenly Father declared, ‘Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name’ [3 Nephi 11:7].

“. . . Let us glorify God’s name by standing strong with our Savior, Jesus Christ. I bear my special witness that He lives.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Stand Strong in Holy Places,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 51.



God’s Only Perfect Child

“I know that God is at all times and in all ways and in all circumstances our loving, forgiving Father in Heaven. I know Jesus was His only perfect child, whose life was given lovingly by the will of both the Father and the Son for the redemption of all the rest of us who are not perfect. I know He rose from that death to live again, and because He did, you and I will also.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Lord, I Believe,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 95.



I Know the Savior Lives

“I declare my witness of and appreciation for the infinite and eternal sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. I know the Savior lives. I have experienced both His redeeming power and His enabling power, and I testify that these powers are real and available to each of us. Indeed, ‘in the strength of the Lord’ we can do and overcome all things as we press forward on our journey of mortality.”

Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2012, 47.



Christ Fulfilled His Mission

“[The Savior] took upon Himself the ‘burden of the sins of mankind’ and the ‘horrors that Satan . . . could inflict’ [James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 613]. In this process He endured the fraudulently concocted trials and the terrible, tragic events leading to His Crucifixion. This ultimately culminated in Christ’s triumphant Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Christ fulfilled His sacred mission as Savior and Redeemer. We will be resurrected from death and have our spirits reunited with our bodies. . . .

“I bear my apostolic witness that Jesus Christ lives and is the Savior and Redeemer of the world. He has provided the pathway to true happiness.”

Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “We Follow Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 83–84, 86.



The Savior Redeemed Us

“The Savior’s suffering in Gethsemane and His agony on the cross redeem us from sin by satisfying the demands that justice has upon us. He extends mercy and pardons those who repent. The Atonement also satisfies the debt justice owes to us by healing and compensating us for any suffering we innocently endure. ‘For behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam’ (2 Nephi 9:21; see also Alma 7:11–12). . . .

“. . . Ultimate redemption is in Jesus Christ and in Him alone. I humbly and gratefully acknowledge Him as the Redeemer.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Redemption,” *Ensign*, May 2013, 110, 112.



The Resurrection and the Life

“Above all, we proclaim our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. All that we are—all that we will ever be—we owe to Him. . . .

“His words echo through the centuries:

“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’ (John 11:25–26).

“Brothers and sisters, He lives. He is resurrected. He guides His holy work upon the earth.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Come unto Him,” *Ensign*, May 2009, 80.



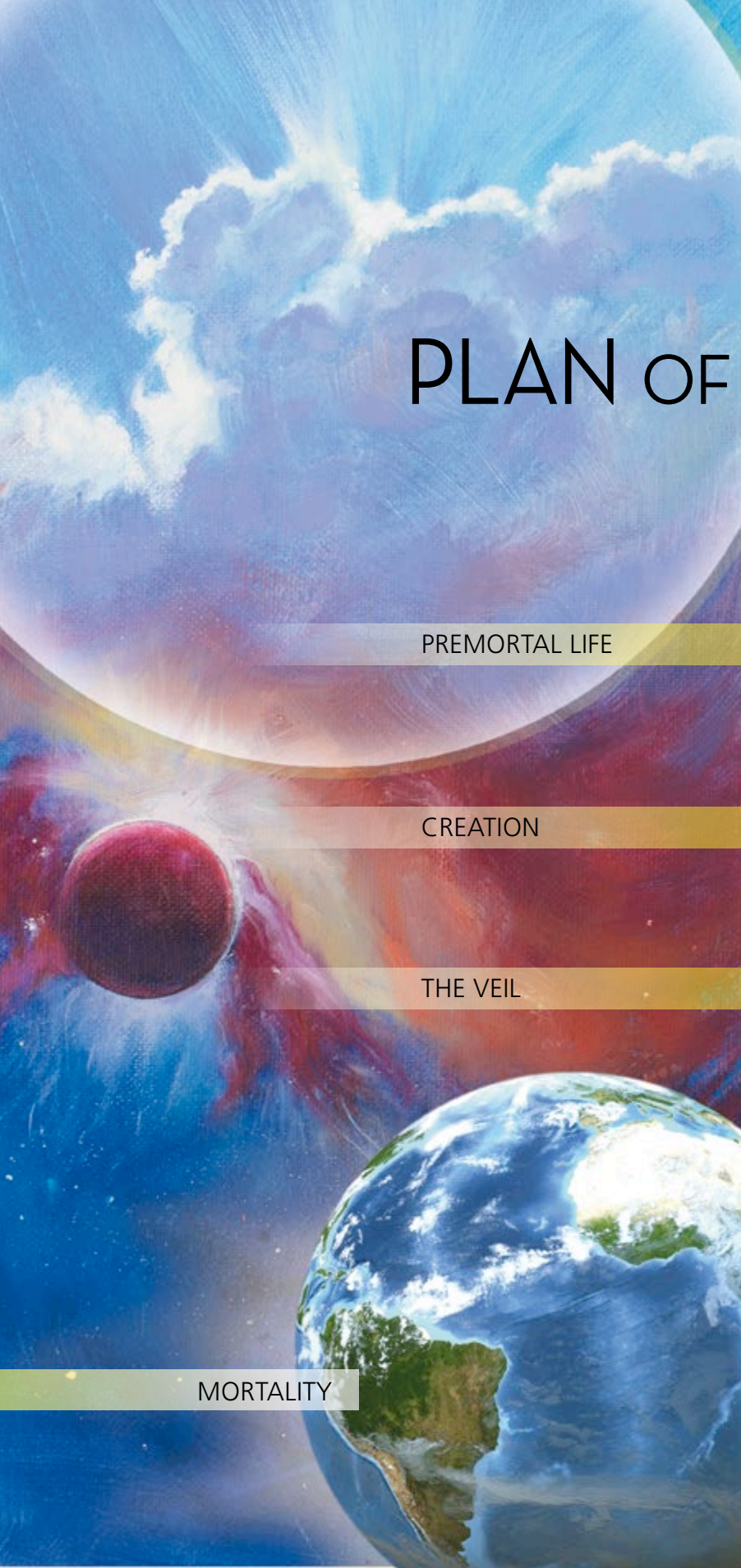
ANSWERING QUESTIONS

What does a resurrected person look like?

“After we have passed through this life, we will . . . have our bodies glorified, made free from every sickness and distress, and rendered most beautiful. There is nothing more beautiful to look upon than a resurrected man or woman. There is nothing grander that I can imagine that

a man [or woman] can possess than a resurrected body. There is no Latter-day Saint . . . but that certainly has this prospect of coming forth in the morning of the first resurrection and being glorified, exalted in the presence of God.”

President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901), in Conference Report, Oct. 1900, 4.



Using the
PLAN OF SALVATION
to Answer Questions

PREMORTAL LIFE

CREATION

THE VEIL

MORTALITY

We are living in an exciting time. The restored gospel of Jesus Christ is coming “out of obscurity” (D&C 1:30). As a result, more of Heavenly Father’s children who are not of our faith are hearing about “the Mormons.” Some hear things that sound strange and confusing. Others hear things that feel familiar and comforting. Individuals from either group may come to us seeking answers to their questions. Many answers are found in the plan of salvation, which is also known as the “great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8).

The most commonly asked questions are “Where did I come from?” “Why am I here?” and “Where do I go after this life?”

All these questions can be answered by truths found in the plan of salvation.

This article shares some of the answers the scriptures and our prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, have given regarding these questions.

Faith in Jesus Christ
Repentance

Where did I come from?

We are eternal beings. We lived with God before this life as His spirit children. “The Apostle Paul [taught] that ‘we are the offspring of God’ [Acts 17:29],” said President Monson. “Since we know that our physical bodies are the offspring of our mortal parents, we must probe for the meaning of Paul’s statement. The Lord has declared that ‘the spirit and the body are the soul of man’ [D&C 88:15]. Thus it is the spirit which is the offspring of God. The writer of Hebrews refers to Him as ‘the Father of spirits’ [Hebrews 12:9].”¹

Why am I here?

Of our life on earth, President Monson said: “How grateful we should be that a wise Creator fashioned an earth and placed us here, with a veil of forgetfulness of our previous existence so that we might experience a time of testing, an opportunity to prove ourselves in order to qualify for all that God has prepared for us to receive.

“Clearly, one primary purpose of our existence upon the earth is to obtain a body of flesh and bones. We have also been given the gift of agency. In a thousand ways we are privileged to choose for ourselves. Here we learn from the hard taskmaster of experience. We discern between good and evil. We differentiate as to the bitter and the sweet. We discover that there are consequences attached to our actions.”²

Where am I going after this life?

Death comes to all members of the human family. But “if a man die, shall he live again?” (Job 14:14). “We know that death is not the end,” said President Monson. “This truth has been taught by living prophets throughout the ages. It is also found in our holy scriptures. In the Book of Mormon we read specific and comforting words:

*When we or
others have
questions about
the gospel of Jesus
Christ, do we
know where to
find the answers?*

*Endure
to the
end*

Baptism

Gift of the Holy Ghost



WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PLAN OF SALVATION?

1. The plan of salvation is taught most clearly in the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.
2. Words of the living prophets are found on conference.lds.org. You can search for terms such as *plan of salvation, plan of happiness, atonement, exaltation, justice and mercy, repentance, and resurrection*.
3. See “Lesson 2: The Plan of Salvation” in chapter 3 of *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service*.

“Now, concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection—Behold, it has been made known unto me by an angel, that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life.

“And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow’ [Alma 40:11–12].”³

After we are resurrected, we go to the celestial kingdom with glory like the sun, the terrestrial kingdom with glory like the moon, the telestial kingdom with glory like the stars, or into outer darkness (see D&C 76).

Is there really a God? Is Satan real?

Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and Satan were all part of the great Council in Heaven held before we were born. As part of the plan of salvation, Heavenly Father asked for one to go to earth and atone for our sins. He said: “Whom shall I send? And one [Jesus Christ] answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another [Satan] answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first.

“And the second [Satan] was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him” (Abraham 3:27–28; see also D&C 29:36–37; Moses 4:1–4).

Do we possess the power to resist Satan’s temptations?

The one-third of the spirits who chose to follow Satan after the Council in Heaven were cast out with him. They and Satan remain spirits without physical bodies. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: “All beings who have bodies have power over those who have not.”⁴ Hence Satan can tempt us, but we have the power to resist.

*Spirit
World*

DEATH

RESURRECTION





CELESTIAL

TERRESTRIAL

TELESTIAL

OUTER
DARKNESS

Why does it sometimes seem like Heavenly Father doesn't answer my prayers?

“Prayer is the act by which the will of the Father and the will of the child are brought into correspondence with each other. The object of prayer is not to change the will of God” (Bible Dictionary, “Prayer”). Prayer is a tool that helps us decide if we will use our agency to align our will with God’s (see Abraham 3:25). Heavenly Father always answers our prayers, but those answers can come in the form of yes, no, or not yet. Timing is important.

Why do I have challenges when I am striving to live a good life?

Challenges are part of the plan of salvation. They make us stronger, refine us, and purify us as we rely on Jesus Christ and His gospel. Heavenly Father sustains us during our challenges. Our trials will “give [us] experience, and shall be for [our] good” (D&C 122:7).

How can I know what is right and what is wrong?

All of God’s children are born with the Light of Christ, which helps us “know good from evil” (Moroni 7:16). In addition, the Holy Ghost can bear witness to us of truth in our mind and heart with feelings of peace and warmth (see D&C 8:2–3).

Can I be forgiven even if I have committed serious sins?

God knew that all of us would sin as we learned to choose between right and wrong.⁵ All sins, however, have punishment attached to them. Justice demands that the punishment be suffered. In His mercy, Heavenly Father allowed Jesus Christ to perform the Atonement and meet the demands of justice for us all (see Alma 42). In other words, Christ’s suffering in Gethsemane and death on Golgotha paid the price for all our sins if we access Christ’s Atonement by repenting and receiving the ordinances of the gospel. Our sins will be forgiven (see D&C 1:31–32). ■

NOTES

1. Thomas S. Monson, “The Race of Life,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 91; see also Abraham 3:22–26.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “The Race of Life,” 91–92; see also Alma 34:32–34.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “The Race of Life,” 93; see also Doctrine and Covenants 76:59–111.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 211.
5. Little children cannot sin “until they begin to become accountable” (see D&C 29:46–47).



Covenants

TWO-WAY PROMISES WITH GOD

We increase in spiritual power with each covenant we make with God: baptism and confirmation, priesthood ordination, temple endowment, and sealing.

By LaRene Porter Gaunt

Church Magazines

What exactly is a covenant? “A covenant,” Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains, “is a binding spiritual contract, a solemn promise to God our Father that we will live and think and act in a certain way—the way of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In return, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost promise us the full splendor of eternal life.”¹ The better we understand the two-way promises of covenants between us and God, the better we will be able to honor the covenants we have made.

Whether we are baptized at age eight or as an adult, the powerful blessings are the same and are dependent on our worthiness. As we move along the covenant path by having the priesthood conferred upon worthy male members, being endowed in the temple, and finally being sealed as a couple or family, we learn line upon line.

Each person’s journey of covenant making may be slightly different, but each of us will increase in understanding as we strive to remain faithful and worthy. For example, when I was baptized at age eight, I didn’t really understand the full meaning of baptism. My husband, however, joined the Church at age 24 after a year of attending church, reading the Book of Mormon, and studying the doctrine. He understood this covenant much better than I did at age eight. He was ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood a week after he was baptized and to the

Melchizedek Priesthood before we went to the temple. We were endowed the day before our sealing, and everything in those ordinances was new to us. Because of distance, we could only attend the temple once a year.

I think our deep understanding of all the covenants, especially the covenants we made when we were sealed in the temple, came during the years each of our first three babies died in infancy. We were so grateful they had been born in the covenant, and we were motivated to be faithful so we could be with them again. We adopted a baby girl and had her sealed to us in the temple a year later. We wept with gratitude. Blessings continued when two more babies were born to us and lived.

Understanding covenants is a lifelong process. Returning to the temple to serve as proxy for our deceased ancestors allows us to perform the ordinances along the covenant path for them. In the process, we are reminded of what we covenanted to do and we increase in our understanding.

What do you remember of your promises and God’s promises as you have made your covenants along your path to eternal life? Do you still have covenants you need to make? Following are reminders of some of the promises we make and some of God’s promises to us if we are faithful. As we keep our covenants, we will increase in understanding and anchor our lives firmly in God’s laws.

Baptism and Confirmation

Baptism and confirmation are the first saving ordinances of the gospel. When we are immersed in water at baptism, we witness to our Heavenly Father that we will be obedient in keeping His commandments (see 2 Nephi 31:7). Confirmation, which is done by the laying on of hands, certifies us as members of the Lord's Church and allows us to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Through baptism and confirmation, we covenant, among other things, to take Christ's name upon us (see D&C 20:37), to serve God and keep His commandments (see Mosiah 18:10; D&C 20:37), and to stand as witnesses of God and Jesus Christ (see Mosiah 18:9). We are also willing to bear each other's burdens (see Mosiah 18:8), to repent of our sins (see D&C 20:37), and to receive the Holy Ghost as a constant companion (see 2 Nephi 31:18).

If we are faithful, God's promises include pouring out His Spirit upon us (see Mosiah 18:10), redeeming us from our sins as we repent (see Mosiah 18:9; D&C 20:37), and bringing us forth in the First Resurrection (see Mosiah 18:9). He also gives us the gift of the Holy Ghost (see 2 Nephi 31:12; Moroni 6:4) and admits us as members of His Church (see Moroni 6:4; D&C 20:37).²



PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT

"We can be washed clean weekly as we worthily partake of His sacrament. As we renew and honor our covenants, our burdens can be lightened and we can continually become purified and strengthened."

Linda S. Reeves, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, "Claim the Blessings of Your Covenants," *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 120.



Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood

The priesthood is conferred upon worthy male members of the Church. The priesthood “is the power and authority that God gives to man to act in all things necessary for the salvation of God’s children.”³

In the oath and covenant of the priesthood, priesthood holders covenant, among other things, to faithfully receive the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods and to magnify their callings and fulfill priesthood responsibilities (see D&C 84:33). They also willingly receive the Lord’s servants (see D&C 84:35–36) and live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (see D&C 84:43–44).

If priesthood holders are faithful, God’s promises include sanctifying them by the Spirit (see D&C 84:33), numbering them with the elect of God (see D&C 84:34), and giving them all that He has (see D&C 84:38).⁴



BLESSINGS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

“A man may open the drapes so the warm sunlight comes into the room, but the man does not own the sun or the light or the warmth it brings. The blessings of the priesthood are infinitely greater than the one who is asked to administer the gift.”

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Power in the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 92.

The Temple Endowment

“The word *endowment* means ‘gift,’ and the temple endowment truly is a gift of spiritual power from God.”⁵ The endowment “consists of a course of instruction, receiving saving ordinances, and making covenants.”⁶ Our temple covenants are sacred, so we do not discuss them in detail outside of the temple.

We covenant, among other things, to obey the gospel, to observe the law of chastity, and to be charitable, benevolent, tolerant, and pure. We also strive to devote time, talents, and resources to the Lord’s kingdom.⁷

If we are faithful, God’s promises include giving us inspiration and instruction through personal revelation.⁸ He will also protect us from temptation,⁹ prepare us to be His disciples,¹⁰ and make us joint-heirs with Jesus Christ of all our Father has.¹¹

Sealing for Time and All Eternity

The sealing of a man and a woman in temple marriage creates an eternal relationship between them and their children that can last beyond death. The sealing of children to parents links generations together in eternal family relationships. These ordinances can take place only in a dedicated temple of God and are administered by those who have been ordained with the sealing power of the priesthood. Whether in this life or the next, all worthy sons and daughters of God will have the opportunity to be sealed to an eternal companion.¹²



BLESSINGS OF THE TEMPLE

“When men and women go to the temple, they are both endowed with the same power, which by definition is priesthood power. . . . The endowment is literally a gift of power.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Let Us Think Straight” (Brigham Young University Education Week devotional, Aug. 20, 2013), 7, speeches.byu.edu.



We covenant, among other things, to maintain complete fidelity to our spouse and to live in ways that contribute to a happy and successful family life.¹³ We are also willing to have children and teach them the gospel.¹⁴

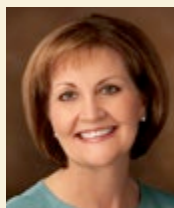
If we are faithful, God's promises include sealing our spouses and children to us for eternity and granting us the blessings of posterity in the eternities. He will also help us come to know Him and His Son, Jesus Christ (see D&C 132:48–50), and will exalt us in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 131:1–4).¹⁵

Putting God and His Covenants First

Making and keeping sacred covenants protects and empowers us, enables us to bless others, and makes eternal life possible. “We who know God’s plan . . . must never deviate from our paramount desire, which is to achieve eternal life,” said Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “We must never dilute our first priority—to have no other gods and to serve no other priorities ahead of God the Father and His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.”¹⁶

May we keep our covenants. They are sacred and lead us back to our Heavenly Father and eternal life with Him and our families. ■

This article is in support of October 2013 general conference. Go to lds.org/topics/covenant/covenant-path for more information to increase your understanding of the covenant path; see also “Understanding Our Covenants with God,” *Ensign*, July 2012, 22–25.



HONORING OUR COVENANTS

“Making and keeping our covenants is an expression of our commitment to become like the Savior.”

Linda K. Burton, Relief Society general president, “The Power, Joy, and Love of Covenant Keeping,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 111.



NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Keeping Covenants: A Message for Those Who Will Serve a Mission,” *New Era*, Jan. 2012, 3.
2. See *Duties and Blessings of the Priesthood, Part A* (2000), 215–22; *Eternal Marriage Student Manual* (2003), 41–42; lds.org/topics/baptism.
3. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 2; see also 7.1; 20.7; Official Declaration 2.
4. See *Eternal Marriage Student Manual*, 44.
5. *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 171.
6. *Eternal Marriage Student Manual*, 45.
7. See *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (2002), 34–35.
8. See “Endowed with Covenants and Blessings” *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 40.
9. See Joseph Fielding Smith, “The Pearl of Great Price,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, July 1930, 103.
10. See Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 5:259.
11. See M. Russell Ballard, “Let Us Think Straight” (Brigham Young University Education Week devotional, Aug. 20, 2013), 7, speeches.byu.edu.
12. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow* (2012), 130–31.
13. See *Eternal Marriage Student Manual*, 46.
14. See J. Ballard Washburn, “The Temple Is a Family Affair,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 12.
15. See *Eternal Marriage Student Manual*, 46.
16. Dallin H. Oaks, “No Other Gods,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 75.



By Elder
William R. Walker
Of the Seventy



Follow THE PROPHET

Several years ago, just before general conference, President Thomas S. Monson taught a wonderful lesson. This time it was to assembled General Authorities who had traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah, many coming from places around the world where they were serving in Area Presidencies. We had come together to be instructed by the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles.

As the time for the meeting approached, everyone seemed to be in attendance except President Monson. Several minutes before the meeting was to begin, we stopped visiting with each other and sat reverently listening to the prelude music, expecting the prophet to arrive any moment.

We patiently waited as 9:00 a.m. came and then passed. Someone walked out the side door—obviously to see if some assistance might be needed. Upon returning, he said, “President Monson will join you shortly.”

About 15 minutes later, President Monson entered the room. Out of respect, we stood as he entered. We were happy to see him and pleased that he looked well. There was no obvious reason as to why he would have been late.

President Monson went straight to the pulpit and said, “Brethren, I’m sorry to be late, but my wife needed me this morning.”

I was deeply impressed and humbled, and I couldn’t stop thinking about his words.

This was a very important meeting. The entire senior leadership of the Church was assembled, but President Monson set the example for us all. His wife needed him,

As we follow President Monson and try to be more like him, we will inevitably succeed in being more faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

and he took the time necessary to care for her. It was a great sermon. I don’t remember anything else said that day, but I remember that sermon: “My wife needed me.”

Following the Prophet’s Example

I would like to suggest five ways we can follow the example of President Monson.

1. We can be positive, and we can be happy.

In the Pearl of Great Price, the Prophet Joseph Smith describes his “cheery temperament” (Joseph Smith—History 1:28). “Cheery” also describes President Monson.

On one occasion President Monson said: “We . . . can choose to have a positive attitude. We can’t direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails. In other words, we can choose to be happy and positive, regardless of what comes our way.”¹

One day I was waiting outside the First Presidency boardroom. I had been invited there to take part in a meeting to discuss temple matters. I sat quietly outside the room, alone. I thought the First Presidency was already meeting



At every temple dedication, President Monson focuses on the children. He loves to include them in the cornerstone ceremony.

and that I would be invited to join them in a few minutes.

As I sat there, I could hear someone walking down the hall whistling. I thought to myself, “Someone doesn’t understand proper protocol. You don’t go walking around whistling outside the office of the President of the Church.”

A moment later the whistler walked around the corner—it was President Monson. He was happy, and he was positive. He greeted me warmly and said, “I guess we’ll start the meeting in a couple of minutes.”

Even with the weight of the whole Church on his shoulders, he is an example of happiness and he always has a positive attitude. We should be that way.

2. We can be kind and loving toward children.

Jesus spoke often of children. His prophet, President Monson, speaks often of children as well. I’ve seen, particularly at temple dedications, how he loves children and, by his example, teaches us how to treat them. At every temple dedication he focuses on the children. He loves to include them in the cornerstone ceremony and always invites a few of them to put some mortar in the cornerstone to participate in the symbolic completion of the temple. He makes it fun for them. He makes it memorable for them. He always has a big smile for them. He encourages

and commends them. It is a wonderful thing to see.

His warm greetings occasionally include high fives, wiggling of his ears, and encouragement to serve missions and marry in the temple.

A few years ago President Monson was scheduled to dedicate the Oquirrh Mountain Utah Temple on his birthday. As he arrived at the temple and approached the front door of the temple, a group of young people had assembled. They obviously knew it was President Monson’s birthday because they began to sing “Happy Birthday” to him. He stopped and faced them with a big smile on his face. He even started to wave his arms as if he were leading them in the singing. At the end they added the refrain “And many more.” He said to me, “That’s my favorite part.”

The children and the youth of the Church love him, and they have no doubt that he loves them too!

3. We can follow the promptings of the Spirit.

President Monson beautifully stated his devotion to the Lord and his commitment to following the promptings of the Spirit with these words: “The sweetest experience I know in life is to feel a prompting and act upon it and later find out that it was the fulfillment of someone’s prayer or someone’s need. And I always want the Lord to know that if He needs an errand run, Tom Monson will run that errand for Him.”²

That is a pattern that each of us should want to follow.

4. We can love the temple.

President Monson will go down in history as one of the great temple builders in the history of the Church. Since becoming President of the Church in February 2008, he has continued the great work of building temples. In the six years he has been the prophet, President Monson has announced plans to build 33 new temples.

President Monson has said, “May each of us live worthy lives, with clean hands and pure hearts, so that the temple may touch our lives and our families.”³

He has also given this wonderful promise: “As we love the temple, touch the temple, and attend the temple, our lives will reflect our faith. As we come to these holy houses of God, as we remember the covenants we make within,

we shall be able to bear every trial and overcome each temptation.”⁴

Let us follow the pattern that the prophet has set for us in loving the temple.

5. We can be kind, considerate, and loving.

President Monson is a wonderful example of loving others. His entire ministry has been filled with making visits to homes; placing his hands on heads and giving blessings; making unexpected phone calls to comfort and encourage; sending letters of encouragement, commendation, and appreciation; visiting hospitals and care centers; and finding time to go to funerals and viewings despite a very busy schedule.

Just as the Savior would do, Thomas Monson has gone about doing good (see Acts 10:38) and blessing and loving others; this has been the driving force in his life.

A remarkable example of President Monson’s kindness occurred in 2012. As the beautiful Brigham City Utah Temple was nearing completion, I met with the First Presidency to discuss plans for its dedication. With Brigham City being only one hour north of Salt Lake City, it would have been very easy for President Monson to travel there for the dedication.

Instead, President Monson said, “Brigham City is the hometown of President Boyd K. Packer, this great Apostle who has sat beside me for so many years in the Twelve. I want him to have the honor and blessing of dedicating the temple in his hometown. I will stay away, and I’ll assign President Packer to dedicate the Brigham City Temple. I want it to be his day.”

It was a wonderful day for President Packer and for Sister Packer, who also grew up in Brigham City. I was very touched by President Monson’s kind and magnanimous gesture to his fellow Apostle. We can all be that way. We can share and be kind and think more of those around us.

The Pattern of a Prophet

President Monson has taught us the way to live our lives with his wonderful and inspiring messages at general



Just as the Savior would do, President Monson has gone about doing good and blessing and loving others; this has been the driving force in his life.

conference. He has taught us how to be followers of Jesus Christ by his remarkable and wonderful personal example. Truly the Lord has given us a pattern in all things, and one of the patterns we should seek to follow is that of our beloved prophet.

I testify that there is a God in heaven who knows us and loves us. He has given us a prophet—to guide us, to teach us, and to lead us in these latter days. I believe the Lord expects us to love the prophet, to sustain him, and to follow his example.

I count it a great blessing to live in the day when Thomas S. Monson is the Lord’s prophet. As we follow him and try to be more like him, we will inevitably succeed in being more faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. ■

From a Church Educational System devotional given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on May 5, 2013. For the full address, visit lds.org/broadcasts.

NOTES

1. “Messages of Inspiration from President Monson,” *Church News*, Sept. 2, 2012, 2.
2. *On the Lord’s Errand* (DVD, 2008).
3. Thomas S. Monson, “Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2010, 19.
4. Thomas S. Monson, *Be Your Best Self* (1979), 56; emphasis added.



The Philippines:

SPIRITUAL
STRENGTH
UPON THE
ISLES OF
THE SEA

In the short span of 53 years, the Church has experienced astounding strength and growth in the Philippines, known as the “Pearl of the Orient.”

To Augusto A. Lim, the message being presented by two young missionaries from the United States seemed to confirm principles he already knew were true. A young lawyer and a Christian, Augusto noted that doctrines such as continuing revelation were “things that even when I was in high school and college, I believed in.”¹

After several months, Augusto agreed to attend Sunday services and took the challenge to read and pray about the Book of Mormon. “I began to read the Book of Mormon seriously in the same spirit that Moroni advised us [to have]. When I did that with the desire to know if it’s true—after a few lines—I was gaining a testimony,” he recalled.²

In October of 1964, Augusto Lim was baptized and became a pioneer of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Philippines, with his wife and family joining shortly. Today, after decades of faithful service in the Church—which included a call in 1992 to serve as a General Authority, the first Filipino to serve in that position—Brother Lim reflects the faith and dedication of hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints living in the “Pearl of the Orient.”

A Fertile Land

About 550 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the Lord promised the Book of Mormon prophet Nephi: “I

remember those who are upon the isles of the sea,” and “bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth” (2 Nephi 29:7). To many who have read these choice words, one group of “isles of the sea” comes to mind: the Philippines.

With a population approaching 100 million, the Republic of the Philippines is a large archipelago of about 7,100 islands located off the southeast coast of Asia. It is a beautiful tropical country populated by friendly, lively, and humble people. Yet the country is prone to earthquakes, typhoons, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves, and other natural disasters and suffers from a host of socioeconomic problems. Widespread poverty is a recurring challenge, and Filipinos have endured bouts of political instability and economic crisis.

But to those who are familiar with the Lord’s ways, the Philippines is fertile ground for the planting of gospel seeds. Along with Tagalog and other native languages, many Filipinos speak English, which is also a national language. Due to a long period of Spanish rule, more than 90 percent of the population is Christian; a significant portion of the minority is Muslim.

The first attempt to introduce the Church in the Philippines was made in 1898 during the Spanish-American War by Willard Call and George Seaman, Latter-day Saint



Building on gospel principles, young adults in the Philippines are achieving success and becoming sturdy leaders in the Lord's Church.

servicemen from Utah who had been set apart as missionaries prior to their departure. As opportunities arose, they preached the gospel, but no baptisms followed.

During World War II, several Latter-day Saints moved through the islands with advancing Allied forces. In 1944 and 1945, military groups held Church meetings in many locations, and numerous LDS service members and service workers were still in the Philippines when the war ended. Among them were Maxine Tate and recent convert Jerome Horowitz. Both helped introduce the gospel to Aniceta Fajardo. While helping rebuild Aniceta's house in a bombed-out area of Manila, Brother Horowitz shared his newly found faith with Aniceta and her daughter, Ruth.

Aniceta gained a testimony and desired baptism, but the Church did not authorize baptisms for Filipinos at that time because there were no permanent Church units in the islands. Elder Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles became aware of Aniceta's desire, and in his capacity as chairman of the General Servicemen's Committee, Elder Lee approved Aniceta's baptism. On Easter morning in 1946, Aniceta Fajardo was baptized by serviceman Loren Ferre and is now acknowledged as the first known Filipino to become a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Commencement of Missionary Work

After the war, Church groups were organized at two U.S. military bases—Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base—as Latter-day Saint service members looked forward to the establishment of a more formal Church presence in the Philippines. On August 21, 1955, President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) dedicated the Philippines for the preaching of the gospel. Legal restrictions, however, delayed the missionaries' arrival until 1961.

In 1960, Elder Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), then an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, visited the Philippines for several days: "I expressed the view that missionary work will be . . . as fruitful as it has been in many other places in the world."³ The following year, after much preparation and paperwork done by members such as Maxine Tate Grimm and President Robert S. Taylor of the Southern Far East Mission as well as friends outside the Church, Elder Hinckley returned to the islands to rededicate the Philippines for the commencement of missionary work.

On April 28, 1961, in the outskirts of Manila, Elder Hinckley met with a small group of service members, American residents, and one Filipino member—David Lagman—and offered a special prayer "that there shall be many thousands who shall receive this message and be blessed thereby."⁴ Those words, uttered by a true servant of the Lord, soon became prophetic.

The first four missionaries—Raymond L. Goodson, Harry J. Murray, Kent C. Lowe, and Nester O. Ledesma—arrived in Manila several weeks later. "The Filipinos accepted the gospel very readily," Elder Lowe noted. "When the head of the family decided to join the Church, in many, many cases the entire family would join the Church."⁵

The Church Progresses

The work progressed to the point where the Philippines Mission was organized by 1967. By the end of that year, there were 3,193 members in the mission, 631 of whom had been converted that year. By 1973 the Church in the Philippines had expanded to almost 13,000 members.

On May 20, 1973, the Manila Philippines Stake was created, with Augusto A. Lim as president. In 1974 the mission was divided, creating the Philippines Manila Mission and the Philippines Cebu City Mission.

In August of 1975, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) came to Manila to preside over the Philippines’ first area conference. August was a stormy month, making travel more difficult for those coming from outside Manila. A busload of Saints from Laoag City almost did not make it, but the Saints pushed their vehicle out of a well of mud and begged the driver not to turn back. Another group of Saints braved the stormy seas for as many as three days

find an appropriate site for a temple. After considering several sites, the director submitted a request to buy 3.5 acres (1.4 ha) in Quezon City. The site overlooks the Marikina Valley, and its location is relatively accessible to many Church members. The request was approved, and the property was purchased in January 1981. The street name was changed to Temple Drive at the request of the Church.

For the groundbreaking ceremony on August 25, 1982, despite the threat of a typhoon, about 2,000 Church members gathered from all parts of the islands by boat, train, and bus. Construction of the temple soon commenced, and it was ready to be dedicated in August 1984.

1898: Two LDS service members preach the gospel in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War



1944–45: More LDS service members preach during World War II

1946: Aniceta Fajardo becomes the first known Filipino to be baptized and confirmed a member of the Church



1955: President Joseph Fielding Smith dedicates the Philippines for the preaching of the gospel

because all that really matters, as one sister said, is to see and hear a living prophet of God.

President Kimball visited the Philippines again in 1980 to preside over another area conference, and he also met briefly with Philippines president Ferdinand Marcos. This meeting paved the way for the Church to eventually open a missionary training center in the Philippines in 1983 and dedicate the Manila Philippines Temple the following year. In 1987 the Philippines/Micronesia Area was established with headquarters in Manila.

Selections from the Book of Mormon were translated into Tagalog in 1987. Translations of the Book of Mormon are now in several languages of the Philippines, including Cebuano.

The Blessings of the Temple

In December 1980, President Spencer W. Kimball sent the director of the Church’s real estate department to Manila to

Nearly 27,000 members and nonmembers toured the temple before its dedication. They came despite two typhoons—just 48 hours apart—that had ripped through the Philippines a few days before. Saints from distant provinces arrived weary but buoyant. In many cases they had been forced to take circuitous routes to Manila because roads had been flooded and bridges damaged by overflowing rivers.

The beauty of the temple impressed the visitors, including many prominent Filipinos. Writer Celso Carunungan commented on “a feeling of holiness, that when you get inside you are going to confront your Creator.” Colonel Bienvenido Castillo, chief chaplain of the Philippine Constabulary, said the temple is “a place where you can contemplate heavenly things because you are in such an environment.” Two nuns felt the temple “is truly a house of the Lord.” Eva Estrada-Kalaw, a member of the Philippine parliament, told guides, “I wish you would build more temples here.”⁶



President Hinckley, Second Counselor in the First Presidency at the time, led the services to lay the cornerstone on Tuesday, September 25, 1984. Nine dedicatory sessions followed, held in the celestial room. Some 6,500 Saints from 16 stakes and 22 districts in the Pacific Area attended the various sessions.

As soon as the last dedicatory session was completed, Paulo V. Malit Jr. and Edna A. Yasona became the first couple to be married in the Manila Philippines Temple, on September 27, 1984. The first president of

sell their house to pay for the trip so that they and their children could be sealed as an eternal family. After they sold their home and most of their possessions, they managed to scrape together the exact amount to pay the boat fare to Manila for their family of nine. Leonides was worried because they would have no home to return to. But Bernardo assured her that the Lord would provide. They were sealed as a family for time and all eternity in the temple in 1985. It was worth every sacrifice they had made, for in the

1961: Philippines officially opens for missionary work; first four missionaries arrive

1967: Philippines Mission organized



1973: Manila Philippines Stake created

1974: Philippines Mission divided, creating the Philippines Manila and the Philippines Cebu City Missions

1975: First area conference, held in Manila

1983: Missionary training center opened in Manila



that temple, W. Garth Andrus, solemnized the marriage ceremony.

Scores of Church members queued up to receive their endowments, beginning with the ordinance workers. Temple work continued through the night into the next day.

Members felt an increased desire to enter the temple. Those who lived far from Manila had to sacrifice much to travel the great distance by boat or bus. But still they came and brought with them stories of faith and determination.

For Bernardo and Leonides Obedoza of General Santos, going to the temple in far-away Manila seemed impossible. But like the merchant man who went and sold all he had to buy one pearl of great price (see Matthew 13:45–46), this couple decided to

A Relief Society meeting on emergency preparedness provides valuable information for sisters who live in a country prone to natural disasters.



temple they found joy incomparable—their priceless pearl. And true to Bernardo’s words, the Lord did provide. On their return from Manila, kind acquaintances gave them places to stay. Their children completed their schooling, and the family eventually acquired their own home in a new location.

On April 18, 2006, the First Presidency announced the construction of the Cebu City Philippines Temple. Upon hearing the news, many Church members shed tears of joy. “We are blessed because the Lord had chosen Cebu City to be the site of the next temple,” said Cesar Perez Jr., director of the Cebu City Institute of Religion.

GROWTH OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN THE PHILIPPINES



Total Church Membership:*
675,166

Wards and Branches:
1,134

Missions: 17

Temples: 2
(another under construction)

Family History Centers: 167

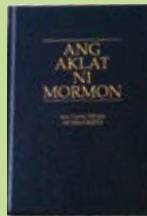
* As of September 2013



1984: Manila Philippines Temple dedicated



1987: Philippines/Micronesia Area established, with headquarters in Manila



1987: Sections of the Book of Mormon translated into Tagalog



2010: Cebu City Philippines Temple dedicated

A few months after the dedication of the Cebu City Philippines Temple, Filipino Latter-day Saints once again found reason to rejoice. On October 2, 2010, during his opening remarks in general conference, President Thomas S. Monson announced the construction of the Urdaneta Philippines Temple, in Pangasinan.

The Best Is Yet to Come

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Philippines is relatively young when compared to its presence in other countries, but its destiny in the island nation is glorious. The growth of the Church has been marvelous, and the best is yet to come. Elder Michael John U. Teh of the Seventy, the second Filipino called to serve as a General Authority, said, “We [Filipino Latter-day Saints] need to prepare ourselves spiritually more than ever before because the work will move forward with or without our help.”⁷

Indeed, as the 21st century rolls forth, the restored Church will continue to grow in size and influence as more and more Filipinos accept its message and become a blessing to this choice people upon the isles of the sea. For Elder Teh and the Filipino Saints, the “great . . . promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the isles of the sea” (2 Nephi 10:21) are now being fulfilled. ■

NOTES

1. Augusto A. Lim, in R. Lanier Britsch, “Faithful, Good, Virtuous, True”: Pioneers in the Philippines,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 60.
2. Augusto Lim, in Gelene Tobias, “Augusto Lim: The Man of Many Firsts,” countrywebsites.lds.org/ph/index.php/datetime-philippines/jubilee-2011.
3. See Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1996), 213–15.
4. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Commencement of Missionary Work in the Philippines,” *Tambuli*, Apr. 1991, 18.
5. Interview of Kent Clyde Lowe by James Neil Clark, Sept. 3, 2007.
6. Francis M. Orquiola, “Temple Dedication Rewards Faith of Filipino Saints,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 107.
7. Michael John U. Teh, “Scriptures and Spiritual Preparation” (Area Presidency Messages, May 2011), lds.org/ph/index.php/literature.



BEYOND THE Bubblegum MACHINE

By Amy Schauers

After my conversion to the gospel, I began to believe the misconception that if I lived the standards of the gospel, life would be easy and I would get the blessings I wanted. I kept hearing and misinterpreting statements like, “If you read your scriptures, say your prayers, go to church, pay your tithing, and attend the temple, you will be blessed.” While these statements are true, I wasn’t being blessed in the ways I thought I deserved to be.

I had what I like to call a bubblegum-machine mentality: You put a coin in the machine and out pops a gum ball. Say your prayers and they will be answered. Go to church and your trials will be lifted. Attend the temple and your righteous desires will be granted in short order. My early testimony of the gospel was built on this misconception.

So it is not difficult to imagine my dismay when things didn’t always work out that way. I had to learn that having faith to turn to God and lay my burdens at His feet can be a difficult, heart-wrenching, and humbling experience. Through my own experiences and trials, I have learned

that life’s challenges are meant to change us and turn us to the Lord in faith.

My trials of faith taught me that the gospel is more than a bubblegum machine that pops out a blessing for our every righteous action.

My First Contact with the Gospel

The process of my conversion to the gospel began after high school, when I moved to Montana, USA, and started dating Aaron. When the topic of religion came up, Aaron said that he was Mormon. He was the first Mormon I had ever met. He wasn’t an active member at the time, and we didn’t talk about it much.

After dating for about two years, we decided to move to Minnesota for better jobs and to be near my family. Just before we moved, we visited Aaron’s parents one last time. That night Aaron’s dad gave him a father’s blessing. Then Aaron’s dad turned to me and asked if I’d like a blessing. At that moment I didn’t know what I was getting myself into or how that single blessing would change the course of my life.

I don’t recall any of his words in the blessing, but I clearly remember how I felt. The Spirit was strong and

undeniable. I thought I'd had spiritual experiences before, but I'd never experienced anything that compared to the feelings I had that day.

The Challenge of Following the Truth

After I received the blessing, Aaron's parents talked with me about the Church. It made so much sense. I felt like many of the questions I'd had all my life were being answered. But at that time I wasn't interested in pursuing the issue further. I had been raised in a devout Catholic family, and even though I hadn't been an active Catholic for some time, I was pretty well rooted in the traditions of that faith.

So when Aaron and I moved to Minnesota, I returned to life as a Catholic. We lived with my parents (Aaron and I having separate rooms) and went to church with them, where I felt comfortable and at home. Aaron loved the one-hour church meeting, and I liked feeling that I fit in. We carried on that way for a while, but it didn't take long before I wanted more. I remembered how I felt during that priesthood blessing, and I wanted to feel that way again. Much to the dismay of everyone in my life, I sought out a nearby LDS Church, met the missionaries, and started taking the discussions.

I felt conflicted. I had a background that included years of Catholic training, a family who didn't understand what I was doing, and a fiancé who was happy to continue attending one-hour-a-week mass with my parents. But deep down I knew that the missionaries were teaching the truth. Eventually what I felt and knew on the inside overruled the external pressures in my life. At age 21, I was baptized and confirmed a member of the Church. Six months later Aaron and I were married.

The Challenge of Staying Converted

I knew I made the right decision to be baptized, so after my baptism—with my bubblegum-machine mentality—I thought that everything would be easy and I would feel blessed. Instead, I felt I had immersed myself in a

brand-new culture that was radically different from what I was used to. The ties of my old life tugged at me constantly.

I was at a crossroads where my core beliefs were being tested. Either I could forget my baptism and go back to living what I saw as an easier path, or I could dig deep, grab the iron rod, and stay on the path. Though I wasn't as abundantly blessed as I thought I would be by joining the Church, I did know the gospel was true, and that knowledge helped me turn to the Lord in faith and get through the challenge of joining the Church and remaining an active member.

Eventually membership in the Church got easier. My family became accepting, and we were able to discuss some of their misconceptions about the Church. Aaron and I were blessed to make great friends in the ward, and we were later sealed in the temple.

The Challenge of Unfulfilled Desires

Sometime after our marriage, Aaron and I decided we wanted to start having children. I thought it was a righteous desire. We had been living gospel standards—putting our coins in the bubblegum machine, so to speak—so I figured that we'd quickly be blessed with a child. But that did not happen.

We tried for years to have a baby. After several miscarriages, I was finally pregnant again and felt that this time my prayers had been answered, that the trial was over, and that I could now reap my reward for living the gospel. Aaron and I began planning for our baby girl. Then, when I was six months along, our baby died.

Since my testimony was built on an unsteady, bubblegum-machine foundation, it quickly and easily toppled. This time, instead of turning to the gospel and leaning on my faith, I turned away from it. I couldn't see beyond the loss of our daughter. For the first time since joining the Church, I stopped attending meetings altogether. I became hardened and bitter. I blocked the Spirit and built walls of anger and bitterness, which resulted in my own unhappiness.

When we moved into a new ward years later, we decided it was time to make a fresh start and return to the gospel.

Nothing else was filling the gaping void in our hearts. As we turned back to the gospel, my outlook on life improved and my anger began to ease. The bitterness slowly subsided, and I allowed the Lord to work changes in me. Little by little, He lifted me up. Simply opening my heart and mind to the possibility that God's power could mend my broken heart resulted in a dramatic change.

The Blessing of Building My Testimony

Rebuilding my testimony on a firmer foundation was a difficult process. I had to ask myself hard questions about my core beliefs. I learned that I needed to consciously decide every day to turn to God and work at living the gospel. I shouldn't expect to be blessed immediately for each action I perform in the way I might anticipate.

Having trials of faith is uncomfortable and frustrating and stretches me outside my comfort zone. But I know that trials of our faith are the only way to receive the witness Moroni talks about: "I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith" (Ether 12:6).

The blessings I hold most dear are the ones that didn't come easily; they are the ones I had to fight the hardest for—the ones that came after a trial of my faith. I fought hard to join and stay active in the Church and—eventually, miraculously—to have children (we now have two girls).

I hope I can learn to turn to the gospel more quickly in times of great challenge and become what Heavenly Father wants me to become. I know that when our

trials overwhelm us and it seems there is nowhere to turn, Heavenly Father is there waiting patiently. Whenever we are ready to extend our faith, however small that faith may feel, He is right there, closer than we can imagine, waiting for us to come to Him. We only need to exercise our faith, even if it's just a particle (see Alma 32:27), and ask for the strength and guidance we need. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Put God first in your life. See November 2013 Ensign: Dallin H. Oaks, p. 72; Thomas S. Monson, p. 85; Russell M. Nelson, p. 106.



CHRIST AS OUR CENTER

"The history of the Church . . . is replete with the experiences of those who have struggled and yet who have remained steadfast and of good cheer. The reason? They have made the gospel of Jesus Christ the center of their lives. This is what will pull us through whatever comes our way. We will still experience difficult challenges, but we will be able to face them, to meet them head-on, and to emerge victorious."

President Thomas S. Monson,
"I Will Not Fail Thee, nor Forsake Thee," *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 86.





The Atonement of Jesus Christ

INSIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION

Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible enhances our understanding of the Savior's suffering, death, and Resurrection.

Soon after The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, the Prophet Joseph Smith was divinely commissioned to make a translation, or revision, of the King James Version of the Bible (KJV). He labored off and on for the rest of his life to fulfill this assignment. The Bible Dictionary explains, “Although the major portion of the work was completed by July 1833, [the Prophet] continued to make modifications while preparing a manuscript for the press until his death in 1844, and it is possible that some additional modifications would have been made had he lived to publish the entire work.”¹ Today, parts of the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) can be found in the LDS editions of the scriptures.²

The Joseph Smith Translation is an invaluable aid to biblical understanding and interpretation. It is a witness for the divine calling and ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

This article will help you increase your understanding of the Savior's suffering, death, and Resurrection by highlighting some of the changes made by the Prophet in his Bible translation. (Please note that in the scripture quotations that follow, the Prophet's changes are represented by **boldface** type.)



Christ in Gethsemane,
by William Henry Margetson
(see JST, Luke 22:44)

A GARDEN OF SORROW

JST, Mark 14:36–38

(compare KJV, Mark 14:32–34)

And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane, **which was a garden; and the disciples began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, and to complain in their hearts, wondering if this be the Messiah.**

And Jesus knowing their hearts, he said to his disciples, Sit **you** here, while I shall pray.

And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and **rebuked them**, and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, **even** unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

JST, Luke 22:45–46

(compare KJV, Luke 22:45–46)

And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping, **for they were filled with sorrow,**

And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest **you** enter into temptation.

JST Mark 14:43, 46–47

(compare KJV, Mark 14:38, 41–42)

And they said unto him, The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. . . .

And he cometh **to them** the third time, and **he** saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the **hand** of sinners.

And after they had finished their sleep, he said, Rise up, let us go; lo, he **who** betrayeth me is at hand.

Could Ye Not Watch with Me One Hour?
by James Tissot
(see JST, Luke 22:45; Mark 14:46–47)

SOME INSIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION

- A gloomy, heavy feeling engulfed the hearts of Jesus's disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Jesus's disciples began to be "sore amazed" by what they were experiencing in the garden with Jesus.
- The disciples, including Peter, James, and John, began to wonder whether Jesus was truly the Messiah.
- Jesus rebuked Peter, James, and John.
- Succumbing to the feeling of sorrow and heaviness in the garden, Peter, James, and John fell asleep. They, not Jesus, said, "The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak."
- Filled with compassion, Jesus watched and waited while His disciples slept, not wanting to wake them.





The Denial of Peter,
by Ary Scheffer (see JST,
Mark 14:80–82)

SIMON PETER AND JUDAS ISCARIOT: NIGHTTIME WITNESSES

JST, Mark 14:80–82 (compare KJV, Mark 14:72)

And the second time the cock crew.

And Peter called to mind the **words which** Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

And he went out, and fell upon his face, and wept bitterly.

JST, Mark 15:1–2 (compare KJV, Mark 15:1)

And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes;

And the whole council **condemned him** [Jesus], and bound **him**, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

JST, Matthew 27:3–6, 10 (compare KJV, Matthew 27:3–5, 10)

Then Judas, **who** had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.

And they said **unto him**, What is that to us? See thou to **it; thy sins be upon thee.**

And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself **on a tree. And straitway he fell down, and his bowels gushed out, and he died. . . .**

And therefore they took the pieces of silver, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed by the mouth of Jeremy.

SOME INSIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION

- Distraught with grief, Peter “fell upon his face” as he wept inconsolably.
- When Judas Iscariot tried to give back the bribe he had received, the leaders of the Jews rebuffed him, saying, “Thy sins be upon thee.”
- The Joseph Smith Translation reconciles the two seemingly different versions of how Judas Iscariot died (see Matthew 27:3–10 and Acts 1:15–20).



The Remorse of Judas, by Edward A.
Armitage (see JST, Matthew 27:3–5)



Jesus before Pilate for the First Time, by James Tissot (see JST, Mark 15:3–4)

SOME INSIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION

- When Pilate asked if He was the King of the Jews, Jesus boldly and directly replied, “I am.”
- The Joseph Smith Translation harmonizes the Matthew and Mark accounts with John’s account of Pilate’s involvement in preparing the cross (see John 19:19–22).

PILATE AND THE KING OF THE JEWS

JST, Mark 15:3–4 (compare KJV, Mark 15:2)

And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

And **Jesus** answering said unto him, **I am, even as thou sayest.**

JST, Matthew 27:26–27 (compare KJV, Matthew 27:24–25)

When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see **that ye do nothing unto him.**

Then answered all the people, and said, His blood **come upon** us, and our children.

JST, Mark 15:29 (compare KJV, Mark 15:26)

And **Pilate wrote his accusation and put it upon the cross, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

JST, Matthew 27:39–42 (compare KJV, Matthew 27:37)

And **Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross, and the writing was,**

Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew.

And the chief priests said unto Pilate, **It should be written** and set up over his head his accusation, This is **he that said he was** Jesus the King of the Jews.

But Pilate answered and said, What I have written, I have written; let it alone.



The Trial of Christ, English School, 18th century (see JST, Matthew 27:26–27)

UPON THE CROSSES AT CALVARY

JST, Mark 15:25–26 (compare KJV, Mark 15:22–23)

And they bring him unto the place **called** Golgotha, which is, (being interpreted) the place of a **burial**.

And they gave him to drink **vinegar** mingled with **gall**: **and when he had tasted the vinegar, he would not drink.**

JST, Luke 23:35 (compare KJV, Luke 23:34)

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do (**meaning the soldiers who crucified him**).

JST, Matthew 27:47–48 (compare KJV, Matthew 27:44)

But the other rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation; and this man is just and hath not sinned; and he cried unto the Lord, that he would save him.

And the Lord said unto him, This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

JST, Matthew 27:54 (compare KJV, Matthew 27:50)

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, **saying, Father, it is finished, thy will is done,** yielded up the ghost.

*It Is Finished,
by Liz Lemon
Swindle (see
JST, Matthew
27:54)*



SOME INSIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION

- The place of Jesus's Crucifixion was near a tomb or place of burial.
- As He hung on the cross, Jesus forgave the Roman soldiers, who were merely doing their duty.
- One of the men crucified with Jesus cried out to Him, asking that He would save him.
- Jesus's last words from the cross included the phrase "thy will is done," confirming that He died according to the will of His Father.

*Jerusalem,
by Jean Leon
Gerome
(see JST,
Mark 15:25;
Matthew
27:47–48)*



Angels
Declaring That
Jesus Is Risen
from the Dead,
by William
Brassey Hole
(see *JST*,
Mark 16:4)



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EASTER DAY

JST, Matthew 28:1–3 (compare KJV, Matthew 28:1–4)

Early in the morning, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

And, behold, there **had been** a great earthquake: for **two angels** of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

And their countenance was like lightning, and **their** raiment white as snow: and for fear of **them** the keepers did shake, and became as **though they were** dead.

JST, Mark 16:3–6 (compare KJV, Mark 16:4–7)

But when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away (for it was very great); and

two angels sitting **thereon**, clothed in long white garments; and they were affrighted.

But the angels said unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, **who** was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

And go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall **you** see him, as he said unto you.

And they, entering into the sepulchre, saw the place where they laid Jesus.

JST, John 20:16–17 (compare KJV, John 20:16–17)

Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, **Hold** me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.

JST, Matthew 27:56–57 (compare KJV, Matthew 27:52–53)

And the graves were opened; and **the** bodies of the saints which slept arose, **who were many**,

And came out of the graves **and** after his resurrection, went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. ■

SOME INSIGHTS FROM THE JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION

- Early Easter morning, *two angels* from the presence of God opened the tomb and cleared the way for the arrival of the women at the tomb.
- The Savior instructed Mary Magdalene, “Hold me not” rather than “Touch me not.”

NOTES

1. Bible Dictionary, “Joseph Smith Translation.”
2. See Robert J. Matthews, “I Have a Question,” *Ensign*, June 1992, 29. For the complete JST text, see *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, ed. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews (2004), also available on the DVD *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible: Electronic Library* (2011).

Jesus Said to Her, “Mary,” by William F. Whitaker Jr. (see *JST*, *John 20:16–17*)





By Elder
Claudio D. Zivic
Of the Seventy

THE BLESSINGS OF Perseverance

We are asked to be productive in the things that are pleasing to God—living to serve and persevering in things of eternal value.

In March 2011 my wife, Dina, and I drove from Salt Lake City to the Manti Utah Temple. We traveled with our son Damian and his wife, Gabriela, along with a friend. One of Damian's former missionary companions had asked me to perform his temple marriage.

Because of carelessness during our drive, we did not notice a small sign that indicated a detour. After we had traveled for approximately an hour, Damian looked at our map and, very worried, told us we had gone the wrong way.

Discouraged, desperate, and ashamed, I told my wife to call the temple president to tell him what had happened and have him assign another sealer to perform the marriage. After Dina had given President Ed J. Pinegar my message, he said, "We love you. Don't worry about the delay. We sustain you, we are with you, and we are going to wait for you."

Finally we arrived at the beautiful, historic Manti Temple, and despite the delay, we rejoiced to participate in a sacred ceremony.

Later my wife made an interesting comment. She said that hearing the words of President Pinegar was like hearing the voice of our Heavenly Father saying, "I love you, I sustain you, I am with you. Don't give up. Repent and persevere on the path I have shown you. If you do, I promise you that we will see each other again in our heavenly home."

I felt bad for arriving late to the temple, but I thank my Heavenly Father, who had inspired President Pinegar to say words that caused me to persevere despite difficulty. Being able to reach our destination blessed not only our lives but also the lives of others.



JOSEPH SMITH IN LIBERTY JAIL BY GREG K. OLSEN



"Deep water is what I am wont to swim in,"
said the Prophet Joseph Smith. Like the
Apostle Paul, he persevered as he
gloried in tribulation.

What It Means to Persevere

I remember reading somewhere a definition of the word *persevere* that I believe provides a better understanding than that provided by a dictionary: “To persevere means to maintain the ability to endure, to carry on, to continue in the same state without weakening or perishing. It is being able to go on in the face of pain, oppression, discouragement or suffering without being defeated.”

What a beautiful and accurate definition!

It has been said that strong men and women are like kites—they only rise higher when the winds of opposition come against them.

Remember that persevering in those things that matter usually requires constant effort. Over time, perseverance will bear the fruit we long to obtain. If our path has no obstacles, our progress will be limited. Success has a price, and there is no choice but to pay that price in order to obtain it.

Former U.S. president Calvin Coolidge said:

“Nothing in this world can take the place of perseverance. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan ‘press on’ has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.”¹

Examples of Perseverance

In the scriptures we find countless examples of perseverance. In the Old Testament we read of Joseph, the son of Jacob. Joseph’s brothers hated him to the point of planning his death, although in the end they sold him to Ishmaelites who took him to Egypt as a slave. He was purchased by Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh’s guard, who “left all that he had in Joseph’s hand” (Genesis 39:6).

Later, after being falsely accused of trying to abuse Potiphar’s wife, Joseph was imprisoned (see Genesis 39:7–20). He remained captive for 13 years and did not see his family again for 22 years.



How grateful I am that our Savior, Jesus Christ, endured to the end, fulfilling His atoning mission.

After so many trials, Joseph would have been justified in giving up and saying, “What is the use of trying to serve God if my reward is only punishment?” Nevertheless, Joseph persevered in his faithfulness to God.

In the end, his perseverance bore wonderful fruit. It blessed the lives of the Egyptians and the Hebrews, and the progress and maturity he achieved were ample compensation for his suffering.

In the New Testament we read of the Apostle Paul, onetime persecutor of the Christians and later a tireless disciple who was brave and faithful in teaching the truth. He appeared before kings, bearing testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sensing beforehand that his end was near, he wrote:

“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:6–8).

In the Book of Mormon we are touched by the courage and perseverance of the prophet Abinadi as he testified of the truth even at the cost of his own life. He declared, “But I finish my message; and then it matters not whither I go, if it so be that I am saved” (Mosiah 13:9).

The Prophet Joseph Smith is another wonderful example of perseverance. Concerning the troubles he had to endure, the Prophet wrote: “Deep water is what I am wont to swim in. It all has become a second nature to me; and I feel, like Paul, to glory in tribulation” (D&C 127:2). Joseph finally sealed his testimony with his own life, as did his brother Hyrum.

These individuals were all imperfect human beings living in a world of realities similar to ours. Their example of perseverance on the right path is worthy of admiration and gratitude. Today we are not required to offer our lives as an example of perseverance. Rather, we are asked to be productive in the things that are pleasing to God—living to serve and persevering in things of eternal value.

Blessings of Endurance

“All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ” (D&C 121:29).

What great blessings we will receive if we endure valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ!

In our family book of remembrance is a photograph taken when my wife and I were children in Primary. In the photo, I am not looking to the front but to the side, right at the girl who would later become my wife. As I look at that photograph, some thoughts come to mind. Some of the children in the photo later left the Church, following forbidden paths. Today we can clearly see the difference between those who persevered in the right path and those who went astray. I can testify of the beautiful fruit

that comes from living the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There is no need to wait until after death to receive the rewards of righteous living. We can enjoy them as we go through this earthly life if we persevere on the right path.

King Benjamin explained the marvelous blessings we will receive if we continue faithful: “And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness” (Mosiah 2:41).

The Lord will hold us guiltless if we persevere and repent. If you have not confessed some serious sin, now is the time to do so.

We have the responsibility of perfecting ourselves day by day (see D&C 50:24). As we do so, our light and understanding increase and we feel more secure in facing responsibility. Sometimes we think this progress will never come, but it will.

Be very careful in your professional lives. Do not put false gods before the Lord. Be wise. Do not let yourselves be carried away by the current of the world. Seek the Lord’s inspiration and guidance to make wise decisions. Let the material things you earn be a blessing and not a curse in your lives and those of your families.

How grateful I am that our Savior, Jesus Christ, endured to the end, fulfilling His atoning mission. He suffered for our sins, and because of His suffering, having “descended below all things” (D&C 88:6; see also 122:8), He understands our pains, depression, anguish, infirmities, and fears. He knows how to help us, encourage us, comfort us, and give us strength to persevere and obtain the crown that is reserved for those who endure. ■

From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University–Idaho on November 15, 2011. For the full address, visit web.byui.edu/devotionalsandsspeeches.

NOTES

1. Calvin Coolidge, in *Wisdom for the Soul: Five Millennia of Prescriptions for Spiritual Healing*, comp. Larry Chang (2006), 226.

Celebrate

NURTURING

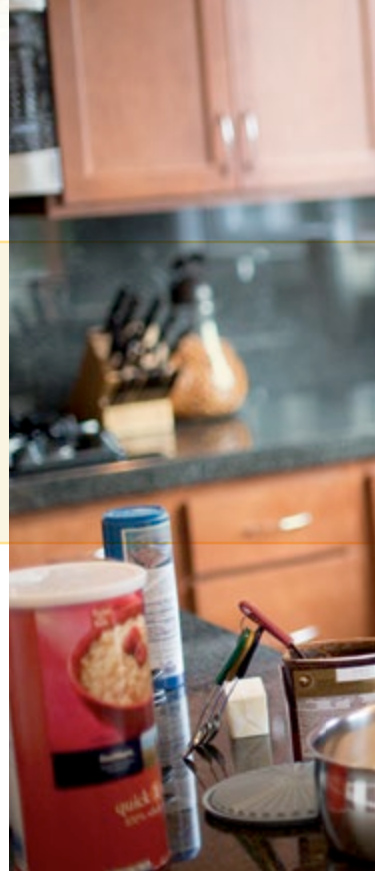
By Rosemary Thackeray

As women, we have many roles we play in our families, our communities, and the Church. In “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” we learn that one of our primary roles is that of being a mother.¹ What are some of the facets of this role?

In most settings, motherhood is discussed in terms of having and rearing children. These children may come into the home by natural childbirth or through the process of adoption or caring for foster children. During talks and lessons in church about the role of being a mother, the discussion often turns to raising children. We discuss holding weekly family home evenings, incorporating daily scripture study into busy schedules, teaching children to pray, preparing children for missions, and more. On these occasions, women will sometimes share frustrations and funny anecdotes about their children’s adventures and antics.

Another facet of being a mother is being a nurturer. Nurturing can be described as acts that foster a good temporal and spiritual climate in which love and learning can thrive. Seen in this light, being a nurturer is not a role exclusive to mothers. Opportunities to nurture are available to everyone, regardless of age or marital status. Personally, I have been blessed with many moments in which I was able to nurture others through my service in Church callings and associations with friends and family. I have also been the recipient of nurturing by women other than my mother.

As a single woman in her 40s who has never given birth to or reared children, I do not pretend to understand the experience of motherhood and the joys, pains, sorrows, and many emotions that accompany that calling. At the same time, it is possible that women who have the privilege of motherhood do not understand the heartache that comes from





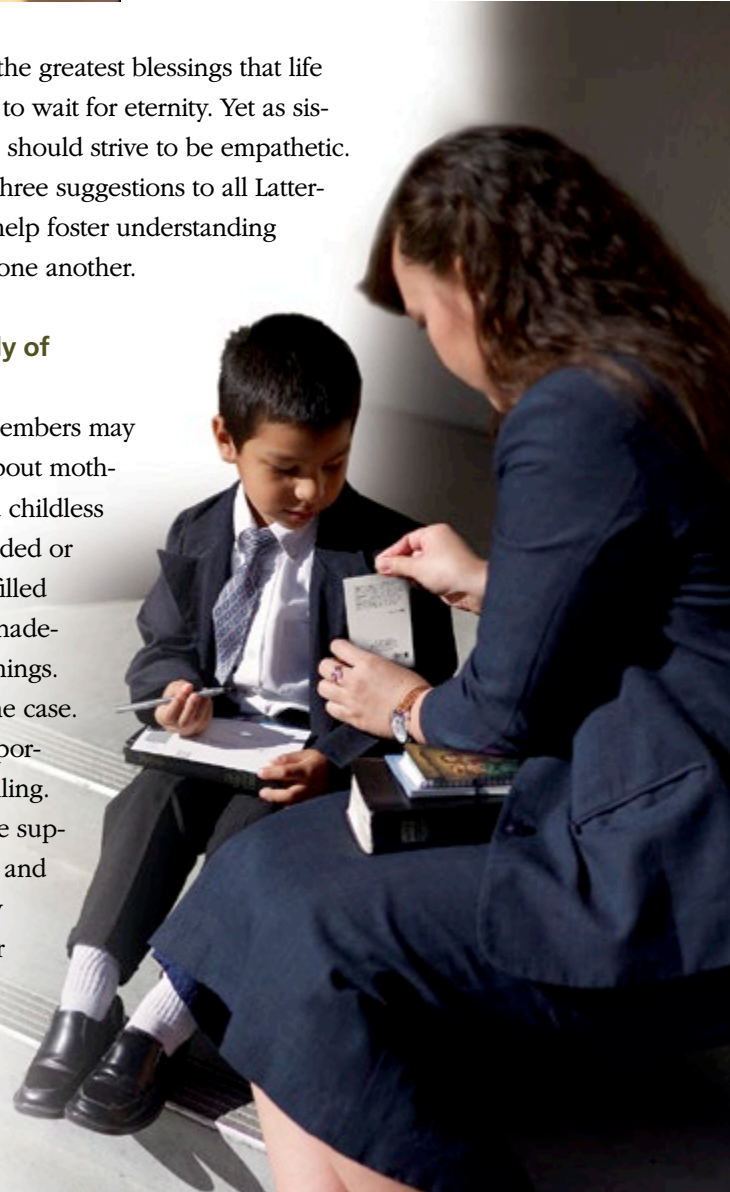
Here are three suggestions to help women understand and relate to one another, whatever their circumstances.



knowing that one of the greatest blessings that life has to offer will have to wait for eternity. Yet as sisters in the gospel, we should strive to be empathetic. I offer the following three suggestions to all Latter-day Saint women to help foster understanding and appreciation for one another.

1. Speak Confidently of Motherhood

At times Church members may be reluctant to talk about motherhood, fearing that a childless woman may be offended or that mothers will be filled with guilt over their inadequacies and shortcomings. That should not be the case. Motherhood is an important, noble, divine calling. Sisters need to receive support, love, validation, and reinforcement as they strive to magnify their calling as mothers.



Maintain confidence when speaking of motherhood, but be aware and sensitive to the situation of the people you are addressing. Perhaps you have heard a teacher or speaker say something to this effect: “For those who do not have children, remember to keep an eternal perspective. One day, despite current circumstances, you will be a mother of numberless children.” While this may be true, it does not begin to fill the void and emptiness a childless woman can feel and may seem to trivialize her feelings. Individuals need not feel obligated to provide advice with the intent to make a person feel better about her situation. It is always best to be led by the Spirit, and sometimes it is best to say nothing.

2. Speak More Often about Nurturing

Nurturing is a behavior that spans a lifetime. You do not need to be a mother to do it—many women have



THE WORD *MOTHER* HAS LAYERS OF MEANING

“When we understand the magnitude of motherhood, it becomes clear why prophets have been so protective of woman’s most sacred role.

While we tend to equate motherhood solely with maternity, in the Lord’s language, the word *mother* has layers of meaning. Of all the words they could have chosen to define her role and her essence, both God the Father and Adam called Eve ‘the mother of all living’ [Moses 4:26]—and they did so *before* she ever bore a child. Like Eve, our motherhood began before we were born. Just as worthy men were foreordained to hold the priesthood in mortality [see Alma 13:2–4, 7–8], righteous women were endowed premortally with the privilege of motherhood [see Spencer W. Kimball, ‘The Role of Righteous Women,’ *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 102]. Motherhood is more than bearing children, though it is certainly that. It is the essence of who we are as women. It defines our very identity, our divine stature and nature, and the unique traits our Father gave us.”

Sheri L. Dew, former second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, “Are We Not All Mothers?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 96.



never given birth but still practice nurtur-

ing. For example, one day I was driving along the shore of the ocean with my 11-year-old niece, Callie, and we saw a wedding ceremony on the beach. We talked about the importance of a temple marriage and how it compared to the beach wedding. This tender moment allowed me to teach Callie and uplifted us both.

As Latter-day Saint women, our collective nurturing efforts contribute to the character development and testimony strengthening of those within our circle of influence. Therefore, we should consider speaking more frequently not only of motherhood but also of nurturing and its impact on our lives. We should celebrate nurturing as often and with as much jubilation as we do motherhood.

3. Expand Your Circle of Sisterhood

People who share common interests tend to gravitate toward each other. Young mothers tend to quickly develop friendships with one another because of their similar situations in life. Sisters who are finished rearing their families may feel that they have nothing in common with those just starting out. And sisters who have never had children also seem to be in their own circle.

However, the fact is that we all need each other. Sister Marjorie Hinckley, wife of President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), said: “Oh, how we need each other. Those of us who are old need you who are young. And, hopefully, you who are young need some of us who are old. It is a sociological fact that women need women. We need deep and satisfying and loyal friendships with each other.”²

Consider inviting sisters in your neighborhood or ward to a social event, lunch, or evening out or to join your



DEVELOPING A “MOTHER HEART”

“Female roles did not begin on earth, and they do not end here. A woman who treasures motherhood on earth will treasure motherhood in the world

to come, and ‘where [her] treasure is, there will [her] heart be also’ (Matthew 6:21). By developing a mother heart, each girl and woman prepares for her divine, eternal mission of motherhood. . . .

“In my experience I have seen that some of the truest mother hearts beat in the breasts of women who will not rear their own children in this life, but they know that ‘all things must come to pass in their time’ and that they ‘are laying the foundation of a great work’ (D&C 64:32–33). As they keep their covenants, they are investing in a grand, prestigious future. . . .

“Covenant-keeping women with mother hearts know that whether motherhood comes early or late; whether

they are blessed with a ‘quiver full’ of children here in mortality or not; whether they are single, married, or left to carry the responsibility of parenthood alone—in holy temples they are ‘endowed with power from on high’ (D&C 38:32), and with that endowment they received the promised blessings and are ‘persuaded of them, and embraced them’ (Hebrews 11:13).

“Every girl and woman who makes and keeps sacred covenants can have a mother heart. There is no limit to what a woman with a mother heart can accomplish. Righteous women have changed the course of history and will continue to do so, and their influence will spread and grow exponentially throughout the eternities.”

Julie B. Beck, former Relief Society general president, “A ‘Mother Heart,’” *Ensign*, May 2004, 76, 77.

GENERAL WOMEN’S MEETING

To read, watch, or listen to addresses from the general women’s meeting held in March 2014, visit conference.lds.org.

family home evening or holiday celebrations. You may be surprised at your shared interests.

For sisters who find themselves in a position where they are nurturers but not yet mothers, acknowledging feelings of sadness is real and normal. Righteous biblical women, including Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, and Elisabeth, felt sorrow in their barrenness. When she finally conceived, Rachel rejoiced, saying, “God hath taken away my reproach” (Genesis 30:23).

The one source of peace and comfort in times of trial comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He has truly “borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows” (Isaiah 53:4). That does not mean that there will not be hard days ahead, especially as you see others enjoy rites of passage associated with motherhood. Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles put it this way: “You can have clear faith in the ultimate outcomes at the end of the trail but still find vexing uncertainties in the steps immediately ahead. The Lord knows the end from the beginning and

everything in between. You, however, function in the muddled, mortal middle.”³

All of us can find joy and fulfillment in the “muddled, mortal middle.” As sisters in Zion, we must look for our commonalities, recognize that we are all striving toward the same eternal goal, and realize that we can help each other along the path that includes opportunities for both the mother and the nurturer. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. See “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
2. In Virginia H. Pearce, ed., *Glimpses into the Life and Heart of Marjorie Pay Hinckley* (1999), 254–55.
3. Neal A. Maxwell, “These Are Your Days,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2004, 29.





WE ARE THE Lord's Hands

*Seeking out the poor and ministering to those who suffer
are indispensable to what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.*

By Neil K. Newell

Welfare Services

During the early days of the Great Depression, six stake presidents from the Salt Lake Valley joined together to grapple with the darkening clouds of poverty and hunger that threatened to overwhelm so many members of the Church.¹ Although the economic crisis affected people everywhere, Utah in particular had been devastated.²

At that time, Church leaders had few resources to help those in need. They could use fast offerings, of course, but the chronic need dwarfed anything they had ever experienced. Under the direction of the Presiding Bishopric, a Deseret Employment Bureau had been founded in the early 1900s. But it was not adequately equipped to handle such massive need.

These six priesthood leaders knew that if the people of their stakes were to be helped, they could not wait. They would have to take immediate action. They began by putting people to work. They organized the men and took them to fields where they could harvest crops. In exchange for their labor, grateful farmers generously donated food to the men. The surplus was taken to a storehouse and distributed to others who were hungry. As donations grew, the Saints began canning food to

preserve it. This was the beginning of the modern-day welfare program.

Eight decades later, modern-day Church leaders throughout the world look over their congregations and feel the same determination to reach out to those in need.

In the October 2011 general conference, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said: “Too often we notice the needs around us, hoping that someone from far away will magically appear to meet those needs. Perhaps we wait for experts with specialized knowledge to solve specific problems. When we do this, we deprive our neighbor of the service we could render, and we deprive ourselves of the opportunity to serve. While there is nothing wrong with experts, let’s face it: there will never be enough of them to solve all the problems. Instead, the Lord has placed His priesthood and its organization at our doorsteps in every nation where the Church is established.”³

This call for local Church leaders and members to take action as inspired by the Holy Ghost has led many throughout the world to, as President Uchtdorf said, “figure it out for [themselves].”⁴ They have rolled up their sleeves and resolved to “remember in all things the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted” (D&C 52:40).

Ecuador

As Bishop Johnny Morante in Guayaquil, Ecuador, looked out at members of his ward, his heart grew heavy. Too many of the families struggled to have even the barest necessities of life. He wanted to help them, so he consulted with ward leaders and took the matter to the Lord.

Since job opportunities in the area were scarce, he began to work with a group of 11 sisters, encouraging them to pursue the possibility of a small-business opportunity. These sisters noticed that there was a need for quality, low-cost household-cleaning supplies, and they wondered if they could produce and sell them in their community. But how would they learn to make these supplies?

At this time, Bishop Morante became aware of an unemployed sister in his ward who had worked as a pharmaceutical chemist. When the 11 sisters asked her if she would help, she was delighted to teach them how to make safe, quality supplies.

They created a business plan, mapped out areas in the community that each sister would cover, chose the products they would make, and designed the packaging and labels.

In a few months, they had built a customer base and were bringing in sufficient revenues to alleviate their poverty and help provide for the needs of their families.

When managers of a local pharmaceutical company learned about this enterprise, they became intrigued by the story of the unemployed pharmaceutical chemist. They eventually interviewed and hired her to head their own manufacturing.

Russia

In the Rechnoy Ward of Moscow, Russia, Galina Goncharova, who was serving as the ward historian, slipped on some ice and broke both her arms. She was taken to the hospital, where her arms were wrapped in casts. She couldn't feed or clothe herself. She couldn't comb her hair or even answer the phone.

When her fellow ward members learned of what had happened, they immediately responded. Priesthood

holders gave her a blessing and worked with the Relief Society sisters to create a schedule to check on this good sister and attend to her needs.

Vladimir Nechiporov, the ward mission leader, said, "We remembered a talk given in general conference about a statue of Christ that was missing its hands.⁵ Below the statue someone had placed a plaque that read, 'You are my hands.' For the few weeks this good sister was



After Galina Goncharova slipped and broke her arms, her Relief Society sisters served as her hands.

incapacitated, the members of the Rechnoy Ward felt a kinship to that story. We literally became her hands."

Philippines

When Tropical Storm Washi descended on the Philippines in 2011, it flooded the area with a deluge of water and wind. Some 41,000 homes were damaged, and more than 1,200 people lost their lives.

Prior to the flooding, Max Saavedra, president of the Cagayan de Oro Philippines Stake, had felt prompted to create a stake emergency response team. He organized committees to fulfill various assignments—everything from search and rescue to first aid to providing food, water, and clothing.

As the floodwaters receded to a safe level, Church leaders and members mobilized. They accounted for the safety of each member and assessed the damage. One member supplied rubber rafts to bring stranded members to safety. The meetinghouses were opened to provide shelter to all who needed food, clothing, blankets, and a temporary place to stay. Clean water was a critical need, so President Saavedra contacted a local business that owned a fire truck, and they transported clean water to the meetinghouse evacuation centers. Members with professional medical experience responded to those who had been injured.

Once Church members were accounted for, President Saavedra and his team visited other evacuation centers in the city and offered to help. They brought them food and other supplies. Many of the members, though they had lost their own homes, selflessly served others immediately after the storm. As the rains stopped and the ground dried, Mormon Helping Hands volunteers from three stakes went to work distributing supplies as well as helping with cleanup.

Brazil

Within the city of Sete Lagoas, Brazil, is a shelter for women with disabilities whose lives have been affected by drug abuse. Each day they struggled to survive. They had a small oven they used to produce about 30 loaves of bread a day. Though the women had received some aid from a local humanitarian association, they scarcely had enough to feed themselves. When Church leaders from the Sete Lagoas Brazil Stake learned of the needs of these women, they wanted to help.

They spoke with the women about their needs. The women said that if they could produce more bread, they could not only better feed themselves but perhaps could sell a few loaves and earn some desperately needed income.

Church leaders and members worked with the local military police and a local school to improve conditions

for these women. With the help of a Church humanitarian grant and volunteers from the Church and the community, they were able to create a new bakery—one that allowed the women to produce 300 loaves of bread daily.

With the proceeds they have received, the women at the bakery have been able to hire their first employee—one of the women at the shelter.

The Work of Welfare

Like those inspired Church leaders decades ago who saw the great need around them and refused to turn away, Church leaders and members throughout the world today are doing the same in their own areas and in their own way.

When President Uchtdorf spoke to the Church about caring for others, he said: “The Lord’s way is not to sit at the side of the stream and wait for the water to pass before we cross. It is to come together, roll up our sleeves, go to work, and build a bridge or a boat to cross the waters of our challenges.”⁶

Seeking out the poor and ministering to those who suffer is an indispensable part of what it means to be a disciple of Christ. It is the work that Jesus Christ Himself did as He ministered to the people of His day. “This work of providing in the Lord’s way is not simply another item in the catalog of programs of the Church,” President Uchtdorf concluded. “It cannot be neglected or set aside. It is central to our doctrine; it is the essence of our religion.”⁷ ■

NOTES

1. Four of these stake presidents—Hugh B. Brown, Harold B. Lee, Henry D. Moyle, and Marion G. Romney—would later be called as Apostles, and all four would later serve in the First Presidency of the Church. Harold B. Lee became the 11th President of the Church.
2. In 1930, Utah had the second-highest unemployment rate in the United States. See Garth L. Mangum and Bruce D. Blumell, *The Mormons’ War on Poverty: A History of LDS Welfare 1830–1990* (1993), 95.
3. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Providing in the Lord’s Way,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 54.
4. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Providing in the Lord’s Way,” 55.
5. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “You Are My Hands,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 68.
6. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Providing in the Lord’s Way,” 55.
7. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Providing in the Lord’s Way,” 55–56.

A VISIT FROM MILTON

Grandma knew next to nothing about her relatives, but I was determined to find out who and where they were.

By Merle Lester

I was always perplexed to think that my maternal grandmother didn't know her exact birthday or hardly anything about her relatives. Even as a boy, I felt compelled to solve the mystery—probably because my mother would sometimes refer to me as her “little genealogist,” hoping to instill in me a desire to find her long-lost relatives.

What We Knew

Our limited knowledge of Grandma's ancestry included the fact that her father, Albert Page, was born in Chicago and died in Pachuca, Mexico, in 1915. He married a Spanish girl named Juana Avila, even though his family was very much against it. His father had a bakery, a car dealership, a candy store, and other businesses in Chicago that made him a wealthy man. Albert's father felt that Albert could do much better than to marry a poor Spanish girl. So Albert and his new wife fled to Mexico to avoid the scrutiny of his family.

Albert and Juana eventually had eight children, including my grandmother, Dora Jane. Several years later, Albert died. Upon his death, Juana feared that the powerful and wealthy Pages would try to take the children. She burned all documents and pictures that proved her family's relationship to them.

The loss of information made it difficult to know anything about this family line, but throughout the years my mother and aunts searched for relatives. My mother told me that she kept having a dream of this “fine-looking gentleman” who would appear and look at her with a smile as if he were waiting for something.

Searching in Earnest

After serving a mission I married, and then my mother reported to me that she had had the dream a couple more times. I decided that it was time to tackle the challenge of finding her ancestors. I was a novice at doing family history research, but I knew that through faith and prayer, I could receive the divine help I needed.

I began my search at the local family history center, looking for Albert's wealthy Chicago father, whose name I thought was Edgar Page. I had no success. The next night I went to the university library and copied the Page family names out of various editions of the Chicago phone book. Still no success.

After fasting with my wife, I went back to search at the family history center. The assistant suggested I look in the



ANSWERING QUESTIONS What should I do if I have family name cards but can't finish the ordinances?

Sometimes circumstances make it difficult to finish the temple work for the family names you've gathered. Perhaps you have so many family name cards that you feel you cannot complete the ordinances in a reasonable time. Consider asking family or ward members to help finish the work. Another option is to release your family names to the temple through FamilySearch.org. On the "Temple" page, select the names you would like to release and click Unreserve. Your family names will become part of the temple file and be made available to other patrons so they can complete the ordinances. (To avoid possible duplication of ordinances, dispose of the cards for any family names you have released to the temple.)

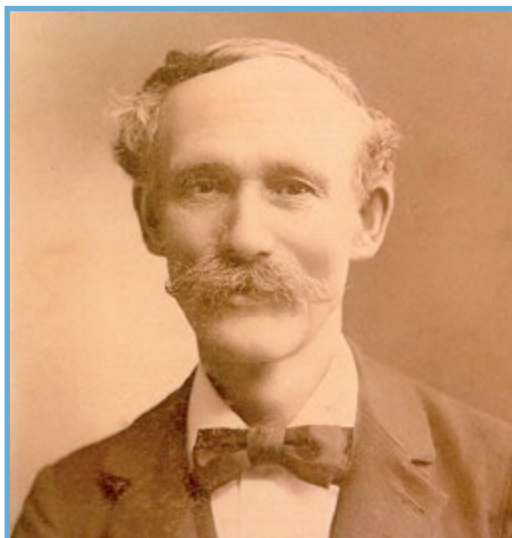
1880 Cook County, Illinois, census. I ordered the A-L film but received the M-Z film instead. I decided to view the film anyway, and as I scrolled through the names, I came across a Milton E. Page. He and his wife had five children: Milton, Walter, Willie, Laura, and Albert. I thought how strange it was that four of these names matched up with the names of Grandma's siblings.

Further Discoveries

Suddenly hopeful, I called Grandma. I asked her if the name Milton E. Page sounded familiar. She said, "Yes, that is my brother's name." Of course, I knew it wasn't her brother listed on the census. Then she remembered that her father said he had named all of his children after his own siblings. Tears began to run down my cheeks. We had found them!

After talking to Grandma, I started looking through my notes and couldn't find anything. I finally looked in my Chicago phone lists, where I came upon the name Milton E. Page Jr. I immediately called the number. The elderly lady who answered the phone turned out to be the daughter of Milton E. Page Jr., who was deceased. I told her I thought I was a relative and asked her to tell me about her grandfather.

She went through the family one by one. Finally she said, "There was one uncle who went down to Mexico with his family." As soon as she said that, I knew we were related. I began to cry. I told her the uncle she mentioned was my great-grandfather Albert. She



This photo of Milton E. Page was found in the family Bible of Brother Lester's relative.

could hardly believe it. She said as a little girl she had written to her cousins in Mexico. Then she added, "I never knew why I kept

Daddy's name in the phone book for over fifty years, until now. I just always felt that I should." The phone book was the link I had needed.

The End of the Search

I spent several hours on the phone listening to stories and taking notes. I finally asked her if I could come and visit. Hesitantly, she said yes. Two weeks later I was on the road with my mother, wife, and daughter.

Our hostess was genial, but she was evasive when we asked for additional information. Her story kept changing regarding the whereabouts of a family Bible. On the fourth night, she must have realized we were not after money, and she pointed to the Bible on the bookshelf.

As I opened the family Bible, a picture fell out and my mother picked it up. She immediately began to sob. It was the man in her dreams: my great-great-grandfather Milton Edwin Page, Albert's father.

With the documentation from the family Bible, we were able to go to the Ogden Utah Temple and complete the ordinances for 42 people. The Lord had been working to bring their history to light long before I was born. At last, my grandma and the rest of my family knew about her relatives, with the help of the Lord and a visit from Milton. ■

The author lives in Wyoming, USA.

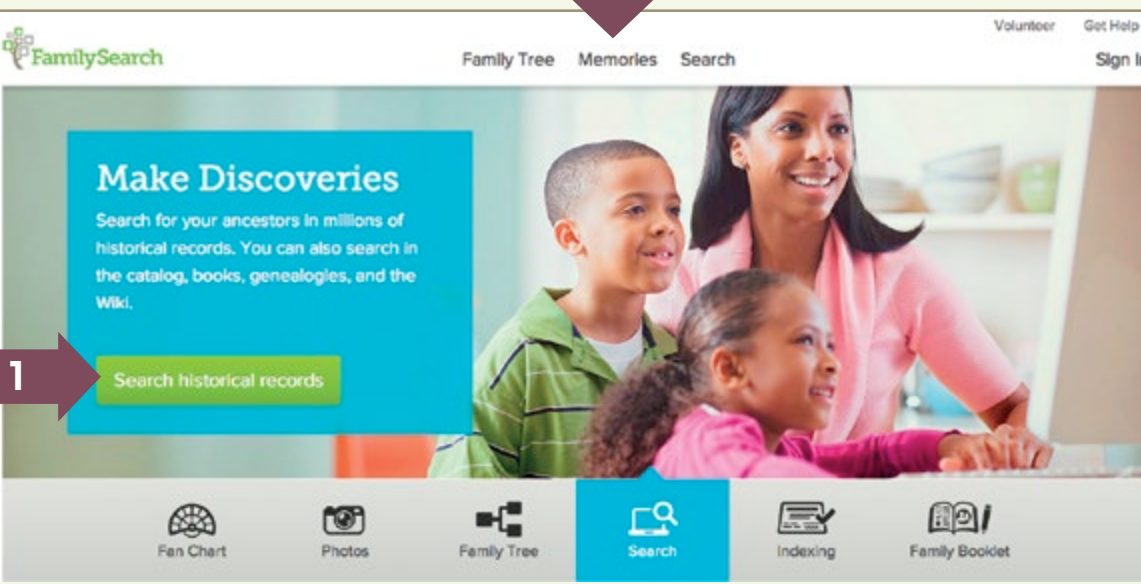
FROM DUSTY FILES TO DIGITAL TOOLS

5

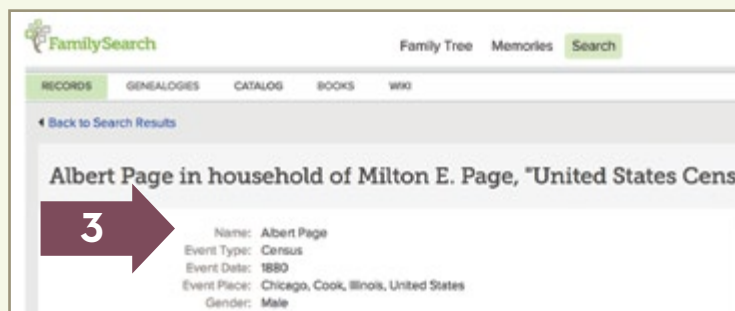
Go to "Memories" to share photos, stories, and other information with your family.

2

For help in getting started with your family history, start with what you know, then go to the pull-down menu "Get Help" for information.



Locate original census records and other information at familysearch.org/search.



At right, a simple Google search found the candy company owned by Brother Lester's ancestors and historical information about the company. It also turned up a source listing the names, birth dates, birth and death places, and relationships of three generations of Milton's family.

4

Chicago's Sweet Candy History - Page 12 - Google Books Result
books.google.com/books?isbn=0738593826
 Leslie Goddard - 2012 - Business & Economics
 Milton E. Page & Co., considered "the leading confectionery house in the West" in 1869, made more than 400 varieties of candy. As this advertisement shows, ...

When Merle Lester began the search for his ancestors in 2002, many records were not available online. Today, numerous records and family history information are available through FamilySearch.org (see no. 1 above).

To begin your own family history search, try watching some of the training videos accessed through the "Get Help" menu at FamilySearch.org (see no. 2 above). Check out the "Research Wiki" to learn how to research areas where your ancestors lived.

More and more sources are being digitized, making it possible to get information about ancestors from census records, birth and death records, military registrations, and so on. Locate these records at familysearch.org/search (see no. 3 above). The search page includes links to records, genealogies, the FamilySearch catalog, and books.

Today, Internet search engines such as Google, Yahoo, or Bing provide clues to your family's past (see no. 4 above). See what happens when you type an

ancestor's name (with perhaps a city where the ancestor lived) into one of these search engines.

Volunteers have extracted more than two billion names worldwide from scanned documents. You can help the indexing project by going to familysearch.org/indexing.

You can connect with relatives and share photos, stories, and other information at FamilySearch.org. Go to the "Memories" section of the site to learn more (see no. 5 above).

The PASSOVER SUPPER

The first Passover prefigured Jesus Christ's sacrifice and showed what it means to be God's covenant people.

The final plague that fell upon the land of Egypt in Moses's day brought death to all the firstborn in the land—even firstborn animals. But God provided a way for His people to be spared from this plague. By performing a symbolic ritual, the children of Israel showed that they were God's people, and then through the Passover, God saved them from destruction, delivered them from bondage, and sent them to inherit a promised land. (See Exodus 12.)

Here is a brief description of the emblems of the Passover, in which we see many symbolic representations of Jesus Christ's ultimate sacrifice and our covenant with God.

TOP: ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN CALL; CENTER: DETAIL FROM L'INNOCENCE, BY WILLIAM BOUGUEREAU, MAY NOT BE COPIED



BITTER HERBS

What were they? Possibly endive, chicory, wild lettuce, horehound, sorrel, dandelions, horseradish, parsley, snake-root, peppermint, or other herbs with a bitter taste.

What was done with them? They were eaten along with the lamb.

What do they represent? Bitterness of slavery and captivity in Egypt; bitterness of slavery to sin; bitterness of Christ's suffering for our sins.

LAMB

What was it? A year-old lamb without blemish.

What was done with it? It was killed and then roasted with fire, whole—no bones broken; head, legs, and edible inner parts attached. It was to be eaten during the Passover night, nothing remaining in the morning. If anything did remain, it was to be burned.

What does it represent? Christ as perfect and sinless sacrifice for sins; the sweet experience of coming unto Him, juxtaposed with the bitterness of sin; the complete dedication required of those under covenant to God.



SIGNIFICANT PASSOVERS WITH THE SAVIOR



- **1st Passover:** Purification of the temple (“Make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise”)—see John 2:13–17.



- **2nd Passover:** Miracle of the loaves and fishes (“I am the bread of life”)—see John 6.



- **3rd Passover:** Last Supper (“This do in remembrance of me”)—see Luke 22:7–20.



- **April 3, 1836:** On Easter Sunday 1836, the second day of Passover, the Savior appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple.



OUR PASSOVER

“Do we see [our weekly sacramental service] as *our* passover, remembrance of *our* safety and deliverance and redemption?”

“With so very much at stake, this ordinance commemorating our escape from the angel of darkness should be taken more seriously than it sometimes is.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “This Do in Remembrance of Me,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 68.

LOINS GIRT, FEET SHOD, STAFF IN HAND, STANDING WHILE EATING

What do they represent? Readiness for hasty flight from captivity; desire for freedom from sin.



PHOTOGRAPH OF LINTEL BY LEE HORN/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK; PHOTOGRAPH OF UNLEAVENED BREAD BY NAFTOLI/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

UNLEAVENED BREAD

What was it? Bread made, most likely, from emmer wheat, barley, or sorghum without leaven, which makes bread softer but also more susceptible to mold and other decay. In addition, leavened bread takes much longer to make, since the dough needs time to rise.

What was done with it? It was eaten for seven days. Leaven (which was probably some kind of sourdough starter) was to be removed from each home during this time.

What does it represent?

Purity; haste of flight from captivity; Christ as the Bread of Life.

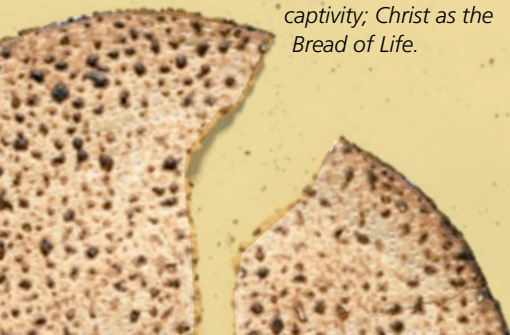
BLOOD ON LINTEL AND POSTS

How was it applied? Hyssop (an herb later used in ritual purifications) was dipped in the bowl of blood from the lamb, and then the blood was placed on the lintel and posts of the door.

What does it represent? A sign identifying God’s covenant people, whom the destroying angel was to pass over; purification through Christ’s blood, which was shed to atone for our sins.



CHRIST CLEANSING THE TEMPLE, BY CARL HENRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERÖD, DENMARK. MAY NOT BE COPIED. FEEDING THE MULTITUDE, © WALTER W. HALL, LICENSED FROM GOODS&ART.COM. MAY NOT BE COPIED. THE LAST SUPPER, BY SIMON DEWEY; THE LORD APPEARS IN THE KIRTLAND TEMPLE, BY DEL PARSON



HOW DID THEY KNOW?

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, gave a message to the Relief Society sisters during the 2011 general Relief Society meeting that touched my heart and gave me peace. He spoke about the tiny forget-me-not flower and how its five petals represent five things we should always remember.¹

After the meeting my daughter Alyssa told me a story about her friend Jessie, who has a small catering business. Jessie was asked by her stake Relief Society leaders to make a dessert to serve after the general Relief Society meeting. Jessie told Alyssa she knew immediately what

she should make—250 cupcakes. Alyssa volunteered to help transport the cupcakes to the stake center.

The day of the meeting arrived, and when Alyssa went to help, she found Jessie nearly in tears. The cupcakes were ready, but Jessie had sent a picture of them to a relative who said they were not fancy enough for the meeting.

Jessie began to doubt herself. She concluded that the stake Relief Society leaders would be expecting something more elaborate than her simple cupcakes. She was frantically trying to figure out a way to redecorate the cupcakes, but there wasn't time. She and Alyssa took the cupcakes as they

were, with Jessie feeling that she had let the sisters down—until President Uchtdorf spoke.

As he spoke about the tiny forget-me-not flower, a picture of the little blue flower appeared on the screen. It was such a simple flower but so beautiful with its delicately veined petals. President Uchtdorf's message touched everyone's heart as he pleaded with us not to become so distracted with the large exotic blooms around us that we forget the five simple but important truths he was teaching us.

After the closing prayer, the sisters made their way to the cultural hall. When Alyssa and Jessie walked in, they found everyone surrounding the dessert table and asking, "How did they know?"

Each cupcake was frosted in plain white frosting and decorated with one simple, beautiful, delicate, five-petaled forget-me-not flower. ■

Gale Ashcroft, Arizona, USA

NOTE

1. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Forget Me Not," *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 120.

The cupcakes were ready, but Jessie had sent a picture of them to a relative who said they were not fancy enough for the Relief Society meeting.



THE PROMISE GAVE ME HOPE

Soon after my husband and I were married, we were blessed with a son. When I saw his smile and looked into his eyes, I felt indebted to Heavenly Father. Our son seemed perfect to me. My husband and I thanked the Lord daily for such a precious gift.

On February 19, 2009, I packed in preparation to return to school for my final year of classes. My husband and I didn't know that the next day our beloved son would contract a fever and leave this mortal life.

It was a difficult experience for me to bear. The members of our ward came to our home to console us with scriptures and hymns and to pray with us. I cherished their compassionate condolences, but my grief for my son persisted. Whenever I thought of him, my eyes became heavy with tears.

Four days after his death, I was inspired to study *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*. As I held the book, it fell open in my hands to the chapter titled “Words of Hope and Consolation at the Time of Death.” I began to read and was deeply affected by the tragic losses Joseph and Emma had suffered as they started their family. When I reached an excerpt from a speech the Prophet gave at the funeral of a two-year-old boy, I felt as if cold water had been poured on my head, cooling my grief-ridden thoughts.

I called to my husband. Together we read: “I have . . . asked the question, why it is that infants, innocent children,

are taken away from us. . . . The Lord takes many away, even in infancy, that they may escape . . . the sorrows and evils of this present world; they were too pure, too lovely, to live on earth; therefore, if rightly considered, instead of mourning we have reason to rejoice as they are delivered from evil, and we shall soon have them again.”

The Prophet added: “A question may be asked—‘Will mothers have their children in eternity?’ Yes! Yes! Mothers, you shall have your children; for they shall have eternal life, for their debt is paid.”¹

Since we read those beautiful words, our family's prayers have been full of thanksgiving for the promise

that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ we will be with our son again.

Today we have two wonderful children, siblings to our departed son. We are teaching them the true and everlasting gospel, which will guide them back to their Heavenly Father and to their Savior, Jesus Christ.

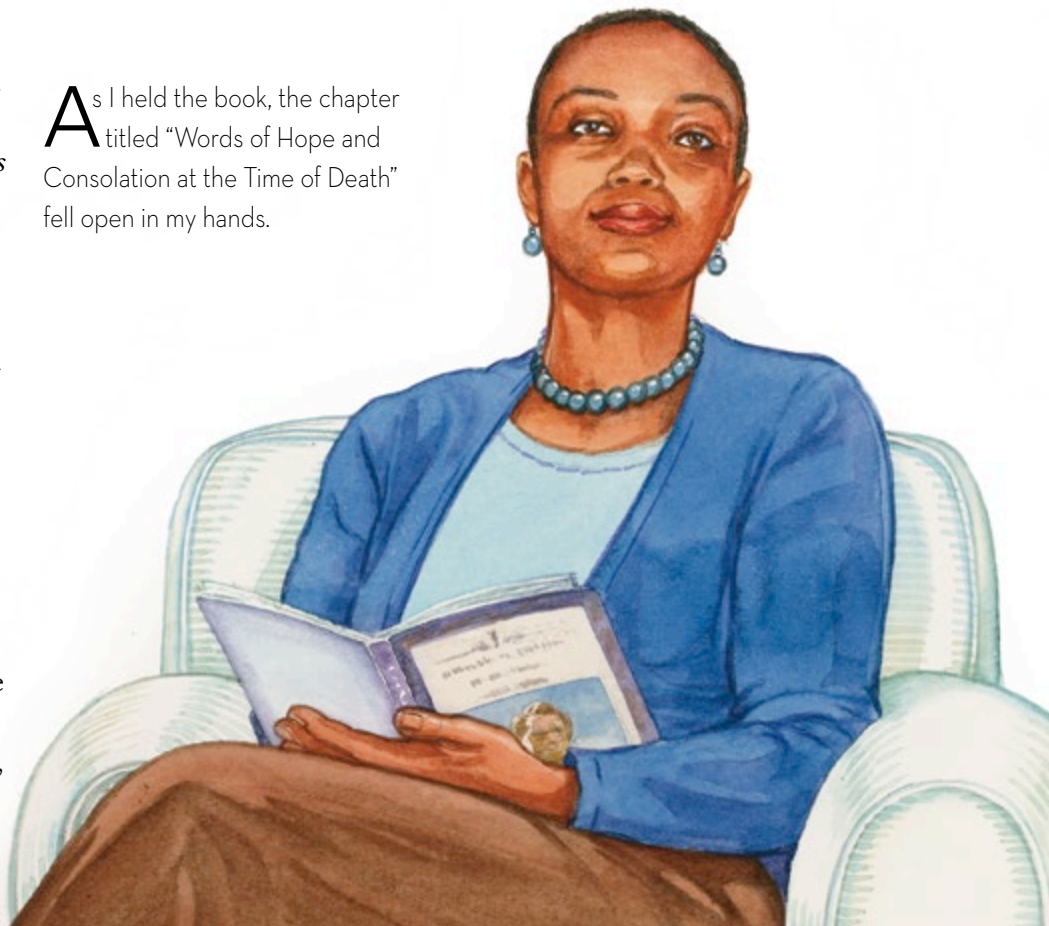
I know that the Prophet Joseph Smith's message of life after death is true. I will be grateful forever for the hope, peace, joy, and happiness it brings to our family—on both sides of the veil. ■

Juliana Fayahun, Lagos, Nigeria

NOTE

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 176, 177.

As I held the book, the chapter titled “Words of Hope and Consolation at the Time of Death” fell open in my hands.



I HAD PLENTY TO SHARE

I had always thought of emergency preparedness in terms of taking care of my family and myself. But I learned to view preparation differently one Sunday morning in southern Florida in 1992. Hurricane Andrew, one of the most destructive and costly hurricanes to hit the United States, disrupted a beautiful summer in Miami, Florida.

I was temporarily living alone in a beach apartment, attending a three-month orientation program for my job. When the hurricane warning came and I learned we would need to evacuate our apartment complex by noon, an associate reserved hotel rooms in an inland region for our co-workers and me. I boarded my windows and stored my personal belongings.

In anticipation of a weeklong visit from my wife and children, I had

previously purchased enough food and water for my family of six. I was comforted knowing I had a safe place to go and enough food to take with me to last several weeks.

As I prepared to leave at 10:30 a.m., I felt good—all was in order. I knelt in prayer, thanking Heavenly Father for my blessings and asking for His help during the coming storm. As I ended my prayer, the Spirit prompted me to say, “If there is anyone in need of help, please help me find him or her.”

Within a few minutes, a widow in her 80s knocked at my door. “I’m sorry,” she said. “I have the wrong room. I’m looking for a friend.”

She looked frazzled. When I asked if I could help, she became distraught and said she didn’t know what to do or where to go. I asked her where she

lived, and together we walked to her apartment, assessed her situation, and went over her options.

I told her that my company might have space in one of our hotel rooms, and I invited her to stay with our group. She sighed in relief. We quickly packed and secured her apartment and belongings, and I arranged for an associate to drive her car to the hotel.

As I prepared to leave, two more widows asked for assistance. I helped them calm down so they could think clearly and figure out where to find refuge. When I picked up luggage from one of my work associates, another elderly widow asked for help. We placed her fragile items in safe areas and helped her prepare to leave.

In the meantime, other co-workers invited two college students who had been living on an island to stay with our group at the inland hotel. The only food they had was a handful of snacks and a quart (.95 L) of mineral water. Fortunately, I had plenty to share, not only with them but with everyone else as well.

What a blessing it was to be prepared and guided by the Lord. This allowed me to provide a calming influence during a time of alarm and to spend almost all my time helping others without worrying about myself. I gained a new level of appreciation for the counsel from our priesthood leaders to be prepared. ■

Brent Fisher, California, USA

When I asked if I could help, the woman became distraught and said she didn’t know what to do or where to go.



WAITING FOR THE SUNRISE

Shadows wrapped the room in darkness as I lay awake listening to my husband breathe, trying to determine whether he was sleeping. It had been only two days since our 12-year-old daughter had passed away from a sudden traumatic accident. I closed my eyes again, but sleep evaded me. My heart yearned for my daughter. All the knowledge of the plan of salvation couldn't ease the ache of missing her.

As dawn neared, I felt a sudden, intense longing. The sun would be rising soon, and in my mind I saw the sky bathed in soft pink light. Our daughter loved the color pink. A pink sunrise would be just the thing I needed to feel close to her again.

"Let's go watch the sunrise," I whispered to my drowsy husband.

We stood in the driveway, faced east, and waited . . . and waited. Though the sky lightened, the sun did not push through the low-lying clouds.

I leaned my head on my husband's shoulder and sighed, trying to pretend it didn't matter. But I wanted more. I needed more. Surely Heavenly Father could have granted me this desire after taking our sweet girl home to Him.

As my husband turned to go inside, looking behind us toward the west, he said, "Look!"

I turned. Behind us the clouds were bathed in a delicate blush, golden light surrounding them. My breath caught, and tears crept to my eyes. It was more beautiful than I could have imagined.

It felt like a hug from our daughter. I knew Heavenly Father was aware of my aching heart and was sending a promise of hope for the future—a gentle reminder of eternal families and all the beautiful moments yet to come.

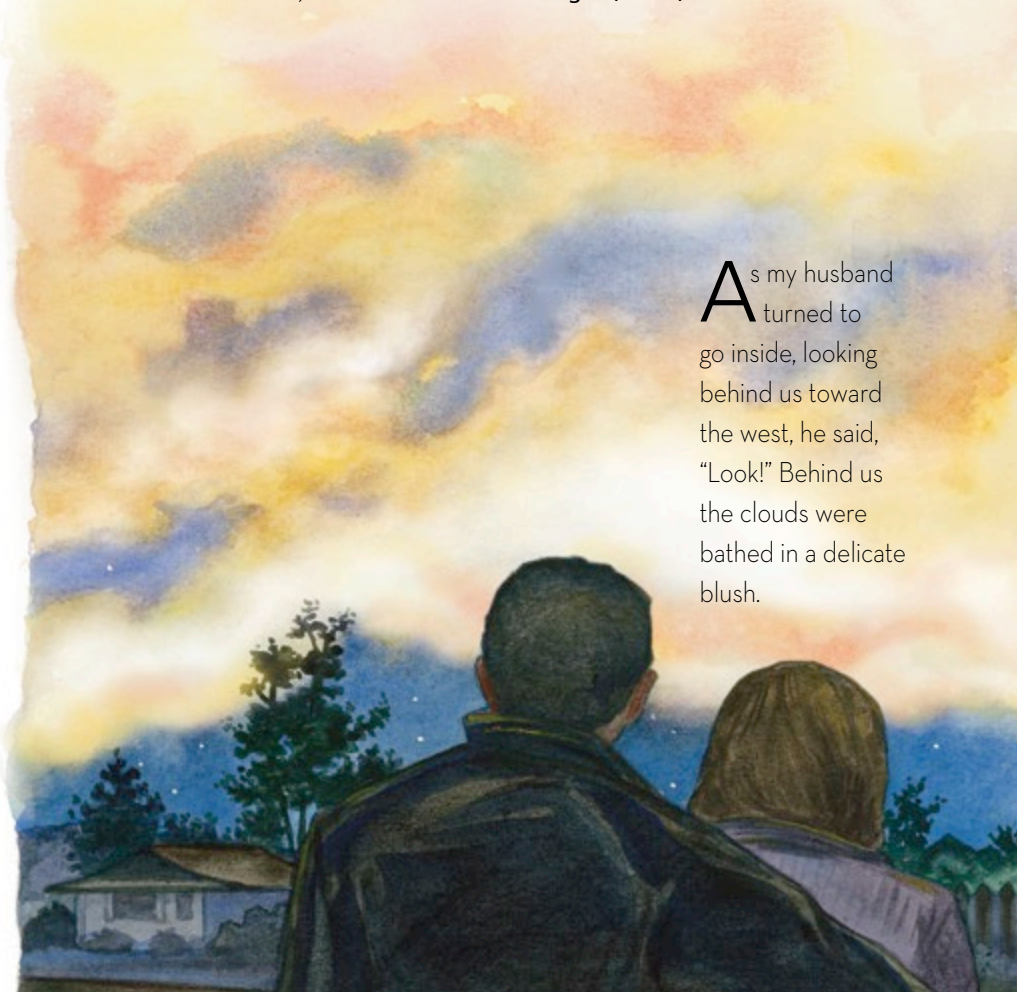
I have thought often on that beautiful moment and the new perspective it gave me. Who looks for a sunrise in the west? And yet that is where my miracle was waiting. How many blessings and miracles do I miss because they come from unexpected places? How many times do I focus on what I think should be and miss the glory of what is?

We had prayed relentlessly for a miracle that was denied, but as I

looked around with my new perspective, I saw the miracle of the four lives bettered through our daughter's organ donations, the miracle of family love and ward unity, and the miracle of service. I have felt deep sorrow, but I have also felt powerful hope fill my soul with each blushing sunrise, each rosy sunset, and each pink flower that crosses my path.

Now as the sun rises, I look east and then turn to look west. I smile with the realization that there are always miracles and blessings to be found—and that the sun will always rise on our sorrows if we let it. ■

Julia Wagner, Ohio, USA



As my husband turned to go inside, looking behind us toward the west, he said, "Look!" Behind us the clouds were bathed in a delicate blush.

FINDING HOPE IN THE FUTURE

By Stan Pugsley

On September 12, 2001, my wife and I were pacing the floor of a hospital in Tucson, Arizona, USA, passing anxious hours as we waited for our son to be born. From our television and from every television in the building, we were barraged by footage from the day before in New York City—images of the two towers that had once anchored the skyline of that city, falling into rubble and dust. The images, broadcast for hours, left us with a sense of despair. It seemed the worst possible time to bring a baby into the world—a world that seemed so dark and threatening.

Early the next morning our infant son was born. As I held our tiny child, I considered the devastating events of the last few days, events that made me think back to the fires in Yellowstone National Park in 1988. The flames had consumed nearly 800,000 acres (323,750 ha) of forest. The park's devastation seemed absolute. News images showed only scorched earth and thick black smoke in the sky. No amount of human effort could quickly bring back what was lost. It seemed as if even the tireless regeneration and vigor of nature was no match for the destructive power of fire.

Yet the next spring a quiet miracle occurred—small plants and flowers began



*The same winds
that buffet and
threaten to over-
whelm us also
sow the seeds
of change and
growth.*

to push through the charred soil. Gradually, more and more flowers and shrubs and trees bloomed from the earth. The rebirth of the park was slow and filled with tiny, glorious details, and over time the results were dramatic.

In moments of fear that seem to consume us like the blazing fires of Yellowstone, when our faith and hope are at their limits, we must remember that there is one quiet, immovable foundation beneath us, much more powerful than any evil force we will encounter. Helaman explains that this foundation is “the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God.” If we anchor ourselves to Him, then “when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall” (Helaman 5:12).

When faced with the frenzied forces of evil and temptation in the world, we may think that the small and simple influence of the gospel is outmatched and overwhelmed. We may feel doubt and despair as we wait in vain for wrongs to be righted, pain to be relieved, and questions to be resolved. Those very winds that buffet us, however, sow seeds of change and growth, and the immense power of the gospel quietly works under the soil of earthly existence, preparing a thousand small seeds of hope and life. ■

The author lives in Arizona, USA.

INSIGHTS



Does God know me, and is He aware of my circumstances in life?

“Whether it is the best of times or the worst of times, He is with us. He has promised that this will never change. . . . May we have a commitment to our Heavenly Father that does not ebb and flow with the years or the crises of our lives. We should not need to experience difficulties for us to remember Him, and we should not be driven to humility before giving Him our faith and trust. May we ever strive to be close to our Heavenly Father. To do so, we must pray to Him and listen to Him every day. We truly need Him every hour, whether they be hours of sunshine or of rain. May His promise ever be our watchword: ‘I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee’ [Joshua 1:5].”



In Church Magazines

Ensign: As member missionaries, we can help others find answers to many of life’s fundamental questions by sharing with them the truths found in the plan of salvation (see pages 28–31).

New Era: Youth often have a lot of questions about the priesthood, and this month’s *New Era* helps them understand why priesthood ordinances are important, how often to ask for priesthood blessings, how to rescue less-active quorum or class members, and more. These articles contain helpful teachings for both young men and young women. (See pages 2–26.)

Friend: It’s almost Easter! Celebrate with the *Friend* by using a countdown to Easter (page 24), a poem (page 11), and a craft (page 26). Help the children in your life feel the peace and joy that come from knowing that Christ is risen.

