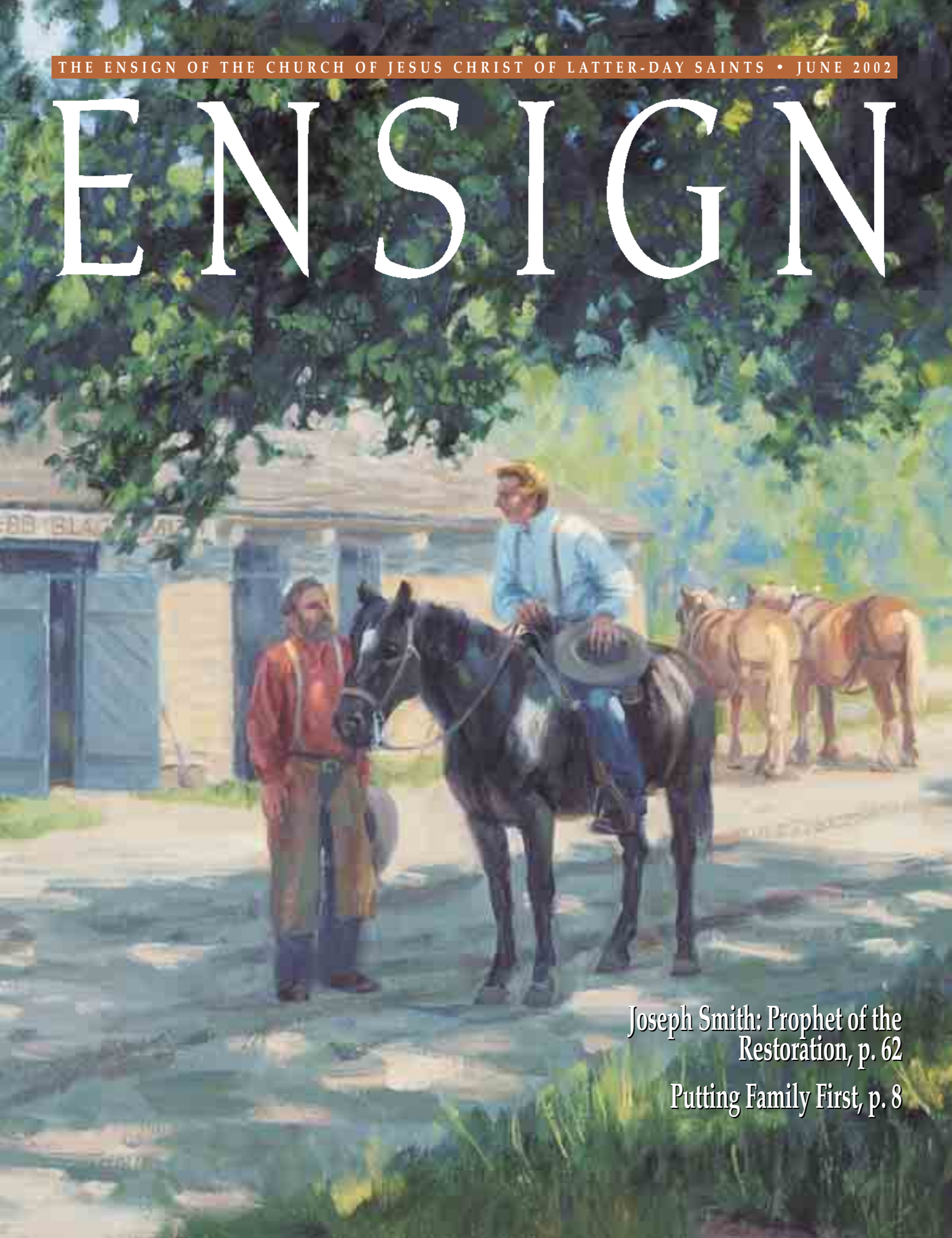


ENSIGN



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Restoration, p. 62

Putting Family First, p. 8

After the Martyrdom, by Gary Smith



This poetic representation of the Martyrdom captures the heavy sadness felt after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum in 1844. Somber colors veil the scene. A tomblike Carthage Jail, its height exaggerated, looms over the Saints standing with heads bowed low. "Joseph Smith . . . lived great, and he died great in the eyes of God and his people; and . . . sealed his mission and his works with his own blood; and so has his brother Hyrum" (D&C 135:3).

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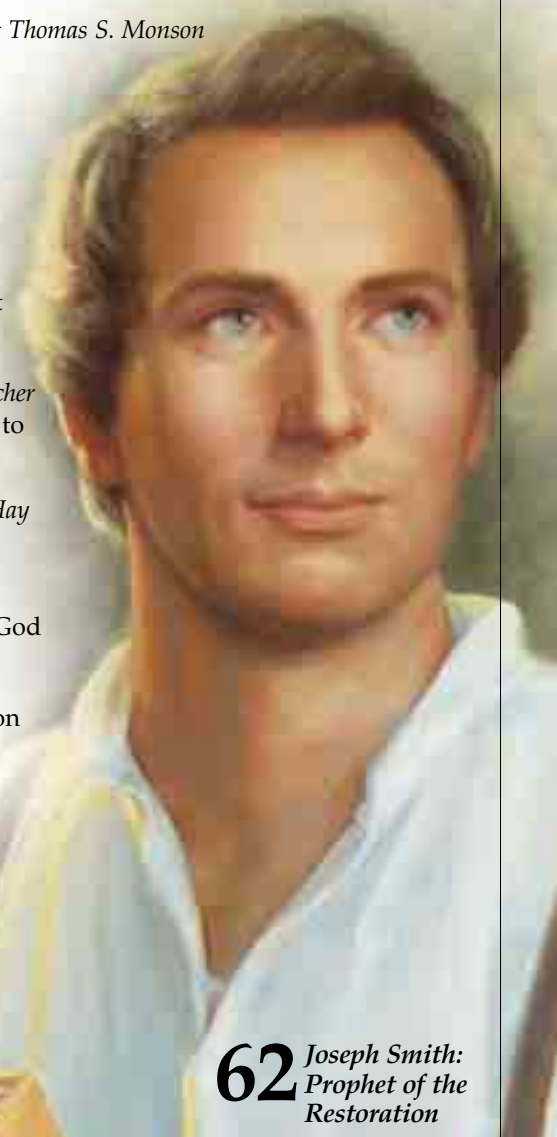


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A Little Child Shall Lead Them



BY PRESIDENT
THOMAS S. MONSON
First Counselor in the
First Presidency

During the Galilean ministry of our Lord and Savior, the disciples came unto Him, saying: “Who is the greatest in

the kingdom of heaven?

“And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

“And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

“Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

“And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

“But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matt. 18:1–6).

THE MANY FACES OF CHILD ABUSE

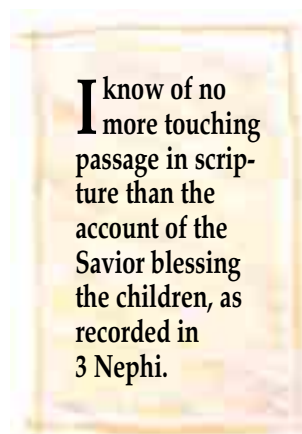
Some time ago, as I read the daily newspaper, my thoughts turned to this passage and the firm candor of the Savior’s declaration. In one column of the newspaper I read of a custody battle between the

mother and father of a child. Accusations were made, threats hurled, and anger displayed as parents moved here and there on the international scene with the child spirited away from one continent to another.

A second story told of a 12-year-old lad who was beaten and set on fire because he refused a neighborhood bully’s order to take drugs.

Still a third report told of a father’s sexual molestation of his small child.

A physician once revealed to me the large number of abused children who are being brought to the emergency rooms of local hospitals in your city and mine. In many cases guilty parents provide fanciful accounts of the child falling from his high chair or stumbling over a toy and striking his head. Altogether too frequently it is discovered that the parent was the abuser and the innocent child the victim. Shame on the perpetrators of such vile deeds. God will hold such strictly accountable for their actions.



I know of no more touching passage in scripture than the account of the Savior blessing the children, as recorded in 3 Nephi.

CHILDREN ARE PRECIOUS TO THE LORD

When we realize just how precious children are, we will not find it difficult to follow the pattern of the Master in our association with them. Not long ago, a sweet scene took place at the Salt Lake Temple. Children, who had been ever so tenderly cared for by faithful workers in the temple nursery, were now leaving in the arms of their mothers and fathers. One child turned to the lovely women who had been so kind to the children and, with a wave of her arm, spoke the feelings of her heart as she

exclaimed, "Good night, angels."

The poet described a child so recently with its Heavenly Father as "a sweet new blossom of Humanity, fresh fallen from God's own home to flower on earth."¹

Who among us has not praised God and marveled at His powers when an infant is held in one's arms? That tiny hand, so small yet so perfect, instantly becomes the topic of conversation. No one can resist placing his little finger in the clutching hand of an infant. A smile comes to the lips, a certain glow to the eyes, and one appreciates the tender feelings which prompted the poet to pen the lines:

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.²*

When the disciples of Jesus attempted to restrain the children from approaching Him, He declared:

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

"And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them" (Mark 10:14-16).

What a magnificent pattern for us to follow.

WE CAN BLESS THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

Several years ago my heart burned warmly within me when the First Presidency approved the allocation of a substantial sum from some special fast-offering contributions to join with those funds from Rotary International that polio vaccine might be provided and the children living in Kenya immunized against this viciouscrippler and killer of children.

I thank God for the work of our doctors who leave for a time their own private practices and journey to distant lands to minister to children. Cleft palates and other deformities which would leave a child impaired physically and damaged psychologically are skillfully repaired. Despair yields to hope. Gratitude replaces grief. These children can now look in the mirror and marvel at a miracle in their own lives.

In a meeting, I once told of a dentist in my ward who each year visited the Philippine Islands to work his skills without compensation to provide corrective dentistry for children. Smiles were restored, spirits lifted, and futures enhanced. I did not know that the daughter of this dentist was in the congregation to which I was speaking. At the conclusion of my remarks, she came forward and, with a broad smile of proper pride, said, "You have been speaking of my father. How I love him and what he is doing for children!"

In the faraway islands of the Pacific, hundreds who were near-blind now see because a missionary said to his physician brother-in-law, "Leave your wealthy clientele and the comforts of your palatial home and come to these special children of God who need your skills and need them now." The ophthalmologist responded without a backward glance. He has commented quietly that this visit was the best service he ever rendered and the peace which came to his heart the greatest blessing of his life.

Tears came easily to me when I read of a father who donated one of his own kidneys in the hope that his son might have a more abundant life. I have dropped to my knees at night and have added my prayer of faith in behalf of a mother in my community who journeyed to Chicago that she might provide part of her liver to her daughter in a delicate and potentially life-threatening surgery. She, who already had gone down into the valley of the shadow of death to bring forth this child into mortality, again put her hand in the hand of God and placed her own life in jeopardy for her child. Never a

complaint, but ever a willing heart and a prayer of faith.

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once shared the pitiable plight of many orphan children in Romania—perhaps 30,000 in the city of Bucharest alone. He visited one such orphanage and arranged that the Church might provide vaccine, medical dressings, and other urgently needed supplies. Certain couples were identified and called to fill special missions to these children. I can think of no more Christlike service than to hold a motherless child in one's arms or to take a fatherless boy by the hand.

We need not be called to missionary service, however, in order to bless the lives of children. Our opportunities are limitless. They are everywhere to be found—sometimes very close to home.



When we realize just how precious children are, we will not find it difficult to follow the pattern of the Master in our association with them.



I thank God for the work of doctors who leave for a time their private practices and journey to distant lands to minister to children.

HOW CHILDREN BLESS OUR LIVES

Several years ago I received a letter from a woman who had emerged from a long period of Church inactivity. She was ever so anxious for her husband, who as yet was not a member of the Church, to share the joy she felt.

She wrote of a trip which she, her husband, and their three sons made from the family home to Grandmother's home in Idaho. While driving through Salt Lake City, they were attracted by the message which appeared on a billboard. The message invited them to visit Temple Square. Bob, the nonmember husband, made the suggestion that a visit would be pleasant. The family entered the visitors' center, and Father took two sons up a ramp that one called "the ramp to heaven." Mother and three-year-old Tyler were a bit behind the others, they having paused to appreciate the beautiful paintings which adorned the walls. As they walked toward the magnificent sculpture of Thorvaldsen's *Christus*, tiny Tyler bolted from his mother and ran to the base of the *Christus*, while exclaiming, "It's Jesus! It's Jesus!" As Mother attempted to restrain her son, Tyler looked back toward her and his father and said, "Don't worry. He likes children."

After departing the center and again making their way along the freeway toward Grandmother's, Dad asked Tyler what he liked best about their adventure on Temple Square. Tyler smiled up at him and said, "Jesus."

"How do you know that Jesus likes you, Tyler?"

Tyler, with a most serious expression on his face, looked up at his father's eyes and answered, "Dad, didn't you see His face?" Nothing else needed to be said.

As I read this account, I thought of the statement from the book of Isaiah, "And a little child shall lead them" (Isa. 11:6).

The words of a Primary hymn express the feelings of a child's heart:

*Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear,
Things I would ask him to tell me if he were here.
Scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,
Stories of Jesus, tell them to me.*

*Oh, let me hear how the children stood round his knee.
I shall imagine his blessings resting on me;
Words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,
All in the lovelight of Jesus' face.³*



An investigator (seated) whom Elder Wilson (far left) had taught was baptized but wanted to be confirmed by him. She, with a few others, journeyed to Elder Wilson's room in the hospital, where he confirmed her a member of the Church.

THOMAS MICHAEL WILSON

One who fulfilled in his life this admonition of the Savior was a missionary, Thomas Michael Wilson. He is the son of Willie and Julia Wilson, Route 2, Box 12, Lafayette, Alabama. Elder Wilson completed his earthly mission on 13 January 1990. When he was but a teenager, and he and his family were not yet members of the Church, he was stricken with cancer, followed by painful radiation therapy, and then blessed remission. This illness caused his family to realize that not only is life precious but that it can also be short. The family began to look to religion to help them through this time of

tribulation. Subsequently they were introduced to the Church and baptized. After accepting the gospel, young Brother Wilson yearned for the opportunity of being a missionary. A mission call came for him to serve in the Utah Salt Lake City Mission. What a privilege to represent the family and the Lord as a missionary!

Elder Wilson's missionary companions described his faith as like that of a child—unquestioning, undeviating, unyielding. He was an example to all. After 11 months, illness returned. Bone cancer now required the amputation of his arm and shoulder. Yet he persisted in his missionary labors.

Elder Wilson's courage and consuming desire to remain on his mission so touched his nonmember father that he investigated the teachings of the Church and also became a member.

An anonymous caller brought to my attention Elder Wilson's plight. She said she didn't want to leave her name and indicated she'd never before called a General Authority. However, she said, "You don't often meet someone of the caliber of Elder Wilson."

I learned that an investigator whom Elder Wilson had taught was baptized at the baptistry on Temple Square but then wanted to be confirmed by Elder Wilson, whom she respected so much. She, with a few others, journeyed to Elder Wilson's bedside in the hospital. There, with his remaining hand resting upon her head, Elder Wilson confirmed her a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

BLESSING THE NEPHITE CHILDREN

I know of no more touching passage in scripture than the account of the Savior blessing the children, as recorded in 3 Nephi. The Master spoke movingly to the vast multitude of men, women, and children. Then, responding to their faith and the desire that He tarry longer, He invited them to bring to Him their lame, their blind, and their sick, that He might heal them. With joy they accepted His invitation. The record reveals that "he did heal them every one" (3 Ne. 17:9). There followed His mighty prayer to His Father. The multitude bore record: "The eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father" (3 Ne. 17:16).

Concluding this magnificent event, Jesus "wept, . . . and he took their little children, one by one, and blessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them. . . .

"And he spake unto the multitude, and said unto them: Behold your little ones.

"And as they looked to behold they cast their eyes towards heaven, and they saw the heavens open, and they saw angels descending out of heaven . . . ; and they came down and encircled those little ones . . . ; and the angels did minister unto them" (3 Ne. 17:21, 23–24).

Over and over in my mind I pondered the phrase, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mark 10:15).

Elder Wilson continued month after month his precious but painful service as a missionary. Blessings were given; prayers were offered. The spirit of his fellow missionaries soared. Their hearts were full. They lived closer to God.

Elder Wilson's physical condition deteriorated. The end drew near. He was to return home. He asked to serve but one additional month. What a month this was! Like a child trusting implicitly its parents, Elder Wilson put his trust in God. He whom Thomas Michael Wilson silently trusted opened the windows of heaven and abundantly blessed him. His parents, Willie and Julia Wilson, and his brother Tony came to Salt Lake City to help their son and brother home to Alabama. However, there was yet a prayed-for, a yearned-for, blessing to be bestowed. The family invited me to come with them to the Jordan River Utah Temple, where those sacred ordinances which bind families for eternity, as well as for time, were performed.

I said good-bye to the Wilson family. I can see Elder Wilson yet as he thanked me for being with him and his loved ones. He said, "It doesn't matter what happens to us in this life as long as we have the gospel of Jesus Christ and live it." What courage. What confidence. What love. The Wilson family made the long trek home to Lafayette, where Elder Thomas Michael Wilson slipped from here to eternity.

President Kevin K. Meadows, Elder Wilson's branch president, presided at the funeral services. The words of his subsequent letter to me I share with you: "On the day of the funeral, I took the family aside and expressed to them, President Monson, the sentiments you sent to me. I reminded them of what Elder Wilson had told you that day in the temple, that it did not matter whether he taught the gospel on this or the other side of the veil, so long as he could teach the gospel. I gave to them the inspiration you provided from the writings of President Joseph F. Smith [1838–1918]—that Elder Wilson had completed his earthly mission and that he, as all 'faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the preaching of the gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the spirits of the dead' [D&C 138:57]. The Spirit bore record that this was the case. Elder Thomas



Like a child trusting implicitly its parents, Elder Wilson put his trust in God.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

Preparation

After studying this message, prayerfully choose one or two statements or stories from President Monson that you feel will most benefit those you teach. Then think of a teaching method or activity for each statement or story that is appropriate for the ages and circumstances of family members. A few examples of how this may be done are provided below.

Suggestions for Teaching

1. *Relate a personal experience of how children have blessed your life or how you have been able to bless the lives of children. Invite family members to do the same. Read aloud the story of Tyler and the many ways President Monson said people are blessing the lives of children. Discuss ways family members can bless the lives of the children that are closest to them.*

2. *Read together and discuss the meaning of the following: Matthew 18:1–6; Mark 10:14–16; 3 Nephi 17:21–24; Isaiah 11:6–9. As you read together the story of Elder Wilson, ask family members to point out what Elder Wilson did to become a leader in his family. What can the children in a family do to help lead their families in righteousness?*

Michael Wilson was buried with his missionary name tag in place."

When Elder Wilson's mother and father visit that rural cemetery and place flowers of remembrance on the grave of their son, I feel certain they remember the day he was born, the pride they felt, and the genuine joy that was theirs. This tiny child became the mighty man who later brought to them the opportunity to achieve celestial glory. Perhaps on these pilgrimages, when emotions are close to the surface and tears cannot be restrained, they thank God for their missionary son, who never lost the faith of a child, and then ponder deep within their hearts the Master's words, "And a little child shall lead them" (Isa. 11:6).

Peace is their blessing. It will be our blessing, also, as we remember and follow the Prince of Peace. □

NOTES

1. Gerald Massey, "Wooped and Won," in *The Home Book of Quotations*, sel. Burton Stevenson (1934), 121.
2. William Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (1924), 359.
3. "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus," *Children's Songbook*, 57.

Gospel topics: children, Jesus Christ, service, child abuse



PUTTING FAMILY FIRST

BY E. JEFFREY HILL

After my mission to Argentina, I fell in love with and married Juanita. We were carefree college students with no money but lots of time for each other. Within a six-month period, I graduated from college, took a job with an international computer company, bought a house, and was called as ward mission leader. In addition, we were expecting our first baby. My wife and I were on our way!

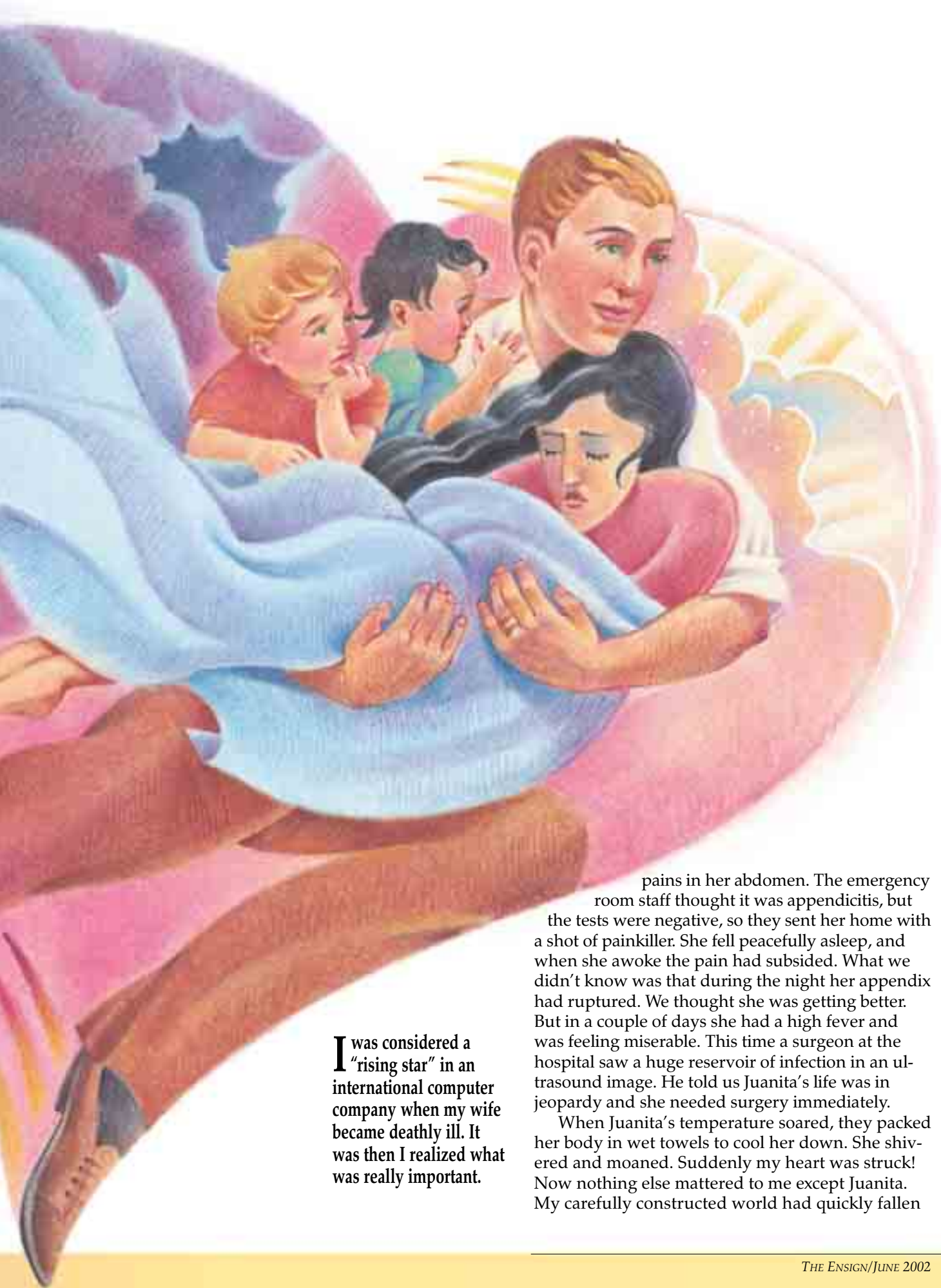
I had learned not to be afraid of hard work and felt that in order to provide well for my family I had to be willing to pay the price in terms of time and dedication. Going to work an hour early each day made all the difference. I won many awards and helped sell millions of dollars of computer equipment. I was promoted to the regional staff and could go anywhere in seven states without asking anybody. This was fun! At church the missionary work was going great, and I spent several

nights a week in missionary work. Soon I was called into the bishopric, also very time consuming.

Occasionally Juanita quietly reminded me that I ought to spend a little more time with her and our two small children. I reminded her that being away from my family five or six evenings a week was necessary so I could be a successful provider and build up the kingdom. I thought to myself, "Juanita is a good mother for our children, so why can't she take care of the home front while I'm doing my important work on the outside?"

"JEFF, I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING TO DIE"

Then Juanita got very sick. She didn't sleep for two nights, and the third evening she said, "Jeff, I feel like I'm going to die." She complained of sharp



ILLUSTRATED BY DILLEEN MARSH

I was considered a “rising star” in an international computer company when my wife became deathly ill. It was then I realized what was really important.

pains in her abdomen. The emergency room staff thought it was appendicitis, but the tests were negative, so they sent her home with a shot of painkiller. She fell peacefully asleep, and when she awoke the pain had subsided. What we didn’t know was that during the night her appendix had ruptured. We thought she was getting better. But in a couple of days she had a high fever and was feeling miserable. This time a surgeon at the hospital saw a huge reservoir of infection in an ultrasound image. He told us Juanita’s life was in jeopardy and she needed surgery immediately.

When Juanita’s temperature soared, they packed her body in wet towels to cool her down. She shivered and moaned. Suddenly my heart was struck! Now nothing else mattered to me except Juanita. My carefully constructed world had quickly fallen

apart. My career, in comparison, became so much fluff. My Church work, though important, paled in comparison to this crisis. My tears fell on her forehead as I walked closely beside her, holding her cold, moist hands as she was wheeled off to surgery.

I went to pray in the chapel on the third floor of the hospital. My whole world became Juanita and Heavenly Father. I was afraid she was leaving me forever, and my whole being rebelled at the thought. I prayed as I had never prayed before. During the operation, I remembered back on how little time we had spent together in recent years. I remembered all the time we had spent together during our college years and how happy we were. Now I would gladly trade those extra hours on the fast track at work for more time with Juanita. I realized I had been spending more time in my Church callings but spending less time with my wife and children.

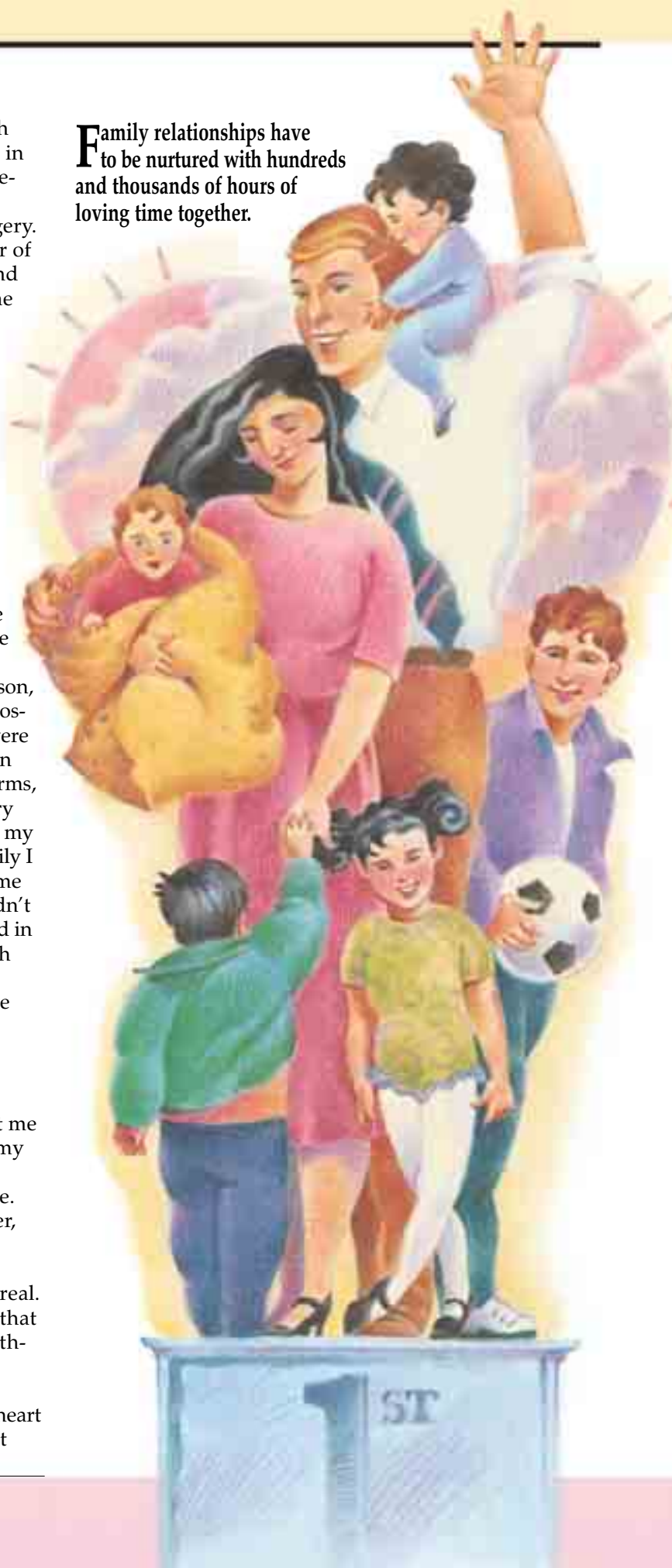
When I saw the doctor, he looked haggard. I was worried, but his first words were, "She will be OK. The operation went perfectly." He told me she would be in the hospital for about two weeks and she should not lift anything, including our infant son, for another six weeks. As I approached Juanita's hospital room I saw a big sign advising that visitors were limited to immediate family. There she was lying in bed with a suction tube gurgling, two IVs in her arms, and an oxygen mask over her face. She looked very sick. This turmoil brought about a great change in my heart. I recognized that by not being with my family I was missing what was most important in life. I came to understand that eternal family relationships didn't just happen, even to good people who were sealed in the temple. Relationships have to be nurtured with hundreds and thousands of hours of loving time together. I recognized I had to choose to make time for my family now or else it might be too late.

REPRIORITIZING MY LIFE

With Juanita in the hospital, my employer let me work half-time, and the bishop said he'd cover my calling. Soon I found out what Juanita had been doing while I was a casual occupant of our home. I learned that if I didn't change the baby's diaper, nobody did. If I didn't get the children dressed, they stayed in their pajamas. I quickly became grateful for the ease of frozen meals and cold cereal. I learned to appreciate a hundredfold the work that Juanita had done all these years in our home without my noticing.

In time Juanita got better. And in a couple of months I was back full-time at work, but now my heart was different. I recognized that my most important

Family relationships have to be nurtured with hundreds and thousands of hours of loving time together.



work was in the lives of my wife and children, not a jumble of silicon chips. Even Church callings did not excuse me from being an involved husband and father. I realized I could be laid off, change jobs, find new employment, or be released from my calling, but my family was forever. I quietly resolved to seek every opportunity to actually be with my family, to teach them, to enjoy them, to love them.

Putting that resolve into practice has not been easy. It has demanded setting clear priorities and making trade-offs. It has required much prayer and sensitivity to the Spirit to take the initiative and make decisions that would benefit the family. The first choice I made was to stop

going to work at 6:45 A.M. Instead, we spent that time having a family devotional and eating breakfast together. This brought a new level of spiritual and emotional closeness. It was a trade-off, however. I was no longer a “rising star” at work but now was a “good, consistent performer.”

We also decided to make the family dinner hour a priority. When involved in a demanding project, I no longer stayed at work until late into the evening. Instead, I would come home, eat dinner with the family, and then finish the project on my laptop computer.

I took unpaid paternity leave at the time our daughter Emily was born. With me at home full-time for several months, Juanita was able to focus on the baby while I took the responsibility for the other children. Everyone grew from the experience. Having condensed time and demanding responsibilities at home taught me a lot about family life. Since I was not being paid, it also helped our family to learn to be frugal and to value time over money.

I finally have learned to put family commitments on a par with Church and work commitments. Whenever I have an errand to run, I take a family member with me. The one-on-one time is more valuable than the errand. I also take family members on business trips. When I was called to be bishop, I often took one of our eight children with me to the hospital or other nonconfidential visits. It strengthened our relationship and testimonies to share these experiences together.

When I am out of town, I often call morning and evening for family prayer. I kneel in my hotel room,



PRIORITIES

“Throughout your life on earth, seek diligently to fulfill the fundamental purposes of this life *through the ideal family*. While you may not have yet reached that ideal, do all you can

through obedience and faith in the Lord to consistently draw as close to it as you are able. Let nothing dissuade you from that objective. If it requires fundamental changes in your personal life, make them. . . . If you have lost the vision of eternal marriage, rekindle it. If your dream requires patience, give it. . . . Don’t become overanxious. Do the best you can. We cannot say whether that blessing will be obtained on this side of the veil or beyond it, but the Lord will keep His promises. In His infinite wisdom, He will make possible all you qualify in worthiness to receive. Do not be discouraged. Living a pattern of life as close as possible to the ideal will provide much happiness, great satisfaction, and impressive growth while here on earth regardless of your current life circumstances.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “First Things First,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 7.

and my family kneels near the speakerphone in the den at home. With eyes closed it seems like we are together. I send my children individual e-mails. They fax me notes and pictures. I leave cassette tapes filled with stories from my life for them to listen to at bedtime.

AN UNUSUAL BLESSING

Probably the most remarkable change came when I was offered an excellent promotion, which included a move to New York. However, the commute would have been horrendous and the cost of living high. I hated to turn the promotion down, but it just wouldn’t work for our family.

Then, in a quiet moment, an impression came that I should propose to take the job but stay in my home and telecommute. I reasoned with my future boss that I could better do my job through a modem from my home in the West than from an expensive office in the East. To my surprise, she agreed to try it out.

The positive difference in my work and family life was immediate. I could roll out of bed early with a good idea and immediately type it into the laptop. So what if I was still in my pajamas! A little later I could get the children up, and we could have our family devotional and eat breakfast together. Because I was working from home, I could listen for baby Amanda while Juanita went to aerobics, shopping, or ran errands. When work got frustrating and I needed a little break, I could put Emily in the jogging stroller and go for a quick run or play a 10-minute game of one-on-one basketball with Jeffrey. Then I could go back to work refreshed. I felt grateful for the unusual blessing of this new work schedule.

In retrospect, I am so grateful for the wake-up call of Juanita’s illness several years ago. As I look at our nine children today, my heart almost bursts with joy. I have a close relationship with all of them. Had I not changed my ways I might have been an executive by now, but I would have missed what is most important—my family. □

E. Jeffrey Hill is a member of the Canyon View Third Ward, Orem Utah Canyon View Stake.

Gospel topics: marriage, family, priorities

FATHER CONSIDER YOUR WAYS

BY THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

The following was published as "A Message from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" and was distributed as a pamphlet in December 1973.

Brethren, have you considered the challenge it is to be a successful father? It takes hard work and planning to rear your children in righteousness and have unity with your wife, to build a constant feeling of love and harmony in the home. Why is being a successful, righteous father such a challenge for almost any man?

The Lord's plan of salvation requires that you pass through trials in this mortal life. Those trials seem to be greatest when you reach fatherhood, but be assured—fatherhood, in a sense, is an apprenticeship to godhood. This presentation will help give you a broader perspective of what it means to be a father; to give you an understanding and a feeling of your worth to your Father in Heaven. Father, consider your ways!

FATHERHOOD AND THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Through His Son, Jesus Christ, God created the heavens and the earth. At this time you lived with Him as His spirit child, and you shouted for joy

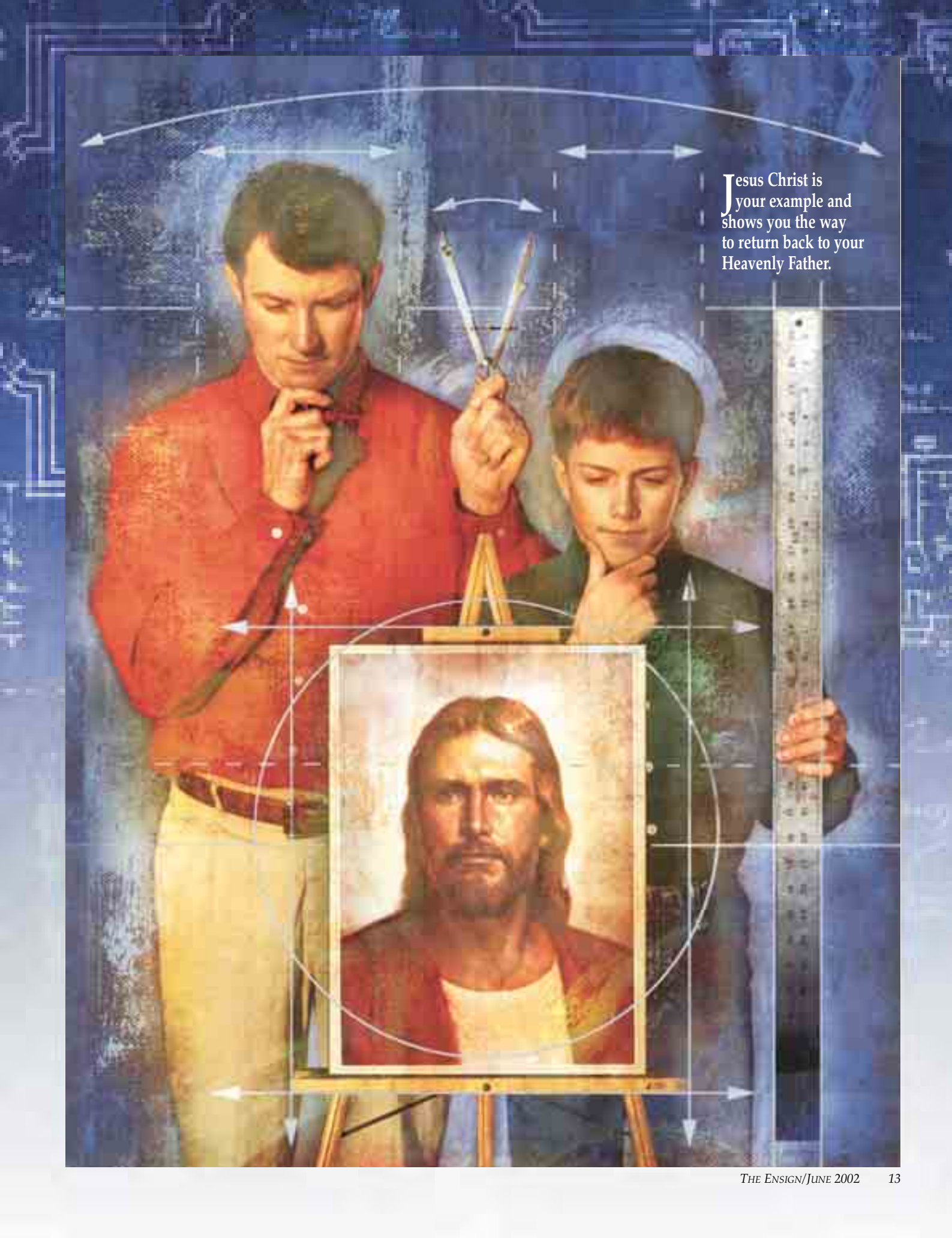


when this earth was formed. You knew the necessity of coming to earth, of gaining a physical body, and of passing through the many trials of earth life. You knew that at times you would make mistakes. You also knew that through the atoning sacrifice of your Brother and Savior,

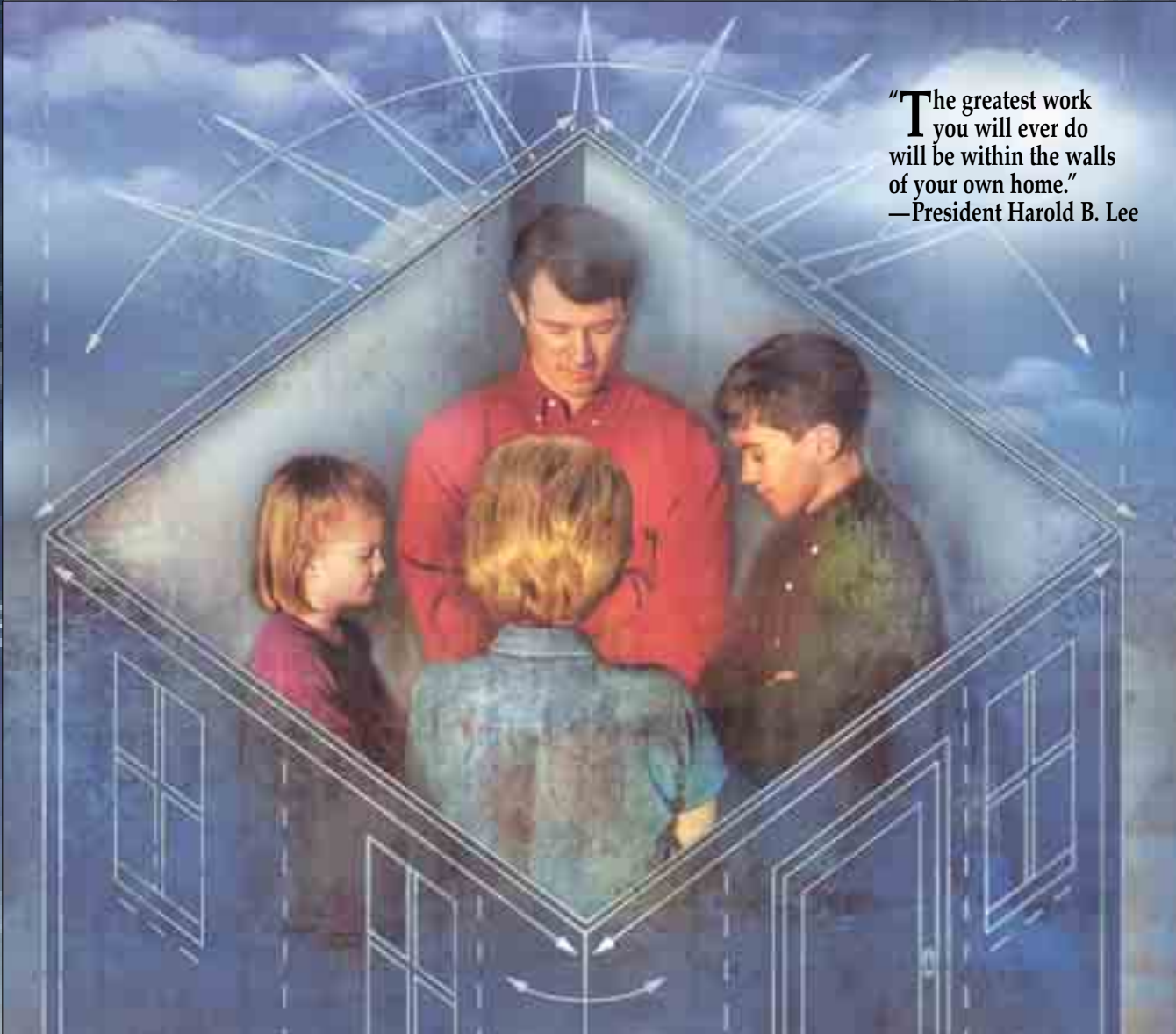
the Lord Jesus Christ, you could repent of these mistakes and be found clean.

You also knew that Jesus Christ was to be your example and would show you the way to return back to your Father in Heaven. "So God created man in his own image . . . ; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27). And He gave man dominion, or stewardship, over all things on the earth and made him accountable for them. His greatest stewardship and accountability would be for children.

Marriage, as ordained of God, is the lawful union of man and wife, not only for this earth life, but for all eternity. A paramount purpose of marriage is to clothe the spirit children of our Father in Heaven with earthly bodies. When your first child is born, you become a father. The title *father* is sacred and eternal. It is significant that of all the titles of respect and honor and admiration that are given to Deity, He has asked us to address Him as Father.



Jesus Christ is
your example and
shows you the way
to return back to your
Heavenly Father.



The greatest work
you will ever do
will be within the walls
of your own home."
—President Harold B. Lee

YOUR FAMILY

A father is the presiding authority in his family. On this earth your initial experience of being a father of a family gives you opportunities to learn to govern with love and patience, and with your wife to teach each of your children correct principles, to prepare them to become proper fathers and mothers. When you do this according to the pattern given us by the Lord and you endure to the end, your family will be added upon eternally. A righteous family is an eternal unit. On this earth, priesthood quorums and all other organizations of the Church aid you, the father, and your wife and family in achieving these eternal goals.

Father, with your wife you have entrusted to you from God the power to be cocreators with Him, to multiply and replenish the earth. As cocreators, you have delegated to you the opportunity and responsibility to bring into mortality and teach in light and truth spirit children of our Father in Heaven.

A FATHER IS A TEACHER

When you recognize the importance of teaching your children, you become humble, because at once you realize that this is accomplished by precept and example. You cannot be one thing and effectively teach another. You must live and study and pray for the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. You must purify and organize your life so that your example and leadership reflect the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You must plan your day as guided by the Spirit of the Lord, earnestly seeking your own welfare and the welfare of your family before other cares blind you to these first responsibilities. As we have been taught by living prophets, "No other success in life can compensate for failure in the home" (David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1964, 5)¹ and "The greatest work you will ever do will be within the walls of your own home" (Harold B. Lee, *Strengthening the Home* [1973], 7).

It must be emphasized that as a father, you are always teaching. For good or ill your family learns your ways, your beliefs, your heart, your ideas, your concerns. Your children may or may not choose to follow you, but the example you give is the greatest light you hold before your children, and you are accountable for that light.

At one time a young father acted somewhat unkindly to his wife. Three days later this same man saw his three-year-old daughter use his very words in acting unkindly to her mother. The man was sobered and came to ask himself this question, "Do I love my children and family enough to repent, to change my life for their welfare?"

The obligations, the burdens, the responsibility of being a proper father may seem overwhelming. Fortunately, you are not required to preside and judge and act without counsel, without assistance. You have a wife—a companion, a counselor, a partner, a helpmeet, a friend.

Is she one with you? Do you thank the Lord daily for her? Do you keep the covenants you made with her and with the Lord in the temple? Do you always strive to keep your thoughts and words and actions pure? Do you realize that when you offend her in any way it is like offending yourself, since you are one?

Does she know of your love for her? Is your relationship one of continual courtship? Do you regularly spend time together—alone, where your expression and actions reassure her of your appreciation and reliance on her companionship? Do you exercise righteous leadership with her?

Do you always keep sight of your marriage goal, the creation of an eternal unit bound together by love and by the power and ordinances of the priesthood?

WHAT WILL BE YOUR REPORT?

Father, you are accountable to the Lord for what you have and what you are. In the future you will surely stand before Him. What will be your report concerning your family? Will you be able to report that your home was a place of love, a bit of heaven? That daily family prayer and secret prayer were fostered? That it was a house of fasting? That in family home evenings and at other times you and your wife taught your children the basic principles of the gospel?

Will you be able to report that you created an environment in your home to build faith in a living God, to encourage learning, to teach order, obedience, and sacrifice? That you often shared your testimony of the reality of your Father in Heaven, of the truthfulness of the restored gospel with your wife and children? Will you be able to report that you followed the living prophets? That your home was where your



FATHERS AND MOTHERS WORK TOGETHER

Following are teachings for fathers by current Church leaders:

"We are trying to preserve the traditional family—father, mother, and children—working together in love toward a common goal. In large measure we are succeeding against great odds. We advocate a family home evening, for instance, one night a week reserved for family activity together. Lessons from the scriptures are taught. Family business is discussed. Vacations are planned. We sing together. We pray together. It works!" (Gordon B. Hinckley, "Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley," *Ensign*, Jan. 1998, 73–74).

"I repeat that plea to all fathers. Yours is the basic and inescapable responsibility to stand as head of the family. That does not carry with it any implication of dictatorship or unrighteous dominion. It carries with it a mandate that fathers provide for the needs of their families. Those needs are more than food, clothing, and shelter. Those needs include righteous direction and the teaching, by example as well as precept, of basic principles of honesty, integrity, service, respect for the rights of others, and an understanding that we are accountable for that which we do in this life" (Gordon B. Hinckley, "Bring Up a Child in the Way He Should Go," *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 60).

"In the home it is a partnership with husband and wife equally yoked together, sharing in decisions, always working together. While the husband, the father, has responsibility to provide worthy and inspired leadership, his wife is neither behind him nor ahead of him but at his side" (Boyd K. Packer, "The Relief Society," *Ensign*, May 1998, 73).

"Is yours a culture where the husband exerts a domineering, authoritarian role, making all of the important decisions for the family? That pattern needs to be tempered so that both husband and wife act as equal partners, making decisions in unity for themselves and their family. No family can long endure under fear or force; that leads to contention and rebellion. Love is the foundation of a happy family" (Richard G. Scott, "Removing Barriers to Happiness," *Ensign*, May 1998, 86).



tender children could feel protected and safe, and where they felt the love and acceptance and warmth [from] you and their mother?

And what will be your report concerning the temporal welfare of your family? It is God's plan that you work for what you get. Your occupation should be honorable and should provide sufficiently to meet the needs of your family. Are your duties and labors undertaken with a joyful and thankful spirit? Do your wife and children feel secure because you feel good about your occupation? Do you practice frugality and thrift and avoid debt by living within your income, your tithed income? Do your wife and children feel a sense of tradition and stability because the family home is not relocated on a whim, for unsound reasons?

Father, are you committed to the eternal welfare of each of your children? Do you labor and love and strive with them as long as they live?

A FATHER IS A LEADER

Fatherhood is leadership, the most important kind of leadership. It has always been so; it always will be so. Father, with the assistance and counsel and encouragement of your eternal companion, you preside in the home. It is not a matter of whether you are most worthy or best qualified, but it is a matter of law and appointment. You preside at the meal table, at family prayer. You preside at family home evening; and as guided by the Spirit of the Lord, you see that your children are taught correct principles. It is your place to give direction relating to all of family life.

SOME POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. *Your fatherhood is, in a sense, an apprenticeship to godhood.*
2. *Your earth life is a part of the plan of salvation that enables you to become like your Father in Heaven.*
3. *Jesus Christ is your example to show you the way to return to your Father in Heaven.*
4. *A righteous family is an eternal unit.*
5. *You are the presiding authority in the home.*
6. *The Church exists to assist you to return with your family to the presence of our Father in Heaven.*
7. *You and your wife are cocreators with God for the eternal welfare of His spirit children.*
8. *You teach most effectively by example.*
9. *The greatest work you will ever do will be within the walls of your own home.*
10. *You must seek the Spirit of the Lord in leading your family.*
11. *The mother sustains the father and is his helpmeet, his counselor.*
12. *You and your wife are one in purpose.*
13. *You have the responsibility for the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of your children.*
14. *You have the responsibility to lead your family by:*
 - a. *Governing, correcting, nurturing, and blessing them in meekness, tenderness, and love on the principles of righteousness (see D&C 121:34–45).*
 - b. *Creating an environment in the home conducive to order, prayer, worship, learning, fasting, happiness, and the Spirit of the Lord.*
 - c. *Teaching them the principles of faith in Christ, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, enduring to the end, and praying vocally and in secret.*
 - d. *Loving God and keeping His commandments.*

You give father's blessings. You take an active part in establishing family rules and discipline. As a leader in your home you plan and sacrifice to achieve the blessing of a unified and happy family. To do all of this requires that you live a family-centered life.

PREPARE YOUR FAMILY

Now, you are a son of God. You were sent to this earth to gain a physical body and to prove yourself in the trials and experiences of this earth life. It is the plan of your Father in Heaven that you have been or will be sealed for eternity to a companion. In marriage you and your wife are one in purpose as you strive to fulfill the purposes of the Lord. As a cocreator with God you bring forth children.

You prepare your family and each member in the family to serve their fellowman, to build the kingdom of God on earth. You conscientiously provide for their material well-being. In the family you learn to govern righteously. You teach your family generally and each child individually the doctrines of the kingdom.

The day will come when you will stand before the Lord and report your stewardship as a father on earth. Father, consider your ways. What will be your report? □

NOTE

1. Quoted from J. E. McCulloch, *Home: The Savior of Civilization* (1924), 42.

Gospel topics: fatherhood, parenthood, teaching, marriage, Holy Ghost Capitalization and punctuation standardized; subheads added.

RIGHTEOUS FATHERS IN THE HOME



BRIGHAM YOUNG
(1801–77)
Second President
of the Church

“Let the husband and father learn to bend his will to the will of his God, and then instruct his [wife] and children in this lesson of self-government by his example as well as by precept, and his neighbors also, showing them how to be brave and steadfast, in subduing the rebellious and sinful disposition. Such a course as this will eventually subdue that unhallowed influence which works upon the human heart” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 198).



JOSEPH F. SMITH
(1838–1918)
Sixth President
of the Church

“Brethren, there is too little religious devotion, love, and fear of God, in the home; too much worldliness, selfishness, indifference, and lack of reverence in the family, or it never would exist so abundantly on the outside. Then, the home is what needs reforming. Try today, and tomorrow, to make a change in your home. . . . Do not let your children out to specialists in these things, but teach them by your own precept and example, by your own fireside. Be a specialist yourself in the truth” (“Worship in the Home,” *Improvement Era*, Dec. 1903, 138).



HAROLD B. LEE
(1899–1973)
Eleventh President
of the Church

“A father may have to discipline his child, but he should never do it in anger. He must show forth an increase of love thereafter, lest that one so reprov'd were to esteem him to be an enemy (see D&C 121:43). The Lord forbid the feeling of a child that his father or mother is an enemy” (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams [1996], 279).



SPENCER W. KIMBALL
(1895–1985)
Twelfth President
of the Church

“A child leaving school or on a mission, a wife suffering stress, a family member being married or desiring guidance in making an important decision—all these are situations in which the father, in exercise of his patriarchal responsibility, can bless his family” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 506).



EZRA TAFT BENSON
(1899–1994)
Thirteenth President
of the Church

“Fatherhood is not a matter of station or wealth; it is a matter of desire, diligence, and determination to see one’s family exalted in the celestial kingdom. If that

prize is lost, nothing else really matters” (“Great Things Required of Their Fathers,” *Ensign*, May 1981, 36).



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

“Effective family leadership, brethren, requires both quantity and quality time. The teaching and governance of the family must not be left to your wife alone, to society, to school, or even the Church. . . . We encourage you, brethren, to remember that priesthood is a righteous authority only. Earn the respect and confidence of your children through your loving relationship with them. . . . Tell your children you love them” (“Being a Righteous Husband and Father,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 50–51).



GORDON B. HINCKLEY
(1910–)
Fifteenth President
of the Church

“Let us deal in kindness and with appreciation with those for whom the Lord will hold us accountable. I never get over the depth of meaning of the words President McKay often quoted: ‘The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother’” [see *Richard Evans’ Quote Book* (1971), 11] (“Reach Out in Love and Kindness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 77). □

Eli and His Sons

Tragedy resulted when this priest and judge of Israel honored his children more than the Lord.



BY ELDER PAULO R. GRAHL
Area Authority Seventy

Should parents be responsible for the unrighteous acts of their children? The Lord has said that parents have a duty and are accountable before Him to “bring up [their] children in light and truth” and “to set in order” their families (see D&C 93:40–43). The story of this Old Testament family reminds us that no matter how well we may perform our duties in the Church, sorrow will come if we neglect to correct our children in righteousness.

OF THE HOUSE OF AARON

Throughout most of the approximately 450-year period of leadership by judges over Israel (between Joshua and Saul), the descendants of Eleazar, Aaron’s oldest son, presided as high priests at the tabernacle and represented Israel before the Lord. With the ordination of Eli, however, the Lord passed the office of high priest to a descendant of Ithamar, the fourth and youngest son of Aaron (see Num. 3:2). Eli was a devoted high priest who served 40 years as judge of Israel, the first of priestly descent also to regulate the affairs of the people (see 1 Sam. 4:18; Bible Dictionary, “Eli,” 663).

Eli was a good man who gave kind consideration to Hannah in her hour of great agony (see 1 Sam. 1:1–18; 2:20–21) and paid careful attention to the upbringing and spiritual training of Hannah’s son Samuel (see 1 Sam. 1:24–28; 2:18, 26; 3:1–19).

Eli had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Together the three of them labored as priests at Shiloh in the tabernacle, where the ark of the covenant was housed (see 1 Sam. 1:3). In keeping with the requirements of the law of Moses, all Israelite males were required to appear before the Lord yearly on each of the great national festivals: Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of

the Tabernacles (see Bible Dictionary, “Feasts,” 672–74). At Shiloh, Eli also officiated in the judgment seat (see 1 Sam. 1:9). Hophni and Phinehas’s role as priests was to function as mediators between God and His people in their worship and offering of sacrifices (see Bible Dictionary, “Priests,” 753–54).

SONS OF BELIAL

“Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord” (1 Sam. 2:12). The term *Belial* means “worthless” or “wicked” (see Bible Dictionary, “Belial,” 620). They were men of greed and lust. They used their authority as priests to extort from the people the best of the meat brought before them for sacrifice (see 1 Sam. 2:13–16). In essence they were taking their portion *before* giving a portion to God! They were also committing immoral acts with the women who gathered at the tabernacle (see 1 Sam. 2:22). Eli knew what they were doing, and when the people saw that the priesthood at Shiloh was corrupt, they “abhorred the offering of the Lord” (1 Sam. 2:17). What was a father to do?

Eli confronted his sons, “Why do ye such things? . . . Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord’s people to transgress” (1 Sam. 2:23–24). Hophni and Phinehas ignored the pleading words of their father. They continued in their evil ways; Eli’s warning was too late, and Eli did nothing to remove them from office.

THE LORD WARNS ELI

A man of God soon visited Eli at Shiloh and delivered a stern rebuke from the Lord: “Why kick ye at [treat with scorn] my sacrifice? . . . Honourest thy sons above me? . . .

Eli confronted his wicked sons, but they ignored his pleading words. And Eli did nothing to remove them from office.

Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. . . . And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, . . . in one day they shall die both of them" (1 Sam. 2:29–34). The Lord had spoken plainly to Eli: restrain or remove your sons or they will die. So did Eli act? No. He continued to allow his sons to work at the tabernacle (see 1 Sam. 4:1–5).

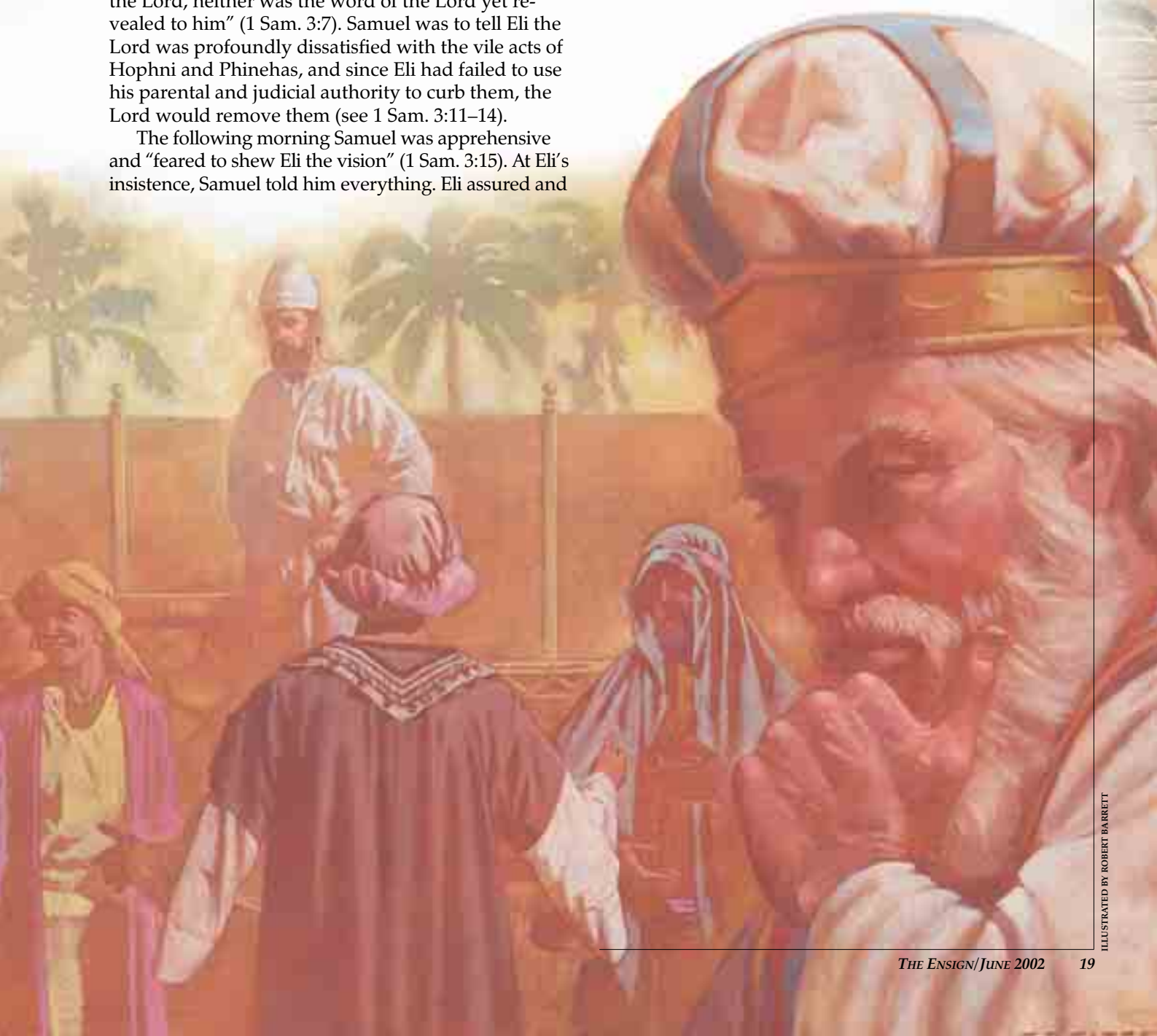
Samuel, who was being reared by Eli to serve in the tabernacle, soon became a young man and Eli grew old. The Lord called to Samuel in the night, directing him to deliver another warning to Eli. It was a sacred moment for Samuel who "did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed to him" (1 Sam. 3:7). Samuel was to tell Eli the Lord was profoundly dissatisfied with the vile acts of Hophni and Phinehas, and since Eli had failed to use his parental and judicial authority to curb them, the Lord would remove them (see 1 Sam. 3:11–14).

The following morning Samuel was apprehensive and "feared to shew Eli the vision" (1 Sam. 3:15). At Eli's insistence, Samuel told him everything. Eli assured and

calmed Samuel, saying, "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good" (1 Sam. 3:18). There is a sense of resignation and submission to God in these words. Eli knew he had sinned and that the fate of his sons was certain. Eli also now knew the Lord had chosen Samuel, not one of his sons, as the new prophet for Israel (see 1 Sam. 3:19–21).

DEATH VISITS THE HOUSE OF ELI

The army of the Israelites soon went out to war against the Philistines. In the first battle Israel was severely beaten, losing "about four thousand men"



(1 Sam. 4:2). The elders of the people, apparently including Eli, supposed that the presence of the ark of the covenant on the field of battle would save them. The ark was brought to the battlefield by its caretakers, Hophni and Phinehas, from Shiloh, a distance of about 20 miles,¹ and “all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again” (1 Sam. 4:5). A new and tenacious battle ensued. Israel fled in defeat, suffering the death of 30,000 footmen and the capture of the ark. Hophni and Phinehas were also killed (see 1 Sam. 4:10–11).

A messenger was sent to Shiloh with the terrible news. From his chair by the gate of the tabernacle, Eli heard an uproar in the distance and feared for the safety of the ark, for there was great risk in removing the ark from the tabernacle except when directed by the Lord (see Ex. 26:34; Josh. 18:1). “What is there done, my son?” Eli asked the messenger. “Thy two sons . . . are dead,” the messenger replied. Then when Eli heard that the ark had been lost, “he fell from off the seat backward,” breaking his neck, and died (see 1 Sam. 4:16–18).



PARENTAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The unhappy events that befell Eli and his sons can be instructive to parents today. It is a case of parental negligence by one who had the sacred and nontransferable responsibility to teach, encourage, correct, and restrain his children in righteousness. Eli gave Hophni and Phinehas the freedom to commit serious sins without the necessary corrective action. The results of this omission were disastrous for him, his sons, and the nation.

The Lord has placed on the shoulders of fathers and mothers the primary responsibility to rear their children. King Benjamin taught the parents of his day: “Ye will not suffer your children . . . that they transgress the laws of God . . . and serve the devil. . . . But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness” (Mosiah 4:14–15).

Some fundamental ways to make parental teaching effective are (1) constant and caring communication between parents and children, with parents being aware day by day of what their children do and learn; (2) regular and well-prepared family meetings, such as family home evening, councils, prayer, and scripture study; (3) frequent family activities; (4) careful supervision and vigilance concerning the contents

of movies, television programs, the Internet, books, magazines, music, and other materials so that children can be alerted and guided past the ambushes and dangers found in the media.

A colleague from work told me that not long ago he was driving his car along a busy avenue when he heard another driver behind him honking his horn and flashing his lights. Thinking it was just another impatient driver, he continued down the road. Soon the other driver pulled up beside him and, shouting, asked him to pull over because he had something important to tell him. When they had both stopped, the stranger pointed to the bumper sticker in the back window of my friend’s car and said, “I know that that is true!” The bumper sticker read, “No other success in life can compensate for failure in the home.”² In tears this man proceeded to tell my friend how he had compromised his values, neglected his family, and lost what he now knew was the most precious blessing in his life.

HELP FOR PARENTS

Like the ancient children of Israel who journeyed to Shiloh to worship and find spiritual strength and renewal, we may also turn to the Savior, our “Shiloh” (see Bible Dictionary, “Shiloh,” 773), for mercy, patience, and long-suffering in our imperfections as parents. By diligently seeking to know Him through scripture study, prayer, pondering, Church meetings, and temple attendance, our knowledge and wisdom as parents will be expanded. Our desire to “live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God” (D&C 84:44) will enable us to make Jesus Christ the center of our lives and the model for all our choices, actions, and reactions as parents. Just as the ark of the covenant was a symbol for the presence of the Lord among the Israelites of old, the Holy Ghost will be with us as an evidence that God is near, that He is attentive to and interested in our happiness, and that He will help us succeed with our children. □

NOTES

1. See Barry J. Beitzel, *The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands* (1985), 110.
2. See David O. McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1935, 116; quoting J. E. McCulloch, *Home: The Savior of Civilization* (1924), 42.

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Gospel topics: parenthood, Old Testament, teaching

A KING FOR *Israel*

The hard lesson learned by ancient Israel warns us against the temptation to become like the world.

BY PEGGY FURNISS LEE

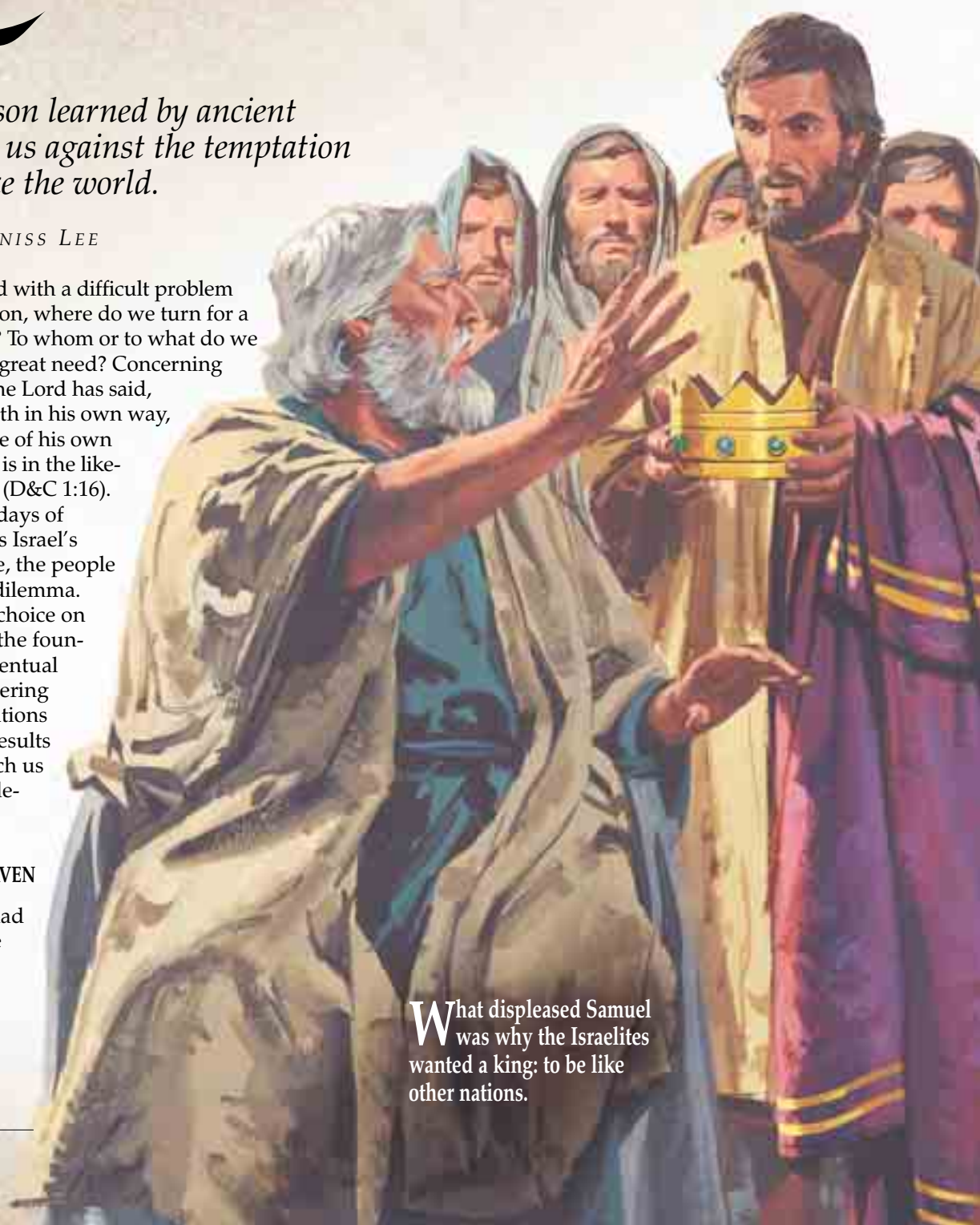
When faced with a difficult problem or situation, where do we turn for a solution? To whom or to what do we appeal in times of great need? Concerning the world today, the Lord has said, “Every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world” (D&C 1:16).

In the waning days of Samuel’s service as Israel’s prophet and judge, the people had a perplexing dilemma. Their desires and choice on that occasion laid the foundation for their eventual captivity and scattering throughout the nations of the earth. The results of their choice teach us lessons that are relevant for our day.

THE KING OF HEAVEN

The Israelites had been free from the rule of an earthly king since their bondage in Egypt. Israel had made a covenant with Jehovah that He

What displeased Samuel was why the Israelites wanted a king; to be like other nations.



would be their God and they would be His people (see Lev. 26:12). Their sovereign was a heavenly king—Jehovah, who is Jesus Christ—who had brought them through the Red Sea on dry ground, enabled them to conquer the land of Canaan, and preserved them as a nation by calling to leadership a series of judges.

Righteous Hannah had prophesied as she dedicated her young child to service at the Lord's tabernacle under Eli, "The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed" (1 Sam. 2:10). Her words looked forward to a time when Jesus Christ would rule Israel as judge, king, and Messiah, the anointed one, a concept also taught by Book of Mormon prophets (see 2 Ne. 6:14; 10:14; 21:1–6). But that time was not yet. The Lord called Samuel to be both prophet and judge over all Israel.

During Samuel's ministry, the ark of God, once lost in battle to the Philistines, was returned to the tabernacle (see 1 Sam. 4–6), the Lord subdued their enemies (see 1 Sam. 7:9–14), and "the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only" (1 Sam. 7:4). "All Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord" (1 Sam. 3:20).

LIKE ALL THE NATIONS

As Samuel grew old, a problem arose. As was the custom, he made his two sons judges over Israel. However, "his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (1 Sam. 8:3). This was a distressful situation for the people and their leaders. To whom or what could they appeal for a resolution? They turned to Samuel and demanded, "Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:5).

Samuel was "displeased" by their petition, but not because monarchy is an inherently evil form of government. We know from King Mosiah that "if it were possible that [we] could have just men to be [our] kings, . . . then it would be expedient that [we] should always have kings to rule over [us]" (Mosiah 29:13). What displeased Samuel was why Israel wanted a king: "That we may also be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles" (1 Sam. 8:20).

They had set their hearts on an earthly king to lead them in battle and give them a sense of national identity, security, and unity. Their request reflected a lack

of faith and trust in their covenant relationship with the Lord. Did they think the Lord was not king enough? He had never broken His promise to be their protector, if they would but believe in Him, and had repeatedly demonstrated His power for their sakes, including giving them a recent victory over the Philistines!

Israel also wanted an earthly king so they could be like the kingdoms around them, whose leaders exhibited an image of magnificence and ceremonious style. Israel wanted a celebrity king who would be a show-piece for their vanity and worldliness, power and grandeur. Through Samuel, the Lord warned the people that such a king would come at a high cost: he would draft their sons to plant his fields and make war for his selfish ambitions, he would make their daughters menial laborers in his kitchens for his parties, and he would tax everything they owned to support himself and his friends (see 1 Sam. 8:11–17). Finally, the Lord promised them that if they persisted in desiring an earthly king instead of Him, He would not hear them in the day of their oppression and misery, a principle reinforced in modern scripture: "They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble" (D&C 101:7).

In an act of great selfishness and pride, the people refused to obey the Lord and his prophet. They wanted to be like everyone else. They wanted a king the world could admire rather than the unseen King who could only be known by faith. "Hearken unto their voice," said the Lord to Samuel, "and make them a king" (1 Sam. 8:22).

Thus Israel changed its form of government, a change that lasted until their scattering more than 400 years later. The Lord revealed to Samuel that Saul was to be their first king (see 1 Sam. 9). Samuel anointed Saul and the Lord gave him a new heart (see 1 Sam. 10), for clearly the Lord wanted His people to have righteous, inspired kings.

More than 40 kings ruled over the Israelites, some over a united kingdom, but most over a divided people living in two different kingdoms. The legacies of their kings are for the most part a fulfillment of the Lord's warning words to Samuel. Even those kings whose hearts were pure at one point in their lives, such as Saul, David, and Solomon, succumbed to idolatry, gross sin, and wickedness.



We have been repeatedly counseled against adopting the philosophies of the world and participating in its fads and styles. President Gordon B. Hinckley said: "I lift a warning voice to our people. We have moved too far toward the mainstream."

LIKE THE WORLD

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are the modern covenant people of the Lord and are subject to many different political systems throughout the world. Spiritually, members of the Church have prophets who warn and counsel against those influences and practices that will harm us and bring us into bondage (see, for example, *For the Strength of Youth*). These warnings are given to help us avoid the attitudes and habits that make us like the rest of the world. For example, after citing some problems that beset families today, such as drugs, alcohol, harsh language, and child and spouse abuse, President Gordon B. Hinckley said: "I lift a warning voice to our people. We have moved too far toward the mainstream of society."¹ We have been repeatedly counseled against adopting the philosophies of the world and participating in its fads and styles. Our prophets plead for us to keep the Sabbath day holy, shun inappropriate media, and avoid debt. Too many ignore the counsel because being acceptable to the world seems more attractive and "fun" than being acceptable to the Lord.

In times of personal crisis, some turn first to "the arm of flesh" (see D&C 1:19–20), reaching out for comfort from a worldly "king," such as misguided friends and leaders, food, drugs, or pornography. These may lead to some social, emotional, or financial successes but eventually end in bondage to sin and the loss of what is more important in life. If we ignore these warnings in order to be like the world, we will suffer the same consequences as ancient Israel: we will lose our sons and daughters, lose the possessions we covet, and become slaves to our new "king."

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "The devil has no power over us only as we permit him."² The scriptures repeatedly promise that those who look to the Lord can be spared unnecessary trials and suffering and receive great blessings (see Alma 38:5). If we will but come to Christ that He may be our king, casting our burdens upon Him,

He will fight our battles and give us rest (see Matt. 11:28–30; D&C 98:33–38; 105:14). This does not mean that we should just sit back and let Him do everything. We must live in such a way that we may find favor in His sight (1 Ne. 17:35). Our interest must be in pleasing Him, not the world.

The prophet Nephi understood the nature of the relationship that must exist between us and the Lord in order to retain Him as our king. "The tender mercies of the Lord," he said, "are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance" (1 Ne. 1:20). □

NOTES

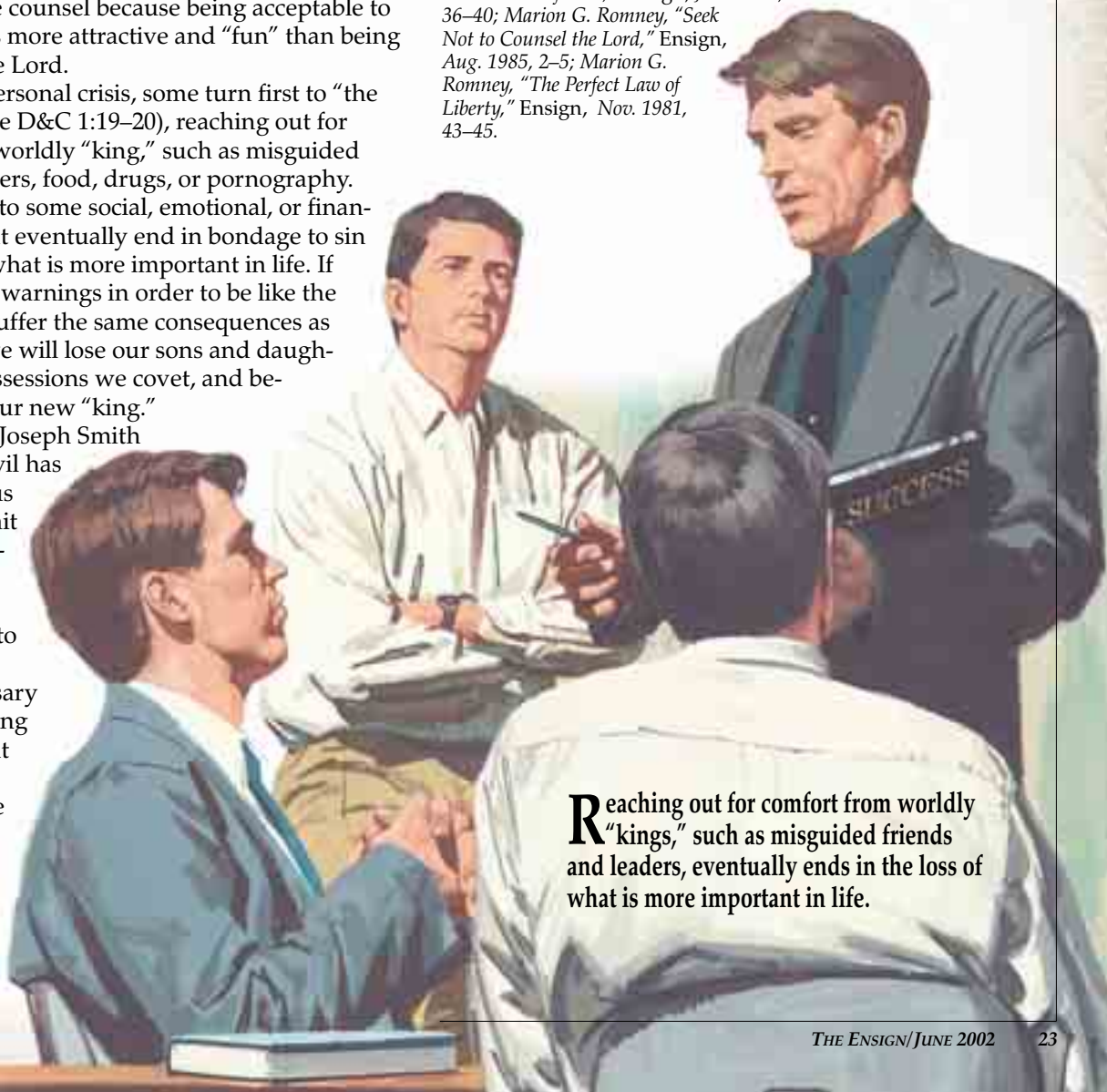
1. "Look to the Future," *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 69.

2. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1970), 181.

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Gospel topics: worldliness, temptation, Old Testament, Jesus Christ

More on this topic: See Richard G. Ellsworth, "The Tragic Dimensions of Saul," Ensign, June 1990, 36–40; Marion G. Romney, "Seek Not to Counsel the Lord," Ensign, Aug. 1985, 2–5; Marion G. Romney, "The Perfect Law of Liberty," Ensign, Nov. 1981, 43–45.



Reaching out for comfort from worldly "kings," such as misguided friends and leaders, eventually ends in the loss of what is more important in life.

FINDING JESUS CHRIST IN THE

Old Testament

The lives of many Old Testament prophets and priests are similitudes of the great Prophet and Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

BY ANDREW C. SKINNER

Modern prophets echo the Savior's invitation, "Look unto me in every thought" (D&C 6:36). "All members of the Church [are] to live with ever more attention to the life and example of the Lord Jesus Christ,"¹ urged President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95). President Gordon B. Hinckley has reinforced this principle: "Whenever a man has a true witness in his heart of the living reality of the Lord Jesus Christ, all else will come together as it should. . . . That is the root from which all virtue springs among those who call themselves Latter-day Saints."²

Thus, as we continue our concentrated study of the Old Testament this year, it seems helpful to be reminded that the Book of Mormon prophet Nephi taught, "All things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of [Jesus Christ]" (2 Ne. 11:4).

PROPHETS AND PRIESTS

Some of the most poignant and powerful symbols of Christ in the Old Testament are found in the persons



whose callings, speech, and actions mirrored those of the Savior. They were themselves anointed in ancient Israel to perform their special duties in imitation of *the Anointed One*. Following His Resurrection, the Savior taught His disciples to look to the contents of the scriptures—in other words, the Old Testament—and see all things "concerning himself" (see Luke 24:13–32). Thus, the lives of these Old Testament personalities—

prophets and priests—are types or similitudes of the life of the great Prophet and Priest.

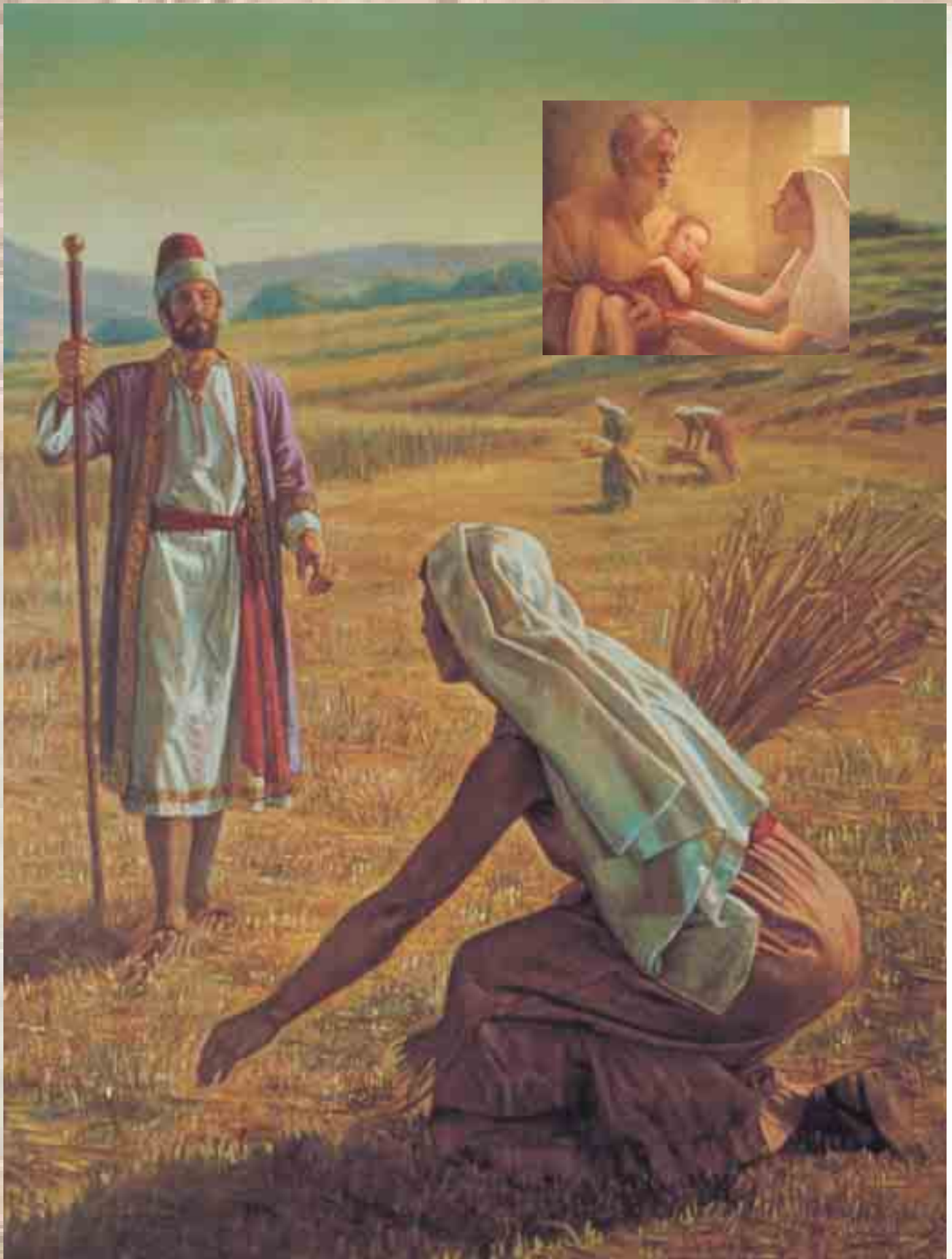
Adam

As Adam and Eve's fall brought life in mortality and the gift of a physical body to all of Heavenly Father's faithful premortal children, the Atonement of Christ also gives life with an immortal, perfected physical body for every son and daughter of Adam and Eve. The Apostle Paul recognized this similitude when he wrote: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [Christ] was made a quickening spirit. . . . And as we have borne the image of the earthy [man], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [man]" (1 Cor. 15:45, 49). Just as Christ can be called the "last Adam," so is the first Adam a type or foreshadowing of Christ.

The prophet Nephi taught, "All things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of [Jesus Christ]."

LEFT: THE CRUCIFIXION, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, DET NATIONALHISTORISKE MUSEUM PÅ FREDERIKSBORG, HILLERØD; RIGHT: SACRIFICE OF ISAAC, BY JERRY HARSTON, INSET: CAIN AND ABEL, BY ROBERT BARRETT





LEFT: RUTH AND BOAZ, BY ROBERT BARRETT; INSET: JESUS RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON, BY AMY DAVIS; RIGHT: JESUS HEALING THE BLIND, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, DET NATIONALE HISTORISKE MUSEUM PÅ FREDERIKSBORG, HILLERØD

Abel

Abel's death was a similitude of the death of Jesus Christ. Satan and Cain conspired in Abel's premeditated murder, and Abel was delivered by Satan into the hands of a wicked man (see Moses 5:29). In parallel fashion, Jesus was delivered by Satan into the hands of wicked men (see Luke 9:44) and was crucified as a result of a conspiracy. Furthermore, Satan "entered into" Judas Iscariot, the instrument of Jesus' betrayal (see John 13:27; Luke 22:3). Just as Abel's death resulted in the shedding of his innocent blood, so too Christ's sacrifice and death were accomplished by the shedding of His innocent blood.³

Melchizedek

The Apostle Paul taught that Christ was "after the similitude of Melchisedec" (Heb. 7:15). There is much we do not know about this great patriarch, but his name, *Melchizedek*, means "King of Righteousness." He was also known as the Prince of Peace, the King of Peace, and the King of Heaven (see Alma 13:14–19; JST, Gen. 14:26–36, Bible appendix;



The actions of Boaz, the kinsman of Ruth, and Elijah, who raised a boy from the dead, foreshadow aspects of the Savior's ministry.

JST, Heb. 7:1–3, Bible appendix). These name-titles not only refer to Melchizedek as the king-priest of Salem, but also denote names for the Lord Jesus Christ. The high priesthood, originally called the "Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God," was renamed the Melchizedek Priesthood (see D&C 107:2–4). Thus, "the priesthood held by Melchizedek is the very priesthood promised [to] the Son of God during his mortal sojourn, which is to say that Christ was to be like unto Melchizedek."⁴

Isaac

One of the most easily recognizable types of the Messiah in Old Testament times is the patriarch Isaac, he whom Abraham was commanded by the Lord to offer up as a sacrifice in "similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son" (Jacob 4:5). The Apostle Paul referred to the parallel between Isaac's life and the Savior's when

he wrote, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son" (Heb. 11:17).

JOSEPH, SON OF JACOB

*The life of the patriarch Joseph was in many ways symbolic of the Messiah.*⁶

JOSEPH

Joseph was the beloved son of his father (see Gen. 37:3).

Joseph was rejected by his brothers (see Gen. 37:4).

Joseph was sold at the urging of his brother Judah into the hands of Gentiles (see Gen. 37:25–27).

Joseph was sold for 20 pieces of silver, the price of a slave his age (see Gen. 37:28).

The attempt to get rid of Joseph eventually led to the temporal salvation of Joseph's family (see Gen. 45:4–5).

Joseph was age 30 when he began his mission (see Gen. 41:46).

All knees bowed to Joseph when he became a ruler in Egypt (see Gen. 41:43).

Joseph generously provided food to his family (see Gen. 42:33, 35).

THE MESSIAH

Jesus Christ was Heavenly Father's well-beloved Son (see Matt. 3:17).

Jesus was rejected by the leaders of His people, the Jews (see Isa. 53:3; John 1:11).

Jesus was sold by Judas, a form of the name *Judah*, and delivered over to Gentiles, the Romans (see Matt. 27:3).

Jesus was sold for 30 pieces of silver, the price of a slave His age (see Matt. 26:15).

The attempt to destroy Jesus led to the Atonement and salvation for Heavenly Father's family (see 2 Ne. 9:7–8).

Jesus was age 30 when He began His mortal ministry (see Luke 3:23).

All knees will eventually bow to Jesus (see D&C 88:104).

Jesus, the Bread of Life, freely offers salvation to all mankind (see John 6:34–35; 2 Ne. 9:50).

Only two people in the standard works are called an “only begotten son”—Christ and Isaac. Thus, we may ponder as we “read the story of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son, Isaac, that our Father is trying to tell us what it cost him to give his Son as a gift to the world.”⁵

Moses

The Lord taught Moses, the great lawgiver and deliverer of Israel, that he was a similitude of Jesus Christ: “And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior” (Moses 1:6). In addition, Moses taught the children of Israel that the Messiah would be like him: “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken” (Deut. 18:15). This prophecy and testimony is mentioned in all our standard works (a truly significant fact), including a statement from the Savior to the Nephites that He was the fulfillment of Moses’ prophecy (see 3 Ne. 20:23; Acts 3:22; 7:37; D&C 133:63; JS—H 1:40). Here are some of the specific ways the lives and ministries of Moses and Christ are alike: both were foreordained in premortal life; both were deliverers, lawgivers, and judges; both taught of the Atonement; both had control over the elements, especially the waters, and provided food for their people; and both were known as the meekest of men.

Boaz

The book of Ruth contains a wonderful story of loyalty and love that takes place in Bethlehem. Its heroine, an ancestor of Jesus of Nazareth, gave up her homeland, religion, and life to unite with her mother-in-law in Israel (see Ruth 1:14–16). Her life strikingly shows that participation in the kingdom of God is not decided by bloodlines but by obedience to God’s will. In the story God provides Ruth with a kinsman-redeemer named Boaz. The Hebrew word used to describe Boaz’s relationship with Ruth is *go’el*. It is translated as “kinsman,” but it literally means “redeemer.” Boaz redeemed the estate of his deceased relative by marrying the widowed Ruth and having a child by her, thus reenfranchising her as a member of Hebrew society. Thus Boaz is a type of Christ’s love and redemptive power. We have a Redeemer who has purchased or rescued us with a price—His precious blood (see Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:20).

Elijah and Elisha

The lives and ministries of these two mighty prophets foreshadowed the life of Christ in many impressive ways. Both Elijah and Elisha multiplied a widow’s food supply to sustain her family (see 1 Kgs. 17:10–16; 2 Kgs. 4:1–7), episodes that foreshadowed two of Christ’s great miracles, the feeding of the 5,000 and the 4,000. Elisha fed 100 men with only 20 loaves and some grain, with food left over, much like Christ (see 2 Kgs. 4:42–44; Mark 6:33–44; 8:1–9). Like Christ, Elisha healed the sick (see 2 Kgs. 5). Elijah and Elisha raised young boys from the dead (see 1 Kgs. 17:21–22; 2 Kgs. 4:32–35) as Jesus raised a widow’s son (see Luke 7:11–17).



Moses was taught by the Lord that he was a similitude of Jesus Christ.

OTHER TYPES

There are many other prophets and priests in the Old Testament who are types of the Messiah, such as Noah, Joshua, Samuel, and Jeremiah. According to the Savior’s own testimony, Jonah’s three days and nights in the belly of a great sea creature specifically prefigured the Savior’s burial and sojourn in the spirit world (see Matt. 12:39–40). The prophets and priests of the Old Testament represent a small fraction of

the similitudes of Christ waiting to be discovered and pondered. To search for and find them is to open a wellspring of new thoughts and feelings relative to the Atonement. The Lord has told us the celestial kingdom will be populated with righteous individuals, who are similitudes of the Savior (see D&C 76:56–59; 138:38–49). May all of us so live that we may be among them. □

NOTES

1. “Exceeding Great and Precious Promises,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 8.
2. “Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 3.
3. Apparently, in Abraham’s day some people mistakenly regarded Abel as a redeemer (because of his spilled blood) in place of the promised Messiah who was to come in the meridian of time to shed His blood for the world (see JST, Gen. 17:3–7, Bible appendix).
4. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah* (1978), 450.
5. Melvin J. Ballard, “The Sacramental Covenant,” *Improvement Era*, Oct. 1919, 1029.
6. See *Old Testament Student Manual [Church Educational System]: Genesis–2 Samuel* (1981), 97.

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Gospel topics: Jesus Christ, Old Testament, prophets

We are frequently told that Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament (see Bible Dictionary, “Jehovah,” 710–11). But when we open our Bibles, we find little evidence that this is so.¹ What is missing in the translations is clear in the original Hebrew text, where *Jehovah*, the Savior’s Old Testament name, appears over 5,000 times!

Why then is *Jehovah* missing from our Bible translations? The answer can be found in the way His name has been treated by Jews since the days of Malachi and Zechariah. Jehovah is the name of God, and devout Jews, out of reverence for Him, never say His name. Instead they substitute *Adonai*, a Hebrew title meaning “Lord.”² So whenever they speak of Him or read aloud His name from scripture, they substitute *Adonai* (Lord).

LORD (IN SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS)

King James translators of the Hebrew Bible followed Jewish practice. Instead of printing *Jehovah*, the name of God, they substituted the English title *LORD*, printed in small capitals, every time the name *Jehovah* appeared in the Hebrew text.

Lord (in lowercase letters)

Lord is also printed in lowercase letters (as *Lord* and *lord*) in the King James Version of

the Bible. *Lord* is a title that refers to rulers of various kinds—heavenly and earthly—such as God, king, husband, governor, prince, prophet, father, captain, and angel. The heavenly ruler is designated by *Lord*, the earthly ruler by *lord*. Neither of these titles, printed in lowercase letters, is a substitution for the name *Jehovah*. Simply put, *LORD* equals Jehovah, while *Lord/lord* refers to an earthly or heavenly ruler.

Knowing the distinction between *LORD* and *Lord* helps us understand the story of Hannah and Eli in 1 Samuel 1:1–28.

In verse 11, Hannah makes a vow with the *LORD* for a child. Then when Eli, the high priest, accuses her of being drunk (v. 14),

Hannah says, “No, my lord.” Her use of *lord* shows her reverence for the high priest. Her calling upon the *LORD* shows her pleading with Jehovah. When we understand the distinctions between *LORD*, *Lord*, and *lord*, we can see what publishers have done. We can find Jesus Christ in the Old Testament by substituting *Jehovah* for *LORD* whenever it appears. Then something wonderful happens. Jehovah, who is Jesus Christ, appears from beginning to end of this great book as the God of the Old Testament.³

The Savior’s ministry on earth did not begin with His birth. He is “the eternal I AM,” the Lord God Omnipotent who appeared to the patriarchs and prophets of old, who delivered Israel from Egypt, who gave the law on Sinai, and who guided and inspired the righteous prophets, priests, seers, judges, and kings of the Old Testament. □

NOTES

1. The Old Testament makes merely four direct references to Jehovah and three references to Him that are names of altars (see Gen. 22:9, 14; Ex. 6:3; 17:15; Judg. 6:24; Ps. 83:18; Isa. 12:2; 26:4).
2. In Hebrew *adonai* literally means “My Lord.”
3. In at least three Old Testament passages it appears that *LORD* applies to Heavenly Father, not Jesus Christ: Psalm 110:1; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 53:10.

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Gospel topics: Jesus Christ, Bible, Jehovah, Lord, translation

LORD = Jehovah

BY KEITH H. MESERVY



LEFT: THE LORD APPEARING TO MOSES, BY WILSON ONG; PHOTO BY KELLY LARSEN

I never thought I'd find myself singing a solo. But there I stood in a Romanian church, before 200 parishioners with unsuspecting ears.

BY RANDAL THATCHER

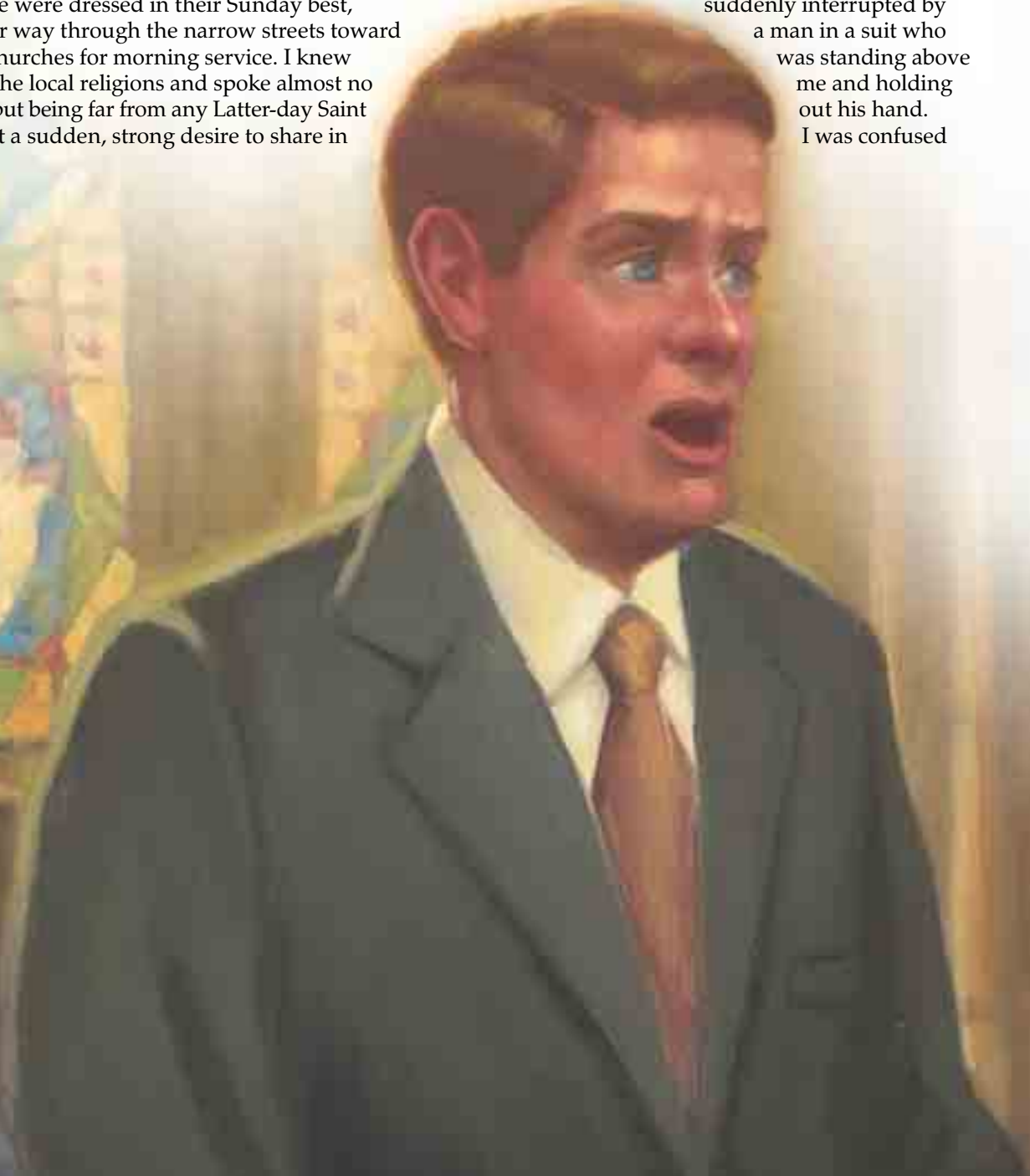
Several years ago I traveled to a small Romanian village as a volunteer for a humanitarian organization. On my second morning there, a Sunday, I was awakened by a symphony of bells pealing from the many church towers that dotted the town. I arose and opened the window of my small hotel room, which looked out onto the town square. It was a beautiful spring morning, and the townspeople were dressed in their Sunday best, making their way through the narrow streets toward one of the churches for morning service. I knew little about the local religions and spoke almost no Romanian, but being far from any Latter-day Saint branch, I felt a sudden, strong desire to share in

the sweet spirit I was certain I would find within any one of these humble churches. Even if I couldn't understand what was being said, at least I could listen to the songs being sung and feel the spirit of the people through their music.

I dressed quickly and strode across the town square toward the nearest church. The service was already in progress, so I crept through the rear door and seated myself in an empty pew in the back. This was a cavernous chapel with a large congregation of about 200, in addition to a wonderful youth choir that was singing hymns. I basked blissfully in the sweet spirit I had come seeking.

As I sat there, absorbing with appreciation that universal language which is music, my reverie was suddenly interrupted by

a man in a suit who was standing above me and holding out his hand. I was confused



by this but even more perplexed by the unnerving realization that the members of the congregation were all turning in their seats to look back at me and this man. He took me by the hand and smilingly escorted me to the front of the chapel, where he spoke in a loud voice to the congregation, gesturing all the while toward me. I was a new sheep to their fold, and it seemed they wanted to know something about me. This fellow finally turned and spoke directly to me in Romanian, then appeared to await my response. With a few simple words of English and even fewer and simpler of Romanian, I managed to convey to the man that I was from America and could not speak their language—a fact that quickly became obvious to everyone.

With this news, I became their guest of honor for the remainder of the service. I was promptly seated in the center of the front-row pew and given a somewhat tattered English Bible. I was feeling uncomfortably conspicuous but still smiled gratefully, thanking the church members for their kind attentions with what few Romanian words I knew. The two dozen youth in the choir seemed to enjoy having a special guest to perform for, and they sang even louder, beaming at me all the while; a few of them even waved discreetly at me between numbers. I understood none of the preaching or readings delivered from the pulpit, but the man next to me took it upon himself to painstakingly look up for me in my English Bible whichever passage was being discussed. Fortunately the meeting was also interspersed with many choir songs, which had been my reason for coming in the first place.

Toward the end of the meeting, the man in the suit handed me a small, folded piece of paper. I opened the note and read the few scrawled words of English with growing trepidation: “Do you have a song for us?”

The man looked at me expectantly. Indeed, the whole congregation seemed to be waiting with an air of anxious anticipation. In my startled panic, I blurted out the only Romanian word I could think of—“*Da!*”—which means, unfortunately, “Yes!”

With this, I was ushered promptly and somewhat ceremoniously to the pulpit. Now, I am no great singer by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, previously I would have deemed it utterly impossible to be coaxed into singing a solo for anyone, let alone an audience of 200. But there I stood before these parishioners with curious, upturned eyes and unsuspecting ears.

I had not given a thought to my Primary music leader in years, but standing there before that microphone, palms sweating and knees trembling, I gained a sudden and profound gratitude for her and her tireless efforts to teach us youngsters all those Primary songs so many years ago. One of those blessed songs from Primary popped into my head, and I began to sing from a long-distant memory:

*As I have loved you,
Love one another.
This new commandment:
Love one another.
By this shall men know
Ye are my disciples,
If ye have love
One to another.
 (“Love One Another,” Hymns, no. 308)*

When I finished, there was a hushed reverence over the entire congregation. My technical performance had been unspectacular, to say the least, and the members of the congregation had doubtless understood few if any of my words. But the simple truth and tender spirit of the music seemed to have touched them, just as theirs had touched me.

As I walked back to my seat, I felt awash in the love and warmth which all true followers of Christ can share, even when beliefs and languages differ. The experience became a precious memory that I will long treasure. □

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Gospel topics: music, fellowship with other faiths

Do You Have A Song For Us?

To ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE *and the* STRENGTH *to* *Use It Wisely*

We can learn vitally important things by what we hear and see and especially by what we feel, as prompted by the Holy Ghost.



BY ELDER RICHARD G. SCOTT
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

My intent is to help you, while your life unfolds in productive ways, to obtain profound joy and happiness. If such joy is the nature of your life, my message will be a confirmation

of what you already have been privileged to learn and apply. If that is not the pattern of your life, I will suggest truths that can help you find consistent, enduring happiness.

First, I will share a principle that, if understood and consistently applied, will bring enormous blessings throughout your life. It is not difficult for me to explain, nor for you to understand. However, it will require of you significant, determined effort to yield its full potential. With it, you can learn vital truths

that will bring you greater, enduring happiness and make your life more productive and meaningful:

I will consistently strive to learn by what I hear, see, and feel.

I will write down the important things I learn, and I will do them.

You can learn vitally important things by what you *hear* and *see* and especially by what you *feel*, as prompted by the Holy Ghost. Most individuals limit their learning primarily to what they hear or what they read. Be wise. Develop the skill of learning by what you see and particularly by what the Holy Ghost prompts you to feel. Consciously seek to learn by what you see and feel, and your capacity to do so will expand through consistent practice. Ask in faith for such help. Live to be worthy of it. Seek to recognize it. Write down in a secure place the important things you learn from the Spirit. You will find that as you write down precious impressions, often more will come. Also, the knowledge you gain will be available throughout your life. Always, day or night, wherever you are, whatever you are doing, seek to recognize and respond to the direction of the Spirit. Express gratitude for the help received and obey it. This practice will reinforce your capacity to learn by



the Spirit. It will permit the Lord to guide your life and to enrich the use of every other capacity latent in your being.

If I had the power to communicate the importance of the principle just shared, I could end this message now, and you would have received the major benefit from these words. It requires effort and practice to consistently learn by what you see and feel. I suggest that you practice this principle now. As I ask a few basic questions that only you can answer for yourself, will you think of your responses? Perhaps you can jot them down. Then consciously ask the Lord to help you recognize any guidance He wants to give you. Since the Lord will not force you to learn, you must exercise your agency to authorize the Spirit to teach you.

Continue to seek this guidance while I suggest some ways to realize your aspirations. I will also suggest what can motivate you powerfully to higher achievement. What you write down from the impressions you feel will be the most valuable help you can receive.

Let us begin. Here are the questions:

What are some of the most fundamental priorities of your life?

What challenges do you face in realizing your dreams and aspirations?

What are some of the obstacles that impede your progress?

What motivates you to overcome temptation and live righteously so that the Lord can guide and strengthen you?

As you consider the remainder of my counsel, try to recognize any spiritual promptings that will communicate a personalized message from the Lord. I will now speak to each of you as though we were in a private conversation where we share our purest feelings—as two can do where there is mutual trust and common beliefs.

The fundamental motivation in some lives is to be popular by doing what is popular. Others, more wise, are motivated by love of the Savior and His truth. They are willing to stand for correct principles despite peer pressure. I will illustrate the consequences of each of these patterns.

Recently I met an intelligent young man with outstanding parents. There are exceptional material and spiritual resources available to him. He is undecided about a mission. He attends a community college because it is easier than going to a university. In his free time he does only those things that he likes to do. He doesn't work because he doesn't need to, and it would take time away from his pleasures. He took seminary classes to pass them, without much thought

of how he should personally apply the knowledge gained. Finally I asked:

"Can I speak to you from my heart? I don't want to offend but rather to point out something. You are making choices today that seem very reasonable to you. They seem to give you what you want: an easy life with abundant enjoyment and not much sacrifice on your part. You can do that for a while, but what you don't realize is that every decision you make is narrowing your future. You are eliminating possibilities and options. There will come a time, and it won't be too distant, where you are going to spend the rest of your life doing things you don't want to do, in places you don't want to be, because you have not prepared yourself. You are not taking advantage of your opportunities."

I mentioned how everything I treasure today began to mature in the mission field. Missionary service is not something we do for ourselves. We have our agency. We can choose what we want to do. Yet, for me, the greatest growth and preparation for the future that most youth have today is gained in a mission. There they focus outside of themselves on other people. They draw close to the Lord and really learn His teachings. They find individuals interested in the

message but not sure of its worth. They try with every capacity—prayer, fasting, and testifying—to help that person change his life. That's what a mission does when it is done selflessly, as many can testify. I felt impressed to give this young man a blessing. As he walked out of the room, I prayed earnestly that somehow the Lord would touch him to choose the right priorities. Otherwise his progress will be limited and his happiness short-circuited.

In stark contrast, I share the example of another young man. Through the years I have watched how his parents have taught him from infancy to unwaveringly live the commandments of God. By example and precept, they nurtured him and their other children in truth. They encouraged the development of discipline and sacrifice to obtain worthy goals. This young man chose swimming as an activity that could instill in his character these qualities. The early-morning practice sessions required discipline and sacrifice. Over time he excelled in that sport.

Then came the challenges—for example, a championship swim meet on Sunday. Would he participate? To help his team win the championship, would he rationalize an exception to his rule of not swimming on Sunday? No, he would not yield, even



Enos taught the importance of praying with "faith in Christ" and being diligent "in keeping [His] commandments" (Enos 1:8, 10).

under intense peer pressure. He was peppered with derisive comments, even physically abused. But he would not yield. The rejection of friends, the loneliness, and the pressure brought times of sadness and tears. But he would not yield. He was learning firsthand what each of us must come to know, the reality of Paul's counsel to Timothy: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). I have observed how over the years this consistent pattern of righteous living—woven from hundreds of correct decisions, some in the face of great challenge—has developed a character of strength and capacity. Now, as a missionary, he is respected by his peers for his capacity to work, his knowledge of truth, his unwavering devotion, and his determination to share the gospel. One who earlier was rejected by his peers now has become a leader of his peers.

Is there a message for you in these examples? How can you see with greater clarity and receive more help through the veil to accomplish your aspirations? I would remind you of eight of the many sources of help.

FIRST: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

There will always be a need for you to walk to the edge of the light of your knowledge and testimony into the twilight of faith. You will be asked to exercise

faith in truths you have not yet come to prove through your own experience or through the sacred witness of the Holy Ghost.

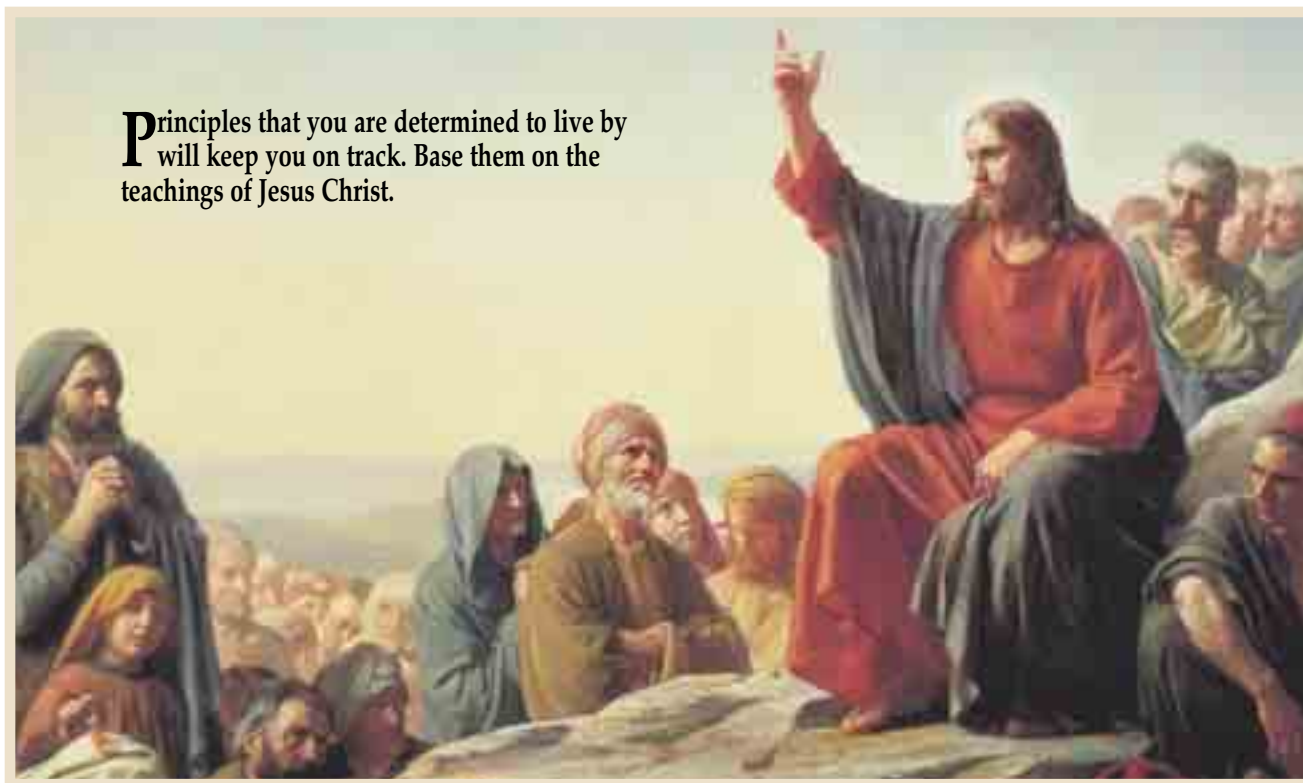
Exercise faith in Jesus Christ and in His infinite capacity to bless. Faith leads one to action, to achieve goals even when there is little visible evidence to give hope of success. Faith is abiding trust in truth. Therefore it is a source of power to know simple yet profoundly important truths and to have the faith to live them. Enduring happiness is rooted in unchangeable truth lived in faith.

SECOND: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

You have likely established a set of guiding principles for your life. If not, do so now. With such standards you will not make the wrong decisions on the basis of the circumstances or the pressures of the day. Principles that you are determined to live by will keep you on track. Base them on the teachings of Jesus Christ. As you use your guiding principles, be honest with yourself. Tragedy, disappointment, and lack of attainment in life come when one is dishonest with self or with the Lord.

Never compromise your principles. Strength and safety come from making no exceptions to them. No matter how it seems that conditions would justify some departure from them, do not do it. Rationalization leads one to take something that is

Pinciples that you are determined to live by will keep you on track. Base them on the teachings of Jesus Christ.



DETAIL FROM THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, DET NATIONALEHISTORISKE MUSEUM PÅ FREDERIKSBORG, HILLERØD

true and twist it to justify invalid exceptions. Rationalization is Satan's tool to lead one from truth. Difficulties in life start when small deviations from standards are justified on the basis of circumstance. Individuals who live for the moment make decisions based on circumstance or what someone else tempts them to do. Such are doomed eventually to violate eternal law and to undermine the great opportunities of life. They may seem to gain an advantage, but that is temporary. They lose those things that bring eternal happiness. As you center your life in truth, you are assured success and happiness.

THIRD: PRAYER

You have found that prayer can be a source of great comfort, direction, and sustaining power. Too often in the routine of daily life you may be tempted to offer hurried, mechanical prayers of no value. Prayers that bring comfort, solace, direction, and great inner strength are like those offered by Enos. He taught the importance of praying with "faith in Christ" and being diligent "in keeping [His] commandments" (Enos 1:8, 10). These words of Enos show how to pray for something vital:

"My faith began to be unshaken in the Lord; and I prayed unto him with many long strugglings. . . .

"And it came to pass that after I had prayed and labored with all diligence, the Lord said unto me: I will

grant unto thee according to thy desires, because of thy faith" (Enos 1:11–12; emphasis added).

When you are prompted to ask the Lord for something that way, you will often receive far more understanding and help than expected.

FOURTH: SCRIPTURES

The scriptures are an excellent source of understanding and strength when pondered with faith in the Savior. They bolster faith in truth. When the truths revealed are applied diligently, they become a vital source of worthy motivation. You will increase your courage to do what is right. Your discipline to adhere to the most important priorities of life will be fortified.

The scriptures give eloquent confirmation of how truth consistently lived opens the door to inspiration to know what to do and, where needed, the divine power to do it. As you reflect upon how others' capacities to conquer difficulty, doubt, and overwhelming challenges were strengthened by the Lord, the Holy Spirit will confirm that their experiences are true. You will know that similar help is available to you.

FIFTH: TEMPLE WORSHIP

Another most significant way to enhance your capacity to understand and live eternal truths is through temple worship. Only by receiving the



We all need to learn the valuable lesson that significant attainment requires significant effort.

fulness of temple ordinances and living the covenants made there can you enter into the highest degree of glory and receive the greatest measure of eternal happiness. Temple attendance has a calming, settling, consoling influence that distills peace and contentment. It provides an environment for inspiration in answer to prayers. The accompanying family history work yields similar blessings.

SIXTH: MORAL CLEANLINESS

Your goal to be morally clean is central to your enduring happiness. You decide by your daily choices whether it will be realized. Garner strength by remembering that you can do anything the Lord asks you to do. When strength is needed, and asked for, He will help you keep this vital commandment. As you do all you are capable of doing, your trust in Him will give you capacity to overcome all obstacles.

SEVENTH: CONSISTENT HARD WORK

It is a principle of happiness to work hard and to willingly obey the principles of truth, confident that the Lord will open doors of help when needed. We all need to learn the valuable lesson that significant attainment requires significant effort. Our Father will not violate His plan. He will not give eternal blessings to those who want them but who are not willing to pay the price.

EIGHTH: GOOD MUSIC

Good music, especially sacred music, makes spiritual things more understandable. It is edifying and conducive to willing obedience. It prepares emotions for response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Stay away from the poison of evil music.

I am afraid it may seem like I've been lecturing to you in our private interview. Forgive me. I don't mean to do that. I just want to share what has brought me immeasurable happiness along with a meaningful life.

There is one additional suggestion before I end. Some places are sacred and holy, where it seems easier to discern the direction of the Holy Spirit. The temple is such a place. You can make other places that way by the way you respect them and behave while there. You need a retreat of peace and quiet where periodically you can ponder and let the Lord

establish the direction of your life. It may seem difficult to find time to meditate with the daily pressures of life. Yet a moment of thought will confirm that no matter how fast you move forward, if you are on the wrong path, it will avail you nothing. Each of us needs to periodically check our bearings and confirm that we are on course. Sometime soon you may benefit from taking this personal inventory:

What are my highest priorities for life?

How do I use my discretionary time? Is some of it consistently used for my highest priorities?

Is there anything I know I should not be doing? If so, I will stop it now.

I sincerely thank you for giving thought to this message and for writing the impressions you have felt. Your righteous lives will bless many others wherever you go. I feel that you either have been or will be doing the things we've discussed. I have left the most important thing I can do for you for last.

I solemnly testify that God our Father lives, that His plan is perfect. I bear testimony that as you raise your voice in prayer, those prayers are heard. They are best answered when offered from a broken heart and a contrite spirit. I know that someday I will be judged for how well I testify of

my certain knowledge of Jesus Christ. Therefore, I solemnly witness that because of His Atonement, our Father's plan of happiness will succeed. Satan's plan is doomed to failure. I know that Jesus Christ lives. I solemnly witness with every capacity I possess that He lives and that He loves you. Through your obedience He will help you find happiness. □

From a devotional address given at Brigham Young University on 23 January 2001.

Gospel topics: happiness, Holy Ghost, knowledge, priorities

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Most Ensign articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. *How can establishing a set of guiding principles help us avoid making wrong decisions based on the pressures of the day?*

2. *How can we develop the skill of learning not only by what we hear and see but also by what the Holy Ghost prompts us to feel?*

3. *How can such things as faith in Jesus Christ, prayer, scripture study, temple worship, and good music enhance our ability to understand and live eternal truths?*



The scriptures are an excellent source of understanding and strength when pondered with faith in the Savior.



"No Place I Would Rather Be"



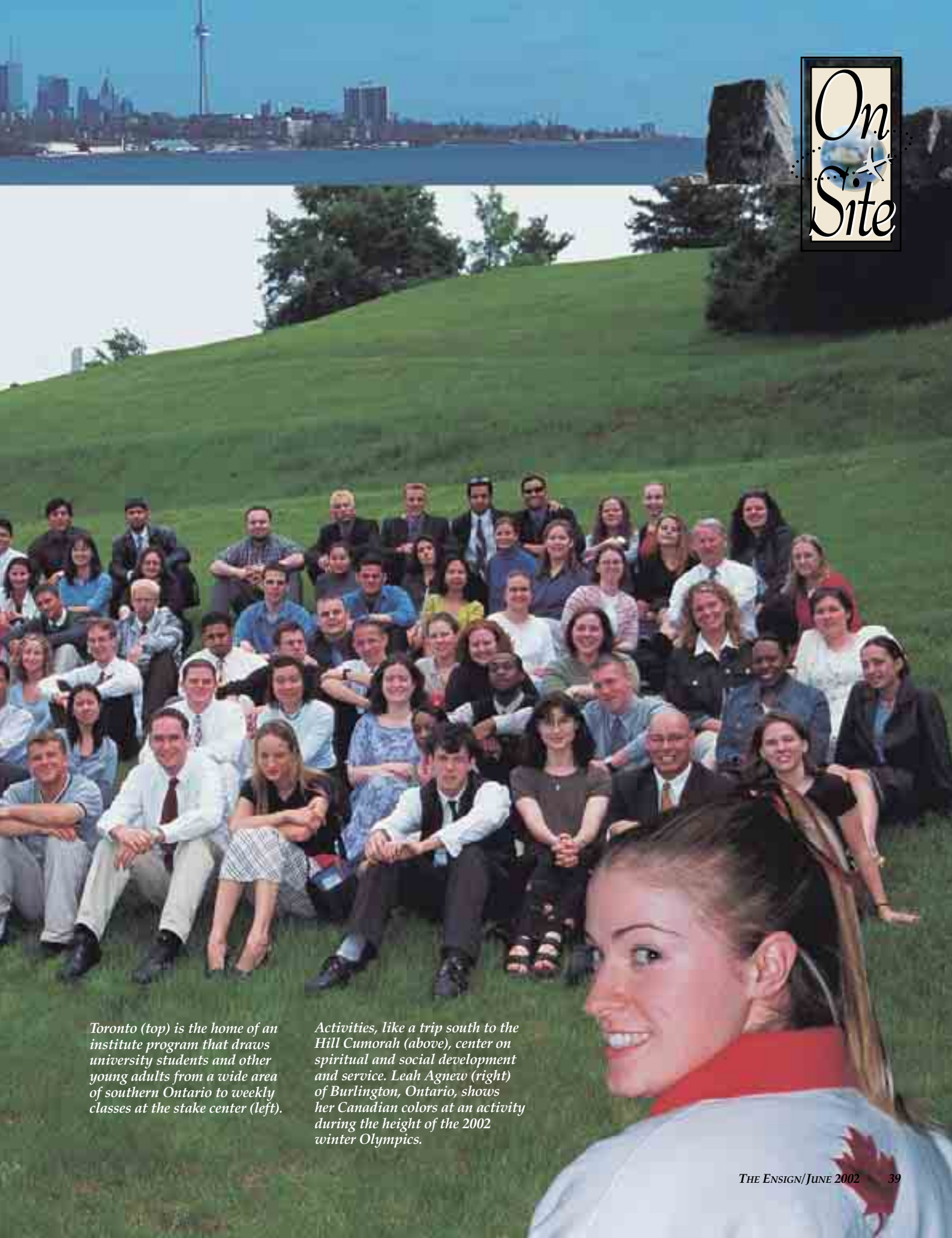
Institute students in Toronto find their classes and activities a haven of learning and friendship.

The Toronto, Ontario, stake center might look like just another church to commuters caught in the traffic flow on Eglinton Avenue, but for the young adults who attend once-a-week institute activities in the building, it is a haven from the world.

It is not uncommon to find students from China, Japan, the Philippines, Albania, Ukraine, Britain, and Scotland in one class. Most of the young single adults involved are full- or part-time university students.

"I love the direction we receive, the diversity of the group, and the spirit we feel when we're here," explains Desmond Lynch, a native of Scotland who is now a member of the Bowmanville Ward, Oshawa Ontario Stake. Desmond lives some 40 minutes east





Toronto (top) is the home of an institute program that draws university students and other young adults from a wide area of southern Ontario to weekly classes at the stake center (left).

Activities, like a trip south to the Hill Cumorah (above), center on spiritual and social development and service. Leah Agnew (right) of Burlington, Ontario, shows her Canadian colors at an activity during the height of the 2002 winter Olympics.

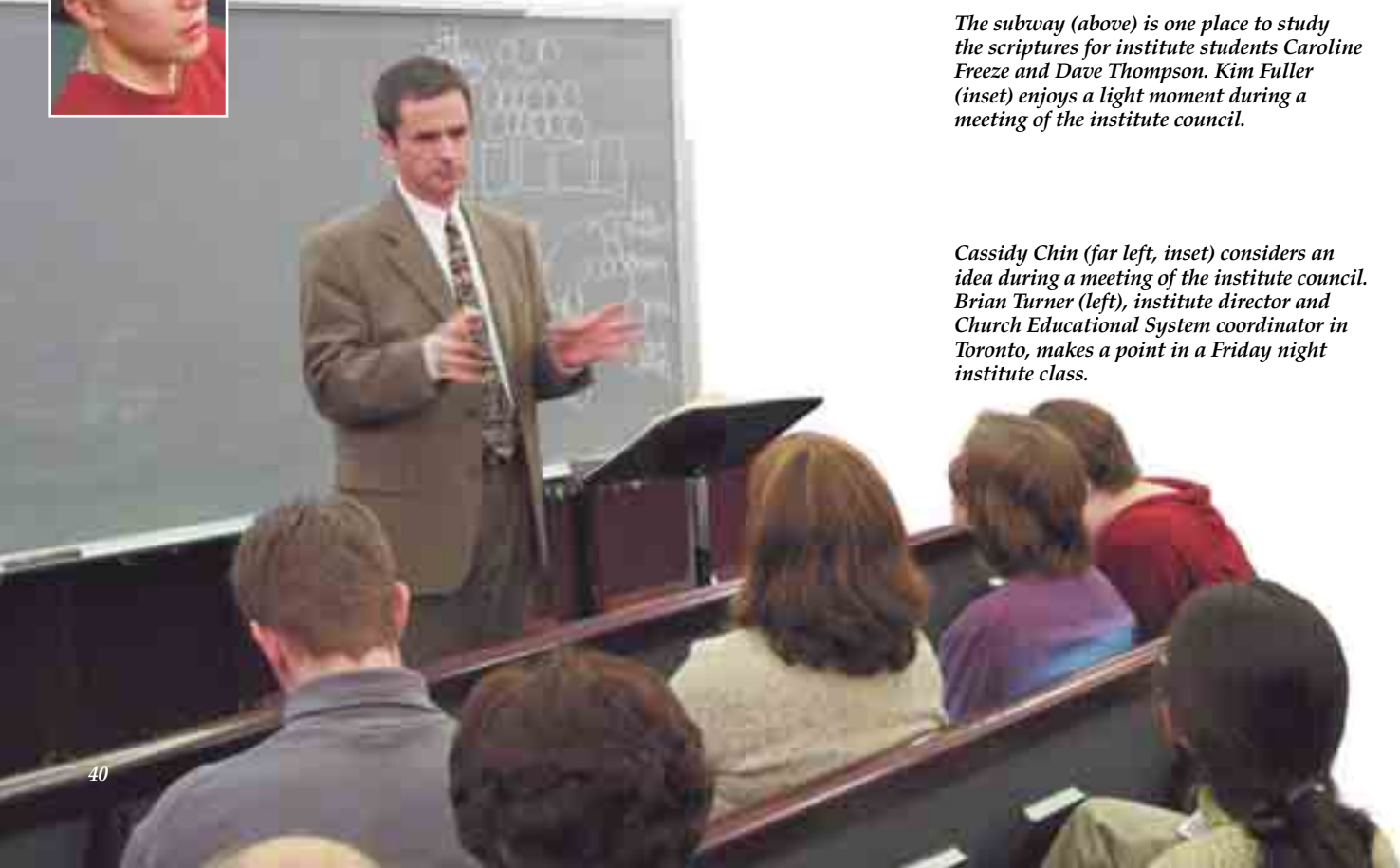


of Toronto, but he doesn't count it a sacrifice to travel to activities. "There's no place I would rather be than at institute class on a Friday night."

Brian Turner, their institute teacher and Church Educational System coordinator in Toronto, says, "These young people hunger for the things of the Spirit." As they are given responsibility, "they thrive on leading one another."

Appointed to his position in 1998, Brother Turner found a program already functioning well under the direction of the stake president. In place was a strong Institute of Religion Council of young adult leaders trying to live and lead as the Prophet Joseph Smith said: "I teach them correct principles, and they govern themselves" (as quoted by John Taylor, *Millennial Star*, 15 Nov. 1851, 339).

Priesthood leaders, with Brother Turner, implemented a Friday night super-institute, which has been embraced by more than 200 students each semester since its inception. Late last year, the number of participants topped 350. Institute students from a wide area of southern Ontario converge at the Toronto stake center each Friday night to be nourished by the things of the Spirit in class and then take part in enjoyable activities.



Slices of institute life: traveling to class (above left); at the temple; roommates studying the scriptures; sampling the crop and painting at the welfare farm; an institute council meeting.



The subway (above) is one place to study the scriptures for institute students Caroline Freeze and Dave Thompson. Kim Fuller (inset) enjoys a light moment during a meeting of the institute council.

Cassidy Chin (far left, inset) considers an idea during a meeting of the institute council. Brian Turner (left), institute director and Church Educational System coordinator in Toronto, makes a point in a Friday night institute class.



On Site



Debbie Olsen was one of several dozen institute students who helped harvest peaches at the stake welfare farm during a service activity in 2001.



Dancing, visiting with friends, and eating are all part of the regular social activities for students attending the institute in Toronto.

“As we continue to increase their spiritual and social opportunities locally through the institute program, more of the young people will remain here, they will raise their families here, and they will help build the kingdom in this part of the world,” Brother Turner says.

Some drive more than two hours each way to attend institute activities. Because of the tremendous growth of the program, the third floor of the stake center has been remodeled into a joint-use facility for the institute and the Canada Toronto East Mission. This is the first institute facility built in eastern Canada.

The composition of the institute student body changes constantly as the young people move on to other areas or get married. (There have been several marriages this year of couples who met while attending the institute.) But those who attend regularly find they need what institute offers. One student in fine arts says she changed her circle of friends after coming into the institute program because she found so many people here to help support her as she faces new spiritual challenges in her life. These challenges may include morally inappropriate material that confronts students in their classes. A returned missionary walked out of a college class, under the eyes of the teacher, when a discussion dwelt on pornographic illustrations. He took a zero on that assignment. He says the strength found through institute helps those who attend stand up to the daily pressures of the world.

Many of the students, when they describe something they like, use a common one-word description: “Sweet!” It is appropriate for what they enjoy on Friday nights.

Jo Lum of the Broadview Branch, Toronto Ontario Stake, quotes Alma 32:28 to describe her feelings about participating in



Kerri O'Brien (above) and Paul Mondragon prepare decorations for an upcoming dance. Kristina Mitchell (inset) came from Arizona to study ballet in Toronto.

institute classes and activities: “It must needs be that this is a good seed, . . . for it beginneth to enlarge my soul; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, yea, it beginneth to be delicious to me.”—**Jason H. Hay, Don Mills Ward, Toronto Ontario Stake** □

Gospel topics: institute, young single adults

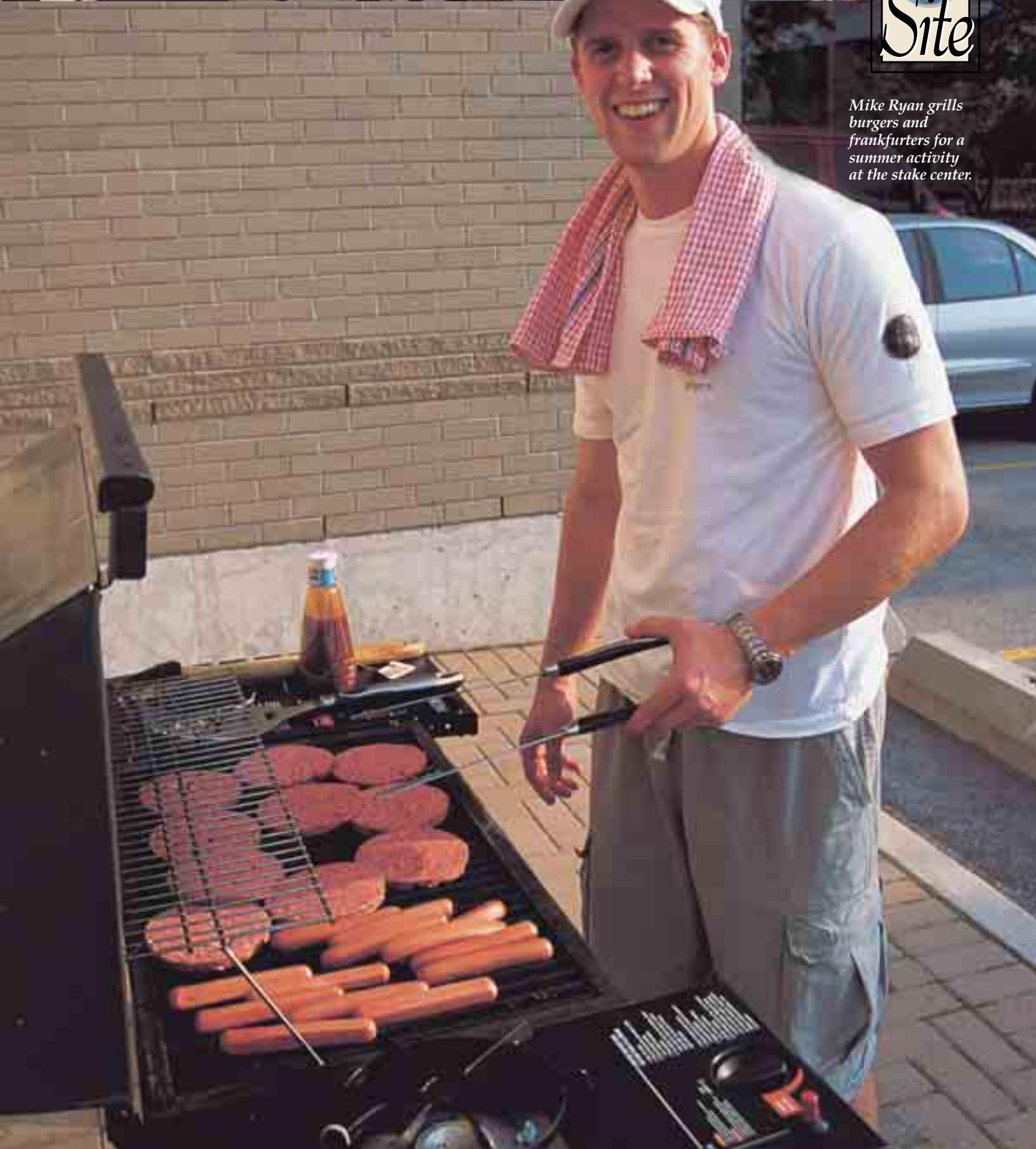
Singer Sonia Ndongmo finds the support of friends, including her roommates, one blessing of the institute.

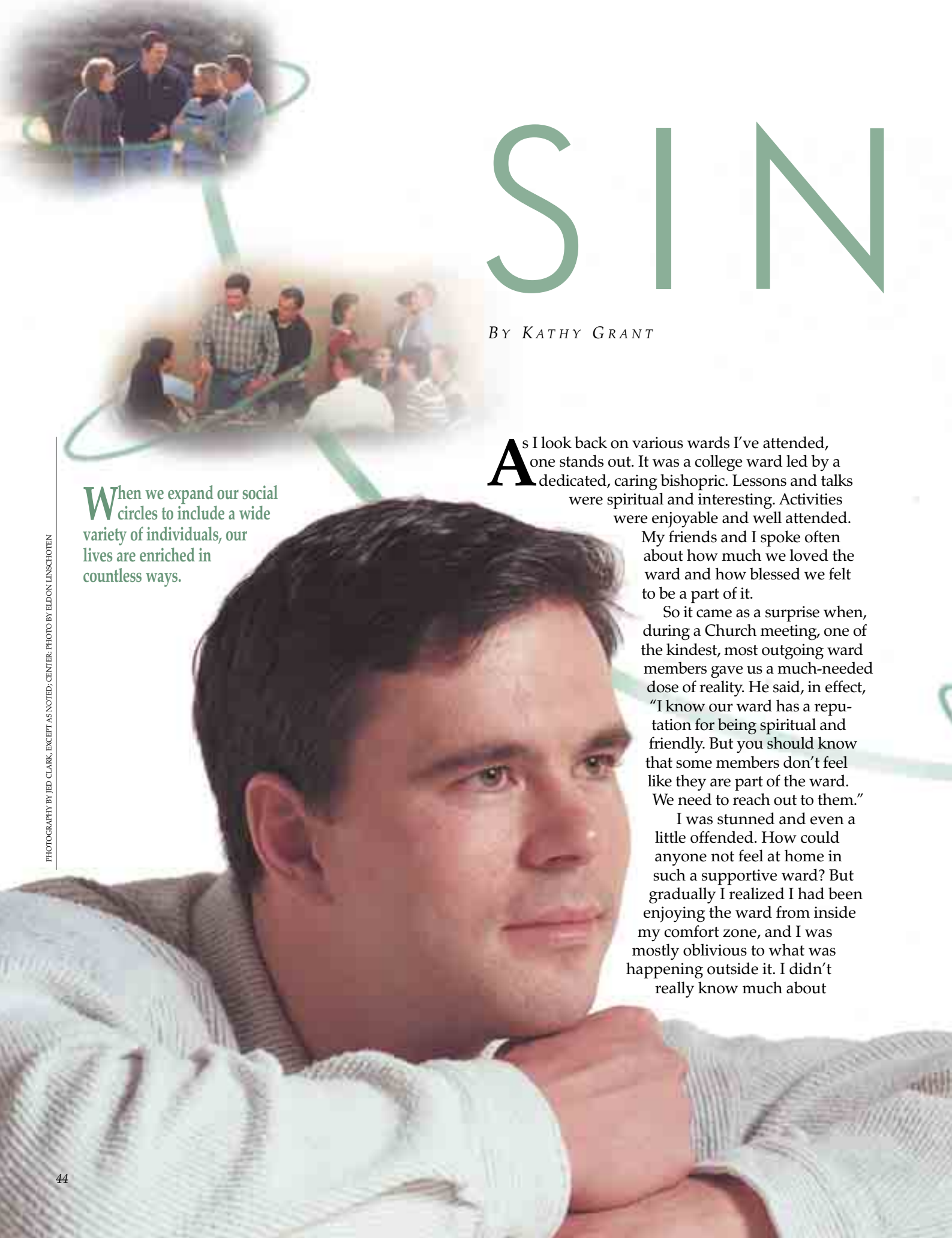




On Site

Mike Ryan grills burgers and frankfurters for a summer activity at the stake center.





SIN

BY KATHY GRANT

When we expand our social circles to include a wide variety of individuals, our lives are enriched in countless ways.

As I look back on various wards I've attended, one stands out. It was a college ward led by a dedicated, caring bishopric. Lessons and talks were spiritual and interesting. Activities were enjoyable and well attended.

My friends and I spoke often about how much we loved the ward and how blessed we felt to be a part of it.

So it came as a surprise when, during a Church meeting, one of the kindest, most outgoing ward members gave us a much-needed dose of reality. He said, in effect, "I know our ward has a reputation for being spiritual and friendly. But you should know that some members don't feel like they are part of the ward. We need to reach out to them."

I was stunned and even a little offended. How could anyone not feel at home in such a supportive ward? But gradually I realized I had been enjoying the ward from inside my comfort zone, and I was mostly oblivious to what was happening outside it. I didn't really know much about

G L E S IN THE WARD FAMILY

Both single and married Church members can take steps to help singles feel they genuinely belong in our wards.

the needs of those who felt they didn't belong.

Now, almost 20 years later, I understand better how those members felt and how it is possible for some members to feel they don't really fit in, even in friendly wards. This understanding has come because I have been part of a group that can too easily drift toward (and sometimes past) the edges of the ward family: the single adult members of the Church—those who are divorced, widowed, or have not married.

The situation of a Church member who is single can be illustrated by a simple analogy. Imagine that your favorite hobby is stargazing and you've just joined a stargazing club. You come to your first club activity eager to participate. It's a cold night, but you're not concerned: most of the club members are wearing club jackets, and you've been told you should be able to get one as well. But there is no jacket for you. You ask about it, and you are told to keep looking and that if you do your best, you will find a jacket when the time is right.

Meanwhile, you are getting pretty cold and a little worried. And you notice that most of the other club members are talking about how nice and warm their jackets are. In fact, throughout the evening the topic surfaces continually in various forms: how to wash and dry your jacket, how to add extra pockets, how to mend it, and so forth. Some of the club members notice you don't have a jacket. "You really need a jacket for these activities," they tell you. "Why don't you have one yet?"

While this analogy should not be taken too far, it does serve to show how awkward

it can sometimes feel to be a single member of a conventional ward. Fortunately, however, there are family wards in which single members feel included and know their contributions are valued.

So what issues do singles face as members of family wards? And what can both married and single members do to help singles feel a sense of belonging?

THE PERSON BEHIND THE CATEGORY

When Brenda Brashier and her single friends moved into a new ward, the members made a concerted effort to reach out to them. "The first Sunday we attended church, ward members gathered around us, introducing themselves and telling us how glad they were to have us in the ward. We could feel they were sincere.

"It wasn't long before we really felt at home. We later realized their welcome was evidence of the Christlike love that exists in the ward. Soon we saw that the members display this love not only to singles but to all the members."

Sadly, not all single members have such positive experiences. One mother described her situation after a divorce: "I never felt that most ward members really found a way to know me as a person. I know that divorce sometimes carries a stigma with it, and even though the ward members seemed to understand that I hadn't transgressed, they seemed to have a hard time equating *me* with *them*." A single brother commented that although his ward was generally friendly, many members "seemed to be afraid to help or be involved with someone who was single."

It can be challenging to reach out to someone whose life seems different from our own. We wonder how we can relate to that person. However, extending friendship and support is a key to helping singles find belonging in the ward family.

The responsibility to reach out goes both ways.



ALL PART OF A FAMILY



"We are a family-oriented church; we have to be. We are all part of a family—either a natural family or a ward or branch family. As President Howard W. Hunter stated: 'The Church is for all members. . . . All of us, single or married, have individual identities and needs, among which is the desire to be seen as a worthwhile individual child of God.'"

President James E. Faust of the First Presidency, "A Vision of What We Can Be," *Ensign*, Mar. 1996, 12.

Many singles who take the initiative to get involved and develop friendships with ward members are greatly rewarded. Pam Zylík of the Calgary 11th Ward, Calgary Alberta East Stake, commented: "When I left the young single adult ward, I found it daunting at first to even imagine being in a family ward. I was afraid it would just be so different, so hard. Finally I bit the bullet and went, and I found out what a wonderful place that ward was. I'm not shy by any means, so I quickly made some great friends. Soon I received a calling teaching Sunday School to the 14-year-olds.

"I feel very at home in my family ward because I chose to get involved with almost every ward activity. I attend all the Relief Society home, family, and personal enrichment meetings, and I just drop in on people for a surprise visit every now and then." Pam finds her efforts are often reciprocated.

THE FAMILY FOCUS—A BROADER VISION

The family is the fundamental unit of society, and the Church's emphasis on the family is an essential part of its mission. Yet in seeking to strengthen the family, some Church members may fail to consider the needs of all members of the ward, particularly those who do not have spouses or children.

Ward activities should be planned in such a way that they do not exclude or embarrass single members. Activities can be planned for "adults" and "ward members" rather than just "couples" or "families." And without downplaying the importance of marriage and families, ward members can help singles feel more included by making sure talks and lessons don't regularly apply exclusively to those with spouses or children and don't devalue those who are single.

Surprisingly, singles who feel discouraged by the frequent emphasis on marriage and families may be able to alleviate their discouragement by embracing this mission wholeheartedly. When this happens, singles find themselves working with other members of the ward in an important way rather than against them. We should remember that each of us is part of a family whether we are related genetically or by the bonds of the gospel. Regardless of our marital status, we can work to strengthen the family as an institution as well as to deepen the bonds within our own family circles.

Sheri L. Dew, second counselor in the Relief Society

general presidency—and a single person herself—has not been hesitant to support the family: "Just because I have not had the privilege of bearing children does not mean that I am unconcerned about the family. . . . There is power in the family that we will find nowhere else, a power that spans generations and reaches across the veil" ("Famous Last Words," in *The Arms of His Love* [2000], 395–96, 397).

AVOIDING THE TWO-EDGED SWORD: BEING JUDGMENTAL AND TAKING OFFENSE

I once attended a sacrament meeting where a long-time wife and mother gave a talk on marriage and family. Addressing the singles in the audience, she assured us good-naturedly that if we would

just try hard enough, we could find companions. I'm sure she had no idea how her words came across to those who had not married despite fervent prayers and continued efforts or to those who had lost companions through death or divorce.

This type of comment can be one of the most difficult challenges for singles in some family wards. As Kathryn Kidd, a married member of the Algonkian Ward, Warrenton Virginia Stake, commented: "It seems that many people who had no trouble finding a spouse think, 'Hey, I lived the gospel and prayed to find a mate and then found one. That means anyone else who's living the gospel can do the same thing.'" This line of reasoning implies that if a person isn't married, he or she must not be fully living the gospel or must lack faith.

The trouble with this logic is that it doesn't take into account the agency of others or the Lord's time line. As Jinelle Monk, a single adult in the Crystal City Ward, Mount Vernon Virginia Stake, commented, "The truth is, one can't know for sure why someone has remained single past a certain age. Our commandment from God to not judge our neighbor definitely applies here" (see Luke 6:37).

Another kind of false assumption is often made about single members. It is true that no vocation is *more* important than that of spouse or parent. Yet some members interpret this statement to mean that the contribution of single adults without children is somehow *less* important. But President Gordon B. Hinckley—sharing the example of a single sister, Rebecca Olsen—taught that this is not so: "[Sister Olsen] served a mission faithfully and honorably.

She is an outstanding teacher. She is a student working on an advanced degree. And beyond all of that, she has spent her summers in Bolivia blessing the impoverished people of that nation. Shall anyone say that her contribution is less than that of some of her married friends? Does anyone dare think her gift of service is any less valuable in the eyes of her Heavenly Father?" ("To Single Adults," *Ensign*, June 1989, 73).


Although insensitive comments can be difficult for single members, the Lord's commandment to forgive applies here as well (see D&C 64:10), and it can bring healing and peace. Single members can bear in mind that when people speak or act in a thoughtless way, often they simply haven't fully considered their words or they feel unsure of what to do; usually they aren't being intentionally unkind.

One brother found himself somewhat ostracized in his ward after a difficult divorce. But rather than taking offense, he continued to reach out to ward members. Several years later, he commented: "I feel that my remaining faithful and warm and friendly has softened the hearts of some of the ward members. Let me hasten to say that this is a wonderful ward—I just feel they did not know how to handle someone who was divorced."

THE SINGLE ADULT PROGRAM

President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) helped establish the Church's single adult program in the early 1970s. In one address he said that the single adult program of the Church was established "after some of the most soulful praying and discussing that I believe I have ever experienced" ("President Harold B. Lee's General Priesthood Address," *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 99).

A single adult program can be a blessing not only to single adults but to the whole ward. Even so, single adult programs in conventional wards often struggle, mainly for two reasons: First, the single adult program is often low in priority in terms of ward support and resources. Second, some single adults themselves have misconceptions about the program and are



Church service
can help a single
member feel fully
involved in the ward.

unwilling to participate. Some have a bad experience at an activity or two and decline to come back; some avoid the program from the outset.

For single adults who feel the single adult program may not be of value for them, a good approach may be to think about what they can *give* to singles and other ward members through their participation. Many singles find reassurance in knowing they are not alone as they associate with others in similar situations. Through this program, single adults may best be able to reach out to other singles who have become less active. Some single adult programs regularly plan service to married members of their wards and stakes, which helps them become even more integrated into the ward family.

Single Church members who belong to a ward or stake without a functioning singles program could talk to their leaders about the possibility of getting one started if there are enough single members to sustain such a program. They can offer their help and encourage other single members to participate as well.

CHRIST AT THE CENTER

President Howard W. Hunter (1970–95) was single for seven years after his first wife, Claire, passed away in 1983. He reminded us, “This is the church of Jesus Christ, not the church of marrieds or singles or any other group or individual” (“The Church Is for All

People,” *Ensign*, June 1989, 76).

As we keep our focus on the Savior and as we come unto Him, we find comfort and rest and belonging, whether married or single. He helps us keep an eternal perspective about our situations and reminds us that all things work together for our good if we love Him (see Rom. 8:28).

With a Christ-centered focus, we find it easier to reach out to each other as brothers and sisters, to be considerate, to participate. We avoid being judgmental and taking offense. And we are more likely to enjoy true unity in our wards, regardless of our individual circumstances and the timing of various events in our lives.


President Hunter made this supplication: “May God bless each of us to treat one another as befits one who refers to himself as a Latter-day Saint. May there be none among us who are made to feel as ‘strangers and foreigners,’ but may we all feel as ‘fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God’ (Eph. 2:19)” (*Ensign*, June 1989, 77). These words apply to all Latter-day Saints, whether married or single. □

Kathy Grant is a member of the Gilroy First Ward, Morgan Hill California Stake.

Gospel topics: singles, fellowshiping, kindness

*More on this topic: See Robert D. Hales, “Belonging to a Ward Family,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1996, 14–17; Sue Bergin, “Single—in a Family Ward,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1989, 32–35.*

Visit www.lds.org or see Church magazines on CD.



When we focus on Christ, we are better able to enjoy unity as a ward family.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS AND EXPERIENCES ARE SHARED BY ENSIGN READERS

QUESTION

Some members of my family are not active or are uninterested in the Church. I want them to feel the joy I feel from living the gospel but do not wish to bring contention into the home. How can I help my family come closer to God?

“Love, the pure love of Christ, is what will soften the hearts of your family members,” says **Susan Pauvif of the Springvale Ward, Melbourne Australia Braeside Stake**. “Do little acts of love and kindness for them. They are children of our Heavenly Father, and He loves them very much.”

“The Lord has been clear: ‘Love one another; as I have loved you’ (John 13:34). Sincere, genuine love is paramount,” says **Richard Harris, Silvergate Park Ward, Mesa Arizona Pueblo Stake**. “People will respond when they know how much we love them.”

Sister Gayle Iliff of the Wauseon Branch, Toledo Ohio Stake, joined the Church several years ago when



The pure love of Christ will help to soften the hearts of family members.

she was 32. Her parents accepted her decision to be baptized but with some reservation. Difficulties increased when she became engaged and tried to explain temple marriage to them. They were deeply hurt at not being able to attend the wedding of their only daughter. They refused to hear any more about the Church or its teachings.

Inspiration and opportunity came to Sister Iliff when she was called as a counselor in the branch

Young Women presidency. “When I was set apart by the branch president,” she says, “I was blessed that I should use the Personal Progress program as a missionary tool to share the gospel with my family. When I complete a value experience, I present the required materials to my mother or father, and they sign my Personal Progress book. I have been able to read scriptures with them, share hymns and testimony, and demonstrate the service and other good works the Young Women are doing. It has been a wonderful experience to watch my parents’ hearts soften as I share these things with them in such a nonthreatening manner.”

Eric Hicks of the Crestwood First Ward, Louisville Kentucky Stake, suggests we need to “spend more time with our families.” This counsel, he says, “is especially important within families where some are not members of the Church. It is sometimes confusing to them that a church stressing family togetherness would pull a family member into so many activities outside the home. As warm and welcome as we may feel at church, this should never become a substitute for the home.”

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

"In addition to Church activities, it is so easy to get caught up in what some have called 'the thick of thin things.' We often find it easy to indulge our own interests or hobbies and leave little time for anyone else. If we want our families to feel close to God, we must become close to them."

"I am the only member of the Church in my family," says **Gwendolyn Young of the Cameron Ward, Liberty Missouri Stake.**

"Many times I have had the desire to share the gospel with them, but every time I have tried, it brought only contention." One day Sister Young was talking on the phone with her father, who is a renal patient. His voice cracked with emotion as he told her of a woman who had decided to give one of her kidneys to her father. Apologizing, he said, "I'm sorry, but every time I hear such a touching story of love I seem to do this."

"It then hit me," says Sister Young; "this was an opportunity to teach. So I said: 'It's all right, Dad. What you are feeling is the Holy Ghost, who bears record of all truth. You know, it takes a special person to feel the Spirit of the Lord. This is one of the ways God communicates with His children.' My father knew what I was saying was true because he said, 'I just felt it again when you said that.'"

Kristy Willhite of the Cottonwood Heights First Ward, Salt Lake Cottonwood Heights Stake, shares an opportunity to teach her nonmember dad about family history work. "As my list of names for temple work grew, I felt I should ask my dad how he would feel if I did the temple work for his parents, grandparents, and other ancestors. When my father expressed some concern, I asked, 'Do you think people go on living after death?' Since this was a natural

question to be asking when discussing temple work for the dead, neither of us felt awkward, and we were able to have a warm, open conversation about the gospel."

After joining the Church several years ago, **Lenora Crane of the Diamond Valley Branch, Calgary Alberta Foothills Stake,** was excited to share her joy with her family but quickly learned they had no interest. "I waited patiently and prayerfully for opportunities when I could explain such concepts as honesty, chastity, and God as universal truths, not just as LDS doctrine. Learning to pray together was a miracle provided by the Lord. When my oldest daughter was distraught over breaking up with her boyfriend, she came to me in tears, not knowing what to do. I told her that if it had happened to me, I would pray to Heavenly Father for help and guidance. She asked, 'How do I do that?' While my other

"Do you think people go on living after death?" I asked my dad.



PHOTO BY STEVE TREGAILE



Praying with her daughter helped one woman be a peacemaker with a less-active husband.

daughter listened, we discussed the steps of prayer. My daughter now knows that Heavenly Father answers prayers. Often she will ask me to pray with her at difficult times. Praying at mealtime, in the morning, and in the evening are now a normal part of our lives.”

Rineke de Bruijn of the Amsterdam Ward, The Hague Netherlands Stake, relates: “When I was young, most of my family were not active. One day one of our friends was sealed to her parents. I cried my eyes out, wanting to be sealed to my parents and five siblings. I asked the missionaries to talk to my parents. The results were negative. The missionaries counseled me to pray and be an example to them. Over the years two of us have gone on missions and three married in the temple. In spite of the religious differences, there is a strong bond of love among all of us.”

“Living the gospel is one of the best ways to get someone interested in the Church,” says **James Richards of the Spring Branch Ward, Katy Texas Stake**. “This allows our family members to see firsthand the fruits that accompany faithfulness: ‘love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance’ (Gal. 5:22–23). As those around us begin to see these fruits, their

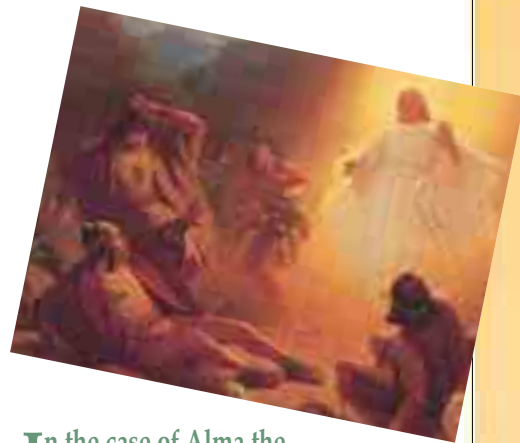
desire to live the gospel will increase. One of the best ways to set a good example is to love them even when they make choices contrary to the gospel.”

Lois Kullberg of the Salmon Creek Ward, Vancouver Washington West Stake, sends a section of her journal to her adult children monthly, two of whom are less active. “In the journal,” she says, “besides our daily activities, I write about Church meetings we attend, thoughts I can share about attending the temple, bits of lessons we teach and talks we give, and testimony-building experiences. This past year we shared the daily happenings of our Church mission in Toronto, Canada.” She says she tries “in quiet ways to bear testimony of various aspects of the gospel. I know they read the journals. I hope they receive the spiritual messages included.”

Esther J. Henscheid of the Blackfoot Fifth Ward, Blackfoot Idaho South Stake, explains that while her husband is not interested in the Church, they do things to bring each other closer to God. “We have spent considerable time learning about each other’s beliefs through the missionary discussions and the religious education teachers from his church. It is understood that these were not attempts to convert. This has helped us become more sensitive to the beliefs and practices we each consider sacred, and we are less prone to say or do something that would be offensive.”

Soon after **Elizabeth Clark of the Stevenage Ward, St. Albans England Stake**, was married in the temple, her husband became less active. “I bought him a taped version of the Book of Mormon and tried to convince him he should return to church,” she says. “This only made things worse. Three factors helped turn this situation around. First, I realized I was trying to pray away my husband’s agency. I had to trust my Heavenly Father

to a greater extent. Second, I continued to pray and read scriptures with our daughter. This helped me be more of a peacemaker. Some time later, my husband stated that he admired my persistence in prayer and scripture study. Third, we had brilliant home teachers who never gave up. Eventually, he accepted a Church assignment and slowly became active again.”



In the case of Alma the Younger, an angel appeared to him in response to the unflagging prayers of his father.

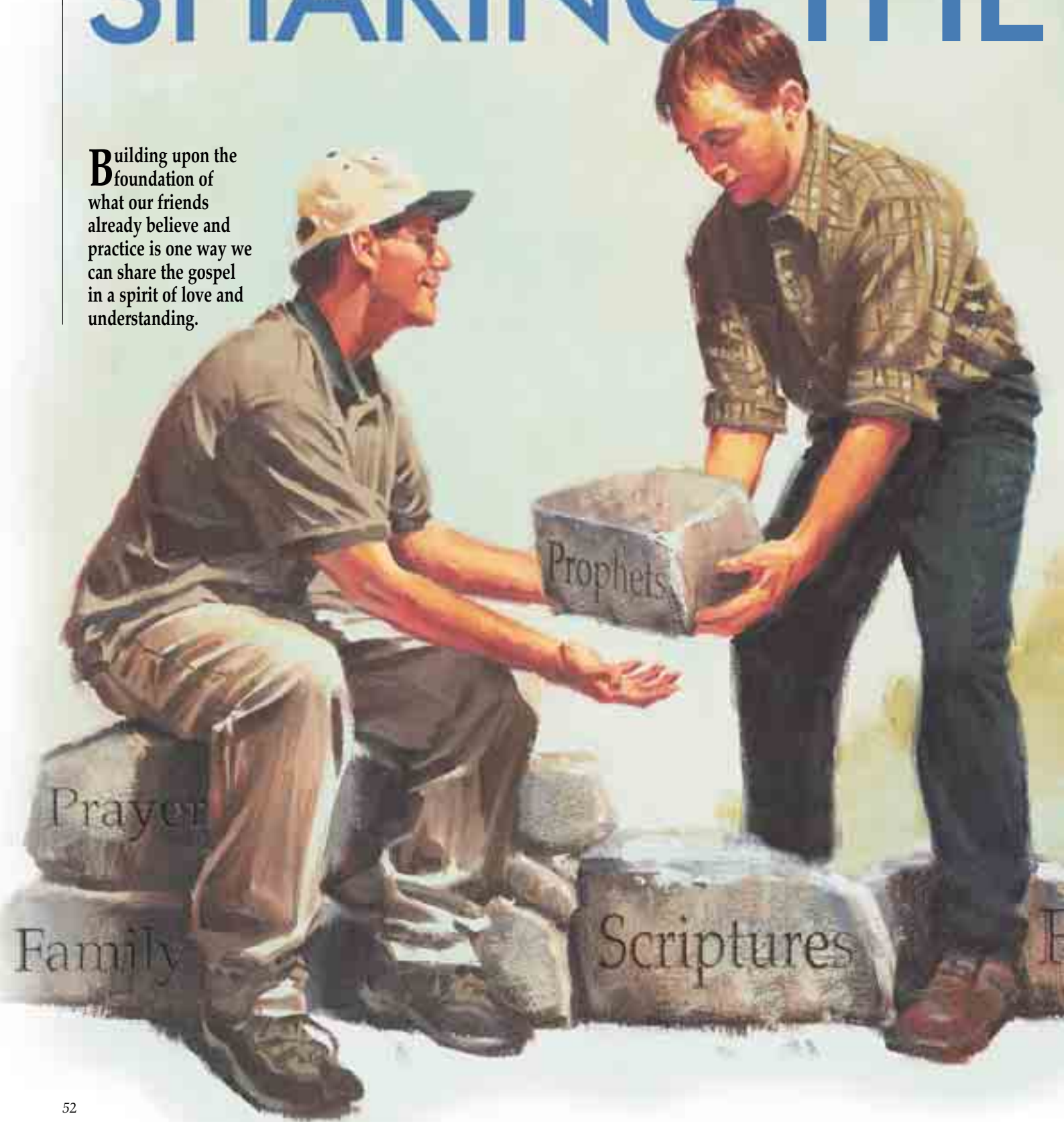
Janine Simons Creager of the Farmington 18th Ward, Farmington Utah South Stake, says: “It is crucial that we never lose hope that one day our loved ones will accept the gospel. In the case of Alma the Younger, the angel who appeared to him came in response to the pleadings and prayers of his father (see Mosiah 27:14). He and the sons of Mosiah had once rejected the truth. But because of the prayers and example of their families, they were receptive when the time came. President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: ‘You have not failed until you have quit trying. . . . Remember that your example in your home will be a more persuasive sermon than will any other kind of preaching’” (“Live Up to Your Inheritance,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 82). □

Gospel topics: missionary work, example, love, teaching

THE CONVERSION OF ALMA, BY GARY KAPP

SHARING THE

Building upon the foundation of what our friends already believe and practice is one way we can share the gospel in a spirit of love and understanding.



GOSPEL

with Sensitivity



BY ELDER R. LLOYD SMITH
Area Authority Seventy

A colleague once said to me, “You Mormons are nice people; I’ve never met a bad one. But your claim that you’re the only true church really bothers me.”

When the resurrected Savior ascended into heaven, He instructed His disciples, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19). In our day the Lord commanded the Prophet Joseph Smith to send missionaries to preach the gospel across this country and Europe. Most recently, President Gordon B. Hinckley has challenged us to double the number of convert baptisms.¹ Sometimes, however, in our eagerness and enthusiasm to share the gospel with family, friends, neighbors, and strangers we may be perceived as being arrogant, perhaps even offensive. We don’t want to come across this way, yet we have a divine mandate to offer the restored gospel to others.

We need not apologize for or feel uncomfortable about our testimony of the restored gospel, nor our eagerness to share it with others.

However, we must ask ourselves, “How can I balance my responsibility as a member missionary with the need to be kind and loving in my approach to others?”

BE SINCERE

The sons of King Mosiah “were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble” (Mosiah 28:3). Our motivation, like theirs, should be a deep love for our friends and neighbors, indeed for every son and daughter of God. Our acquaintances must know that our friendship is not contingent upon their joining the Church. When they feel that we truly care about them, they will begin to recognize that what we are offering them is based upon our love for them, not just a desire to increase the membership of the Church.

Daily seeking the Spirit to attend us in our activities and in our conversations with others will help us be sincere and motivated by Christlike love. We need to be meek and humble if we expect the Spirit to work through us. It is the Holy Spirit that can change a person’s heart, not the member or the missionary.

A friend who worked in marketing once told me, “People immediately recognize a sales pitch, and nothing turns them off faster than a sales pitch on religion.” When we are perceived as selling something, the response we get from those we approach often changes from full engagement in conversation to a half-listening mode. When introducing the gospel, do not be too concerned with the amount of doctrine you are teaching. Usually our friends’ questions can be answered in a simple, direct way. Stay focused on responding to the questions, and avoid straying into



unrelated subjects. Do not engage in debates that can lead to emotional confrontations. Remain engaged in a friendly, caring conversation so “he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together” (D&C 50:22). Our friends may have personal doubts about our religion, but we should never give them reason to doubt our sincerity or the spiritual feelings they have when we say something to them that is endorsed by the Holy Ghost.

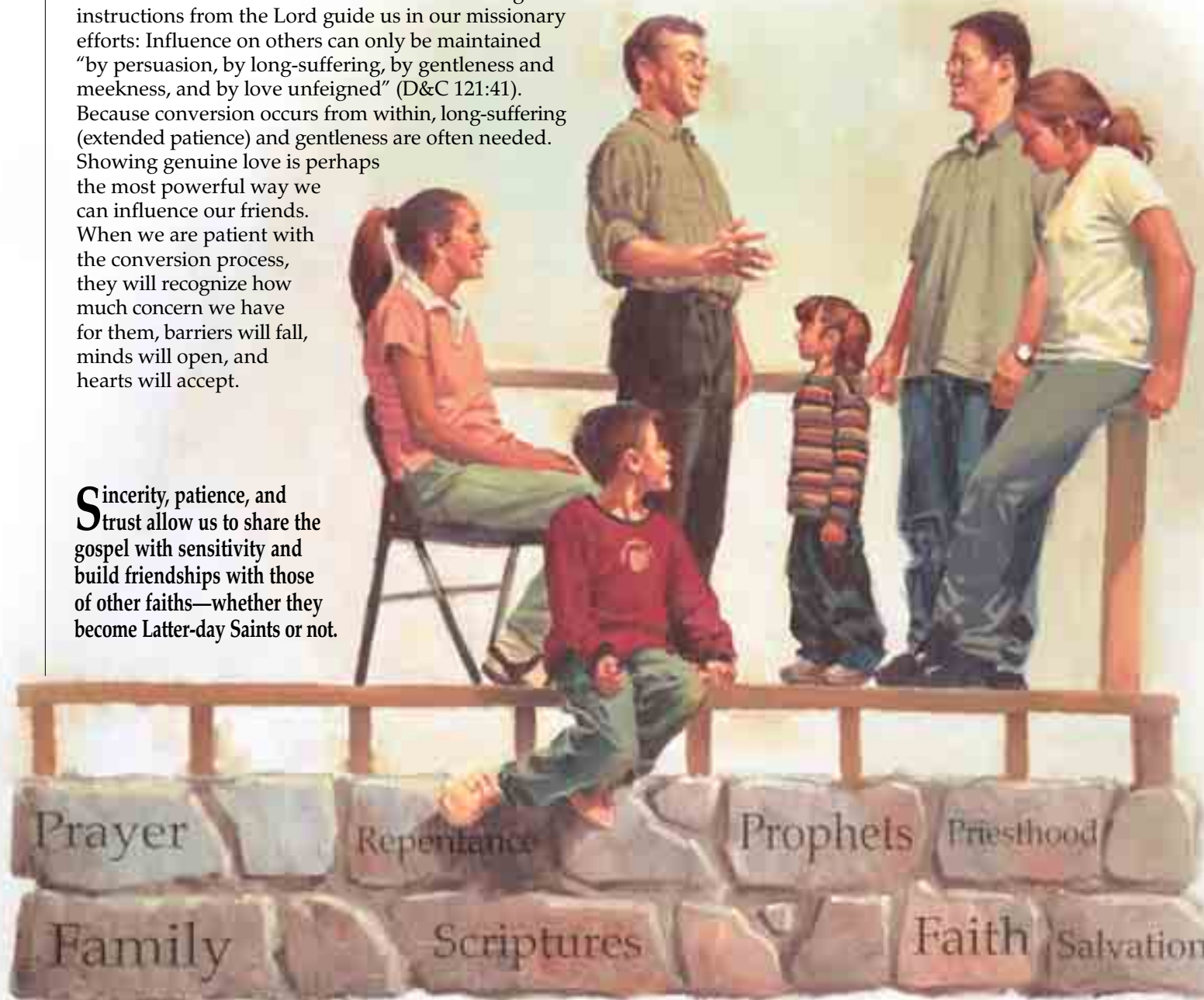
BE PATIENT

In addition to being sincere, we need to be patient. The Lord’s timetable is often different from ours. The conversion of friends and family members is often a long-term process; it may begin with a gradual change in attitude. We would do well to let the following instructions from the Lord guide us in our missionary efforts: Influence on others can only be maintained “by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned” (D&C 121:41). Because conversion occurs from within, long-suffering (extended patience) and gentleness are often needed. Showing genuine love is perhaps the most powerful way we can influence our friends. When we are patient with the conversion process, they will recognize how much concern we have for them, barriers will fall, minds will open, and hearts will accept.

Sincerity, patience, and trust allow us to share the gospel with sensitivity and build friendships with those of other faiths—whether they become Latter-day Saints or not.

BUILD TRUST

Conflict between the new ideas you are telling your friends and their old beliefs may cause them to hesitate or to reject the message of the restored gospel. One investigator I know put it this way: “If you’re right, my parents and my whole family have been wrong, and that is tough to take.” Our friends sometimes feel they must make the difficult choice of believing either the people they have known and trusted all their lives—those who have instilled within them their core beliefs and values—or of believing someone who is most likely a relative newcomer in their lives. Their decisions, quite simply put, become a matter of trust. As member missionaries we can help ease or lessen this conflict by reinforcing the correct principles and beliefs they already have. This



can help because it validates their trust in the people they already love and respect.

The issue of trust is also essential for the member missionary. We must trust that the Lord also cares about our friends. Rather than trying to urge or press our beliefs upon them, which may push them away, we must trust the Spirit to give them a sense of peace and assurance during their time of social and doctrinal transition. The testimony of converts who have faced and overcome similar difficulties can help them at this stage of their conversion process. We can also help our friends build trust in the Lord by encouraging them to go to Him in prayer for understanding and confirmation of what they have been taught.

AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF ARROGANCE

As my colleague noted, one of the real challenges for some investigators is accepting the idea of only one true church. This is especially true if they have been active in another religion.

How can we teach this principle without appearing arrogant or offensive? We can teach it by explaining our beliefs with patience and humility, as directed by the Holy Ghost, and by not taking offense when some of our cherished doctrines are initially disbelieved or rejected.

President Hinckley has said, “[We are] not argumentative. We do not debate. We, in effect, simply say to others, ‘Bring all the good that you have and let us see if we can add to it.’”² We will not bring souls to Christ by simply telling them they are wrong. Many good people are striving to live good lives. When we lived in Tennessee, our six children made friends with young people who were as active in their churches as we were in ours; one neighbor family read the Bible together every day. I have a business partner who pays tithing to his church. Most of my neighbors attend services at their churches every week. When sharing the gospel, build upon the foundation of what your friends already believe and practice. Acknowledge their many good beliefs and practices; then explain that God has made even more available through modern-day revelation: eternal marriage, sealed families, temple blessings for living and deceased ancestors, exaltation, and many other blessings.

The expression “I know the Church is true,” while a powerful testimony by itself, can be strengthened and made more effective with our friends when we also testify of principles that show the Church is true. Testify of how the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ have changed your life. Testify of Joseph Smith as a modern-day prophet and relate experiences that

have brought you knowledge and peace. Testify of the feelings you have when you read the Book of Mormon and of how you came to know it is the word of God. Testify of the Restoration of the priesthood authority to the earth and the blessings that have come to you through the priesthood. Testify of modern-day prophets and explain the teachings of President Hinckley that have touched you personally. Testify of the joy and happiness you feel as a member of the Church. Testify that it is because of all these things that you know the Church is true.

APPRECIATE DIFFERENCES

During a staff Christmas gathering at the Catholic hospital where I work, I was impressed by the prayer of a beloved nun. She asked that a blessing be upon our Jewish friends, who were also celebrated during the holiday season. Like her, we should always be considerate and respectful of other faiths. Our Church is a worldwide church. Our friends and neighbors

come from diverse backgrounds of cultural and religious beliefs. Those of us who have been raised in the Church often have too little appreciation of how much courage it takes to be baptized when that choice means breaking with long-standing traditions or forfeiting family and friends. This difficult transition can be especially true of people

who are embracing Christianity for the first time. It is important for us to understand and appreciate the traditions from which they are coming.

President Hinckley has asked us to be tolerant of those of other faiths: “We must not be clannish. We must never adopt a holier-than-thou attitude. We must not be self-righteous. We must be magnanimous, and open, and friendly. We can keep our faith. We can practice our religion. We can cherish our method of worship without being offensive to others.”³ These attitudes, coupled with a sincere Christlike love, patience, and trust, are the answers to sharing the gospel with sensitivity to our family and friends. □

NOTES

1. “Find the Lambs, Feed the Sheep,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 105.
2. “The BYU Experience,” in *Brigham Young University 1997–98 Speeches* (1997), 64.
3. “President Hinckley Speaks during Pioneer Day Devotional,” *Church News*, 28 July 2001, 4.

Elder R. Lloyd Smith is an Area Authority Seventy serving in the North America East Area.

Gospel topics: love, missionary work, tolerance

*More on this topic: See Dallin H. Oaks, “Sharing the Gospel,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 7–9; Jeffrey R. Holland, “Witnesses unto Me,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 14–16; Sandra Rogers, “Knitting a Worldwide Church Together,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1998, 48–53.*

A Priceless

ALMA O. TAYLOR'S MISSION TO JAPAN

The journals of this early missionary are inspiring for missionaries everywhere today.

BY REID L. NEILSON

Kneeling on a wooded hill overlooking Tokyo Bay, Alma Taylor was full of joy as he heard Elder Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles dedicate the land of Japan. Although at the time Alma was only a 19-year-old boy far away from home, he would go on to help lay the foundation of the Church in this great Asian nation.

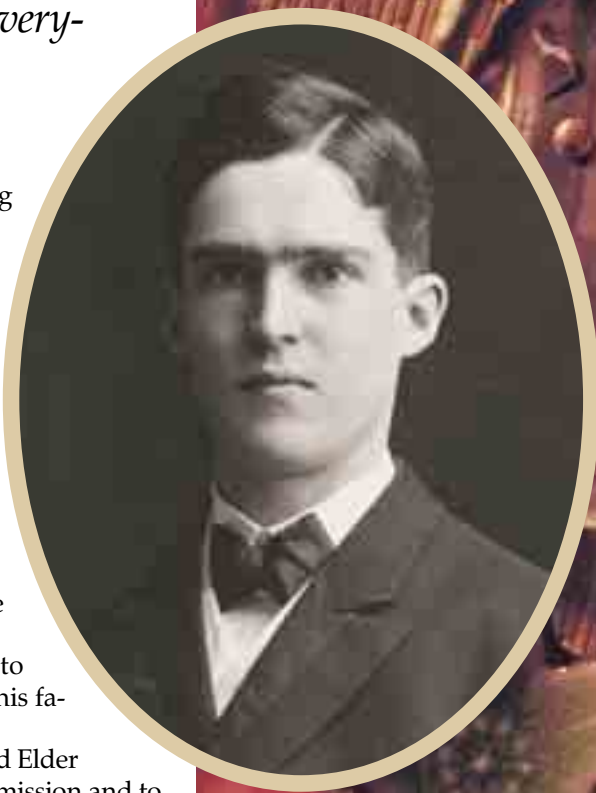
Alma Owen Taylor was born in Salt Lake City on 1 August 1882. From an early age, he showed great ability and intellect. At 17 he graduated from Salt Lake City's Latter-day Saint College, and a year later he graduated first in his class from Chicago's Harvey Medical College. He then returned to Salt Lake City, where he began working in his father's mortuary business.

About this time, the First Presidency called Elder Heber J. Grant to establish the first Japanese mission and to serve as its president. Elder Grant then called two men to accompany him: 45-year-old Louis A. Kelsch and 29-year-old Horace S. Ensign. Several months later, Elder Grant also felt inspired to call young Alma to join his group.

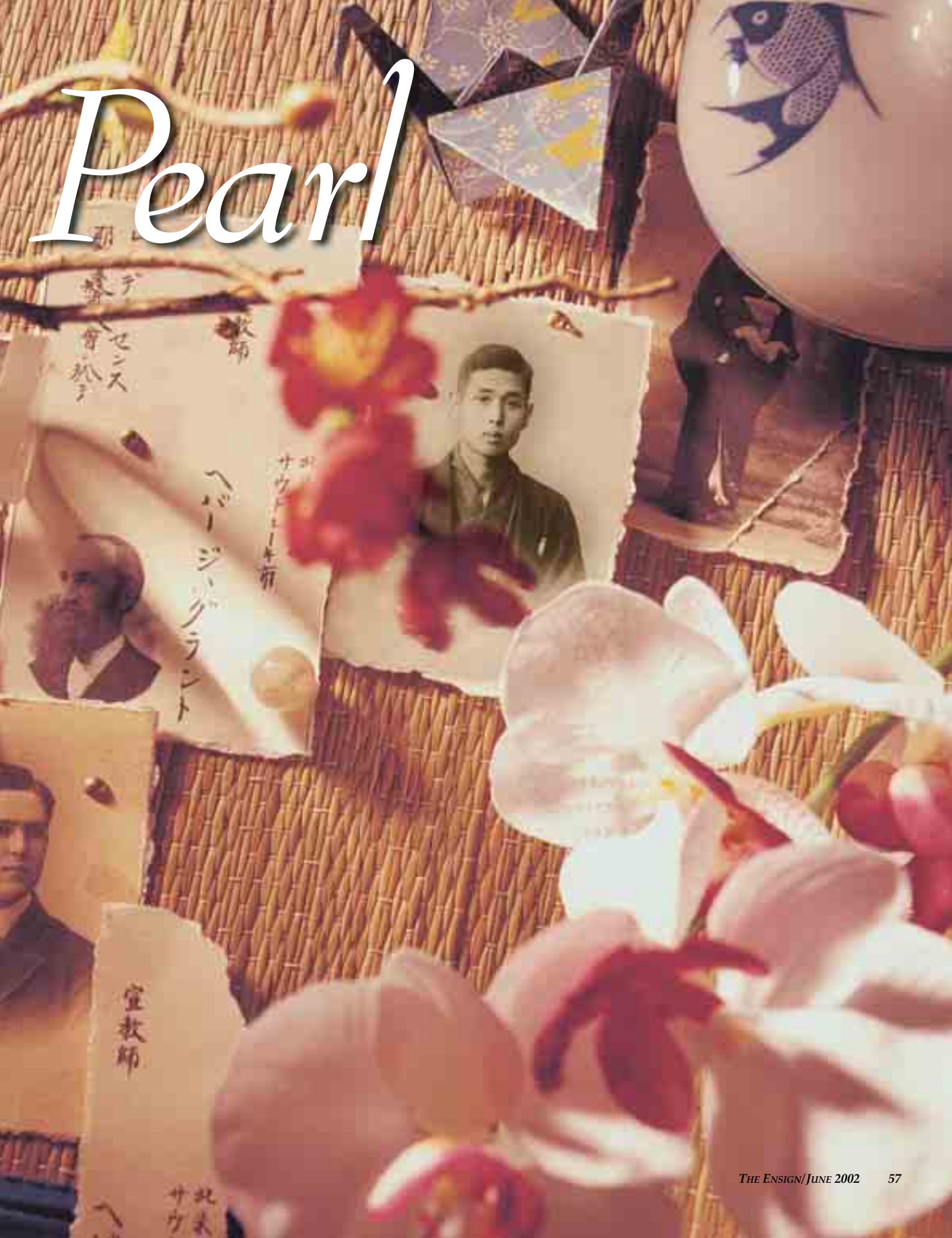
The four missionaries departed from Salt Lake City on 24 July 1901, traveling by train to Vancouver, Washington, where they boarded their steamer for Japan. On 12 August the missionaries arrived in Tokyo Bay.

Their initial exuberance at being in Japan was tempered a few weeks later as they watched their ship sail

Among mementos of the first missionaries to Japan are the calling card of Elder Heber J. Grant (center) and photos of Alma Taylor (inset and bottom) and acquaintances.



Pearl



from the harbor. Alma wrote, "With longing eyes we stood on the shore and watched [the ship] as it moved gently out of the harbor, and we felt as though we were parting with a dear friend. But," he continued with his characteristic optimism, "still we were happy in the thought that we had come to this land for the purpose of winning souls unto Christ."¹

During their first weeks, Alma and his companions busied themselves with various responsibilities, including responding to a barrage of anti-Mormon press. On Sunday, 1 September 1901, the fasting elders gathered together on a wooded hill in Yokohama to dedicate Japan for the preaching of the gospel.

Alma's journal entry is the only written account of the momentous occasion. After the four missionaries sang several hymns, Elder Grant dedicated the isles of Japan for missionary work. Wrote Alma, "[Elder Grant's] tongue was loosed and the Spirit rested mightily upon him; so much so that we felt the angels of God were near for our hearts burned within us as the words fell from his lips. I never experienced such a peaceful influence or heard such a powerful prayer before. Every word penetrated into my very bones and I could [have] wept for joy."²

While praying, Elder Grant asked Heavenly Father to bless Alma with "further knowledge and power," that he "might become as Alma of old, full of the Spirit and powerful in the Word of God."³ Alma would continually draw strength from that prayer and its promises as he struggled through the difficult times of his mission.

By nature Alma was a thoughtful young man. His journals and letters brim with inspiring insights and testimony. On 13 October 1901 he recorded in his journal: "In the evening before supper, I took a walk out on the Bluff . . . to a place which looked out over the bay. The sight was a pleasing one. . . . The restless billows seemed to [bear] me home again, for before my mind there arose the loving and familiar features of my folks and the Wasatch Range [of Utah], with its canyons, its snow-capped peaks, its streams of crystal water, and its fascinating grandeur. . . .

"I thought of friends and the happy associations which I had left, to come out into this distant land. And why had I left the happiness of home? Why was I here traveling among those whom I knew not, and to whom I was a total stranger? I am here to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to those who know not God. . . .

"But why do this?" Alma asked himself. "The doctrine which you teach is mocked by men; your efforts

are ridiculed by those whom you seek to convert; and your earnestness and sacrifice is not appreciated, but on the contrary, it is made a matter of sport and a subject for hilarity with those who see or hear of your labors. Why not return to your friends where your society and efforts will be appreciated?

"Because the Lord has called me to this land to proclaim the truth unto this people, and I have received the promise that if I do not succeed in converting one soul, yet am diligent in carrying out the duty that has been imposed in me by the Prophet of God, in spite of the ridicule and persecution of men, I shall in no wise lose my reward, nor will the Lord fail to recognize my labor."

In spite of his strong desire to declare the gospel, the formidable Japanese language humbled Alma. Two months after arriving in Japan he confided in his journal, "[This] afternoon I spent in study and research after the Japanese language, which seems at present an almost insurmountable task, most discouraging to the mind of its young student."⁴

But it was not the language itself that fueled Alma's discouragement; rather it was not having the ability to share the gospel with the people. "It almost makes my heart sick," he wrote, "when I think of the opportunity there is in this land to preach the gospel . . . if we could only speak the Japanese language. It is truly hell to want to, and not be able to."⁵

Alma's hopes of learning the language were kept alive, however, often in undeniable ways. During a

fast and testimony meeting, Elder Grant prophesied that Alma "would be the main instrument in the hands of the Lord in translating the Book of Mormon into the Japanese language," further stating that "he had been praying that [Alma] should be assisted of the Lord to learn this language speedily so that the translation of this book might be made in the near future."⁶ Several months into his mission, Alma received by letter encouragement from his mother: "I still think you are doing well in the language. . . . With a prayer in your heart get up and preach and if they understand you, thank God; if they don't, keep on preaching and the Lord will, according to promise, come to your relief."⁷

On the group's first Christmas in Japan, Alma wrote, "I hope that by the next Christmas, that I will have received from my Heavenly Father that gift which I so much long for, namely the knowledge of the language so that I may preach the Gospel of the Man whose birth these days commemorate."⁸

As Alma endeavored to increase his understanding of the language, he also gained a deep appreciation for



On 19 February 1902, Alma (back row, center) and his companions had this photo taken on the site where they had earlier dedicated Japan.

the people. During the New Year's holiday, Alma and his companion, Horace Ensign, were invited to visit the home of a Japanese acquaintance. Traveling by train, the two reached the small farming village of Kameari and were greeted by their Japanese host. That evening, the missionaries slept on futons on the floor, next to their host family. As was custom, the family heated their wooden home with small stoves called "hibachi."

"At midnight or soon thereafter I woke up and saw our friend sitting by one of the 'hibachi,'" wrote Alma, "but did not realize why he was doing so. It leaked out in the morning, however, that he feared we would be cold in the night and he has sat up all the time to keep the fires going for the comfort of [us], his guests. Such a display of kindness and consideration found a soft place in my heart for him. . . . Let people say what they will concerning . . . the heathenism that prevails here, so long as [the Japanese] can demonstrate, by such actions as this, their appreciation of friends and friendship, they can teach their more civilized neighbors how to be considerate of the comfort of the stranger traveling in their midst. . . ."

"I asked myself if I would be willing to sit up all night long to look after the comfort of a sleeping friend, much less a comparative stranger, and I feared that my disposition was faulty, so I tried to profit by the lesson which this incident taught me."⁹

For the first several months in Japan, the four elders enjoyed little missionary success. Most of their time was spent studying Japanese or in defending, rather than sharing, their faith. Finally, a young Shinto priest by the name of Hajime Nakazawa began to show interest and eventually desired to be baptized.

Alma's journal chronicles Brother Nakazawa's conversion. On 8 March 1902, Alma and the three other missionaries hired a small rowboat and ferried their investigator and an interpreter out into Tokyo Bay. Once they reached the requisite depth for immersion, Elder Grant and Brother Nakazawa lifted themselves over the boat's frame and into the salty water. Clasp Brother Nakazawa's right wrist with his left hand, Elder Grant raised his own right arm to the square and performed the first Latter-day Saint baptism in Japan.

Alma described the historic event: "All was peace, and Apostle Grant's words were spoken slowly and with marked distinctness. Our bosoms swelled with emotion as the words of the prayer fell upon our ears and we could have shouted with thanksgiving when the waters parted and enveloped within their rippling folds one of God's children, who soon came forth from that 'burial with Christ' unto a new life, having taken upon himself the covenant of the everlasting gospel. . . ."

"It can only be left to the imagination of others the



Left: Elder Heber J. Grant in a Japanese ricksha. Above: In 1902 the number of missionaries in Japan increased. Alma Taylor stands at the far left of this photo, taken in front of mission headquarters in Yokohama.



feelings which passed through my mind and heart, for this was the first time for me to witness the initiation of a convert into the fold in the mission field, and it was with the deepest sentiments of brotherhood that I welcomed this soul into the chosen fold of the Father. . . . We began the day with four members . . . and ended with five."¹⁰

Alma would go on to spend eight more years in Japan as a missionary, eventually serving as president of the Japanese Mission and producing in October 1909 the first Japanese translation of the Book of Mormon.

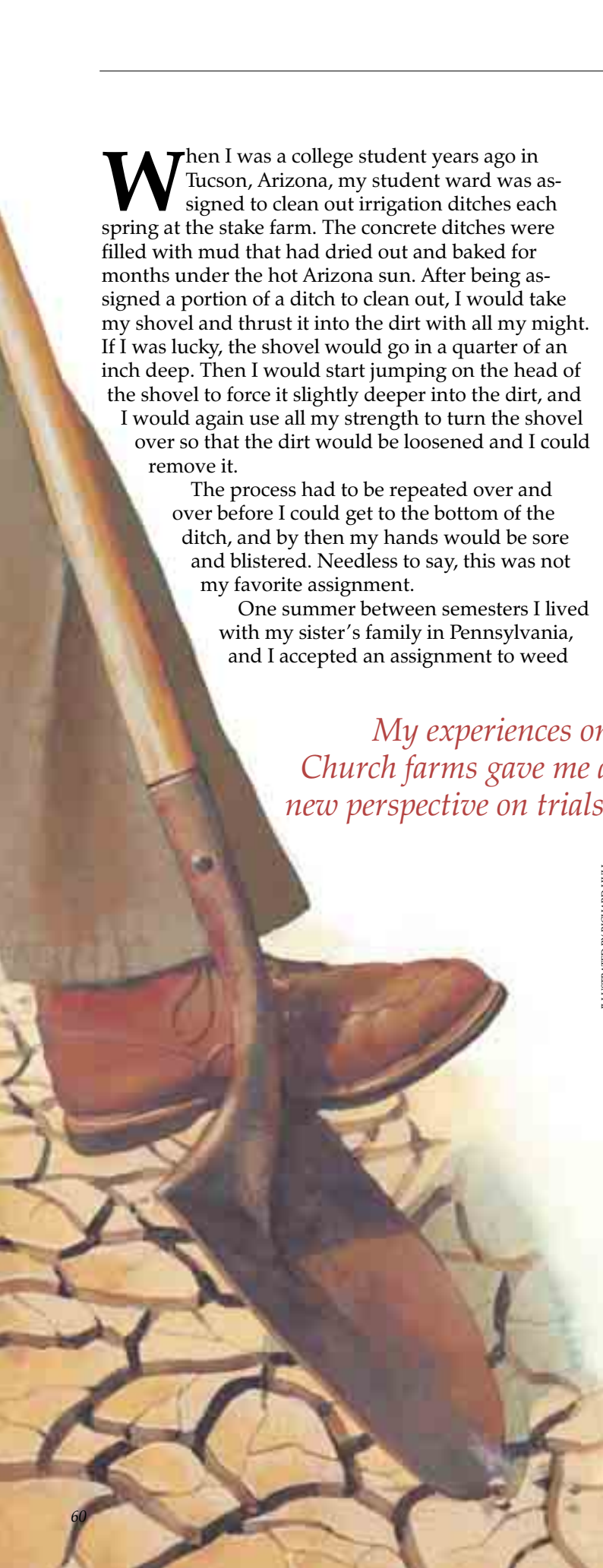
Only 35 people joined the Church in Japan during all the years of Alma's tenure there. But his efforts lay the foundation for what has today become, 100 years after its first baptism, a nation of more than 110,000 Latter-day Saints, with 2 temples, 31 stakes, and 8 missions.

In a letter to an acquaintance of another faith, Alma bore powerful witness of the gospel and of missionary work, stating: "It is the universal testimony of all the missionaries of our church that their missionary days are the happiest of their lives. We leave our homes, loved ones, friends, business, and all that is near and dear to the natural heart of man and go to any part of the world we may be sent . . . among strange people in strange lands. . . . Yet, ask any 'Mormon' missionary if money or any of this world's riches or honor could buy from him the testimony that such experiences have given him and you will find that practically without exception they hold such a testimony as a priceless pearl."¹¹ □

NOTES

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Journal of Alma O. Taylor, 6 Sept. 1901, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University. | 6. 5 Jan. 1902. |
| 2. 1 Sept. 1901. | 7. 24–30 Mar. 1902. |
| 3. 1 Sept. 1901. | 8. 25 Dec. 1901. |
| 4. 8 Oct. 1901. | 9. 2–3 Jan. 1902. |
| 5. 9 Feb. 1902. | 10. 8 Mar. 1902. |
| | 11. Letter to the Rev. H. C. Houston, 23 Jan. 1902, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University. |

Reid L. Neilson is a member of the BYU 213th Ward, BYU 15th Stake. Gospel topics: missionary work, testimony, obedience, endurance

An illustration showing a person's legs in khaki pants and brown boots, standing on a field of cracked, dry earth. A wooden-handled hoe is positioned vertically, leaning against the person's legs. The background is a soft, hazy landscape.

When I was a college student years ago in Tucson, Arizona, my student ward was assigned to clean out irrigation ditches each spring at the stake farm. The concrete ditches were filled with mud that had dried out and baked for months under the hot Arizona sun. After being assigned a portion of a ditch to clean out, I would take my shovel and thrust it into the dirt with all my might. If I was lucky, the shovel would go in a quarter of an inch deep. Then I would start jumping on the head of the shovel to force it slightly deeper into the dirt, and I would again use all my strength to turn the shovel over so that the dirt would be loosened and I could remove it.

The process had to be repeated over and over before I could get to the bottom of the ditch, and by then my hands would be sore and blistered. Needless to say, this was not my favorite assignment.

One summer between semesters I lived with my sister's family in Pennsylvania, and I accepted an assignment to weed

My experiences on Church farms gave me a new perspective on trials.

the tomatoes at the ward farm. I approached my assigned row with a hoe in hand, swung it high over my head like a golf club, and attacked the first weed I saw. The weed went flying through the air, followed by a clump of dirt and an airborne tomato plant.

I was more than a little embarrassed. I quickly replanted the tomato plant and approached the next weed, which, as luck would have it, was perilously close to another tomato plant. I swung my hoe only about half as high as before, but still the weed went sailing, again followed by a clump of dirt and a hapless tomato plant.

By then I started to notice the concerned looks of some of the ward members. One of them said in a gentle but pleading tone, "You don't have to swing so hard!"

As I approached the third weed, I was determined to hold back my strength. It seemed that I just barely moved my wrists to swing the hoe, but you would never know it from the results. Once again, the weed went flying, but this time the tomato plant didn't follow it—although it was uprooted.

I'm sure the ward members were fearful that their

Arizona Dirt,

BY BARBARA MURPHY LIKOVICH

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD HULL

entire tomato crop would be ruined if someone didn't step in and show me how to use a hoe properly. Once instructed, I began working at a rapid pace, going much faster than the other workers, who were huffing and puffing as they went along. Some cautioned me not to work so fast, saying that I would wear myself out, but I didn't feel any fatigue and kept up my quick pace.

Finally, someone asked me how I was able to work so fast and for so long. "That's easy," I replied. "I'm used to hard Arizona dirt. This soft Pennsylvania soil is nothing!"

As the years have gone by, I have spent much of my life in situations akin to Pennsylvania soil. But without Arizona dirt experiences to compare them with, I wouldn't realize how easy they are. And without Arizona dirt to strengthen me, the Pennsylvania soil would wear me out.

I have been inspired by the Book of Mormon account of Lachoneus, a righteous governor of the Nephites. He received a letter from Giddianhi, the leader of the Gadianton robbers, demanding the surrender of all the Nephites' lands and possessions. Giddianhi warned that the Nephites would be slaughtered if his demands were not met, a threat that left Lachoneus "exceedingly astonished, because of the boldness of Giddianhi" (3 Ne. 3:11).

In response, Lachoneus instructed his people to “cry unto the Lord for strength” (v. 12) and to gather to one place with all their possessions. Once gathered, the people built strong fortifications around themselves and placed armies as guards around them to provide round-the-clock protection.

Lachoneus next told the people to repent of all their sins and again pray diligently for deliverance from the robbers. Then Lachoneus appointed righteous men to serve as chief captains in the army. The “chiefest among all the chief captains” (v. 18) was Gidgiddoni, who caused that his army “should make weapons of war of every kind, and they should be strong with armor, and with shields, and

Pennsylvania Soil

with bucklers, after the manner of his instruction” (v. 26).

The people prayed. They built fortifications and made weapons. They formed armies. They repented. Nowhere do we read that they prayed for the battle not to happen. Lachoneus apparently understood a lesson most of us must learn many times over during our lifetimes: Sometimes it is better for us to be strengthened to overcome an obstacle rather than to have the obstacle removed. Sometimes we must tackle the Arizona dirt when we would prefer Pennsylvania soil.

In the fourth chapter of 3 Nephi, we read that the Nephites were victorious against the Gadianton robbers, although one of the battles that led to victory was described as so “great and terrible . . . there never was known so great a slaughter among all the people of Lehi since he left Jerusalem” (v. 11). When the war was over, the Nephites were a much spiritually stronger people who “did forsake all their sins, and their abominations, and their whoredoms, and did serve God with all diligence day and night” (3 Ne. 5:3).

I have never had to fight a battle as did the Nephites under Lachoneus, but I have enough challenges behind me now to see that I am stronger spiritually because of them.

President Spencer W. Kimball once said: “There are

great challenges ahead of us, giant opportunities to be met. I welcome that exciting prospect and feel to say to the Lord, humbly, ‘Give me this mountain,’ give me these challenges” (“Give Me This Mountain,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 79). I can now understand a little of the excitement he felt. I know that I would not be the same person without having had my challenges, and so I too feel to say humbly to the Lord, “I love Pennsylvania soil, but please bless me with enough Arizona dirt in my life to strengthen my faith so I can make it back to Thee.” □

Barbara Murphy Likovich is a member of the Camarillo Third Ward, Camarillo California Stake.

Gospel topics: adversity, endurance



PROPHET OF THE RESTORATION

Even a casual observer cannot help but be impressed with the Prophet's astonishing achievements.

Joseph



BY ELDER TAD R. CALLISTER
Area Authority Seventy

In 1844 Josiah Quincy, the respected mayor of Boston, Massachusetts, traveled to Nauvoo, Illinois. He toured the city, visited with the Saints, and interviewed the Prophet Joseph Smith. Mr. Quincy later wrote a book titled *Figures of the Past* and included a chapter on the Prophet with this prediction: "It is by no means improbable that some future text-book for the use of generations yet unborn will contain a question something like this: 'What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen?' And it is by no means impossible that the answer to the interrogatory

may be thus written: 'Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet.'"¹

A LEGACY OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

If we were to travel to Sharon, Vermont, the birthplace of the Prophet, we would see a towering granite shaft piercing 38 1/2 feet into the sky, each foot representing a year in the Prophet's mortal life. To even a casual observer, the Prophet Joseph Smith has left a staggering list of accomplishments for his relatively short lifetime. He was a candidate for the presidency of the United States, proposing a remarkable platform that offered solutions to "the slave problem," championed the elimination of imprisonment for debt, made recommendations for a national bank, and suggested the annexation of Texas, Mexico, and Canada to the United States. He



Joseph Smith

founded the city of Nauvoo, helping to author its charter and supervise its growth in the early 1840s into one of the largest cities in Illinois. He served as one of Nauvoo's mayors, judges, and aldermen. He commanded its armed militia, the Nauvoo Legion, that at its peak was a force of about 3,000 men, and, in addition to all this, he oversaw the construction of two major temples.

But his most significant accomplishment was the establishment of the restored Church of Jesus Christ, a work he was foreordained to do in the Grand Council in Heaven before the world was (see D&C 127:2). Under this divine appointment he saw God the Father and His

Son, Jesus Christ, in a grove of trees in New York, which vision signaled the glorious truth that God speaks to man today. While much of the Christian world believes revelation ended with the Bible, Joseph's First Vision was living proof of the testimony of the prophet Amos: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

THE BOOK OF MORMON MIRACLE

The Prophet Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon (531 pages in the present English version) in

about 85 days. In this book of scripture is found a host of new names, both people and places, interwoven into a complex historical narrative. But most important, this book contains new and clarifying religious doctrine. Its exposition of the Atonement is unsurpassed in beauty and clarity. This book manifests a spirit that captivates the heart of all those who are searching for the truth.

Some years ago, a friend made a presentation on the Book of Mormon in one of our family nights. He commenced by reading these lines from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*:

*There is no fear in him; let him not die;
For he will live, and laugh at this hereafter.
[Clock strikes.]
Peace! count the clock.
The clock has stricken three.*²

At first, these lines seemed not only insignificant but irrelevant to anything in the Book of Mormon. Then my friend made his point—that Shakespeare, one of the keenest intellects the world has ever produced, made a mistake: there were no striking or ticking clocks at the time of Julius Caesar. Shakespeare had placed something out of date. Even this mastermind had momentarily stumbled.

For more than 170 years, critics of the Prophet have placed their scholarly “stethoscopes” firmly against the Book of Mormon, listening for “ticking clocks,” but their stethoscopes have been embarrassingly mute because this book is not the work of a man, but of God.

NEW LIGHT ON BIBLICAL DOCTRINES

The Prophet Joseph taught the marvelous concept of a premortal existence—that we lived as thinking, acting, spirit children of God before we were born.

He brought to light the truth taught centuries earlier to



LEFT PAINTING BY GARY KAPP; INSET PAINTING BY DALE KILBOURN

Left: As a part of his divine appointment to establish the restored Church of Jesus Christ, young Joseph Smith saw God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Right: Translated by the Prophet in about 85 days, the Book of Mormon contains a complex historical narrative and, most importantly, new and clarifying religious doctrine.

the prophet Jeremiah: “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jer. 1:5).

The Prophet was an instrument in God’s hands in restoring the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods to the earth. He then became God’s mouthpiece in explaining how each of these priesthoods functions.

The Prophet Joseph Smith introduced an understanding of temples that was unknown to his contemporaries. Many in Jerusalem today look forward to the rebuilding of a temple in that holy city, but the question lingers, What ordinances will they perform there? Will they only reinstate the sacrifices of Old Testament times, or will they do something more? Fortunately the Prophet revealed to us much more; he revealed the additional ordinances of our latter-day temples that open the doors to exaltation and godhood.

This same beloved Prophet taught that the gospel is preached in the spirit world to those who have died without an opportunity to hear it. Not only is this doctrine scripturally correct, but it appeals to every fair-minded individual. The Prophet simply restored the doctrine espoused years ago by the Apostle Peter: “For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (1 Pet. 4:6).

One verse in the New Testament stands out like a colossal monument. Most of the Christian world attempts to discreetly avoid it. It is found in 1 Corinthians 15:29: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” But the Prophet

Joseph faced this scripture “square on.” He explained that baptism for the dead is a gospel ordinance that is absolutely essential for people who have

1829

1820



lived on the earth but never received this sacred rite.

The Prophet revealed to us the true meaning of genealogy. It is not to prove we are better than someone else, as was the reasoning of the Pharisees, but to perform essential gospel ordinances for our ancestors, recognizing “that they without us should not be made perfect” (Heb. 11:40).

The gospel is somewhat like a 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle. When young Joseph came on the scene, perhaps 100 pieces were already in place. Then the Prophet exercised his divine mantle and put most of the other 900 pieces together. People could now say: “I understand where I came from, why I am here, and where I am going. I know what it means to be a child of God. I understand the depth of my divine potential.”

Certainly there have been many brilliant men and women since the meridian of time. Why were they not able to put this puzzle together? Because God had reserved this work for the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The Prophet once spoke of Christopher Columbus, who was the guest of honor at a banquet. A courtier who was jealous of his discoveries asked him if there were not other capable men in Spain who could have successfully completed his voyage. Columbus responded by holding up an egg and inviting those present to make the egg stand on its end. No one could do it. Finally, he struck one end of the egg upon the table and left it standing. The Prophet then made this point: Once Columbus had shown the way to the New World, nothing was easier than to follow.³ It was the Prophet Joseph Smith who led the way in restoring the Church of Jesus Christ to the earth with all its doctrines and ordinances. In hindsight, it all seems so logical and natural. The Prophet’s role in this divine endeavor was clearly defined by the Lord: “This generation shall have my word through you” (D&C 5:10). Joseph Smith was God’s chosen instrument. His contributions to the restoration of God’s kingdom are monumental.

SATAN’S COUNTERATTACKS

Satan knew Joseph in the premortal existence. He knew Joseph was destined to be a

disturber to his kingdom (see JS—H 1:20). Before the advent of something good and great, Satan always works to prevent it. It is his *modus operandi*. Such was the case at the birth of the Savior with the slaying of the innocents (see Matt. 2:16–18). It occurred again when the Savior commenced His mortal mission and was confronted by Satan and his three temptations (see Luke 4:1–13). The hours of His Atonement were no exception—there was the agony in the Garden, the betrayal, the denunciation, the mock trial, the scourging, and the crucifixion. At every critical juncture, Satan was lying in wait attempting to destroy the Savior and His work. And so it would be with the Prophet Joseph. Satan and his nefarious forces would be present in all their diabolical fury to prevent the Restoration from going forward. Observed the Prophet, “In relation to the kingdom of God, the devil always sets up his kingdom at the very same time in opposition to God.”⁴

Shortly before his First Vision, young Joseph was returning home and was about to cross the threshold of the door when a bullet flew past him. Quickly he jumped inside. The next morning the family discovered that the potential assassin had taken his shot while lying under a nearby wagon. Of this incident Joseph’s mother, Lucy, wrote: “We have not as yet discovered the man who made this attempt at murder, neither can we discover the cause thereof.”⁵ But with hindsight we can guess the cause. Satan knew that the time was near when his kingdom would be shaken to its roots.

Not long after, young Joseph was reading James 1:5 in the Holy Bible. One can almost envision Satan wringing his hands as he watched this boy read this verse again and again. Later Joseph wrote of the spiritual impact of this experience: “Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. I reflected on it again and again” (JS—H 1:12). Satan knew the time for the showdown was near at hand. On a beautiful spring day

LEFT: PAINTING BY CLARK KELLEY PRICE; INSET: PAINTING BY DALE KILBOURN; BELOW RIGHT: PAINTING BY KENNETH RILEY; INSET: PAINTING BY ROBERT BARRETT



Left: The Prophet Joseph Smith led the way in restoring the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Right: The Prophet’s suffering at Liberty Jail was a mighty assault by Satan.



PAINTING BY GREG OLSEN, COURTESY MILL FOND PRESS

Joseph went to a grove of trees near his home, but he was not alone. As he knelt in prayer, he heard a noise like someone walking behind him. His tongue thickened so he could not speak.⁶ An overpowering gloom of darkness overshadowed him. After he called upon God for help, a glorious light dispelled the cloud of darkness and he saw God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

No sooner had the Prophet received the gold plates than attempts were made to wrest them from him. Numerous lawsuits were filed against him—part of the diabolical plan to divert and discourage him from consummating his divinely appointed work. He was falsely imprisoned, tarred and feathered and driven from his home. He endured widespread apostasy and betrayal by friends. And then, 38 1/2 years after his birth, he sealed his testimony with his blood. Satan’s blatant and perpetual assaults are a mighty witness that Joseph Smith was, indeed, a prophet of God, chosen to restore the Church of Christ to the earth.

A TESTIMONY OF HIS GREATNESS

Despite Satan’s unrelenting war against him, the Prophet had a spirit of optimism. Elder George A. Smith (1817–75) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reported that once when he was discouraged, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, “I should never get discouraged, whatever difficulties should surround me, if I was sunk in the lowest pit of Nova Scotia and all the Rocky Mountains piled on top of me, I ought not to be discouraged but hang on, exercise faith and keep up good courage and I should come out on the top of the heap.”⁷ It was as if the Prophet wore a spiritual life preserver. He could be pushed beneath the water with all the force Satan could thrust upon him, but he would always rise to the surface. He had about him an uncanny spiritual buoyancy. No earthly means, no Satanic opposition could thwart the cause. The Prophet Joseph had a testimony of his own divine destiny: “I shall triumph over all my enemies, for the Lord God hath spoken it” (D&C 127:2).

In 1881 the father of President David O.

McKay (1873–1970) was called on a mission to his native Scotland. Brother McKay noticed that the people shunned him when he taught the restored gospel.

They were particularly bitter when he mentioned the name of Joseph Smith. Accordingly he resolved to teach the simple truths of the gospel without mentioning the Restoration. Within a short time he felt a terrible spirit of gloom. “Unless I can get this feeling removed,” he wrote, “I shall have to go home. I can’t continue having my work thus hampered.” Some time thereafter he retired to a secluded cave. He prayed, “Oh, Father, what can I do to have this feeling removed? I must have it lifted or I cannot continue in this work.” He said he then heard a distinct voice say: “Testify that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God.” In response, he cried in his heart, “Lord, it is enough.”⁸

We can testify without excuse, apology, or embarrassment that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, that he went into a grove of trees and saw God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and that he was the chosen instrument in the Lord’s hands to restore His Church to the earth. It is no wonder the scriptures declare of him, “Joseph Smith, the Prophet . . . , has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it” (D&C 135:3). □

NOTES

1. Quoted in John Henry Evans, *Joseph Smith: An American Prophet* (1946), 3–4.
2. *Julius Caesar*, 2.1.190–93.
3. *Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1993), 340.
4. *Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 411.
5. Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith* (1979), 68.
6. See his 1835 account as cited in Dean C. Jessee, “The Early Accounts of Joseph Smith’s First Vision (JS—H 1:26),” in *Studies in Scripture, Volume Two: The Pearl of Great Price*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (1985), 309.
7. Quoted in *Memoirs of George A. Smith*, in George A. Smith papers, ms 1322, box, folder 1, Family and Church History Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
8. *Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay*, comp. Clare Middlemiss (1970), 27–30.

Elder Tad R. Callister is an Area Authority Seventy serving in the North America West Area.

Gospel topics: Joseph Smith, revelation, First Vision, Book of Mormon



The Prophet founded the city of Nauvoo, where he commanded an armed militia of 3,000 men. He oversaw the construction of a temple and then, 38 1/2 years after his birth, sealed his testimony with his blood.

1844

Strengthening Our Marriages, Families, and Homes

Read the following with the sisters you visit, and discuss the questions, scriptures, and teachings from our Church leaders. Share your experiences and testimony, and invite those you teach to do the same.

What is the Lord's view of marriage, family, and home?

Mark 10:6-9: "From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

"And they twain shall be one flesh. . . .

"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God. . . .

" . . . Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities" ("The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "What if you are

single or have not been blessed with children? Do you need to be concerned about the counsel regarding families? Yes. It is something we all need to learn in earth life. Unmarried adult members can often lend a special kind of strength to the family, becoming a tremendous source of support, acceptance, and love to their families and the families of those around them" ("Strengthening Families: Our Sacred Duty," *Ensign*, May 1999, 34).

What can we say and do that will result in strong, happy family relationships?

Mosiah 4:15: "Ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another."

The First Presidency: "We counsel parents and children to give highest priority to family prayer, family home evening, gospel study and instruction, and wholesome family

We should give highest priority to family prayer, home evening, and gospel study.

activities. However worthy and appropriate other demands or activities may be, they must not be permitted to displace the divinely-appointed duties that only parents and families can adequately perform" (First Presidency letter, 11 Feb. 1999).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: "A good marriage requires time. It requires effort. You have to work at it. You have to cultivate it. You have to forgive and forget. You have to be absolutely loyal one to another" ("Life's Obligations," *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 4).

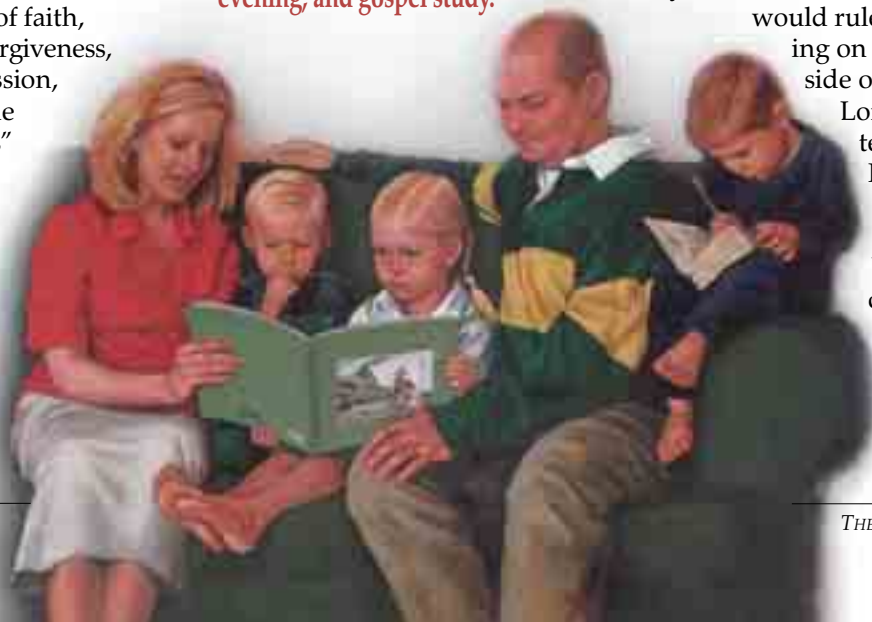
"I know of no single practice that will have a more salutary effect upon your lives than the practice of kneeling together as you begin and close each day. Somehow the little storms that seem to afflict every marriage are dissipated when, kneeling before the Lord, you thank him for one another, . . . and then together invoke his blessings upon your lives" ("Except the Lord Build the House . . .," *Ensign*, June 1971, 72).

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "If you are single and haven't identified a solid prospect for celestial marriage, live for it. Pray for it. Expect it in the timetable of the Lord. Do not compromise your standards in any way that

would rule out that blessing on this or the other side of the veil. The

Lord knows the intent of your heart.

His prophets have stated that you will have that blessing as you consistently live to qualify for it" ("Receive the Temple Blessings," *Ensign*, May 1999, 27). □



Honoring My Father

By Sondra Annis

For many years I struggled to honor my father, although I knew it was a commandment for me to do so. He was an alcoholic, abusive, and critical of the Church. More than once I said to myself, "If only I could learn to love my father, I could surely love my enemy."

One Sunday many years after I had left home, the ward family history teacher gave a talk on the importance of families and temple work. As I listened to her talk, I felt prompted to repent. I knew I needed to find some way to honor my father, so I turned to

As my father shared his personal history, I became acquainted with the man I'd grown up with but never really known.

Heavenly Father in prayer.

After I prayed, I felt impressed that to truly honor my father I must first learn to accept him as a child of God. I thought, "My father, a child of God?" As I continued to pray about the matter, I was inspired to write to him. I didn't have to tell him I loved him, just that I was thinking of him.

The first letter was hard to write. As I wrote more letters, it became easier for me. My father never answers letters, so I did not know what effect my letters were having on him. But it was something I needed to do, and soon I could feel my attitude changing.

During this time I received a telephone call from Los Angeles telling me my father was in the hospital in critical condition. He was

suffering from cirrhosis of the liver, the result of many years of heavy drinking. He was also in need of a serious operation that could not be immediately performed because of the poor condition of his body.

When I received the call, panic swept over me. I cared more about my father than I had realized. I could not bear the thought of him dying without knowing that I cared. I now prayed that he would live long enough for me to see him again. As I prayed that I might know the right things to say and do to help him the most, I felt prompted to ask him to tell his personal history.

Eventually, I was able to fly from my home in Idaho to Los Angeles to be with him. A few days before I arrived, he was released from a five-week hospital stay.



Upon my arrival, family members warned me that my father's memory was very poor because of his illness. In prayer I questioned the advisability of asking for his history, considering the condition of his health. The answer was still the same. I was to ask him for it. After being with my father for a few days, I knew the time to ask had come. So I did. He thought for a while and then began to talk. It was hard to believe. His mind suddenly became clear. He was like a different person as he spoke in detail about his life.

He recounted his high school and college years, describing his love for sports and the thrill of nearly qualifying for the Olympics. He talked about being a bomber pilot instructor for the Canadian Air Force and the sorrow that came when he learned that only three of the 21 men he enlisted with survived the war. He spoke of being a young father living on a Canadian homestead in a small house with seven children, the oldest being six years old. He related how fortunate he felt for conveniences such as a well "only" 200 feet from the house.

My father shared his personal history in two sessions, totaling about 16 hours. I became acquainted with the man I had grown up with but never really known. The love and honor that I had prayed for became a reality. I was proud to record 14 notebook pages of his personal history.

After returning home, I continued to write my father letters. His condition improved until he was able to have the much-needed operation. Then, just before Christmas, I received a beautiful Christmas card from him—the first card I'd ever received from my father. Enclosed was a letter. In part he wrote, "Thank you for your letters and prayers. I think someone up there likes me." The

day before Christmas he called and again thanked me for my letters and prayers. "I couldn't have made it without them," he said.

The commandment to honor our fathers and mothers does not apply only to those children whose parents have the same beliefs and values. Although it required considerable effort, I learned that honoring parents can bring great blessings to a family. □

Sondra Annis is a member of the Orofino Ward, Lewiston Idaho Stake.

Gospel topics: honoring parents, family history, Holy Ghost

The Faith of a Child

By William M. Wach

A few years ago in October, our black Labrador gave up her doghouse when our mother cat decided to move in with her litter of six kittens. The mother cat had five healthy kittens and one runt. The runt was a homely calico, but because of her small size the children gave her extra attention and made sure she was not bullied out of line during feeding time. This extra attention created a special bond between my children and the kitten.

By November, the kittens were ready to eat dry cat food, and they seemed to enjoy it. We thought we were putting out enough food for all the kittens, so we quit paying as much attention to the runt.

On a cold, rainy evening a week later, I brought food to the kittens and took a flashlight to look in on them. As I counted the kittens, I noticed the runt was missing. Looking around, I found her in the small, covered wooden box in which the kittens had been born. Apparently she had become ill during the day, and the mother

cat had moved her away from the rest of the kittens.

When I found her, the small kitten was lying on her side, almost dead. She was wet, cold, and so weak she could hardly make a sound. When I picked her up, I saw how malnourished she had become. Although I was sure the kitten would die within a few hours or even minutes, I decided to try to save her.

I took her into the house and, with my children, bathed the frail kitten with warm water and dried her in front of the heater, making sure she did not get too hot. The kitten did not seem to be breathing, and the only way we could tell there was life in the small body was when it occasionally twitched.

My nine-year-old daughter, Kristine, became very upset at the thought of the runt dying. This was the special kitten she had watched over from the day it was born to ensure that it received a full portion at mealtime. Now it was going to die, simply from a week's lack of attention.

Looking up at me, Kristine asked if we could say a prayer for the runt. I am not in the habit of praying for sick cats, but I told Kristine she could say a prayer if she wanted to. She left the room, but soon my wife came in and told me Kristine wanted to have a family prayer for the kitten.

I gathered our family of five into the living room near the kitten and offered the prayer. I asked Heavenly Father, if it was His will, to intervene on the kitten's behalf. I also asked that if the kitten was to die, that it would go quickly and in peace.

As soon as I said "Amen" the kitten took a deep breath, lifted its head, and made a soft cry. I couldn't believe it. This was the first sign of life we had seen from the kitten since I'd brought it in. Within

minutes the cat was strong enough to drink milk from a bowl. By the next day it was able to rejoin its litter mates, and the children took special care to feed the runt separately from the other kittens until we found her a good home.

That night, I learned that the simple faith of a child can bring forth miracles. This was a miracle of no apparent importance—except to a child. Though only nine years old, Kristine truly understood and had faith in the power of prayer. □

William M. Wach is a member of the Rexburg Eighth Ward, Rexburg East Idaho Stake.

Gospel topics: faith, children, prayer

My Search by Postcard

By Bobi Morgan

Years ago I spent quite a bit of time gathering information for my four-generation family group sheets. The information on one of my group sheets was eventually complete, with the exception of one great-uncle. I had searched extensively for his birth and death dates without ever finding a real lead. Every time I glanced at this group sheet, the white space where Edward's information should have been loomed out at me.

Several times I despaired of ever finding his information and thought of sending the sheet in as it was. However, I prayed for inspiration to know what I should do. I asked Heavenly Father to help me find a record or a person who would be able to help me. After praying I felt that I must not give up.

One day, after having tried every other place I could think of, I picked up a postcard and addressed it to the "Rector of the

City Cemetery" and put the address of a town that Edward's family had lived in for a while. On the back I simply asked if there was a grave marker with Edward Oren Tarbutton's name on it. I wasn't even sure a cemetery existed in that town, yet as I sent the postcard I suddenly felt free of frustration.

A few weeks went by without any answer to my postcard, nor did I expect one. Then one day I felt unusually excited, like a child on Christmas morning. At the normal mail delivery time, when I heard the familiar noise of a metal mailbox being opened and closed, I ran out

to pick up the mail. The stack was big that day, but I stood on the street at the open box and looked carefully at every piece. In the stack was the returned postcard, and on it was Edward's missing information!

As I gazed at the long-sought-for dates on the postcard, a warm feeling embraced me. I felt that Edward was somehow close to me in that moment, and I could feel his great joy.

I will never forget the prompting to send the postcard and the circumstances of its return. Later I learned that the town I had sent the postcard to had no rector and no



Realizing no one in town would know about my ancestor, the postmaster searched for the grave himself.

official cemetery. The postmaster realized that no one in the town would know about my ancestor. His first impulse was to stamp the card *Return to Sender*, but on second thought he decided to search for the grave site himself. He remembered once seeing headstones in a field near a small church. It was there he found Edward's headstone and copied the inscription.

This experience deepened my love for my ancestors and helped me understand how much they long to be linked permanently to their families. And as I encountered disappointments in the following years of family history research, I thought of the postcard and kept going. □

Bobi Morgan is a member of the Olive Ward, Mesa Arizona Stake.

Gospel topics: family history, Holy Ghost, love

Tatting for the Temple

By Candace Bailey Munoa

Two years before the San Diego California Temple was to be dedicated, a letter came to my stake Relief Society president asking that she find women in the stake to make altar cloths for the new temple. The altar cloths were to be tatted or crocheted and had to be completed within 10 months. My ward Relief Society president suggested my name. I accepted the invitation to help with much trepidation because up to that point I had tatted only small strips of lace.

I immediately called a cousin who also tats and asked her to send me several patterns she thought would work for the temple. When they arrived, I quickly

chose one and began to figure out exactly how much work I would have to do each day in order to have the cloth completed in time. Each repetition in a pattern, or what I call a medallion, takes 30 minutes to make, and I would have to make three each day. I would have to tat for an hour and a half every day, six days a week, for approximately nine months.

I felt I had gotten in over my head. I was already a busy wife and mother of four children, ages 7 through 12. I was also a brand-new schoolteacher and Young Women adviser.

I was about to say I couldn't fulfill the assignment, but then I thought of the women who had crushed their china to beautify the walls of the Kirtland Temple and the women who sewed shirts for those who worked on the Nauvoo Temple. I wanted to participate as those women did. I didn't know where I was going to get an extra hour and a half each day, but I trusted that the Lord would accept my sacrifice and provide a way.

The Lord truly blessed me during those next nine months. I took my tatting with me wherever I went. I washed my hands before I touched it and wrapped it in a towel to make sure it stayed perfectly white. I wanted this altar cloth to be perfect. Many times I would find a mistake and have to pick out as many as five or six medallions, thus increasing the time per day I would need to spend tatting. However, somehow I still found time each day to work on the cloth, and what started out to be a sacrifice became a great privilege and joy.

When the cloth was finally completed, I carefully washed and shaped it. Before I turned it in, I gave it one last look. There in the middle was a huge mistake! I had inadvertently added an extra piece to one of the medallions.

I had handled the cloth hundreds of times. How could I have overlooked the mistake? I would gladly have picked it out when it had occurred or even weeks afterward, but now there was no time. The date for delivery was upon me, and correcting the mistake would take at least four months of work!

I was devastated beyond words. I cried. I berated myself. I had worked painstakingly to have this altar cloth perfect for the Lord's house, and now there was a mistake in it that could not be corrected in time. I prayed to Heavenly Father, asking why this had happened and how I could have missed something so obvious. I told Him how sorry I was that it was not perfect.

Then a beautiful peace came over me. I realized that like the altar cloth, I am not perfect, but the Savior accepts my sincere efforts, and He would accept my gift for His house. He makes up the difference when I fall short. His grace is sufficient for me.

Feelings of gratitude and relief washed over me. I got off my knees and did my best to fix the mistake so that it was barely noticeable and delivered the cloth on time.

A few months later I was with the Young Women of our ward as we toured the temple before its dedication. I was thrilled when we walked into a sealing room and there on the altar was my cloth. It looked beautiful.

When I began the altar cloth I felt I had been given a way to honor my temple covenants by making a sacrifice for the Lord. What I learned is that I was blessed for making the sacrifice. I thought I was giving something to the Lord. In reality, He was giving me the opportunity to draw closer to Him. □

Candace Bailey Munoa is a member of the Pleasant View Fourth Ward, Edgemont Utah South Stake.

Gospel topics: Atonement, sacrifice, temples

A Garden for All Seasons

Do you spend days and weeks gardening and when harvest time comes, your days are filled with picking, canning, blanching, and freezing? The good news is, there's a better way! By planning and working with nature, you can have a garden that produces enough vegetables and fruits over a longer period of the year with a minimum of preserving. Depending on where you live, here are eight tips to get you started.

1. Plant perennial fruits, vegetables, and herbs. These plants tend to come up before seeds are ready to go into the ground and are ready to harvest when other plants are seedlings. Strawberries, blueberries, rhubarb, asparagus, and chives are common.

2. Use mulched, raised beds. In early spring you can move organic mulch from last year's garden to reveal soil that is ready to plant without

tilling. Early vegetables such as peas, spinach, and lettuce can be planted as soon as one or two inches of soil can be worked.

3. Plant varieties of the same vegetables. You can plant early, mid, and late season varieties to spread the harvest over several weeks. This is especially helpful with crops that tend to ripen all at once.

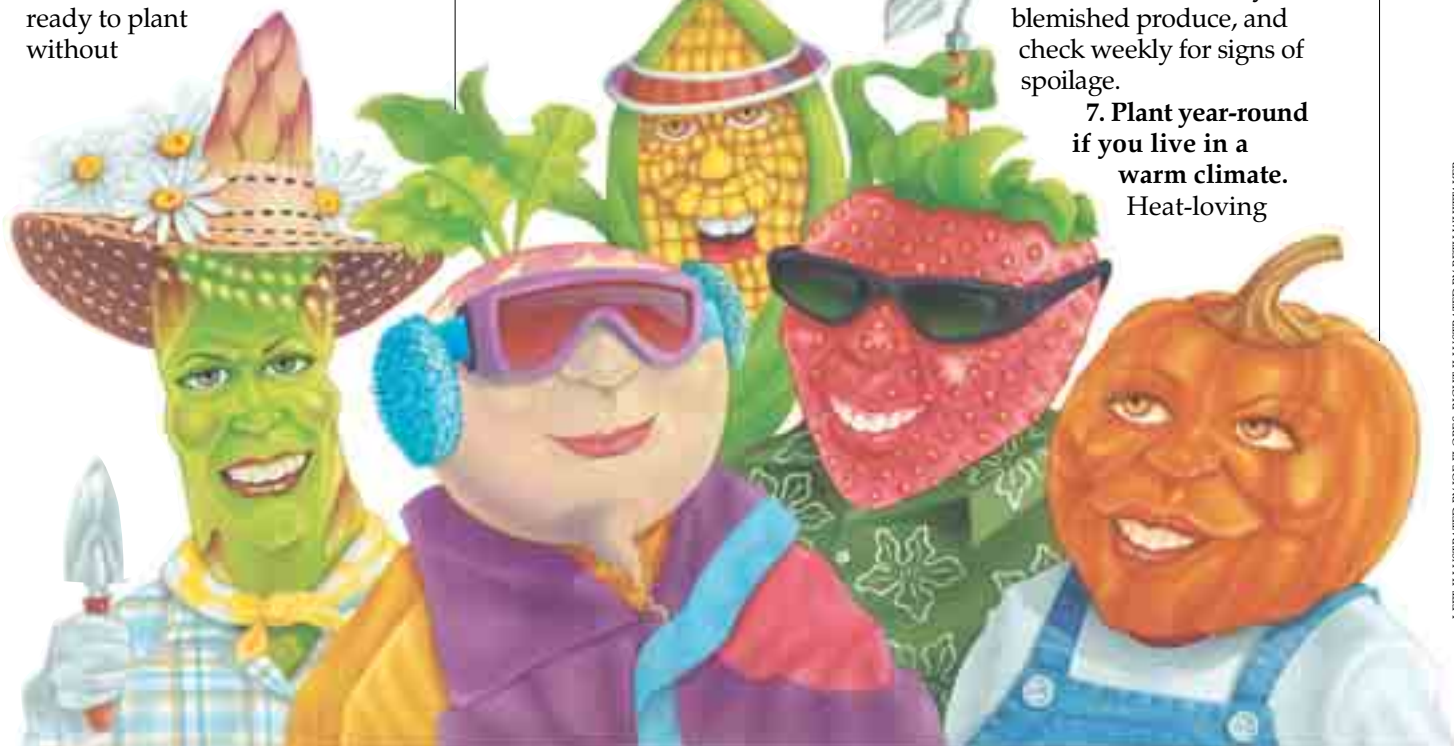
4. Plant more cool weather and root vegetables. Cool weather vegetables such as brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, and some greens improve in flavor after a few frosts and can be left in the garden. Root vegetables can be covered with at least 12 inches of mulch so the ground doesn't freeze and can be used during winter. Turnips, for example, can be left in the ground for use all

winter and as early greens in the spring. You can also plant seeds of some cool weather cultivated varieties in the fall so they will sprout in early spring.

5. Plant field varieties of corn, beans, and peas. Field varieties are the kind that dry on the stalk. Field corn can stay on the cob until you are ready to grind it. Bean stalks and pea vines can be pulled from the garden and hung upside down until you can shell them.

6. Select varieties that store well. Apples, nuts, cabbages, potatoes, and winter squash, to name a few, can be kept for months if stored properly. Pumpkins and sweet potatoes can be kept in basements if the temperature is 35 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit (1.7–4.4° C) and humidity is about 50 percent. In the United States, you can contact your local county extension agent for more information. Also, remember to store only unblemished produce, and check weekly for signs of spoilage.

7. Plant year-round if you live in a warm climate. Heat-loving



LEFT ILLUSTRATED BY JOE FLORES; RIGHT ILLUSTRATED BY BETH WHITTAKER



Family Night Flexibility

plants such as okra, cantaloupe, and sweet potatoes can be grown when it's too hot for other plants.

8. Protect plants from the cold. Use cold frames and hot beds to prolong a growing season. Cold frames use solar heat, and hot beds use the heat from composting matter. These gardening devices create miniature greenhouses that help prolong the growing season. Also, be sure to cover plants during first frosts.

Not only can we enjoy garden produce over a much longer period, potentially all year, but we can more fully appreciate how the Lord provides for us when we do our part. We can learn how to use "every herb . . . and every fruit . . . with prudence and thanksgiving" (D&C 89:11).—**Holly Furgason, Memorial Park Ward, Houston Texas East Stake**

You've Got Mail . . . and a Journal

If your family is like ours, helping your children become interested in journal writing can be a challenge. We used to have family home evenings about the importance of keeping a journal, but our initial enthusiasm usually faded quickly. Then we discovered an easy, exciting way to help our family better record life events: e-mail journals.

Originally we opened e-mail accounts (many are free) for each of our children to encourage weekly correspondence with extended family living across the country. Every week they wrote about the interesting, happy, and sad events they had experienced. My husband and I soon realized

When we were first married and starting our family, my husband and I committed to follow the counsel of our prophets and hold a weekly family home evening. Over the years, we discovered several ways to hold family night regularly.

1. Be flexible. For a time, our family held two-part family home evenings to accommodate our schedules. We had a lesson on Sunday and an activity on Monday. Having two "mini" family nights helped us meet consistently together and provide appropriate Sunday activities as well as family time on Mondays. When my husband attended night classes for graduate work, we held family home *morning* for almost a year. This is also an effective way to include spouses who work evenings.

2. Develop traditions. Plan activities that your family can look forward to. We have enjoyed a variety of family activities, including our version of the Olympics and a Backwards Party for Leap Year.

3. Widen your circle. When my husband served as bishop, we sometimes invited new families in the ward to join us for family home evening. We also invited

students who were attending a nearby university. Our family received blessings as we fellowshipped others and shared our enthusiasm for family home evening. No matter where we live, there is always someone we can invite to family home evening.

4. Organize an "Empty Nester" family home evening group. When our children grew up and left home, we organized a monthly "Empty Nester" group. Through this group, we have enjoyed uplifting discussions with friends who might otherwise spend Monday nights alone.

With some creativity, we have been richly blessed by following the admonition of our prophets to strengthen our families through family home evening.—**Kathryn W. Hales, Ellensburg Second Ward, Selah Washington Stake**



that these e-mails contained some of our children's best journal material. We saved and printed any e-mails of interest, then compiled them in a three-ring binder for each child.

We have benefited greatly from keeping e-mail journals. Not only have our children become acquainted with long-distance relatives, but they have also become more motivated to write, thus

improving their writing skills. And our younger children participate, too, because we simply type what they want to say! The whole family has been enthusiastic about keeping e-mail journals, and it is an easy way to preserve our day-to-day thoughts and correspondence with loved ones.—**Anastasia Kneeland, North Highlands Second Ward, Sacramento California Antelope Stake**

S A I N T S I N LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

As early as 1834, a small group of Latter-day Saints lived in Campbell County, Kentucky. But by 1836 they had migrated to Nauvoo, Illinois, later pioneering on to the Salt Lake Valley. In the following decades the Church had no formal presence in Kentucky, in part because of the U.S. Civil War, which raged through the state. But after missionary efforts were renewed in 1875 with the creation of the Southern States Mission, Church growth in the area was slow but steady.

Today a temple stands in Kentucky. The Louisville temple, dedicated on 19 March 2000, now serves some 34,000 members in 10 stakes in Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana.



Twenty miles from downtown Louisville (above) is the Louisville temple (right).



LEFT PHOTO COURTESY DAN DRY & ASSOCIATES; BELOW PHOTO COURTESY CHURCH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

scheduling the two weeks off for that trip proved to be a formidable task. At last, however, the Buttons found the right person to tend their cows, and the only remaining obstacle was getting their harvest of hay into the barn.

Shortly before they were to begin their trip, rain fell on the freshly cut hay, so it had to dry in the field before baling. If the weather stayed dry, the Buttons would be able to finish the baling the day before they were to leave for the temple. Knowing the forecast was for rain, Frank and Mary gathered their family together for evening prayer, asking Father in Heaven to hold back the rain long enough for them to secure the dry hay in the barn.

By noon the next day, it was raining throughout the county, even on the Buttons' home and yard. But in the field where the family was furiously baling hay, not a drop fell. It wasn't until late in the day, when the last bale was put into the barn, that the rain fell in the field where the family had been working. Consequently, the family was able to depart for the temple. The story of the Button family's miracle is still told in the stake today.

The recent dedication of a temple in Louisville is also seen as a miracle by local members.

The Button family, shortly after they were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple in 1958.

In the temple's dedicatory prayer, President Thomas S. Monson prayed that interest in the gospel would increase among area residents. Local priesthood leaders report this request has certainly come to fruition. "This area is really beginning to blossom because of the temple. The interest it has generated among local residents has provided many teaching opportunities," says Michael Cannon, president of the Kentucky Louisville Mission.

Michael Gillenwater, president of the New Albany Indiana Stake, which neighbors Louisville, agrees. The temple has created an overall positive effect on his friends of other faiths, who now ask questions about the gospel, he says. The temple has served as an incentive for activation among members, strengthened adults, and given the youth an enthusiasm for the gospel he has not seen before, President Gillenwater says.

With blessings like these, local members feel confident that the Church in the Louisville area—along with their faith—will continue to grow.—Mary Moeck, Pioneer Ward, Lexington Kentucky Stake □



The faith of long-time members such as Frank and Mary Button of the Crestwood Second Ward, Louisville Kentucky Stake, has bolstered the Church's growing strength in the area. In 1958 the Buttons planned to take their family to the Salt Lake Temple—the closest temple to their home—to be sealed. Because they were dairy farmers,



PHOTO COURTESY BUTTON FAMILY

New Missions Created, Others Combined

On 1 July 2002, seven new missions will begin operating in the United States and western Africa. Five other missions will be combined with neighboring missions, bringing the total number in operation to 335.

The new missions are the Arizona Mesa Mission, the Colorado Colorado Springs Mission, the Texas Lubbock Mission, the Washington Kennewick Mission, the Cape Verde Praia Mission, the Nigeria Ibadan Mission, and the Nigeria Uyo Mission.

The Austria Vienna Mission will combine with the Germany Munich Mission to form the Germany Munich/Austria Mission. The Netherlands Amsterdam, Switzerland Geneva, and Belgium Brussels Missions will be realigned to form two missions, the Belgium Brussels/Netherlands Mission and the Switzerland Geneva Mission. The England Bristol Mission will be combined with the England Birmingham, England London, and England London South Missions.

The Italy Padova Mission will be absorbed by the Italy Milan and Italy Rome Missions. Much of the Portugal Lisbon North Mission will be combined with the Portugal Lisbon South Mission to form the Portugal Lisbon Mission. The remaining portion of the Lisbon North mission



Seven new missions have been created in the United States (top) and in western Africa (right).

will become part of the Portugal Porto Mission.

According to Elder Charles Didier of the Presidency of the Seventy, executive director of the Missionary Department, the changes will allow more missionaries to serve in a greater where there is a greater need for them.

Finally, the name of the Lithuania Vilnius Mission is being changed to the Baltic Mission. This mission, headquartered in Riga, Latvia, includes the countries of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. □



Stake Missions Recently Dissolved

In an effort to bolster member missionary and fellowship efforts, the First Presidency recently dissolved stake missions and instructed bishops and branch presidents to directly oversee all missionary and retention responsibilities in their units. By dissolving stake missions, the responsibility and accountability for missionary work now rests with individual wards and branches.

The callings of ward mission leader and ward missionary will now be extended on a ward level rather than a stake level,

under the direction of the bishop or branch president. Ward mission leaders will report directly to the bishop rather than a stake leader and will continue to coordinate the missionary efforts of the unit.

Ward missionaries will continue to prepare people to be taught the gospel, fellowship investigators and new members, teach new-member discussions, and encourage members.

Callings are no longer issued for a specified term of service, and ward missionaries no longer wear nametags. □

New Family History Products for European Genealogy Announced

The Family and Church History Department recently announced two new tools to assist people with genealogy work—*Sweden: Finding Records of Your Ancestors, Part A* and The British Isles Vital Records Index (second edition).

Sweden: Finding Records of Your Ancestors, Part A

This new workbook features easy-to-follow instructions, colorful graphics, and tear-out worksheets to assist in researching Swedish roots. The publication is designed for those who have already gathered and organized some information from their family and are ready

to search public records.

The 20-page guide introduces a new strategy on how to go from one record to another, providing simple, expert advice every step of the way. It explains different types of records in Sweden and tells



when and how to use them. Users will learn where to start, how to find and use Swedish records, and what unique elements to look for. It is ideal for people who have limited genealogical experience or little time to do research.

Sweden: Finding Records of Your Ancestors, Part A covers the period from 1860 to 1920. *Part B*, which will be available in 2003, will cover additional time periods and research strategies.

More guides in the *Finding Records of Your Ancestors* series will be published in 2002, including those for the British Isles, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Spain, and Switzerland. Additional guides for African-American, American Indian, and Pacific Islander research will follow. *Denmark: Finding Records of Your Ancestors, Part A* was released earlier this year.

British Isles Vital Records Index (second edition)

Millions more birth, christening, and marriage records from selected parishes in the British Isles, some dating back more than 450 years, are now available on compact disc. The British Isles Vital Records Index (second edition) updates and includes the British Isles Vital Records Index Resource File released in 1998. The

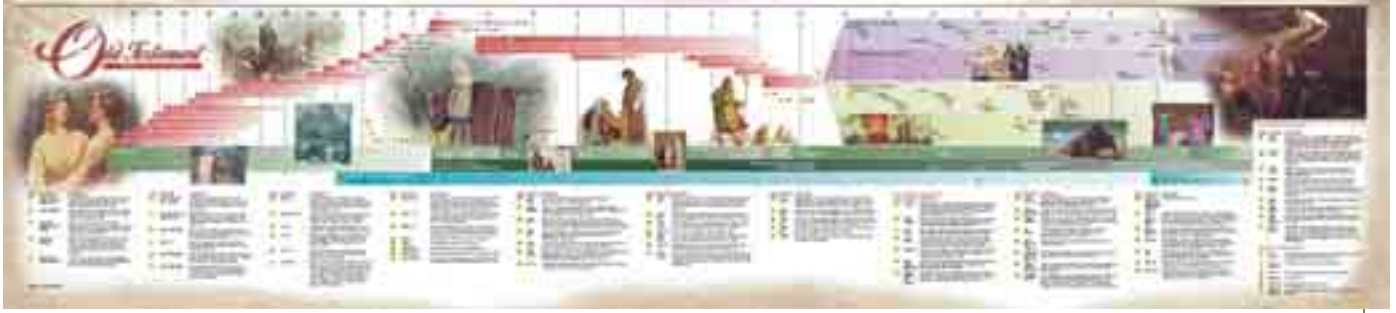


second edition adds approximately 7.3 million birth and christening records to the index for a total of 12.3 million. Spanning an approximate time period from 1530 to 1906, this new set of 16 compact discs contains names from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man.

"These CDs may save families hundreds of hours of time and painstaking research. The process is as simple as typing in a name," said Elder D. Todd Christofferson, executive director of the Family and Church History Department.

The CD set also includes the most recent version of the Family History Resource File Viewer program. Other features include a parent search, book marking, print options and GEDCOM export.

The second edition of the British Isles Vital Records Index (item no. 50126; U.S. \$20) and *Sweden: Finding Your Ancestors, Part A* (36579; U.S. \$3.25) are available through Church distribution centers or at www.familysearch.org. □



OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY CHART—Published in the January 2002 *Ensign*, this chart can now be purchased as an 11-by-48-inch foldout poster. The chronology chart (item no. 22321; U.S. \$50) is designed to assist members in their personal study and teaching of the Old Testament. To order, contact your local distribution center or visit the Church Web sites www.ldscatalog.com or www.lds.org.

Appointments

Leon T. Ballard and Flora Miller Ballard, Snowflake Sixth Ward, Snowflake Arizona Stake, have been called as president and matron of the Snowflake Arizona Temple.

Eran A. Call and Katherine Groesbeck Call, Edgemont 14th Ward, Provo Utah Edgemont Stake, have been called as president and matron of the Monterrey Mexico Temple.

Jay B. Jensen and Alice Edwards Jensen, Lubbock Fourth Ward, Lubbock Texas Stake, have been called as president and matron of the Lubbock Texas Temple.

Donald R. McArthur and Donna Hall McArthur, Country Park Third Ward, South Jordan Utah Country Park Stake, have been called as president and matron of the Kona Hawaii Temple.

Elder James M. Paramore, an emeritus General Authority, has been called to preside over the missionaries and volunteers in the Family and Church History Department at Church headquarters. Elder Paramore's wife, Helen Heslington Paramore, will serve as his companion. □

First Meetinghouses Dedicated in Sri Lanka, Serbia, and India

The first meetinghouses in Sri Lanka, Serbia, and India have recently been dedicated, blessing the faithful Saints in these countries.

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka's first meetinghouse was dedicated on 2 December 2001 in Colombo by Elder John B. Dickson of the Seventy, Second Counselor in the Asia Area Presidency. More than 300 members of the Colombo Sri Lanka District and neighboring branches attended the dedication.

The Church has been in Sri Lanka for 24 years. The Colombo district was formed on 22 October 2000, and the groundbreaking for the meetinghouse took place that same day. There are two branches in Colombo.

"I am delighted with the culmination of this long-prayed-for event," says Colombo district president Sunil Arsecularatne. "We will look for a stake here in the future."

SERBIA

The first meetinghouse in Serbia was dedicated on 19 January 2002 in Beograd. Elder Douglas L. Callister of the Seventy, Europe East Area President, gave the dedicatory prayer. Approximately 150 Church members, government officials, and community members attended the meeting.

Members of the community were also invited to an open house preceding the dedication and provided information about the Church.

Missionaries arrived in what is now Serbia during the 1980s. Because of ongoing civil conflict, the presence of full-time missionaries in Serbia has been sporadic. But local members have faithfully upheld the Church throughout the country's turbulent times.

"For the Saints of Serbia this was a reward for all they have lived through and endured during the last 10 years," says Sladjan Mihajlovic, president of the Beograd Branch, speaking of his branch's new building.



The first Serbian Church meetinghouse is a remodeled villa located in the city of Beograd.

The new meetinghouse is a remodeled villa built in the early 1930s. It is located in the center of the city and is surrounded by several foreign embassies.

"This building houses the Lord's embassy," says Dragomir Savic, Beograd district president.

INDIA

Elder H. Bryan Richards of the Seventy, President of the Asia Area, dedicated India's first meetinghouse on 2 February 2002. The new building serves the Rajahmundry Branch

PHOTO BY SLADJAN MIHAJLOVIC



Church members gather outside the Rajahmundry Branch building after its dedication in February. The new Church meetinghouse—India's first—attracted more than 2,300 visitors to its open house.

of the Hyderabad India District. More than 400 members, many from as far as Bangalore, a 10-hour train ride, attended the dedication.

The local community also welcomed the new meetinghouse. More than 2,300 people attended an open house held prior to the dedication. Hosted by

Karl E. Nelson, president of the India Bangalore Mission, visitors in groups of 10 to 20 were escorted by the full-time missionaries and branch members

through classrooms and the chapel. By the end of the tour, the visitors had heard the first two missionary discussions, learned the role of Church auxiliary programs, and received an invitation to sign up for a copy of the Book of Mormon.

On the first Sunday after the open house, 50 children attended Primary. Not even 10 of them were Church members; most were visitors from the surrounding area. Several adults visited as well.

"The people are astonished at this miracle from Heavenly Father," said Padmanandam Chalanti, president of the Rajahmundry Branch.

The Rajahmundry Branch was formed nearly two decades ago with 38 members. The branch now numbers more than 400. □

In the Spotlight

BYU PRESIDENT ELECTED TO NATIONAL EDUCATION BOARD

Elder Merrill J. Bateman, a member of the Seventy and president of Brigham Young University, was recently elected to the board of directors of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU). NAICU represents more than 900 private colleges and universities on policy issues with the United States federal government.

PRIMARY TEACHER, 90, HAS TAUGHT THREE GENERATIONS

After continually serving for more than 50 years in her ward's Primary, Eva May McCallister, 90, was honored at a recent gathering by dozens of her former

and current Primary students. A member of the Copperton Ward, South Jordan Utah Glenmoor Stake, Sister McCallister has taught three generations of children, including those from less-active families and families of other

faiths. Among the children Sister McCallister helped to activate are many returned missionaries and several bishops and stake patriarchs.

LATTER-DAY SAINT WRESTLER HAS PERFECT NCAA RECORD

Cael Sanderson wrestled 159 times during his collegiate wrestling career at Iowa State University and came off victorious every time. His wins made him the first wrestler ever to achieve an undefeated record and to take four U.S. National Collegiate Athletic Association titles.



Sister Eva May McCallister (center, front) poses with some of the hundreds of people she has taught during her continual 50-year calling as a Primary teacher in her ward.



PHOTO BY SONJA STANBRO

Church member Cael Sanderson is the first wrestler ever to win four NCAA championships.

A member of the Iowa State University Branch, Ames Iowa Stake, Brother Sanderson completed his college career on 23 March with a 12–4 victory in the 197-pound weight class of his fourth NCAA tournament. He has also been voted Most Outstanding Wrestler of all four NCAA championships and awarded the Dan Hodge Trophy (the equivalent of U.S. football’s Heisman Trophy) three times. Twice he has received Academic All-American honors. Cael, who grew up in Heber City, Utah, hopes to compete in freestyle wrestling in the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece.

Cael’s father, Steve Sanderson, says wrestling “has pretty much been a family affair.” Brother and Sister Sanderson coached and assisted their four sons in their high school wrestling, in which all four brothers won state championships. □

Comment

Call for Articles

Do you have an original family home evening lesson or activity idea? How about an effective way to plan the evening? If so, the Ensign would like to hear your idea for possible inclusion in our Random Sampler department. Submissions should contain how-to instructions as well as an explanation of how the experience has helped you or your family. A short submission of no more than two double-spaced pages is preferred.

Please send your submission by 31 August 2002. While we are not able to acknowledge receipt of individual manuscripts, authors whose stories are selected for publication will be notified. Please mail submissions to Ensign Editorial, 24th Floor, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3224, or send them via e-mail to cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org. Put “Family Home Evening” at the top of your submission or in the subject line. Be sure to include your name, address, and telephone number. If you want your manuscript to be returned, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Strength in Troubled Times

To all those responsible for the wonderful articles in the *Ensign* magazine, we would like to express our thanks and gratitude. The articles have been a strength to us in these troublesome times. We know you are following the promptings

of the Holy Ghost.
Clem J. and LaRie Thompson
Rexburg, Idaho

Thanks for a Hymn

Thank you for including the hymn “Mid the Stillness of the Night” in the April 2002 *Ensign*. I sat down at my piano today and played it through. It is a beautiful hymn, perfect for Easter. I have often wished that the *Ensign* would publish more hymns and songs like the *New Era* and *Friend*. Please let this be one of many hymns you publish.
Emily Milner
Lindon, Utah



Stake Organized Earlier

I read with considerable interest the article “A Branch of Faith in the Forest” (Apr. 2002). Many of us here in Whatcom County know of the members mentioned. Theirs is a noble and distinctive pioneer heritage.

I did want to point out that the Bellingham Washington Stake was not organized in 1994, as was mentioned in the article, but in 1981. The stake was first organized with five wards and a dependent Sunday School on the Lummi Indian Reservation.

Eugene C. Hatch
Bellingham, Washington

Inspiration to Change

I have not been active in the Church for quite

some time. I was recently skimming through the pages of the *Ensign* when I came upon various articles concerning problems I have been facing in my life. As I was reading the articles, I began to cry. For so long I did not realize my unhappiness came from the poor choices I made, but now I feel the importance of repentance and forgiveness. I just want to express gratitude for helping my understanding grow into a desire to change.
Name Withheld

Wrong Photo

The Gospel Classics article entitled “The Origin of Man” (Feb. 2002) was a 1909 First Presidency statement from President Joseph F. Smith, President John R.

Winder, and President Anthon H. Lund. However, the photo that appeared with the article pictured a later First Presidency, namely President Joseph F. Smith, President Anthon H. Lund, and President John Henry Smith. This First Presidency served from 1910 to 1911.
Jonathan Plowman
Bountiful, Utah

Editors’ note: The correct photo of the 1909 First Presidency appears below and in the Internet version of the Ensign on the Church’s Web site at www.lds.org.



Making the Most of This Issue

J U N E 2 0 0 2



- An Old Testament story teaches of a father's responsibility to lead and discipline, p. 18.

- To teach children that

Heavenly Father hears and answers prayers, try reading and discussing "The Faith of a Child," p. 69.

- Flexibility is a key to holding regular, productive family home evenings. Four tips on p. 73 show you how.

A Better Missionary—You

- How can you share the gospel with family members or friends who seem uninterested? Latter-day Saints in wards from Melbourne to Calgary and Toledo offer their ideas, p. 49.

- Are you sensitive to the personal values, heritage, and feelings of others when you try to share the gospel? An Area Authority Seventy suggests some points to consider, p. 52.

Yes, He *Is* in the Old Testament

Have you ever searched and searched for something that seemed hidden, only to find it right in front of you? Finding Jesus Christ in the Old Testament can be like that. See p. 24.



Home Teachers and Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pp. 2 and 67.

Did You Know?

A wide variety of gospel study or learning materials are available for members with disabilities, and they can be ordered on-line. Log on to the Church's Web site, www.lds.org, click on Order Church Materials, then Individual Shoppers, then Materials for Those with Disabilities. You will be able to select from materials

for the hearing impaired, intellectually impaired, or visually and physically impaired. These materials can also be ordered from Church distribution centers or through

the Church Materials Catalog available in local wards and branches.

Focus on Fathers and Families

- What happens when a young fast-track executive's wife becomes desperately ill and he has to rethink his priorities? See how one man's life was changed, p. 8.
- Want to be successful as a father? Counsel from the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles points out the path in "Father, Consider Your Ways," a classic message, p. 12. Follow up with succinct thoughts on fatherhood from several presidents of the Church, p. 17.

More Blessings of Family History

- Recording a personal history provided a means of mending a troubled relationship for one member. See p. 68.
- You've got mail—and a journal at the same time if you save your e-mails to relatives and friends far away. Learn more on p. 73.

A Garden for All Seasons

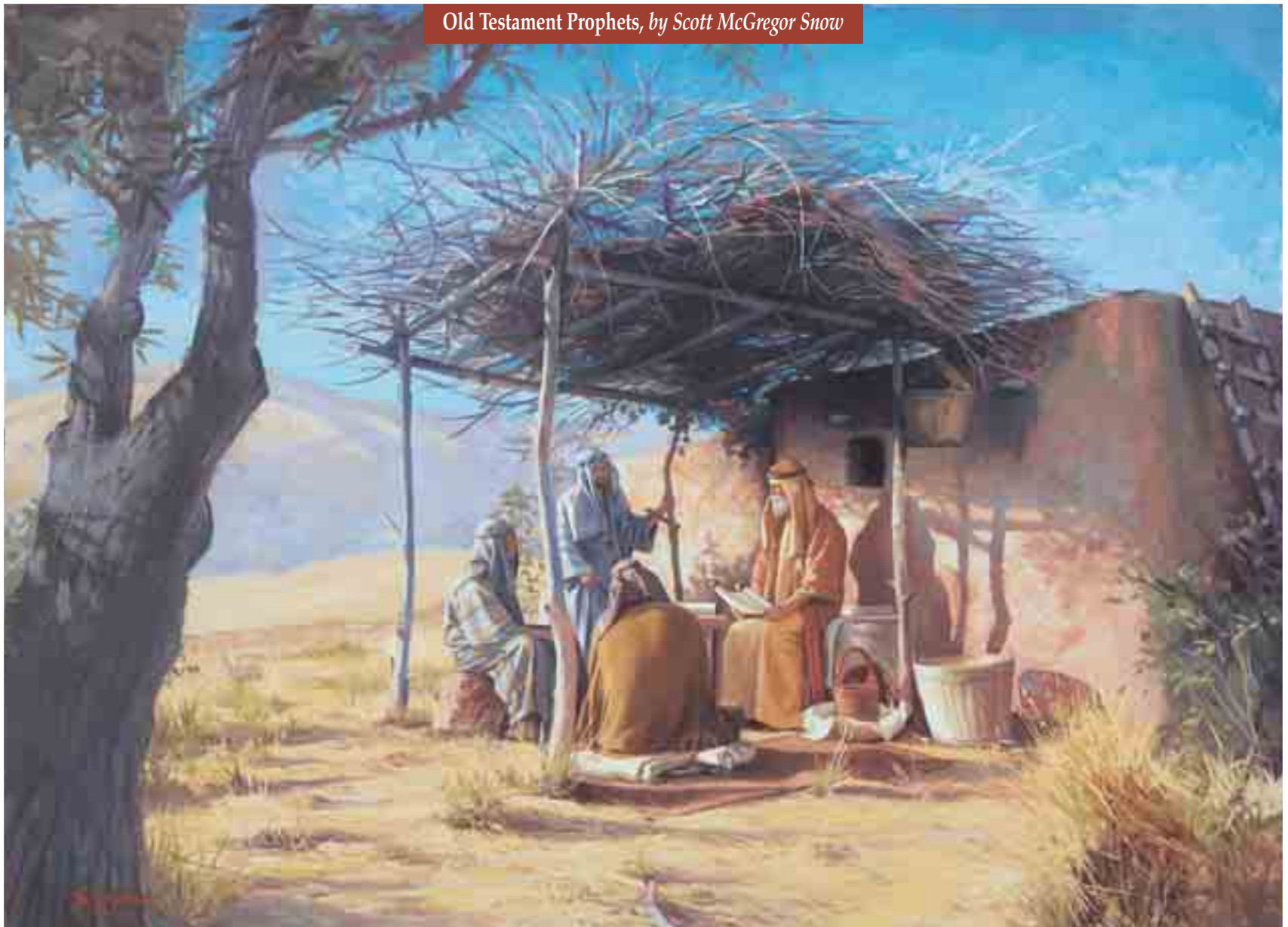
Produce from your garden—in February? You can enjoy garden produce year-round. Learn how on p. 72.



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Old Testament Prophets, by Scott McGregor Snow



Anciently, as today, a prophet's primary responsibility was to bear witness of Christ. This painting shows us what such a scene may have looked like during ancient times. A prophet is called by God and acts as His messenger. He teaches truth and makes known God's will to mankind. He denounces sin and warns of its consequences (see Bible Dictionary, "Prophet," 754).

Joseph Smith Jr



Joseph Smith was not what many newcomers expected of a prophet when they met him on his horse in the streets of Nauvoo. But they soon learned he was a man who loved associating with friends and neighbors like Chauncey Webb, one of the men who cared for Joseph's horses at the blacksmith shop.