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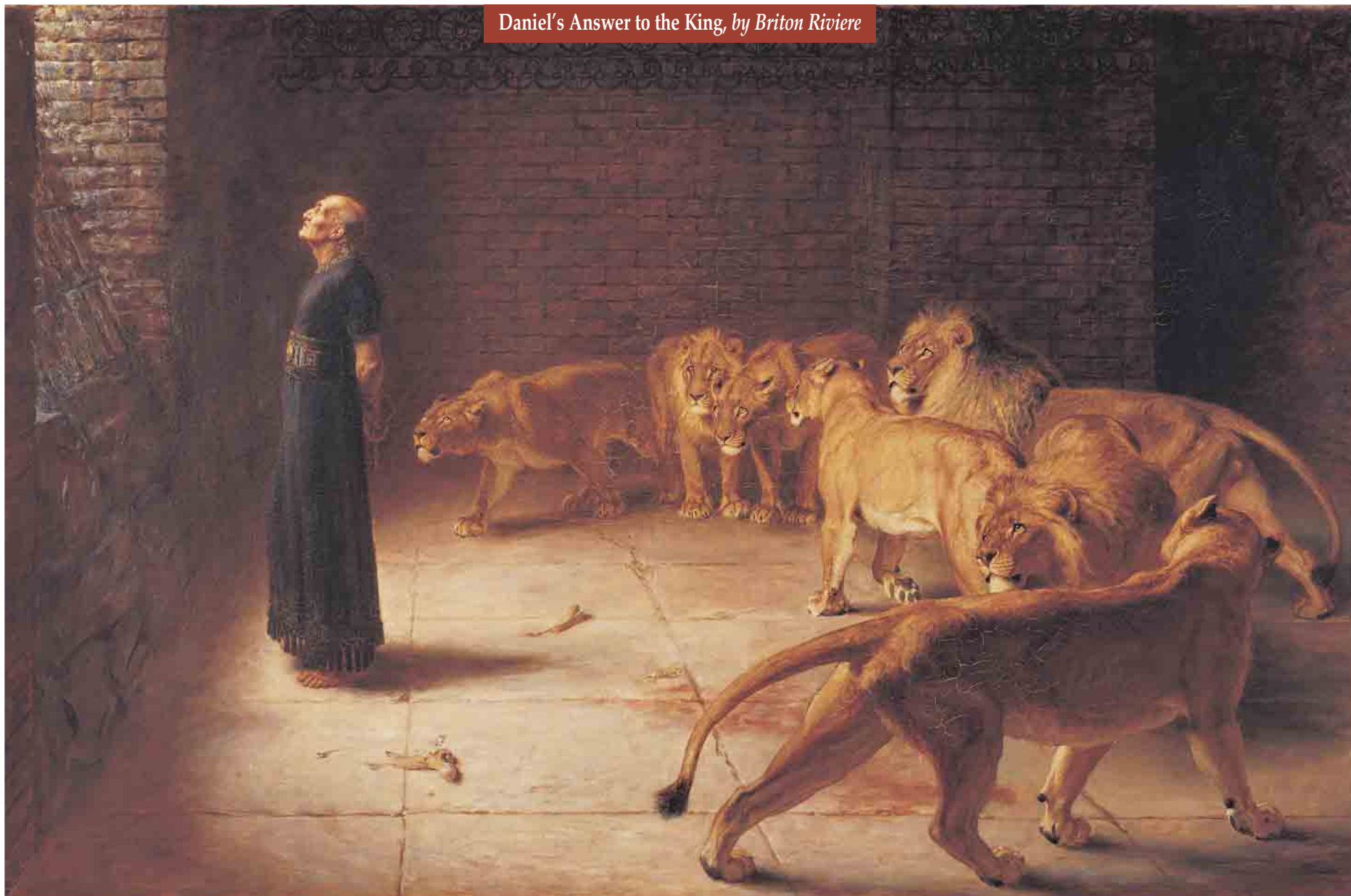
ENSIGN



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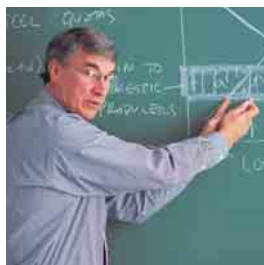
Daniel's Answer to the King, by Briton Riviere



"Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God" (Daniel 6:21–23).

ENSIGN

OCTOBER 2002 • VOLUME 32, NUMBER 10



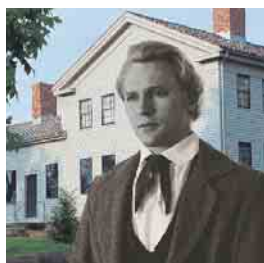
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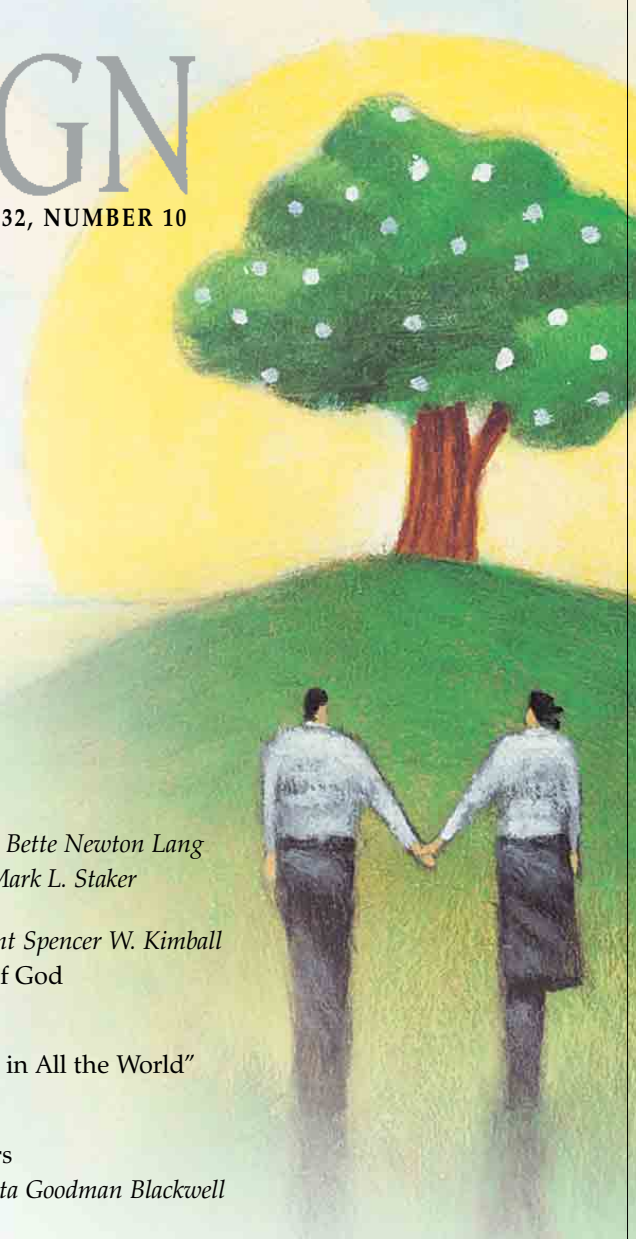


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Even at the tender age of seven, Joseph Smith would not take counsel from his fears. He endured an excruciating operation with only the comfort of his father holding him.



Be Not AFRAID



BY PRESIDENT
JAMES E. FAUST
*Second Counselor in the
First Presidency*

When we think of the Prophet Joseph Smith we recognize that he was a man who possessed many great attributes. Courage was certainly one of these. Even at the tender age of seven, he would not take counsel from his fears. He had contracted typhus, from which he developed a fever sore that settled into his left leg. To save his leg, doctors cut a deep incision and removed several pieces of affected bone. There was, of course, no anesthetic available at that time, and already the seeds of greatness were sprouting as the brave young Joseph endured this excruciating operation with only the comfort he could draw from his father holding him.

AFRAID OF THE PAIN

I can relate to the Prophet Joseph's experience because of something that happened to me. When I was a boy, I used to love to walk in the fields and in the meadows and to swim in the creeks and in the ponds. My father taught me to hunt and to fish. One summer our family went on an outing near Wanship, Utah. We camped in tents among the trees that grew along the banks of the river. A group of our parents' friends and their families went with us and pitched their tents close to ours. One afternoon some of my young friends and I went out hunting varmints, which were considered pests because they ate the

tender feed the sheep needed as they grazed. We had .22-caliber rifles, and I was accidentally shot in the leg above the knee at close range. When the bullet passed through my leg, it felt like a hot poker was going through the flesh. Then I felt the warm blood running down my leg from the hole where the bullet had passed through it. I called my father to show him what had happened. He and the other men administered first aid to control the bleeding, then helped me into our family car to go to the nearest doctor, who was in Coalville.

After laying me on the operating table and examining the wound carefully, the doctor decided that he must first sterilize the hole in my leg through which the bullet had passed. When I saw how he was going to sterilize it, I was afraid of two things: I was afraid of the pain and I was also afraid that I would cry. I didn't want to cry, because I wanted my father to think I was no longer a child. In my heart, I said a silent prayer that Heavenly Father would help me so that no matter how badly it hurt, I wouldn't cry.

The doctor took a rod like those used to clean gun barrels. On the end of the rod was a hole through which a small piece of gauze was threaded and dipped into a sterilizing solution. The doctor then took the rod and pushed it into my leg. When it came out on the other side, he changed the gauze, put fresh antiseptic on it, and pulled it back through the hole, pushing it back and forth three times. It hurt quite a bit, especially when he got near the bone. But my father held my hand, and I gritted my teeth and shut my eyes and tried to hold still. Heavenly Father had heard my silent prayer, because it did not seem to hurt as much as I thought it would, and I didn't cry. The wound healed quickly and completely. I was

never bothered again by that leg, even when I participated in sports in high school and college. I have felt something of a feeling of kinship to the Prophet Joseph ever since, knowing that he, too, had had a painful wound in his leg and had been healed and that he was later described as being a hale and hearty man.

FEAR NEED NOT CONTROL US

As problems and difficulties have come in my life since, I have tried to face them as best I could, relying more on the help of our Heavenly Father than the comfort from tears. I learned the lesson that life's burdens don't seem to be so great if we don't allow ourselves to get paralyzed into a stupor of inactivity by our sorrow and pain. As children of our Heavenly Father, we should learn to be happy, to trust in Him, and to not be afraid.

The United States and much of the world have been plunged into a state of fear by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. But this is nothing new in the history of the world. The roles of terror and killing were integral parts of the Gadianton strategy in the history of the Nephites. This terror perpetrated in this new millennium has been skillfully designed to frighten us, but fear need not control us. The subsequent anthrax scare is perceived as being more psychologically damaging because it is less obvious than a plane crash. Yet we deal with far more prevalent risks such as staph infections, which happen every day. We are more ready to accept risks that we are familiar with, such as riding in an automobile or even crossing the street.

Satan is our greatest enemy and works night and day to destroy us. But we need not become paralyzed with fear of Satan's power. He can have no power over us unless we permit it. He is really a coward, and if we stand firm he will retreat.

In the children's classic *The Secret Garden*, author Frances Hodgson Burnett tells the story of the orphan, Mary Lennox, who is taken to her uncle's house, where she meets her cousin, Colin, who is a recluse. Even though there is nothing wrong with him, he is paralyzed by the fear he will become a hunchback if he lives, and he has convinced himself that he will soon die.

Mary Lennox is a lonely child who is determined not to be interested in anything. One day while

walking on her uncle's estate, she stumbles upon the key to the entrance of a garden enclosed by a high wall. Once she enters the garden, a transformation takes place. In working to restore the garden to its former grandeur, she experiences a freshening of her spirit. Colin is coaxed from his gloomy room into the garden, and the author writes this commentary:

"So long as Colin shut himself up in his room and thought only of his fears and weakness and his detestation of people who looked at him and reflected hourly on humps and early death, he was a hysterical half-crazy little hypochondriac who knew nothing of the sunshine and the spring and also did not know that he could get well and could stand upon his feet if he tried to do it. When new beautiful thoughts began to push out the old hideous ones, life began to come back to him, his blood ran healthily through his veins and strength poured into him like a flood. . . . Much more surprising things can happen to any one who, when a disagreeable or discouraged thought comes into his mind, just has sense to remember in time to push it out by putting in an agreeable determinedly courageous one. Two things cannot be in one place.



In the children's classic *The Secret Garden*, Mary Lennox helps her cousin, Colin, overcome his fears of death by coaxing him to visit her garden.

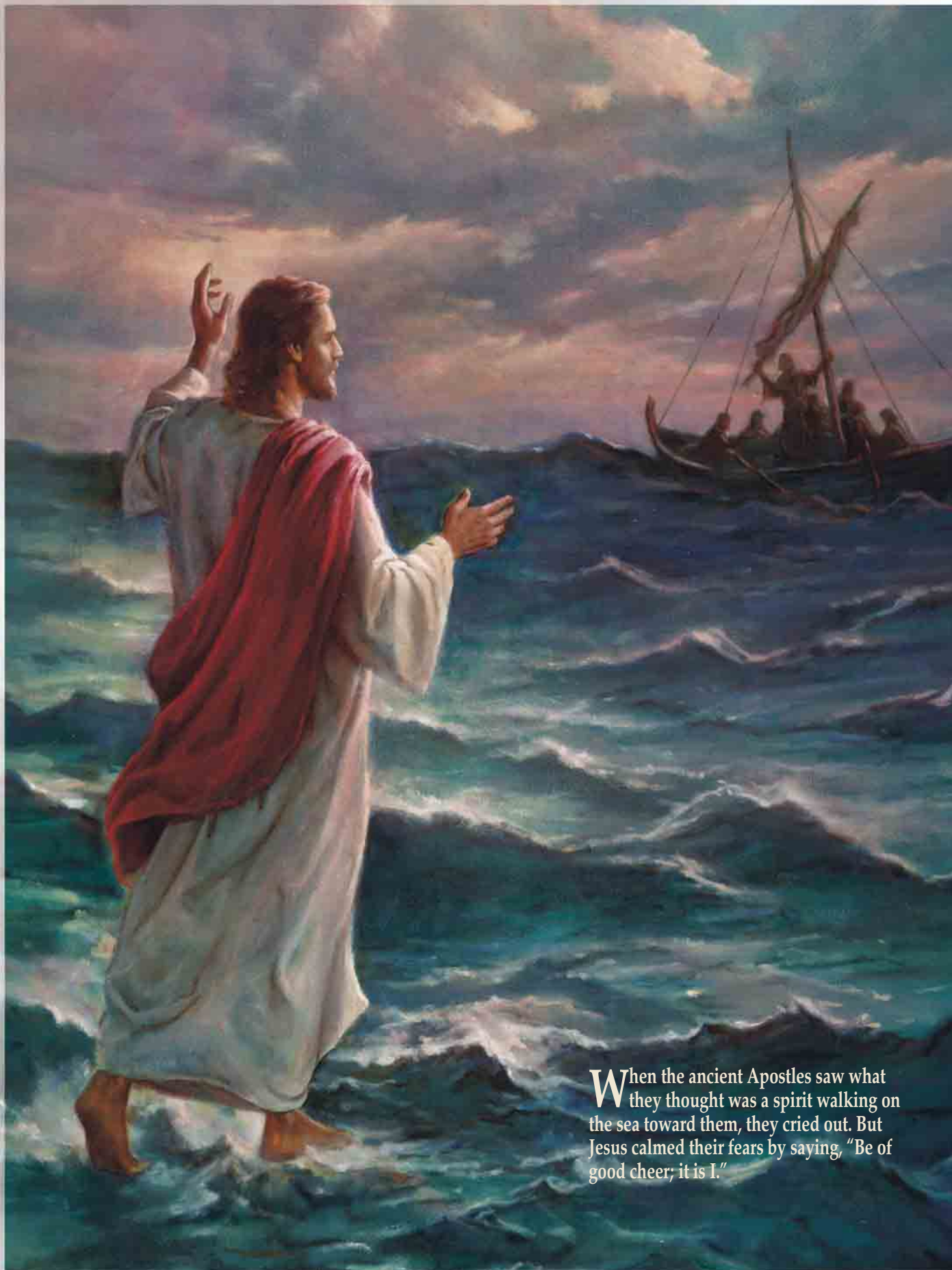
*'Where you tend a rose, my lad,
A thistle cannot grow.'*¹

HEAVENLY FATHER WILL COMFORT US

Remember, the Lord has said, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered" unto the Father. "Fear ye not therefore" (Matt. 10:30–31). He knows us, He loves us, and He knows our needs. He will comfort us if we will only trust in Him and His goodness and wisdom.

There are many things that we cannot change. We all have difficulties and disappointments. But often these turn out to be opportunities. The Lord can measure how strong we are by how we handle these difficulties in our lives. As the Lord said to the Prophet Joseph Smith, "Know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good" (D&C 122:7).

Sometimes the Lord allows us to have trials to shape us into productive servants. In our desire to achieve, we often fail to see that the Lord is trying to prune us away from false pride and vain ambition so He can teach us discipleship. His all-seeing eye is



When the ancient Apostles saw what they thought was a spirit walking on the sea toward them, they cried out. But Jesus calmed their fears by saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I."

over us and ever watching us as our Eternal Heavenly Parent. When trials come, as surely they will to all of us during mortality, let us not sink into the abyss of self-pity but remember who is at the helm, that He is there to guide us through all the storms of life.

LET US NOT TAKE COUNSEL FROM OUR FEARS

The story is told of a ship that was in distress during a severe storm off the coast of Holland:

"A rowboat went out to rescue the crew of the fishing boat. The waves were enormous, and each of the men at the oars had to give all his strength and energy to reach the unfortunate sailors in the grim darkness of the night and the heavy rainstorm.

"The trip to the wrecked ship was successful, but the rowboat was too small to take the whole crew in one rescue operation. One man had to stay behind on board because there simply was no room for him; the risk that the rescue boat would capsize was too great. When the rescuers made it back to the beach, hundreds of people were waiting for them with torches to guide them in the dreary night. But the same crew could not make the second trip because they were exhausted from their fight with the stormwinds, the waves, and the sweeping rains.

"So the local captain of the coast guard asked for volunteers to make a second trip. Among those who stepped forward without hesitation was a nineteen-year-old youth by the name of Hans. With his mother he had come to the beach in his oilskin clothes to watch the rescue operation.

"When Hans stepped forward his mother panicked and said, 'Hans, please don't go. Your father died at sea when you were four years old and your older brother Pete has been reported missing at sea for more than three months now. You are the only son left to me!'

"But Hans said, 'Mom, I feel I have to do it. It is my duty.' And the mother wept and restlessly started pacing the beach when Hans boarded the rowing boat, took the oars, and disappeared into the night.

"After a struggle with the high-going seas that lasted for more than an hour (and to Hans's mother it seemed an eternity), the rowboat came into sight again. When the rescuers had approached the beach close enough so that the captain of the coast guard could reach them by shouting, he cupped his hands around his mouth and called vigorously against the storm, 'Did you save him?'

"And then the people lighting the sea with their torches saw Hans rise from his rowing bench, and he shouted with all his might, 'Yes! And tell Mother it is my brother Pete!'"²

On another day and on another sea, the ancient

Apostles were on a ship "in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

"And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (Matt. 14:24–27).

Let us not take counsel from our fears. May we remember always to be of good cheer, put our faith in God, and live worthy for Him to direct us. We are each entitled to receive personal inspiration to guide us through our mortal probation. May we so live that our hearts are open at all times to the whisperings and comfort of the Spirit. □

NOTES

1. *The Secret Garden* (1987), 338–39.
2. Jacob de Jager, "You Never Know Who You May Save," *Ensign*, Nov. 1976, 56–57.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

Preparation

After studying this message, you may want to review Matthew 14:22–27 and consider the Savior's counsel to be of good cheer. Prayerfully choose one or two statements from President Faust that you feel will most benefit those you teach. Then select a teaching method or activity for each statement that is appropriate for the ages and circumstances of family members. A few examples of how this may be done are listed below.

Suggestions for Teaching

1. Invite family members to describe a person who is courageous. Have family members take turns reading aloud the stories about the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Faust as young boys.

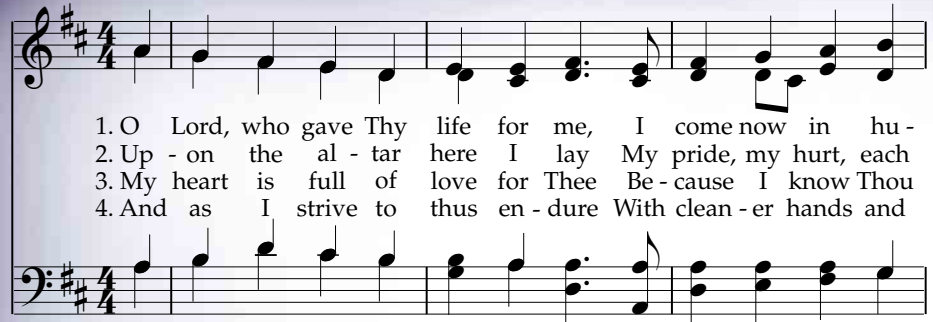
2. Show family members a plant and invite them to tell what they know about being a successful gardener. Briefly review what President Faust said about the story of The Secret Garden. How can the saying "Where you tend a rose, . . . a thistle cannot grow" be applied to overcoming fears?

3. Show family members the painting on page 5 of Jesus walking upon the sea. Ask them to imagine how they would have felt if they had been on that ship. Read Matthew 14:22–27, and tell about a time when putting faith in God helped you be of good cheer. Family members may also want to share similar experiences.

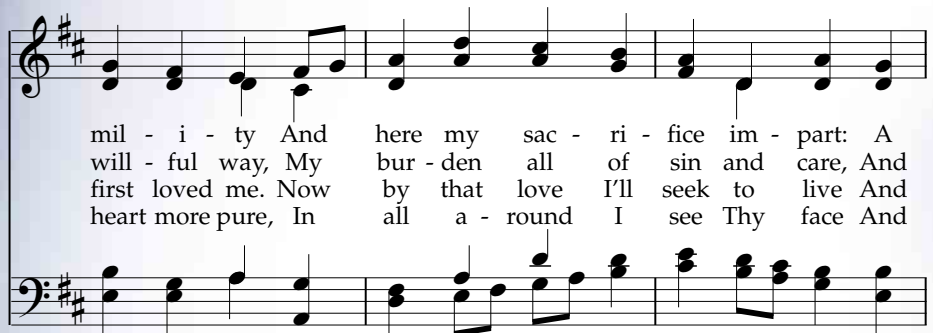
O LORD, WHO GAVE THY LIFE FOR ME

Reverently ♩ = 84-96

Text and music by Alice W. Johnson



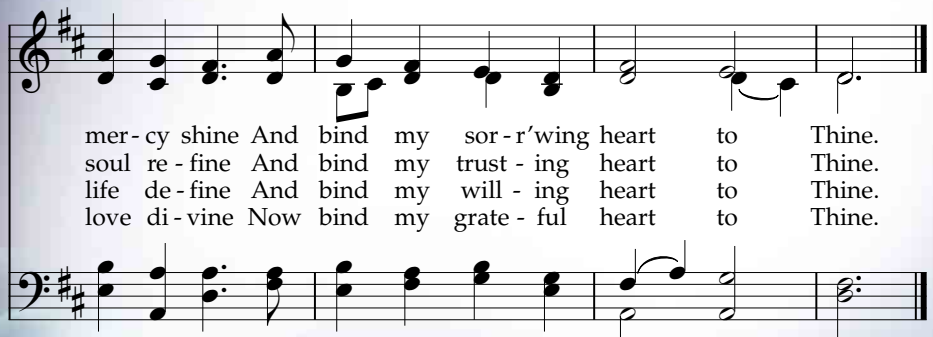
1. O Lord, who gave Thy life for me, I come now in hu -
2. Up - on the al - tar here I lay My pride, my hurt, each
3. My heart is full of love for Thee Be - cause I know Thou
4. And as I strive to thus en - dure With clean - er hands and



mil - i - ty And here my sac - ri - fice im - part: A
will - ful way, My bur - den all of sin and care, And
first loved me. Now by that love I'll seek to live And
heart more pure, In all a - round I see Thy face And



con - trite soul, a bro - ken heart. Oh, may Thy love in
in its place Thy yoke I'll bear. Oh, may Thy love my
free - ly, like Thy - self, for - give. Oh, may Thy love my
feel the boun - ties of Thy grace. O Sav - ior, may Thy



mer - cy shine And bind my sor - r'wing heart to Thine.
soul re - fine And bind my trust - ing heart to Thine.
life de - fine And bind my will - ing heart to Thine.
love di - vine Now bind my grate - ful heart to Thine.

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3 Nephi 9:20

1 John 4:19

FACING THE

Fiery Furnace



PAINTING BY WILLIAM MAUGHAN

Feeling pressure to compromise your standards? Take courage from the story of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

BY TERRY W. CALL

Have you ever noticed how some people seem to always make right choices? Even when enticing alternatives are available, they seem to go on unaffected. We know they have trials and temptations, but they have every appearance of being happy and eager about life. How are they able to meet the challenges of life so well?

Several ideas for achieving this kind of success may be found in the Old Testament book of Daniel.

FRIENDS FROM AN EARLY AGE

Our story begins in the kingdom of Judah about 620 B.C. Jeremiah and other prophets were preaching in the streets of Jerusalem, warning the people that they must repent or face destruction. The threat of a Babylonian military invasion hung over the land.


Into this society four boys were born, reared, and nourished in the secular and religious truths and traditions of the day. Their parents undoubtedly instilled a deep commitment to the Lord in their hearts and minds. Then about 605 B.C. the forces of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against Judah and laid siege to Jerusalem. Jehoiachin, king of Judah, soon surrendered and "all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, . . . and all the craftsmen and smiths . . . and the mighty of the land, those carried [Nebuchadnezzar] into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon" (2 Kgs. 24:14–15). Among those taken to

Babylon were Shadrach (Hananiah), Meshach (Mishael), Abed-nego (Azariah), and Belteshazzar (Daniel) ¹ (see Dan. 1:6–7).

A TEST OF FAITH

The king of Babylon soon decided that he wanted several young Jewish boys "of the [Israelite] king's seed, and of the princes" to serve in his court. He asked his chief officer to select the young men and train them for three years. The king wanted only young men "in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science" (Dan 1:3–4). Among those chosen were these four boys.

As the four of them sat for their first meal in the king's cafeteria, Daniel called to the chief officer and, speaking for the four of them, asked that they be excused from eating the food and drink provided by the king. It would be a violation of their religious beliefs to eat such food, he said. This made the king's chief officer very nervous, for the menu had been specifically set by the king. So the four young men, who must have become friends by now, proposed a 10-day test of their kosher diet versus the king's diet: "Let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants" (Dan 1:13). The chief officer agreed. The Lord



Humiliation and rejection by others are some of the ways we can be influenced to do evil. We must look beyond these momentary temptations into eternity with faith in God and without fear of man.

rewarded the young men for their faith, courage, and obedience to His dietary laws by blessing them “knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom” (Dan. 1:17; see also D&C 89:18–19).

When their schooling was finished, the king invited the entire graduating class to appear before him. He interviewed and questioned them, and from among them he “found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,” for they were 10 times wiser than all the wise men in his whole kingdom (Dan. 1:19). So Daniel and his friends became advisers to the kings of Babylon and served for more than 60 years.

A TRIAL OF FAITH

When more challenges came, Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-nego, and Daniel prayed for each other. Their first trial came less than a year later, when King Nebuchadnezzar ordered the execution of all his advisers. He was angry because he thought no one could interpret one of his dreams. When the commander of the king’s guard came to kill

LEFT PHOTO BY JED CLARK; ABOVE, DETAIL FROM CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER, BY HEINRICH HOHMANN

him, Daniel promised that if he was given a little time he could give the dream's interpretation, even though at that moment he knew nothing about it.

Daniel returned to his house and counseled with his friends. Together they prayed, asking God to reveal the dream and its meaning to them. That night the Lord showed Daniel by a "night vision" all he needed to know. In the morning the four young men rejoiced together. Daniel then went to the palace and explained the dream to Nebuchadnezzar. "Then the king . . . fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel" (Dan. 2:46). Daniel became a ruler in Babylon and chief adviser to the king. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were also made rulers in Babylon.

"WE WILL NOT SERVE THY GODS"

Some time later a prideful King Nebuchadnezzar commanded that everyone in his kingdom fall down and worship his 90-foot (27-meter) image. This edict was in direct conflict with the beliefs of all Jews (see Ex. 20:3–5). Some of the king's men informed him that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego "have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image" (Dan. 3:12). Nebuchadnezzar was furious and ordered that they be brought before him. "Is it true?" he asked. "Do not ye serve my gods? . . . If ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" (Dan. 3:14–15).

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego answered with some of the most honest and decisive words of faith and courage recorded anywhere in scripture: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter." The three friends wanted the king to know that they were ready for his question and had made up their minds on what to say. "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace. . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods" (Dan 3:16–18). Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego testified to the king that they served a God whom they knew could deliver them from the fiery furnace. But they also knew that even if God chose to let them burn on this occasion, to them it did not matter. They would not worship a false god! This expression of absolute trust in God reminds us of the 2,000 stripling warriors, who though "they never had fought, yet they did not fear death" (Alma 56:47).

"I SEE FOUR MEN LOOSE"

The king was absolutely infuriated and demanded that the furnace be made seven times hotter. Into the blazing fire the three were cast as the king watched

with satisfaction. Suddenly the king leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers: "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? . . . Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt" (Dan. 3:24–25). Shouting into the blazing furnace, Nebuchadnezzar said, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth" (Dan. 3:26). Out walked the three friends without having even a hair of their heads singed. The king blessed the name of Jehovah and promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in power and influence in his kingdom.

THOUGH THE ENEMY DERIDE

The pressure to participate in immoral and lewd acts, indecent language or music, scenes of violence and anger, and violations of the Word of Wisdom is particularly challenging today. "Everyone else does it," "You can repent later," or "Do it if you want any friends," are words that bully and provoke us. Humiliation, mockery, fear, and rejection by others are some of the potential effects of these temptations. We must look, as did these righteous Hebrews, beyond the momentary pressures, into eternity, with faith in God and without fear of man. The power and influence of the Holy Ghost can be with and strengthen us, like the fourth person in the fiery furnace. The words of a hymn remind us to cast our insecurities aside:

*Fear not, though the enemy deride;
Courage, for the Lord is on our side.
We will heed not what the wicked may say,
But the Lord alone we will obey.*²

Have you ever noticed how some people seem to always make right choices, even when enticing alternatives are available? The examples of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego show us that like-minded, valiant friends; faith in God and an abiding trust in His will, even unto death; and the protective power of the Holy Ghost can help see us through any trial or temptation. They will guide us in our search for happiness and will help us cultivate an optimistic eagerness about life. □

NOTES

1. Names listed first are the Chaldean names given to these four men after their arrival in Babylon. The names in parentheses are their Jewish names.

2. "Let Us All Press On," *Hymns*, no. 243.

Terry W. Call is a member of the Hobbie Creek Ward, Meridian Idaho North Stake.

More on this topic: Sharon G. Larsen, "Standing with God," Ensign, May 2000, 88–90; Howard W. Hunter, "Standing as Witnesses of God," Ensign, May 1990, 60–62; Neal A. Maxwell, "Willing to Submit," Ensign, May 1985, 70–73; Marion G. Romney, "We Need Men of Courage," Ensign, May 1975, 72–74.

Jeremiah

AS POTTER'S CLAY

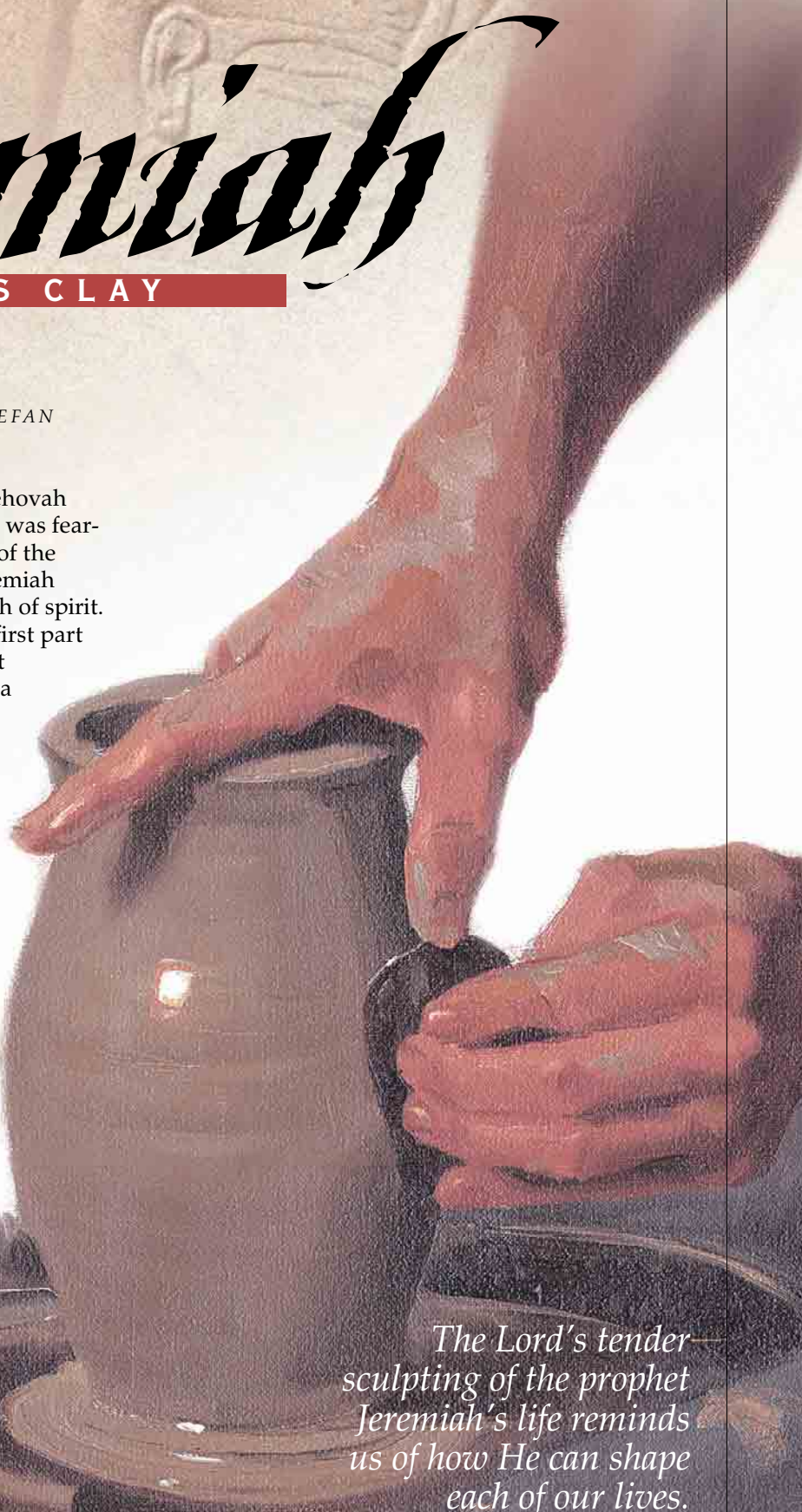


BY ELDER JEAN A. TEFAN
Area Authority Seventy

His name means "Jehovah will exalt," and he was fearless in his service of the Lord; yet the prophet Jeremiah experienced much anguish of spirit.

Sometime during the first part of Jeremiah's more than 40-year ministry at Jerusalem, the Lord instructed him to visit a potter's house (see Jer. 18:1–2). Jeremiah observed the potter at work, spinning a lower wheel with his foot while working with his hands a pile of wet clay on an upper wheel. Pottery making is one of the oldest crafts of civilized man. Jeremiah watched as the potter discovered a flaw in the vessel he was making. It interested Jeremiah that the potter collapsed the clay formation in his hands and began again to shape a whole new pot (see Jer. 18:3–4). The Lord then asked Jeremiah a rhetorical question, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter?" (Jer. 18:6). This question also might well have been addressed to Jeremiah.

He was a prophet who saw some of the darkest days of Israel's wickedness, yet through it all he recognized the skilled hands of the Master Potter, molding his character into a beautiful work of art. The events of his life remind us of the necessity to submit our whole lives, no matter how difficult it may be, into the Lord's loving hands.



The Lord's tender sculpting of the prophet Jeremiah's life reminds us of how He can shape each of our lives.

HIS CALL TO SERVE

Jeremiah was born in the town of Anathoth, about three miles northeast of Jerusalem. His father, Hilkiah, was "of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin" (Jer. 1:1; see also Bible Dictionary, "Jeremiah," 711). While Jeremiah was still young, the Lord called him to be His prophet: "Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak" (Jer. 1:7). Jeremiah at first resisted the Lord's confidence in him: "I cannot speak: for I am a child" (Jer. 1:6). But the Lord was aware of Jeremiah's potential: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; . . . and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1:5).

Similarly, the Lord knows each of us and has chosen us to come forth into mortality in a time and place that is best for us. He can mold us through our callings to serve in the home or Church. My wife and I gained a greater appreciation for this principle when we were called to preside over the Fiji Suva Mission. We did not speak fluent English, and my wife was particularly overwhelmed. She received a special blessing for this gift when she was set apart. She studied hard and practiced English at home and with the missionaries. Soon she was able to speak in English to the missionaries in zone conferences in Fiji, Vanuatu, and Kiribati; then in turn, she taught the missionaries working in New Caledonia in French. She felt that the Lord had called her to serve people of both languages; therefore, she needed to be able to speak both languages. This experience has molded and blessed her, our family, and the people she has had the opportunity to teach, even if her English has a slight French accent.

HIS PLIABILITY

A major factor in the molding of Jeremiah's life was his pliability, meaning his readiness to yield to the commands of God, to be flexible in freely and repeatedly bending to the will of God. Humility, obedience, faith, and freedom from pride are qualities of character that enhance pliability. The Master potter frequently tested Jeremiah's willingness to be obedient.

One time the Lord directed Jeremiah to buy a clay jar, smash it before the leaders of the people, and then boldly prophesy, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh

a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again" (Jer. 19:11; see Jer. 19:1–15). Jeremiah's fulfillment of this assignment to make such a dramatic denunciation of his political overlords required courageous obedience, casting aside any regard for his own safety.

The word of the Lord then came to Jeremiah to make himself into an impressive object lesson. Jeremiah was instructed to make a yoke that animals wear out of a crossbar and straps, put it around his

own neck, and wear it in the presence of King Zedekiah and Jerusalem's ambassadorial corps. What a strange spectacle Jeremiah must have been before these men of great influence and power! Jeremiah told them that if they did not voluntarily bow down to and serve the king of Babylon, as oxen in a yoke, the Lord would destroy them (see Jer. 27:1–11).

In these and many other instances, Jeremiah was pliable enough to do what the Lord commanded, no matter how peculiar, unpopular, or foolish it may have made him appear to others.

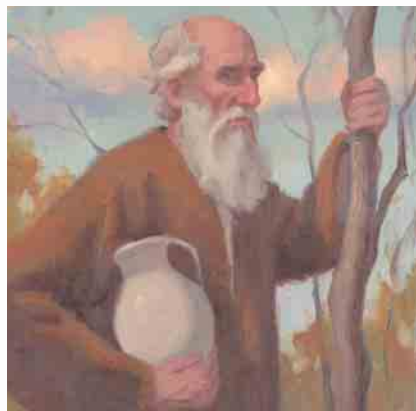
During my service as mission president, I met many young people who also demonstrated this

kind of pliability. I first met Olivier Pecqueux on a visit to New Caledonia. He was 24 years old and in the military service. He was not active in the Church, pursuing instead a life of worldliness. But the Lord had other plans for him. At his request we met and discussed his patriarchal blessing. He decided to humble himself, repent, and let the Lord mold his life. Soon he was called on a full-time mission and became one of my most capable elders. He is now attending college and was recently married in the Tahiti temple.

Our decisions should likewise exemplify pliability and a hope in Christ as expressed by Elder Hugh W. Pinnock (1934–2001): "When we make mistakes, as ancient Israel was making, we can take what we have marred and begin again. The potter did not give up and throw the clay away. . . and we are not to feel hopeless and reject ourselves. Yes, our task is to overcome our problems, take what we have and are, and start again."¹

THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED

Jeremiah was a man who saw many afflictions (see Lam. 3:1). In fact, the Lord warned him at the time of his call that kings, princes, priests, and the people would fight against him. "But they shall not prevail



The Lord directed Jeremiah to buy a clay jar and smash it before the leaders of his people, saying, "Even so will I break this people."

against thee; for I am with thee . . . to deliver thee" (Jer. 1:19), the Lord promised. The following are just two of the many difficult circumstances Jeremiah was required to endure.

When Pashur, the priest in charge of keeping order in the temple courts, heard of Jeremiah's impressive breaking of the clay jar and prophesying before the people, he had Jeremiah arrested, beaten, and confined in the stocks. The next day Pashur had Jeremiah brought to him, but Jeremiah fearlessly repeated the Lord's words of impending destruction, adding, "And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity" (Jer. 20:6).

As the Babylonian army laid siege to Jerusalem, Jeremiah relayed the word of the Lord to King Zedekiah and his people that they must surrender. This upset certain officials, who then used Jeremiah's attempt to leave the city as a pretext to arrest and imprison him for treason (see Jer. 37:6–15).

Jeremiah was cast into a terrible cistern-dungeon to die of starvation. Cisterns are pear-shaped cavities cut out of rock to catch and store water. Sediment had settled in the bowl of this cistern over the years until it was so deep that Jeremiah "sunk in the mire" (Jer. 38:6). If not for the courage and Christlike service of Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian servant to the king, Jeremiah would have surely died (see Jer. 38:7–13; see also 1 Ne. 7:14).

When the Babylonian king overran Jerusalem, Jeremiah chose to remain with his people at Jerusalem, continuing to deliver the word of the Lord to them despite their constant refusal to follow his advice. Jeremiah is believed to have died in Egypt not long after making one more appeal to his people to return to the Lord (see Jer. 44).

The things which Jeremiah suffered were some of the Lord's most powerful tools for shaping and purifying his life. Likewise, that which we suffer and endure in patience gives us experience and can be for our good (see D&C 122:7–8). Elder John B. Dickson of the Seventy has said, "Life is not intended to be easy, but I promise those that labor faithfully . . . and with determination handle every challenge properly . . . they will be blessed with feelings of happiness . . . that [will] mold and build us and that can never be taken away."²

VESSELS OF HONOR

On 19 December 1841 the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles met in the home of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

According to the minutes of the meeting kept by Wilford Woodruff, "Elder

Heber C. Kimball preached . . . of the clay in the hands of the potter, that when it [was] marred in the hands of the potter it was cut off the wheel and then thrown back again into the mill, to go into the next batch, and was a vessel of dishonor; but all clay that formed well in the hands of the potter . . . was a vessel of honor."³

Jeremiah was a prophet who truly testified of Christ (see Hel. 8:20). The Savior Himself used Jeremiah's words to teach and prophesy during His mortal ministry. His life was a vessel of honor, a guiding light of service, pliability, and long-suffering for Saints today.

Our lives may also be vessels of honor, a work of beauty in the hands of the Master potter, if we will respond to His call, be pliable in His hands, and learn from the things that we suffer. □

NOTES

1. "Beginning Again," *Ensign*, May 1982, 12.
2. "Nobody Said That It Would Be Easy," *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 46.
3. *History of the Church*, 4:478.

Elder Jean A. Tefan is an Area Authority Seventy serving in the Pacific Islands Area.

More on this topic: See Larry A. Hiller, "In the Potter's Hands," *New Era*, Dec. 1999, 20–25; Dallas N. Archibald, "The Potter's Hand," *Ensign*, Oct. 1990, 17–21; Ezra Taft Benson, "Spencer W. Kimball: A Star of the First Magnitude," *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 33–35.

Education for REAL LIFE

*Putting spiritual learning first
gives our secular learning purpose.*



BY ELDER HENRY B. EYRING
*Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles*

Conversion brings a drive to learn. From the Restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ in the time of Joseph Smith to our own day, you can see evidence of this.

Joseph Smith, as a very young man, translated the Book of Mormon from plates inscribed with a language no one on earth understood. He did it by a divine gift of revelation from God. But he later hired a tutor to teach him and other leaders of the Church ancient languages. Joseph Smith had essentially no formal schooling, yet the effect of the gospel of

Jesus Christ on him was to make him want to learn more so that he could be more useful to God and to God's children.

When the Latter-day Saints were driven from Missouri by mobs, they built a city on the banks of the Mississippi River. They named it Nauvoo. In their poverty and on the western edges of the country, they formed a university.

"In 1840, Joseph Smith sought the incorporation of the City of Nauvoo, Illinois, and along with it authority to establish a university. The Nauvoo charter included authority to 'establish and organize an institution of learning within the limits of the city, for the teaching of the arts, sciences and learned professions, to be called the "University of the City of Nauvoo" ' [quoted in



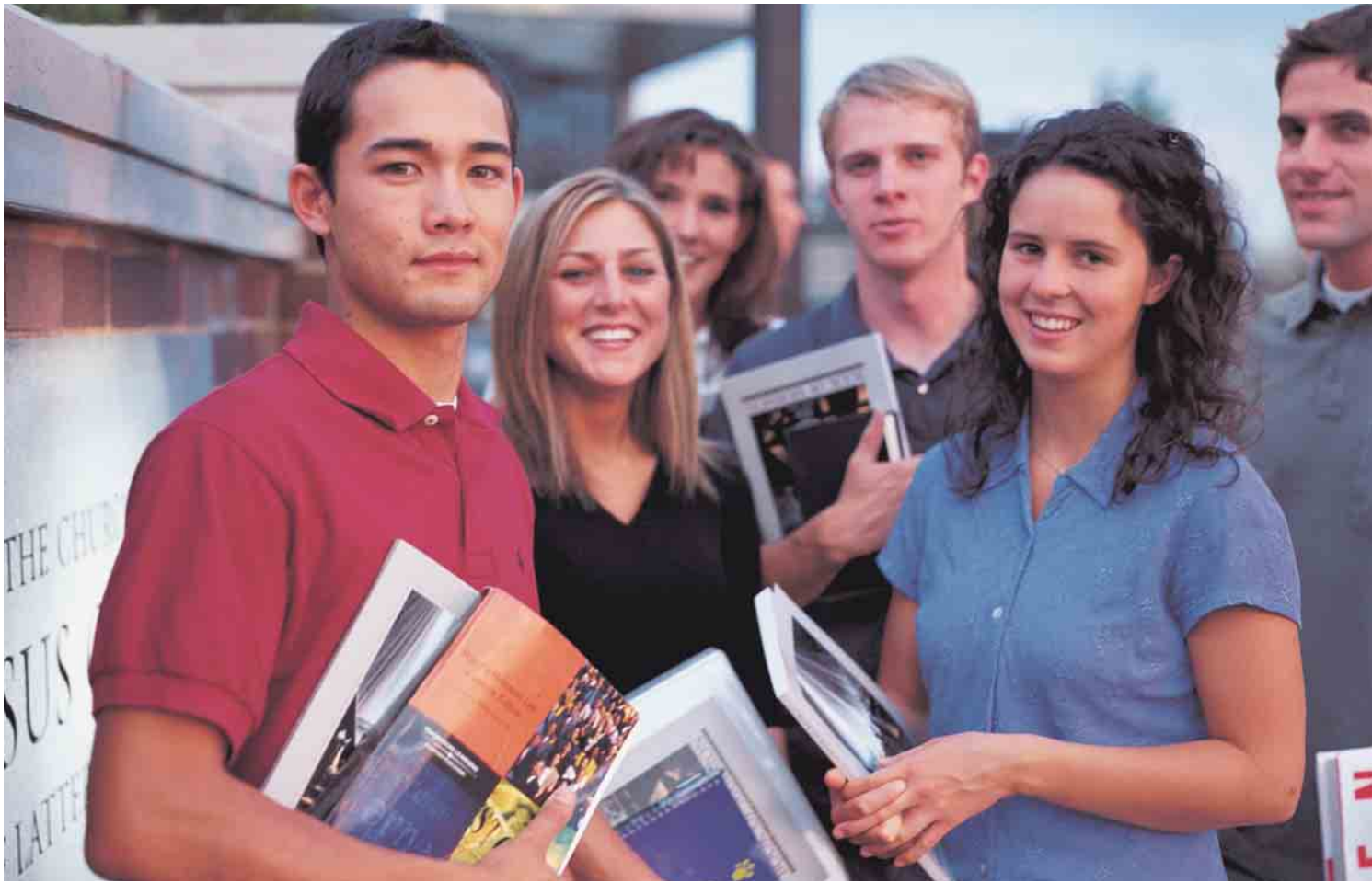
H. S. Salisbury, "History of Education in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Journal of History*, July 1922, 269].

"The first academic year in Nauvoo was that of 1841–42. The university probably was among the first municipal universities in the United States [see Wendell O. Rich, *Distinctive Teachings of the Restoration* (1962), 10]. . . . The curriculum included languages (German, French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), mathematics, chemistry and geology, literature, and history. . . . 'The faculty represented considerable scholarship [compared with what you would expect to find in a frontier city in those early days]' [Milton Lynn Bennion, *Mormonism and Education* (1939), 25]. . . .

"The charter of the University of the City of Nauvoo

served as the foundation for the University of Deseret (now the University of Utah), established by Brigham Young in Salt Lake City in 1850. 'Education,' he once told this school's Board of Regents, 'is the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life' (Bennion, p. 115). He advised: 'A good school teacher is one of the most essential members in society' (JD 10:225)" (in Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 5 vols. [1992], 2:442–43).

When the Saints in Utah were still struggling to produce enough food to live, they started schools. They felt driven to lift their children toward light and to greater usefulness by education. That drive is more than a cultural tradition passed on through the generations. It is the natural fruit of living the gospel of Jesus Christ. You



see it today across the world in our missionaries coming home from their brief service in the field. Those who have planted the good word of God and have served faithfully invariably have awakened in them a great desire for self-improvement. And with that comes a desire to learn more and to gain greater skills.

The purpose of God's creations and of His giving us life is to allow us to have the learning experience necessary for us to come back to Him, to live with Him in eternal life. That is only possible if we have our natures changed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, true repentance, and making and keeping the covenants He offers all of His Father's children through His Church.

So the leaders of the Church have always known that the drive for learning among our people must have a powerful spiritual component. That spiritual element, when it is effective, refines and uplifts the aims of our total education.

SEEK LEARNING TO SERVE GOD

The thirst for education that comes with the change the gospel brings can be a blessing or a curse, depending on our motives. If we continue to seek learning to serve God and His children better, it is a blessing of great worth. If we begin to seek learning to exalt

ourselves alone, it leads to selfishness and pride, which will take us away from eternal life.

That is one of the reasons we should always put spiritual learning first. And that is why the Church has placed institutes of religion across the earth wherever young members are gathered in sufficient numbers. Their spiritual education in the institute will shape the purpose and speed the process of their secular learning.

Listen to the words of the Lord as recorded by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Doctrine and Covenants. They constitute His call for education and establish the purpose and process of our learning:

"I give unto you a commandment that ye shall continue in prayer and fasting from this time forth.

"And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.

"Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;

"Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments

which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—

“That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you” (D&C 88:76–80).

Let’s start with the purpose of our learning. The Lord and His Church have always encouraged education to increase our ability to serve Him and our Heavenly Father’s children. For each of us, whatever our talents, He has service for us to give. And to do it well always involves learning, not once or for a limited time, but continually.

In the scripture above, the Master is clear about the process. Through prayer, fasting, and hard work, with a motive to serve Him, we can expect His grace to attend us. I can assure you from my own experience, that does not mean we will always be on the high end of the grading curve. It means that we will learn more rapidly and grow in skill beyond what we could do only with our unaided natural abilities.

That leads to some clear answers to the question of what all this means for us and what, therefore, we should do.



You are interested in education, not just for mortal life but for eternal life. When you see that reality clearly with spiritual sight, you will put spiritual learning first and yet not slight the secular learning.

SPIRITUAL LEARNING GIVES PURPOSE TO SECULAR LEARNING

It is clear that our first priority should go to spiritual learning. For us, reading the scriptures would come before reading history books. Prayer would come before memorizing those Spanish verbs. A temple recommend would be worth more to us than standing first in our graduating class. But it is also clear that spiritual learning would not replace our drive for secular learning.

The Lord clearly values what you will find in that history book and in a text on political theory. Remember His words. He wants you to know “things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations” (D&C 88:79). And He favors not only Spanish verbs but the study of geography and demography. You remember that His educational charter requires that we have “a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms” (v. 79).



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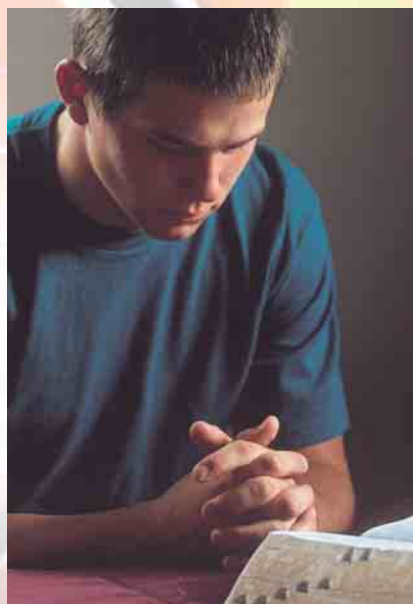


PHOTO BY JED CLARK

There is also an endorsement for questions we study in the sciences. It is clear that putting spiritual learning first does not relieve us from learning secular things. On the contrary, it gives our secular learning purpose and motivates us to work harder at it.

If we will keep spiritual learning in its proper place, we will have to make some hard choices of how we use our time. But there should never be a conscious choice to let the spiritual become secondary as a pattern in our lives. Never. That will lead to tragedy. The tragedy may not be obvious at first, nor may it ever be clear in mortal life. But remember, you are interested in education, not just for mortal life but for eternal life. When you see that reality clearly with spiritual sight, you will put spiritual learning first and yet not slight the secular learning. In fact, you will work harder at your secular learning than you would without that spiritual vision.

GOD KNOWS WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW

Part of the tragedy you must avoid is to discover too late that you missed an opportunity to prepare for a future only God could see for you. The chance to learn



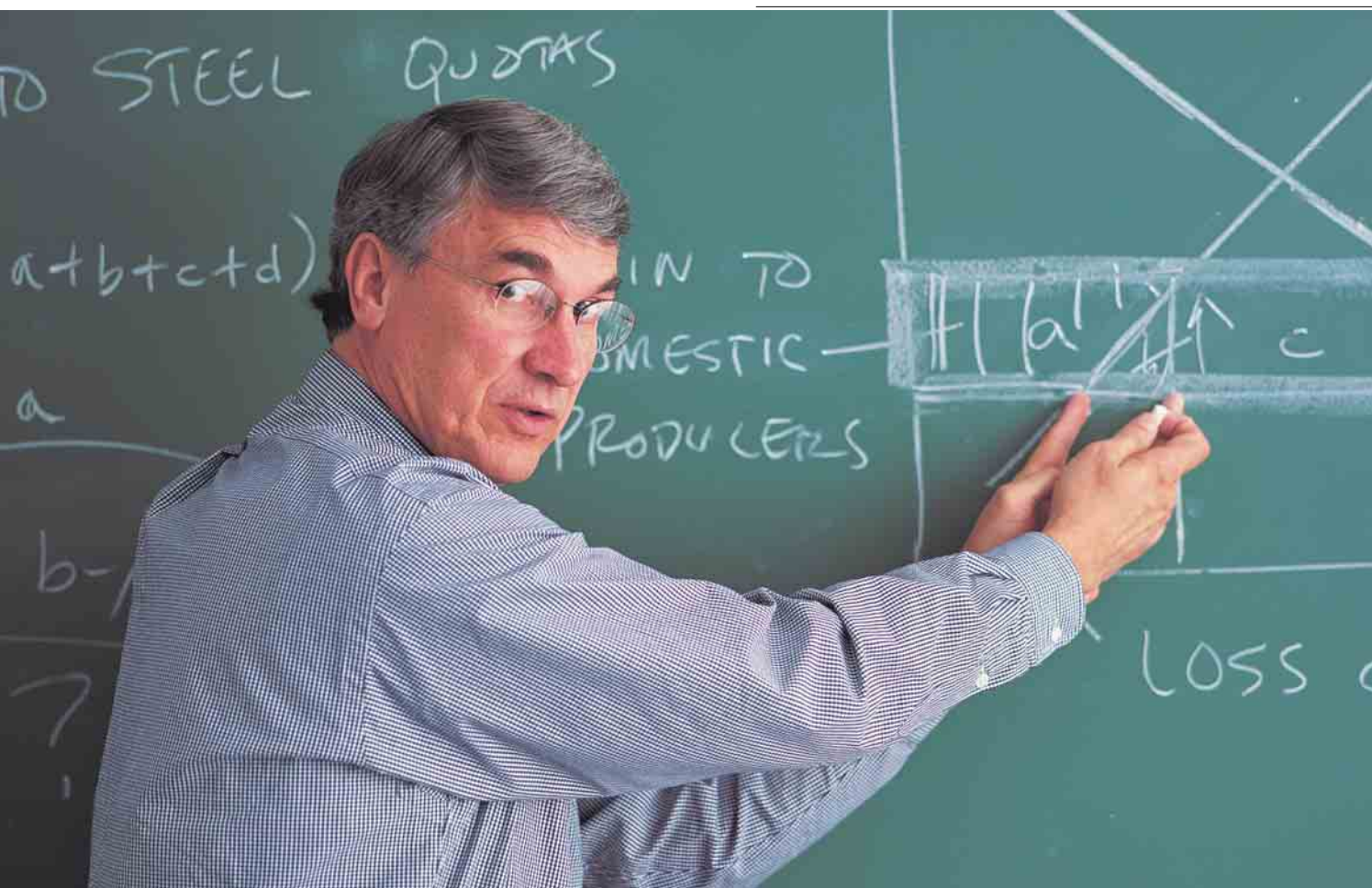
another language is for me a painful example. My father was born in Mexico. He grew up speaking Spanish as his first language. I lived in his home for more than 20 years. Sadly, I never asked him to teach me a word of Spanish. Now I am the first contact in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for the Church in Mexico, in Central America, and in Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. It was no accident that I was born into a home with a Spanish-speaking father.

But there was another opportunity. My father was a great teacher. He was a chemist. He even kept a blackboard in our basement for his children. He was eager to teach me mathematics. He spent hours trying to help me solve problems for my physics classes. He pled with me to think more often about those things that then seemed so uninteresting and so unimportant. Years later I was called by the Lord to the Presiding Bishopric of the Church and given responsibilities for computing and communications systems. What a blessing I might have had by taking the counsel I give you now.

Your life is carefully watched over, as was mine. The Lord knows both what He will need you to do and what you will need to know. He is kind and He is all-knowing. So you can with confidence expect that He has prepared opportunities for you to learn in preparation for the service you will give. You will not recognize those opportunities perfectly, as I did not. But when you put the spiritual things first in your life, you will be blessed to feel directed toward certain learning, and you will be motivated to



Your service may not be in what the world would recognize as a lofty calling. When the real value of service becomes clear in the judgment of God, some people who worked in quiet anonymity will be the real heroes.



work harder. You will recognize later that your power to serve was increased, and you will be grateful.

Your service may not be in what the world would recognize as a lofty calling. When the real value of service becomes clear in the judgment of God, some people who worked in quiet anonymity will be the real heroes. Many of them, perhaps most of them, will be the underpaid and underrecognized people who nurtured others. I never visit an elementary school and watch the teachers without thinking about that future day when the rewards will be eternal. I never visit a hospital and watch those who nurse and those who clean without thinking of that. I never visit a workplace where someone serves me and others well, earning wages barely enough to provide the necessities for a family, without thinking of the future. And I never see a mother juggling three little children who are crying while she is smiling, as she shepherds them gently, without seeing in my mind's eye that day of honor in the presence of the only Judge whose praise will finally matter.

LEARNING SHOULD NEVER STOP

No service that matters can be given over a lifetime by those who stop learning. A great teacher is always studying. A nurse never stops facing the challenge

of dealing with something new, be it equipment or procedure. And the workplace in every industry is changing so rapidly that what we know today will not be enough for tomorrow.

Our education must never stop. If it ends at the door of the classroom on graduation day, we will fail. And since what we will need to know is hard to discern, we need the help of heaven to know which of the myriad things we could study we would most wisely learn. It also means that we cannot waste time entertaining ourselves when we have the chance to read or to listen to whatever will help us learn what is true and useful. Insatiable curiosity will be our hallmark.

For many of us, the feeling bears down on us that we must choose between spiritual and secular learning. That is a false conflict for most of us, particularly for the young. Before we have families, there is leisure time even in what is our busiest day. Too often we use many hours for fun and pleasure, clothed in the euphemism "I'm recharging my batteries." Those hours could be spent reading and studying to gain knowledge, skills, and culture.

For instance, we too often fail to take advantage of the moments we spend waiting. Think of the last time you sat in a barber shop or a beauty salon or the waiting room of a doctor's office. It is so easy to spend time thumbing through any magazine that is stacked on a



table there. In fact, if you think about it, you will remember how you wondered where they get those out-of-date magazines. There is much valuable reading you could do if you took a book with you to fill those islands of time.

From at least the time man was created, there was the written word. The scriptures tell us that from what they teach about Adam and Eve. They were conscious of the need to develop the mind and the power of reading and writing. In the book of Moses we read, "And by them their children were taught to read and write, having a language which was pure and undefiled" (Moses 6:6).

It takes neither modern technology nor much money to seize the opportunity to learn in the moments we now waste. You could just have a book and paper and pencil with you. That will be enough. But you need determination to capture the leisure moments you now waste.

GOD CAN MULTIPLY THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR TIME

I realize that there are some, perhaps many, for whom my urging to capture leisure time cuts like a knife. You feel overwhelmed by the lack of time. You have left unfinished tasks in your Church calling. You've carried your scriptures all day but still have not found a moment to open them. There is someone in your family who would be blessed by your thoughtful attention, but you haven't gotten to them yet. You will go to a job tomorrow that barely pays enough to keep food on your table and pay your bills. Rather than finding ways to capture leisure time for learning, you are trying to decide what to leave undone.

There is another way to look at your problem of crowded time. You can see it as an opportunity to test your faith. The Lord loves you and watches over you. He is all-powerful, and He promised you this: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

That is a true promise. When we put God's

purposes first, He will give us miracles. If we pray to know what He would have us do next, He will multiply the effects of what we do in such a way that time seems to be expanded. He may do it in different ways for each individual, but I know from long experience that He is faithful to His word.

Years ago I was admitted to a graduate program for which I was poorly prepared. The course was arduous. The competition was fierce. On the first day the professor said, "Look at the person on your left and on your right. One of the three of you will not be here at the end. One of the three of you will likely fail." The schedule of classes filled the five weekdays from early until late. Preparations for the next day's classes lasted until nearly midnight, often beyond. And then late on Friday a major paper was assigned, with no way to prepare until the assignment was given and with the paper due at nine o'clock on Saturday night.

I can still remember the hours of frantic study and writing on those Saturdays. And as the nine o'clock deadline approached, crowds of students would stand around the slot in the wall of the library to cheer as the last desperate student would dash up to throw in his completed paper, just before the box inside the building was pulled away from beneath the slot to let the late papers fall into the oblivion of failure. Then the students would go back to their homes and to their rooms for a few hours of celebration before starting preparations for Monday classes. And most of them would study all day on Sunday and late into the night.

For me, there was no party on Saturday and no studying on Sunday. The Lord gave me an opportunity to test His promise. Early in that year He called me, through a humble district president, to a Church service that took me across the hills of New England from the early hours of Sunday to late in the evening. I visited the tiny branches and the scattered Latter-day Saints from Newport and Cape Cod on the south to Worcester and Fort Devens on the west and Lynn and Georgetown on the north. I realize that those names mean more to me than they do to you. For me the words bring back the joy of going to those places, loving the Lord, and trusting that somehow He would keep His promise. He always did. In the few minutes I could give to preparation on Monday morning before classes, ideas and understanding came to more than match what others gained from a Sunday of study.

I've seen that same miracle when there seemed not to be enough time for my family when they needed me. I had four young sons and a challenging new job, and then came a call from our bishop to be the assistant Scoutmaster and the deacons quorum instructor. The Scouts camped out often, taking me from my boys, who were either older or younger than Scout ages. But I gave my heart to teaching and serving, trusting the

Lord's promise. I began to take one of my sons and then another with me on our outings. What seemed a call away from my obligations to my sons, with the Lord's help, formed a bond with them that will last for eternity. I gave my heart to the Lord's service in that deacons quorum; He gave me the hearts of my sons.

I cannot promise academic success or perfect families. Nor can I tell you the way in which He will honor His promise of adding blessings upon you. But I can promise you that if you will go to Him in prayer and ask what He would have you do next, promising that you will put His kingdom first, He will answer your prayer and He will keep His promise to add upon your head blessings, enough and to spare. Those apparent prison walls of "not enough time" will begin to recede, even as you are called to do more.

REAL LIFE IS ETERNAL LIFE

The real life we're preparing for is eternal life. Secular knowledge has for us eternal significance. Our conviction is that God, our Heavenly Father, wants us to live the life that He does. We learn both the spiritual things and the secular things "so we may one day create worlds [and] people and govern them" (Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 386). All we can learn that is true while we are in this life will rise with us in the Resurrection. And all that we can learn will enhance our capacity to serve. That is a destiny reserved not alone for the brilliant, those who learn the most quickly, or those who enter the most respected professions. It will be given to those who are humbly good,



All we can learn that is true while we are in this life will rise with us in the Resurrection. And all that we can learn will enhance our capacity to serve.

who love God, and who serve Him with all their capacities, however limited those capacities are—as are all our capacities, compared with the capacities of God.

I pray that you will feel a debt of gratitude to the Master Teacher, our Savior Jesus Christ. I pray that you will sense the great service that a loving Heavenly Father expects you to give to His children and that you will see the opportunities to learn that He has prepared for you. □

From a talk given on the 75th anniversary of the Institute of Religion program at a Church Educational System fireside in Moscow, Idaho, on 6 May 2001.

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. Why does conversion to the gospel often result in an increased desire for education?
2. How can we better recognize opportunities to learn that the Lord has provided for us?
3. How can we devote more time to studying and learning? For example, do we take advantage of the moments we spend waiting?



PHOTO BY STEVE BUNDERSON



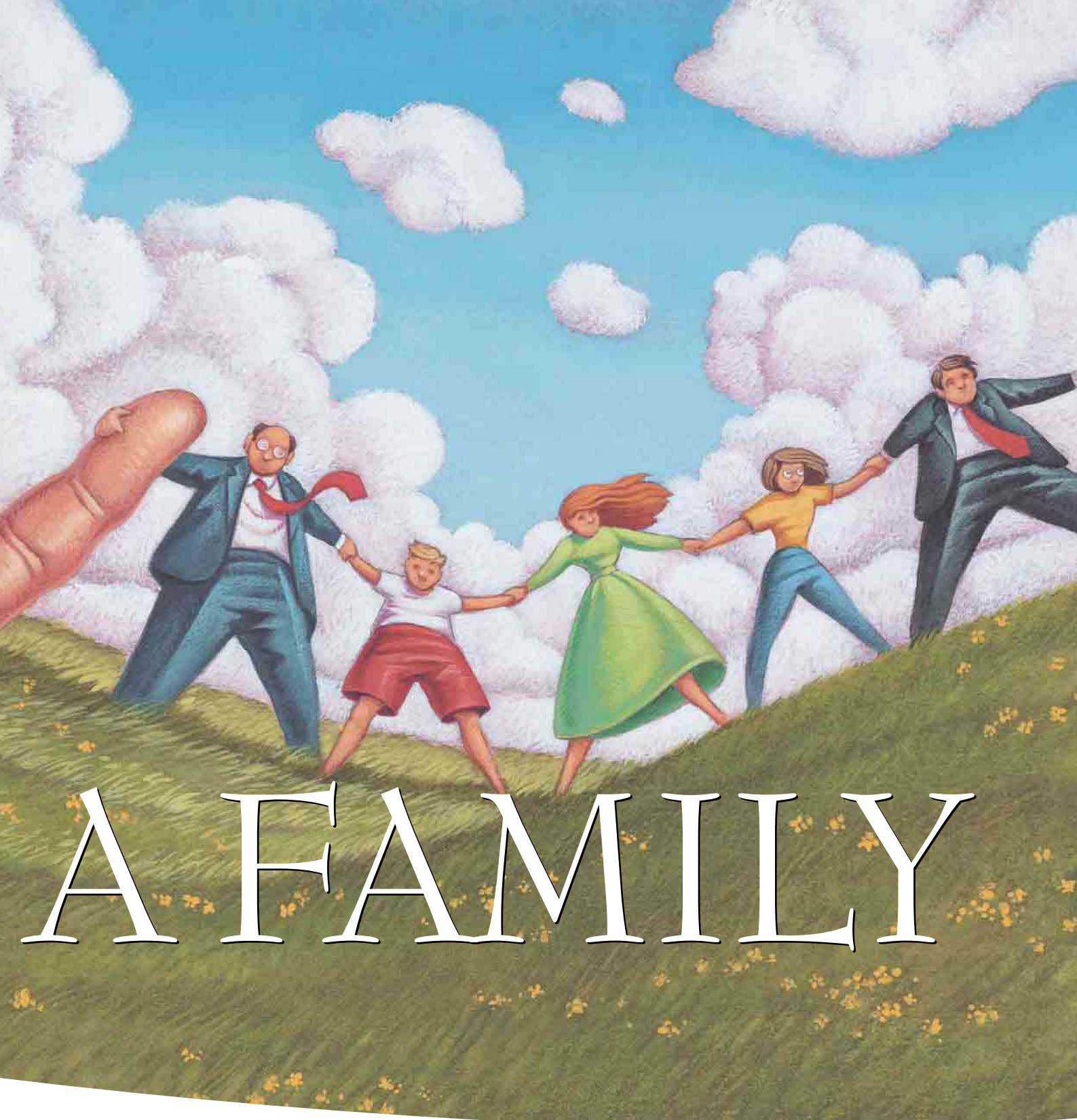
PART OF

You may be single, but you still have a family.

STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

BY MICHELE BURTON

As I saw the bishop come toward me the first week in my new ward, I prepared myself for his question. I have moved often enough to know what the first greetings usually are. In a kind and warmhearted way, the bishop extended his hand and introduced himself. After I told him my name, he looked around me as he asked, "Do you have a family?" Smiling brightly, I answered, "Yes! I have a wonderful family. I have outstanding parents, fabulous brothers, and terrific sisters." The bishop looked confused and then carefully



A FAMILY

asked if I was married or had any children. I replied that I did not. I was coming into the ward on my own.

I could have also told the bishop about my grandparents, nephews, nieces, cousins, uncles, and aunts. However, it is sometimes easy to forget this family when telling someone I don't have a husband or children. I never expected not to be married at my age, and my

situation can be awkward and at times painful. But while the blessings of marriage and children have not yet come into my life, many other blessings have.

One of my greatest blessings is my family, and I do what I can to strengthen my relationships with them. Fortunately, I have a job that enables me to live close to many of my family members. While I am as busy as

ILLUSTRATED BY GREG NEWBOLD

any member of my family, including those who are married with children, I do have a certain kind of freedom that not everyone has. In addition to attending family get-togethers, I am able to schedule time for events such as football games, school plays, and awards ceremonies as well as baptisms, blessings, and priesthood ordinations.

I also strengthen my relationships with my family members by praying for each of them. When I ask Heavenly Father to help them, I try to see them as He does. Consequently, I more readily recognize their strengths and become more tolerant of their weaknesses. The Holy Ghost helps me to see my own weaknesses and how I can work to change my actions to help build a more eternal family. Through prayer I am better prepared to receive personal revelation and learn how I can more effectively serve my family members.

I have developed closer relationships with family members through service, whether I am giving or receiving it. Being single, I have learned to rely on myself to handle most of the difficulties that come with daily living. It is often hard for me to ask my family for help, but when I have done so, my love and appreciation for them have grown. One sister who lives far away has helped me answer questions and solve problems as we talk on the telephone. Digging a trench in my yard with my brother led to a serious gospel discussion that helped me gain a new understanding and strengthened my testimony. Traveling with my grandmother gave me the opportunity to learn the life stories of family members, both living and those who had passed on long before. My neighbors were amazed at the transformation that took place in my backyard one Saturday morning as my family gathered together and had a family workday.

As I think about eternity, I know I cannot wait until I have a husband and children to build strong family relationships. I have a family now. Someday my future husband and children will benefit by the family unity I am helping to establish. I know that if I live worthily I will be able to meet Jesus Christ again, and

THE LORD SENT EACH OF US TO A FAMILY



"At times when one speaks of home and family, some who are single, widowed, a single parent, or a grandparent might be tempted to feel these teachings don't apply to them. But may I remind all that when the Lord sent us here for our individual growth, he sent us to live with and be nurtured spiritually and temporally by a family. The Lord organized the whole earth this way. There is no other way to enter mortality. . . . It doesn't matter if your parents or spouse or brothers or sisters are members, nonmembers, living, or dead, they are still your family. And if you are righteous and faithful to the end, no matter what your present status, you ultimately will be blessed as part of a family unit."

Elder Gene R. Cook of the Seventy, "Home and Family: A Divine Eternal Pattern," *Ensign*, May 1984, 31; emphasis in original.

on that day I want to be surrounded by all the members of my family. □

Michele Burton is a member of the Lebanon Second Ward, Lebanon Oregon Stake.

BRIDGING THE DISTANCE

BY KRISTIN BAYLES
BATCHELOR

I grew up in a home that was filled with love, laughter, and lots of noise. Family dinners lasted for hours as we all talked about our day. Evenings were filled with pickup basketball, board games, and videos with popcorn. My siblings and I would stay up talking late into the night.

My career has taken me far from home since then. During my single years, until my recent marriage, I lived alone in an apartment where it was rather quiet—unless I talked to myself or my cat! Despite the distance, I have been able to maintain close ties with my family by engaging in a few simple activities:

Sending cards and letters.

I don't wait for special occasions to write cards to members of my family, and many times I feel prompted to write to a specific individual. I like to make cards rather than buy them. My family members seem to especially appreciate the cards I make out of family photographs, because these are more than just cards—they are tangible memories that can be saved. I also enjoy making cards out of construction paper for my nieces. Sometimes I include a surprise with their cards, such as pencils or stickers. My nieces love getting mail with their names on it, and often they will call to let me know they received their letter. This helps me feel more involved in their young lives.

Finding common interests. My father was a football coach, and my family has always loved watching football together. Now that we live in different locations, we hold a weekly football contest throughout the college season. My dad selects the games we are to follow, and we all pick our winners. Then we keep track of who wins the most games. We do this

through e-mail, but the contest could also be modified and done by telephone. There is never a prize for the winner; we just enjoy the competition and keeping in touch. Other families could choose to follow a different sport or could read a book, see a movie, or do some other activity separately and then discuss it later by e-mail or telephone.

Creating a family newsletter. I help put together a family newsletter four times a year. Everyone writes an article about his or her family and sends it to me. I put the articles into a newsletter and add photographs and other items of interest. It's always fun to read what everyone else is doing—it's almost like talking with my family and hearing them tell stories. My brothers' contributions always make me laugh.

Maintaining a family Web site. I have set up a Web site for my family, including members of my extended family. On the Web site we can download pictures and articles and even chats with one another. This is a great way to keep updated on each other's lives.

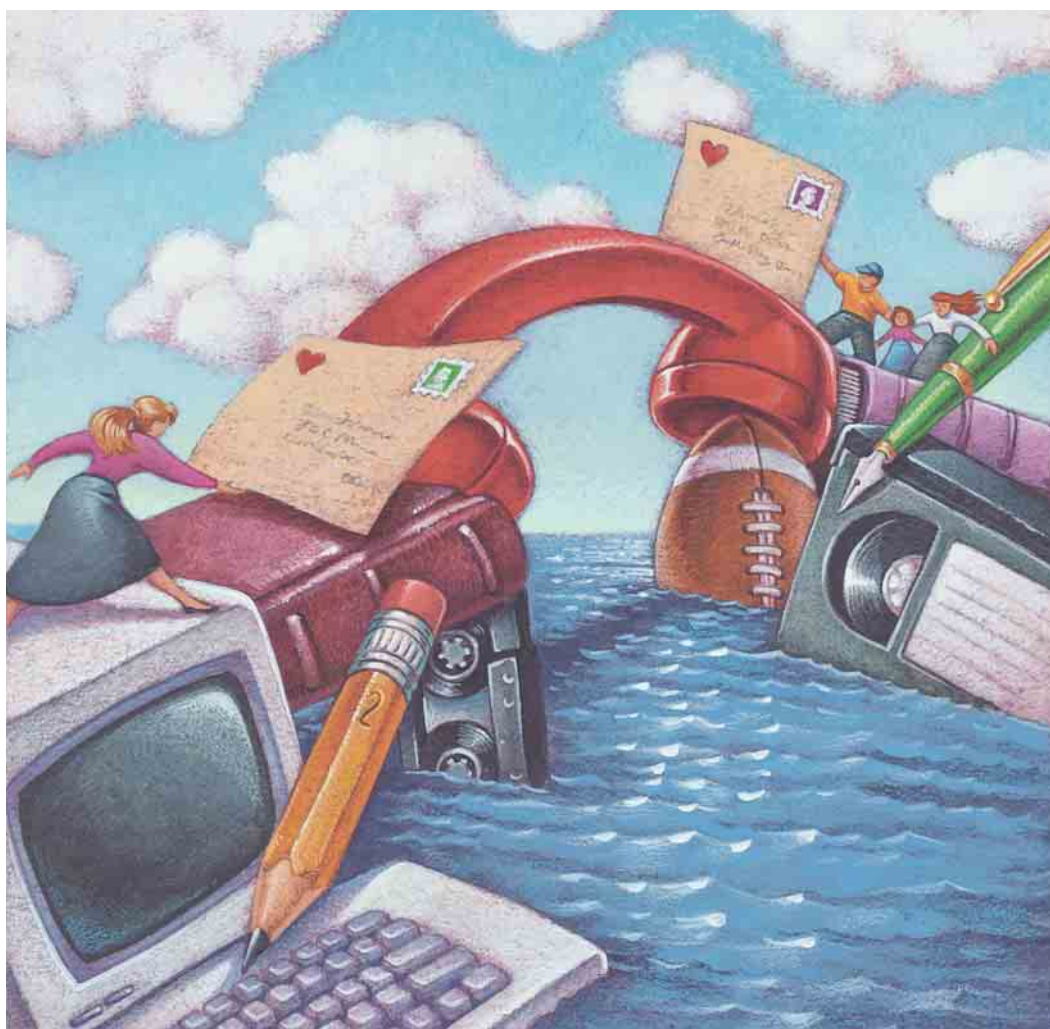
Recording home videos or audiotapes. When I was living in Argentina and Mexico, my dad would send me videos of my niece so that I could see her growing and changing. Making and sending videos or audiotapes can be a fun alternative to sending cards or e-mails.

Of course, nothing compares to actually being with my family, so I try to schedule visits as often as I can. But during those times when we are far away from each other, we make the effort to stay in touch. That way, even when we are hundreds of miles apart, we still feel close. □

Kristin Bayles Batchelor is a member of the Westfield Ward, Houston Texas North Stake.

More on this topic: See Deena King, "The Proclamation on the Family: For Every One of Us," Ensign, Dec. 2000, 20–21; Kandy Martin, "Are You a Mommy?" Ensign, July 1999, 28–29; Gene R. Cook, "Home and Family: A Divine Eternal Pattern," Ensign, May 1984, 30–31.

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



A few simple activities can help you feel connected to family members even when you live far away.

Making CHOICES for Eternity

*Correct motives and a strong testimony
will help guide us through our experience on earth.*



BY ELDER DIETER F. UCHTDORF
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

As Church members, most of us have the ultimate goal of achieving immortality and eternal life. The Savior has already made provision for part of this goal to be achieved: immortality has

been brought to pass for all of God's children here on earth. Now we are working on achieving the second part of that goal: eternal life, God's greatest gift to us (see D&C 14:7).

We read in the Book of Mormon the necessary preconditions to reach this lofty goal: "Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; . . . and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ. . . . Then are ye sanctified in Christ" (Moro. 10:32–33).

Each precondition for this transition to perfection and sanctification is no small task. The things we are required to do are challenging. But they are worth the effort. The process is based on the law of the harvest: "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

That law, however, will be divinely influenced to our advantage by our loving and caring Heavenly Father. We are promised uplifting sunshine and

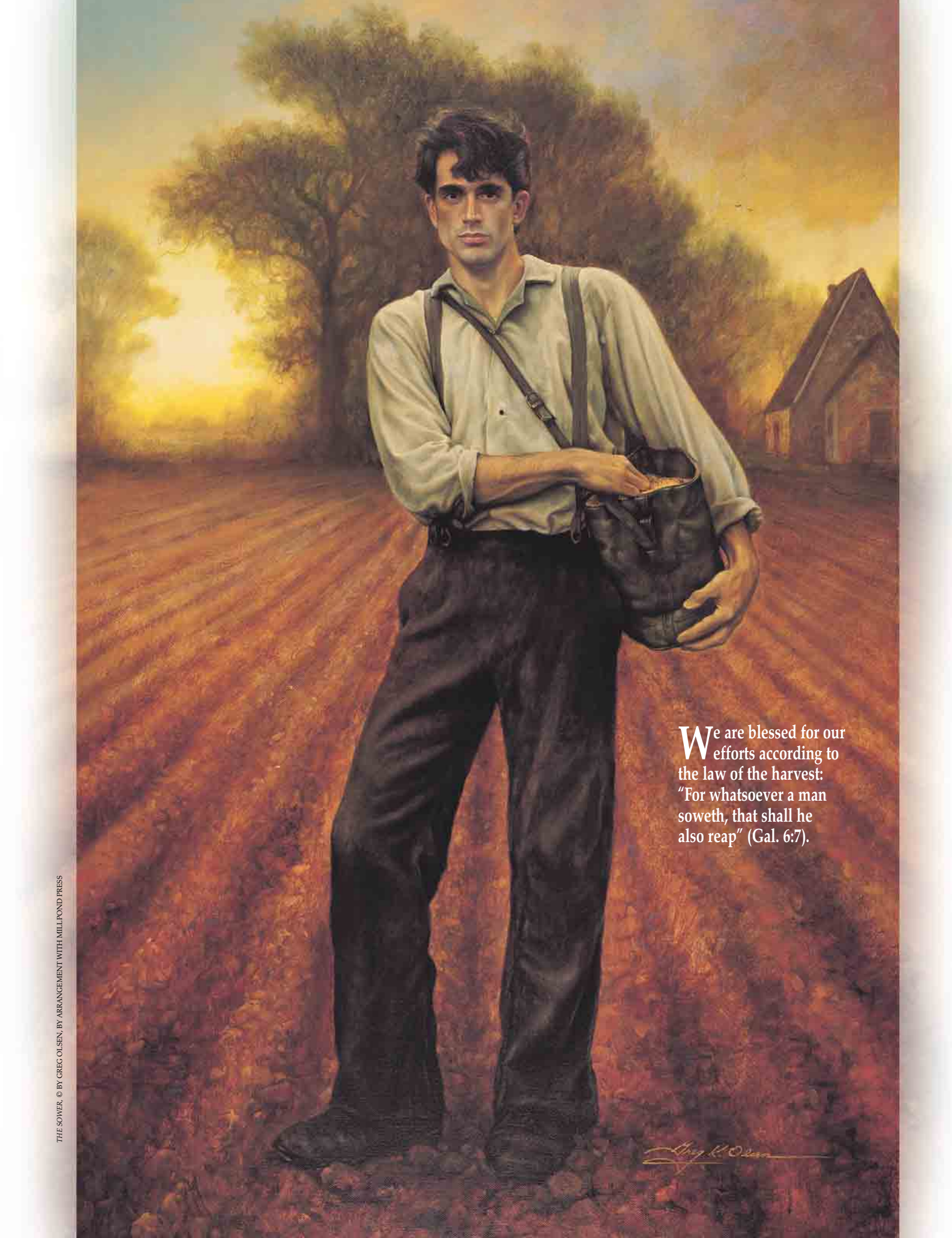
nourishing rain in times of slower growth or serious setbacks, if only we stretch out our hand, mind, and heart to receive renewing energy and strength through the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Repentance is the handle and forgiveness is the window that will open up the heavens so we may receive nourishing rain and uplifting sunshine.

Always remember to walk tall, for you are sons and daughters of God. Your lives will be fruitful and you can overcome any fear or doubt if you only have the right motives, which will give you the power to stay on the road to true achievement. You can do it!

MOTIVES INFLUENCE ACTIONS

Let me share with you a personal experience. After the turmoil of the Second World War, my family ended up in Russian-occupied East Germany. We had fled from Czechoslovakia before the Russian front and lost everything during this terrible war. In the town of Zwickau, East Germany, my family learned about the restored gospel and joined the Church. At that time I was only six years old and the youngest of four children. The Church made an indescribable difference in our then very difficult lives. Even in these trying times, with extreme financial hardship, we were a happy family because of the Church.

Later, as a 10-year-old boy, I attended fourth grade and had to learn Russian as my first foreign language.

A full-page oil painting of a man standing in a vast, tilled field at sunset. The man, with dark hair and a serious expression, is dressed in a light-colored long-sleeved shirt, dark trousers, and a shoulder bag. He is holding a large, dark, leather-like bag filled with seeds, from which he is sowing. The field is a deep reddish-brown, with furrows receding into the distance. In the background, a large, leafy tree stands on the left, and a small, rustic house is visible on the right. The sky is a warm, golden yellow, suggesting the setting or rising sun. The overall mood is one of quiet determination and the promise of harvest.

We are blessed for our efforts according to the law of the harvest: "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Greg Olsen

Initially it was quite difficult because of the Cyrillic alphabet, but as time went on I seemed to manage all right.

When I turned 11, we had to leave East Germany overnight because of the political orientation of my father. He was perceived as a dissenter by the Communist government, and his life was endangered. We were refugees again and had lost everything for the second time.

Now I was going to school in West Germany, and the Russian language was not appreciated there at all. We were in the American-occupied part of Germany, and in school I had to learn English. Somehow I could not learn it. To learn Russian was difficult, but English was impossible. I even thought my mouth was not made for speaking English. My teachers had a hard time. My parents were desperate. And I knew English was not my language.

I agonized through those school years, helped and encouraged by kind and understanding English teachers, but I just couldn't do it. It wasn't my thing!

At this time, my dream in life was to become a pilot. Almost daily I rode my bicycle to the airport. I could picture myself in the cockpit of an airliner or even in a military jet fighter. This was definitely my thing!

I eventually learned that to become a pilot, I needed to speak English. Suddenly, the resisting condition of my mouth changed. I was able to learn the language. Why? Because of a strong motive!

Our motives and thoughts ultimately influence our actions. Jesus repeatedly emphasized the power of good thoughts and proper motives: "Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not" (D&C 6:36).

In Proverbs we read, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

Nephi wrote about the struggles he had with his brothers: "And when my brethren saw that I was about to build a ship, they began to murmur against me, saying: Our brother is a fool, for he thinketh that



When the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith and instructed him about the gold plates, he emphasized that Joseph's motives must be true.

he can build a ship; yea, and he also thinketh that he can cross these great waters" (1 Ne. 17:17).

But Nephi clearly had the right motives and succeeded because he knew "that the Lord . . . [would] prepare a way . . . [to] accomplish the thing which he commandeth" (1 Ne. 3:7).

From young Joseph Smith we can also learn that the right motive was crucial for the success of his mission. When the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph and instructed him about the coming forth of the gold plates, Moroni repeated over and over again that Joseph's motives must be true.

Joseph said Moroni taught that "Satan would try to tempt me. . . . I must have no other object in view in getting the plates but to glorify God, and must not be influenced by any other motive than that

of building his kingdom; otherwise I could not get them" (JS—H 1:46).

What a great lesson in doing things for the right reason.

KEYS TO SUCCESS: OUR TESTIMONY, OUR MOTIVES

Our own prospects for eternal advancement are closely influenced by learning to put in the center of our motives a very personal testimony of the Savior Jesus Christ and His restored gospel. The Prophet Joseph Smith declared, "The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 121).

How did the young Prophet Joseph Smith arrive at his strong testimony? How did he manage this great transition from a farm boy to a prophet of the Lord, to a civic leader, to a man of God?

Let's use him as our example. He was a teenager when he studied the scriptures. During this time a

multitude of unanswered questions arose. He wondered, he pondered, he asked, and he received answers.

Build your testimony the same way: Study the scriptures, increase your knowledge of the gospel, search for answers in the scriptures. If you have doubts or fears, invest the time and energy to find the answers in the scriptures and in the written words of our prophets. Contemplate, meditate, ponder, and pray.

Go to our Heavenly Father in prayer; communicate with Him daily. Draw close to Him, and He will draw close to you. Ask about your studies of the scriptures, about your feelings and your questions, and He will answer. He is waiting, He is real, and He is there. Use the gift of the Holy Ghost. Believe in the power of prayer.

It takes effort and time. Be patient; it is worth it. You can do it. You are not alone in this; others went through this before. Remember, it is easy to doubt, but it is a sure sign of maturity and responsibility to question and then search prayerfully for answers.

In the Pearl of Great Price—what a telling title for a priceless book—we can read how Moses had questions and how he conversed with the Lord and received divine answers:

“And again Moses said: I will not cease to call upon God, I have other things to inquire of him. . . .

“And it came to pass that Moses called upon God, saying: Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest them? . . .

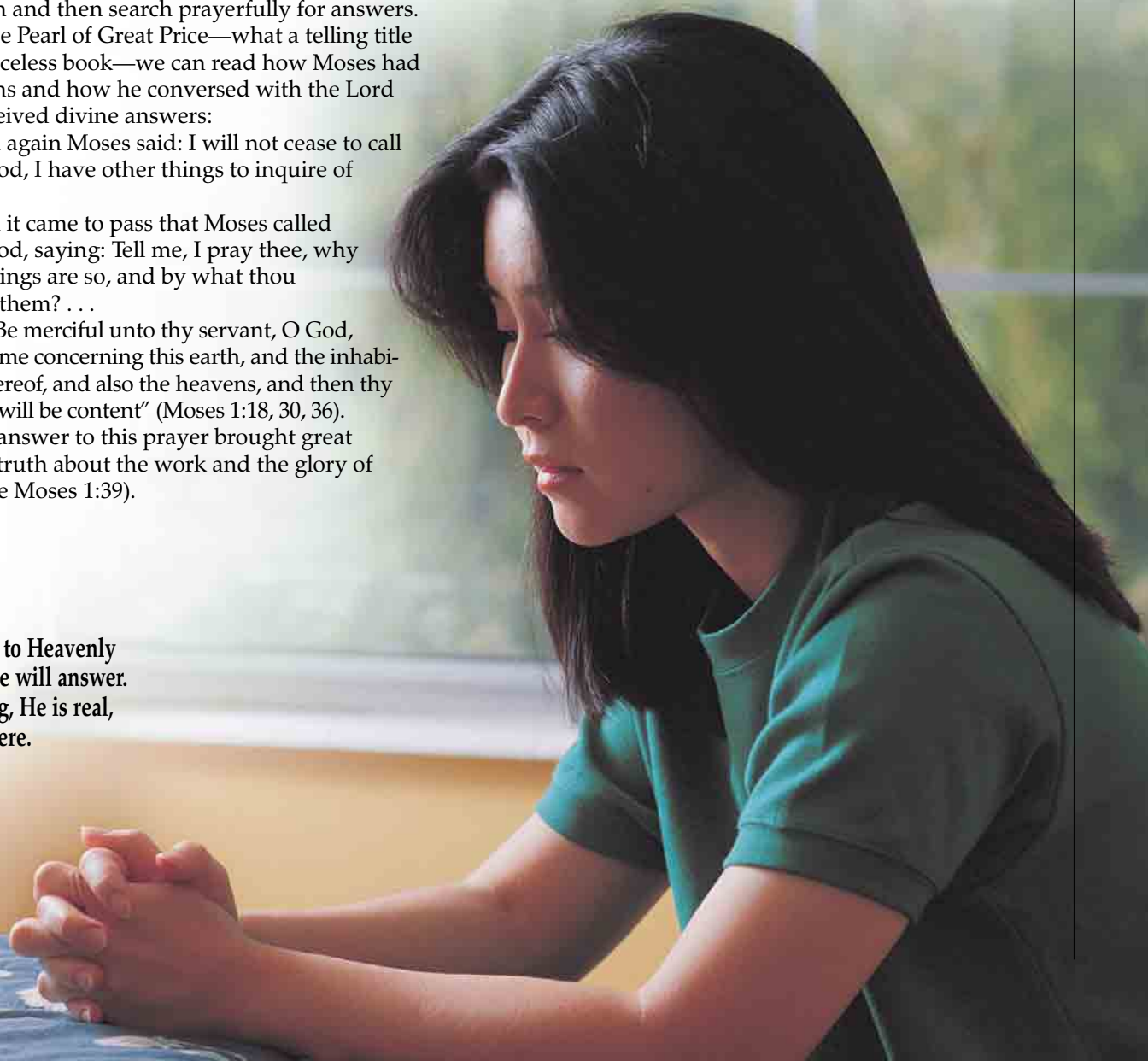
“ . . . Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and then thy servant will be content” (Moses 1:18, 30, 36).

The answer to this prayer brought great eternal truth about the work and the glory of God (see Moses 1:39).

During his transition time, the Prophet Joseph Smith worked hard; he did not idle away his time and did not bury his talents because of the fear of man. He had pure, noble motives. He had faith, prayed and studied, repented, showed good works, was obedient, and relied on the Holy Ghost. He was therefore taught from on high.

The law of the harvest worked well for him while translating the Book of Mormon. The translation time took no longer than 85 days. During these 85 days, so many other things happened in his life—including receiving revelations recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, moving to Fayette, and many other time-consuming activities—that only about 55 days remained for the translation (see Russell M. Nelson, “A Testimony of the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 71, 72 note 40). What a miracle! Great miracles can happen in your lives too. But you also need to have pure motives and a strong personal testimony.

Pray often to Heavenly Father. He will answer. He is waiting, He is real, and He is there.



WHAT OUR TESTIMONY NEEDS TO INCLUDE

To build the foundation for your own personal testimony, you have to use material recommended by the greatest character builder there is: Jesus Christ. These materials include faith, prayer, obedience, honesty, truth, and accountability.

In building your own testimony, invest your time, your brain, your talents. Be focused, study it out, be in tune with the Spirit, and then find your own Sacred Grove to receive confirmation. Every one of us needs to find a very personal testimony of the following:

- A living Father in Heaven
- The Atonement of Jesus Christ
- The Prophet Joseph Smith
- The Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ
- Our living prophet today, even President Gordon B. Hinckley, with authority as the 15th President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in an uninterrupted succession from Joseph Smith

WHAT IS A TESTIMONY GOOD FOR?

This testimony, or firm belief and assurance in your heart, will be a solid foundation, an overarching motive in all you accomplish in your life. It will be your true and faithful companion during good and challenging times in your lifelong transition. It will be a constant source of confidence and motivation. Your testimony provides you with a reason for gladness. It will help you cultivate a spirit of optimism and happiness and will help you to rejoice in the beauties of nature. Your testimony will help you to choose the right at all times and in all circumstances. It will give you peace of mind, His peace. If God is with you, who can be against you? (see Rom. 8:31).

Your testimony will be the strongest motive to select the right path and direction in your educational and vocational endeavors. It will help you to not live below your privileges and possibilities.

Your testimony will even help you to choose your eternal companion, if you have not already done so. The transition from being single to married will be



Your lives will be fruitful and you can overcome any fear or doubt if you have the right motives.

well grounded because you will base your preparation and decisions on true values and feelings.

You are to do the choosing here and now during this exciting and wonderful transition time on earth. Moral agency, the freedom to choose, is certainly one of God's greatest gifts next to life itself. We have the honorable right to choose; therefore, we need to choose the right. This is not always easy.

We are blessed to live in a time when we have a living prophet—President Gordon B. Hinckley—just like during the times of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph Smith, and Brigham Young. The words of the prophets help us make the right choices of our own free will during this earthly transition time.

As we refine and solidify our testimony by listening to the prophet's voice, we will joyfully follow his counsel and guidance. In the scriptures we read, "For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith" (D&C 21:5) and "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

The Lord will bless you as you follow His counsel and guidance given through prophets. Go forward and become the valiant men and women of Zion you were prepared to be. The Lord has a great work for each of you to do. "Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations" (D&C 115:5). He trusts you, and He calls and relies on you to stand taller and shine brighter in these challenging but wonderful days. □

From a devotional address given at Ricks College (now Brigham Young University—Idaho) on 13 March 2001.

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. Why is it crucial that we have proper motives? How do our motives affect our actions?
2. How can our testimonies help us as we make decisions?
3. In what areas does your testimony need to be strengthened? How can you work on these areas?

I first began worrying about being a Cub Scout den mother when my son was about 20 minutes old. After counting his toes in the delivery room, I fell into an uneasy sleep. I dreamed that 10 Cub Scout babies in disposable diapers were chasing me. I awoke in a cold sweat and spent the next eight years stewing over the inevitable.

When the day finally came for my first den meeting, I felt apprehensive but prepared. When the meeting ended at 4:30 P.M., I was sure my teeth were permanently clenched together under my smile and that my hearing had suffered irreparable damage. My own son had definitely been the loudest and worst.

I learned some basic truths quickly:

1. Under no circumstances should you hold den meetings in your own home if you have white carpeting or a nervous dog.

2. The three conditions of a Cub Scout uniform are (a) dirty at home, (b) dirty on the boy, or (c) clean but lost.

3. Two pairs of scissors cannot be equally divided among six boys.

4. If your own son is in the den, he will refuse to treat you as a den mother but will instead treat you simply as Mother.

5. The three conditions of Cub Scout books are (a) lost or forgotten; (b) in pieces, held together with rubber bands and paper clips; and (c) empty, as in devoid of any signatures or evidence of work. Several conditions may coexist at any given time.

6. Speaking of time, it's relative. When you are reading a good book, an hour is hardly measurable. When you are in the midst of an unsuccessful Cub Scout craft project with nine boys ages eight to ten, an hour is hardly endurable.

7. An hour is sometimes longer than 60 minutes, since at least one mother is generally late to pick up her son after each meeting. This is especially true if the den mother has company coming for dinner exactly 60 minutes after den meeting.

Despite truth 6, the time, surprisingly, has passed; and my sanity, astonishingly, is intact. Den meetings held at the neighborhood school library, where there is no white carpeting or nervous dog, were mostly successful and often enjoyable. My ears grew less sensitive to the enthusiastic noise, and now I clench my teeth only at night. Although the books and uniforms remained elusive, the rewards were tangible.

My son turned ten and advanced to Webelos. Content, I was ready to abdicate my responsibilities. Luckily, I had another son who would turn eight in a few weeks, and I confess I was happy to stay on as den mother. □

Bette Newton Lang is a member of the Moses Lake Third Ward, Moses Lake Washington Stake.

Confessions OF A Den Mother

BY BETTE NEWTON LANG

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVE KROPP



Remembering HIRAM Ohio

BY MARK L. STAKER

In 1818, John and Alice (known as Elsa) Johnson came to Hiram, Ohio, about 31 miles southeast of Kirtland. The family lived in several log cabins while they built a home directly across the road. The Johnsons had 15 children; 9 lived to adulthood: Alice, Fanny, John Jr., Luke, Olmstead, Lyman, Emily, Marinda, and Justin.

After Sidney Rigdon baptized John and Elsa's 19-year-old son, Lyman, in February 1831, the couple read the Book of Mormon and believed. Elsa, who had suffered from chronic rheumatism in her arm for years, asked John to take her to Kirtland so the Prophet Joseph Smith could heal her. When the Prophet blessed her, she was completely healed. By May, all members of the Johnson family were baptized except Olmstead, who had moved to Mexico.

Later that year, the Prophet, seeking a peaceful, secluded place in which to continue his work of translating the Bible, accepted an invitation from the Johnsons to live in their home. Joseph and Emma came on 12 September 1831 with their four-month-old adopted twins, Joseph and Julia. Converts Sidney and Phebe Rigdon settled with their six young children across the road in a log cabin.

The Johnson home served as a haven in which the Prophet could live and work in peace. With the assistance of Sidney Rigdon, he labored diligently on the translation of the Bible. In the fall of 1831, a series of historic conferences were held in the home, and seven sections of the Doctrine and Covenants were received at this time.



In all, 17 sections of the Doctrine and Covenants were received in Hiram.

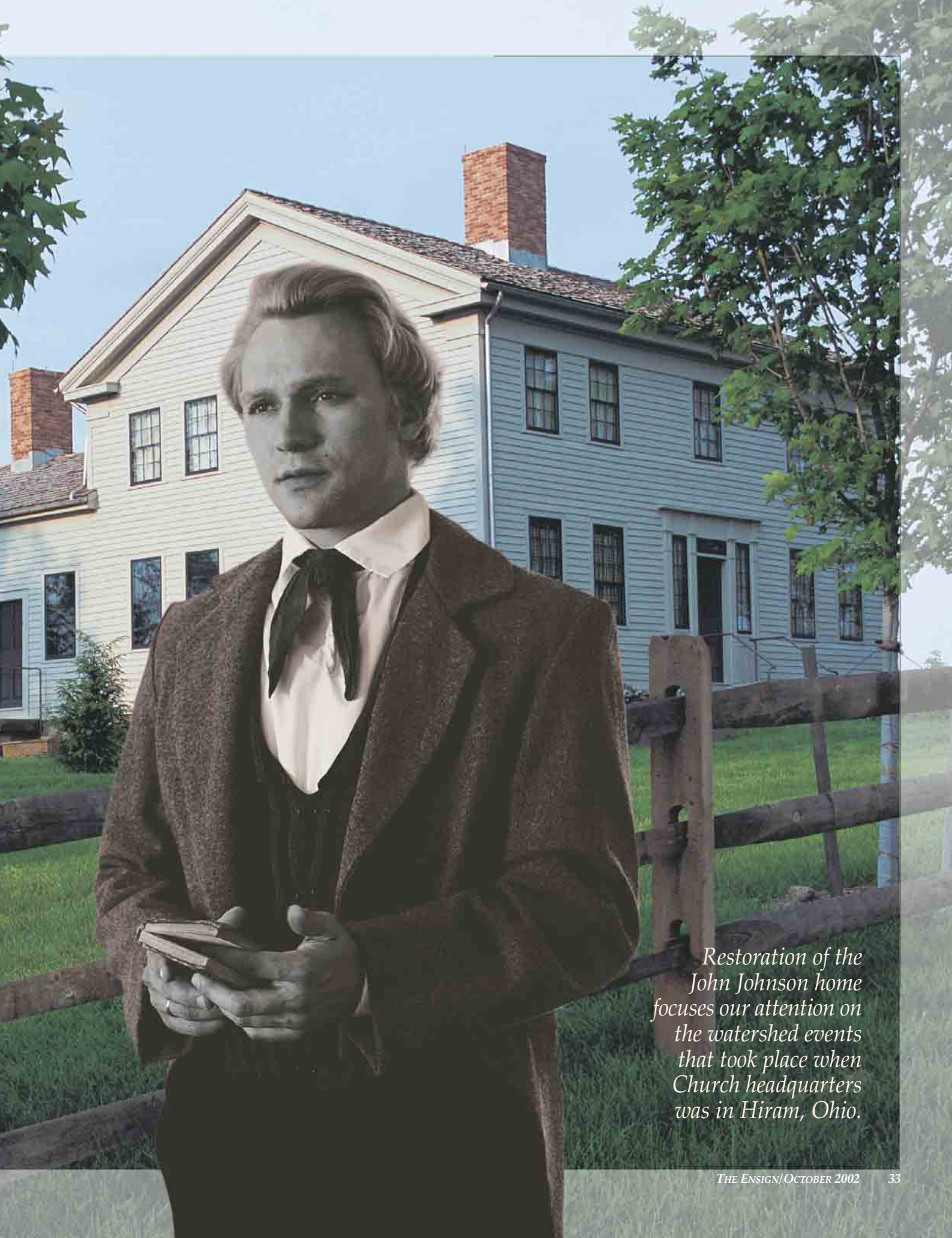
Among them was one of the greatest doctrinal revelations given in this dispensation—section 76, a vision of the three degrees of glory. The Prophet noted that “the sublimity of the ideas . . . are so much beyond the narrow-mindedness of men, that every honest man is constrained to exclaim: ‘It came from God!’” (*History of the Church*, 1:252–53).

Many in the area were baptized. By March 1832, more than a hundred Latter-day Saints were preparing to gather with the Saints in Missouri. This planned migration as well as differences in religious doctrine clearly troubled some local residents, who formed a mob. On the night of 24 March, the mob attacked Joseph and Sidney and dragged them into a nearby field, where they were beaten, tarred, and feathered.

Four days later, the Rigdon family moved to Kirtland. The Prophet left on a previously planned trip to Missouri. He returned in July and spent the summer working on the translation of the Bible. On 12 September 1832, exactly one year from the day they first arrived, the Smiths moved back to Kirtland. □

Mark L. Staker is a member of the West Bountiful Sixth Ward, West Bountiful Utah Stake.

Above: Elsa Johnson. Right: The Prophet Joseph Smith often taught the gospel from the front steps of the Johnson home. In order to accommodate the many visitors, the Johnsons built a bowery in their front yard. Note: Black-and-white images superimposed over color photographs of the John Johnson home help us envision important historical events that took place there.



Restoration of the John Johnson home focuses our attention on the watershed events that took place when Church headquarters was in Hiram, Ohio.

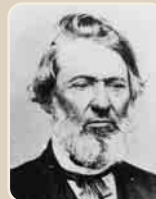


Sidney Rigdon

EARLY CHURCH LEADERS WITH TIES TO HIRAM

Sidney Rigdon was a key figure in the Church from 1830 to 1838. Baptized on 14 February 1830, this former minister was an eloquent and powerful speaker. In Hiram, he proved to be a great support to the Prophet. On 18 March 1833, he was set apart as first counselor to the Prophet Joseph.

Two years later, in the spring of 1835, the Prophet organized the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation. Five of the Apostles had connections to the Johnson family: Luke and Lyman Johnson; Orson Hyde, husband of Marinda Johnson; William McLellin, husband of Elsa's niece, Emeline Miller; and John F. Boynton, close friend and business partner of Lyman Johnson. Amasa Lyman, who had worked as a farmhand on the Johnson farm in 1832, became an Apostle in 1842.



William McLellin



John F. Boynton



Amasa Lyman





*Inset, top: Entryway
of the Johnson home.*

*Inset, bottom:
Weaving room on the
second floor.*



On Saturday, 24 March 1832, with Joseph's help, Emma spent her day caring for 11-month-old twins Joseph and Julia, both suffering from the measles. By nightfall, Emma went to bed with baby Julia. Joseph remained up with little Joseph, who was the more ill of the two children. Later Emma, concerned about her husband, suggested he and little Joseph lie down on the trundle bed (pictured here) near the door. He did so and quickly fell asleep.

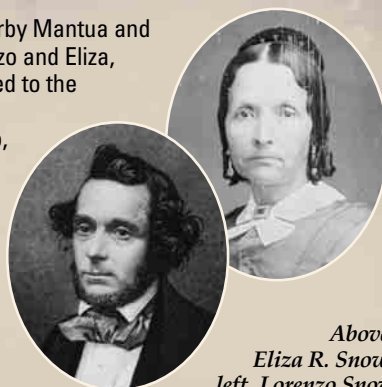
During the cold night, a group of men with black-painted faces burst through the door. Emma screamed as they dragged the Prophet from his bed. During the attack, baby Joseph was left uncovered long enough to catch a severe cold and died a few days later.

Sidney Rigdon was also a target of the mob that night. The men dragged him by his heels, his head thumping upon the frozen ground. They also threw tar on him. Sidney suffered severe head injuries and was delirious for days afterward.



**LORENZO AND ELIZA R. SNOW—
FAITHFUL FUTURE LEADERS**

Oliver and Rosetta Snow of nearby Mantua and their children, including Lorenzo and Eliza, were among those who listened to the Prophet Joseph preach on the front stoop of the Johnson home. Lorenzo, a childhood friend of Luke and Lyman Johnson, became the fifth President of the Church in 1898. Eliza, a natural leader and master organizer, became the second president of the Relief Society in 1866. She also wrote hundreds of poems and several songs, including “O My Father” (*Hymns*, no. 292).



*Above:
Eliza R. Snow;
left, Lorenzo Snow*



After the mobbing, Joseph pulled the tar from his mouth so he could breathe. He made his way back to the house, where several neighbors had gathered upon hearing the commotion. When Emma saw the beaten and tarred Joseph, she fainted. She managed to recover enough to join Elsa and others in the kitchen (pictured here), where they scraped Joseph's skin clean, using lard to soften the tar and ease the pain.

The sun arose a few hours later. Though the Prophet had lost a tooth, received a severe injury in his side, was missing a patch of hair, and had nitric acid burns, he preached a sermon at the usual Sunday worship service. Among the Saints gathered there were at least four members of the mob. Afterward, the Prophet baptized three members of the congregation.

Insets: Above left: kitchen pantry; right: loft bedroom.



THE JOHNSONS AFTER 1832

Antagonists continued to menace the Johnsons after 1832, but Father Johnson and Luke kept working the land. In December 1833, the Lord commanded that “all the churches gather together all their monies” to help purchase land in Missouri (see D&C 101:72–73). Father Johnson sold most of his 160 acres the following spring and donated the \$3,000 to the Church. Once again the Johnsons had willingly laid all they had at the feet of the Lord. The family moved to Kirtland and took over the operation of an inn near the Newell K. Whitney store.

Despite the significant impact the Johnson family had on the early Church, some family members became caught up in the financial speculation and apostasy that took hold in Kirtland in 1837–38. Father Johnson and his sons Luke and Lyman were



Luke Johnson



Lyman Johnson

among those who left the Church, as were John F. Boynton and William McLellin. Of these, only Luke



Marinda Johnson



Orson Hyde

returned. He was rebaptized in 1846 in Nauvoo and traveled to the Salt Lake Valley in 1847 with the first company of Saints. Although never reinstated as an Apostle, he served faithfully as a bishop.

Alice Johnson Olney and Justin Johnson died in Nauvoo, faithful.

Marinda Johnson Hyde died in Utah, also faithful to the end. Her husband, Orson Hyde, briefly left the Church during the troubles in Missouri, but he repented and was restored to the Quorum of the Twelve on 27 June 1839.



The brightly colored trim in the upstairs bedroom (top inset), the teal doors and trim in the upper hallway (bottom inset), and the painted checkered floor on the first level (pages 34–35) reflect the flair for color that was popular during the time among those who could afford it.



This room, originally John and Elsa Johnson's second-floor bedroom, was the nicest room upstairs. When it became obvious that the Prophet needed more space to accomplish his work of translation, the Johnsons allowed Joseph to use this room. He also held conferences here. John and Elsa simply divided another large room with a wall and used half of it for their bedroom.

Happiness *in* Marriage



BY PRESIDENT
SPENCER W. KIMBALL
(1895–1985)

Honorable, happy, and successful marriage is surely the principal goal of every normal person. Marriage is perhaps the most vital of all the decisions and has

the most far-reaching effects, for it has to do not only with immediate happiness, but also with eternal joys. It affects not only the two people involved, but also their families and particularly their children and their children's children down through the many generations.

In selecting a companion for life and for eternity, certainly the most careful planning and thinking and praying and fasting should be done to be sure that of all the decisions, this one must not be wrong. In true marriage there must be a union of minds as well as of hearts. Emotions must not wholly determine decisions, but the mind and the heart, strengthened by fasting and prayer and serious consideration, will give one a maximum chance of marital happiness. It brings with it sacrifice, sharing, and a demand for great selflessness.

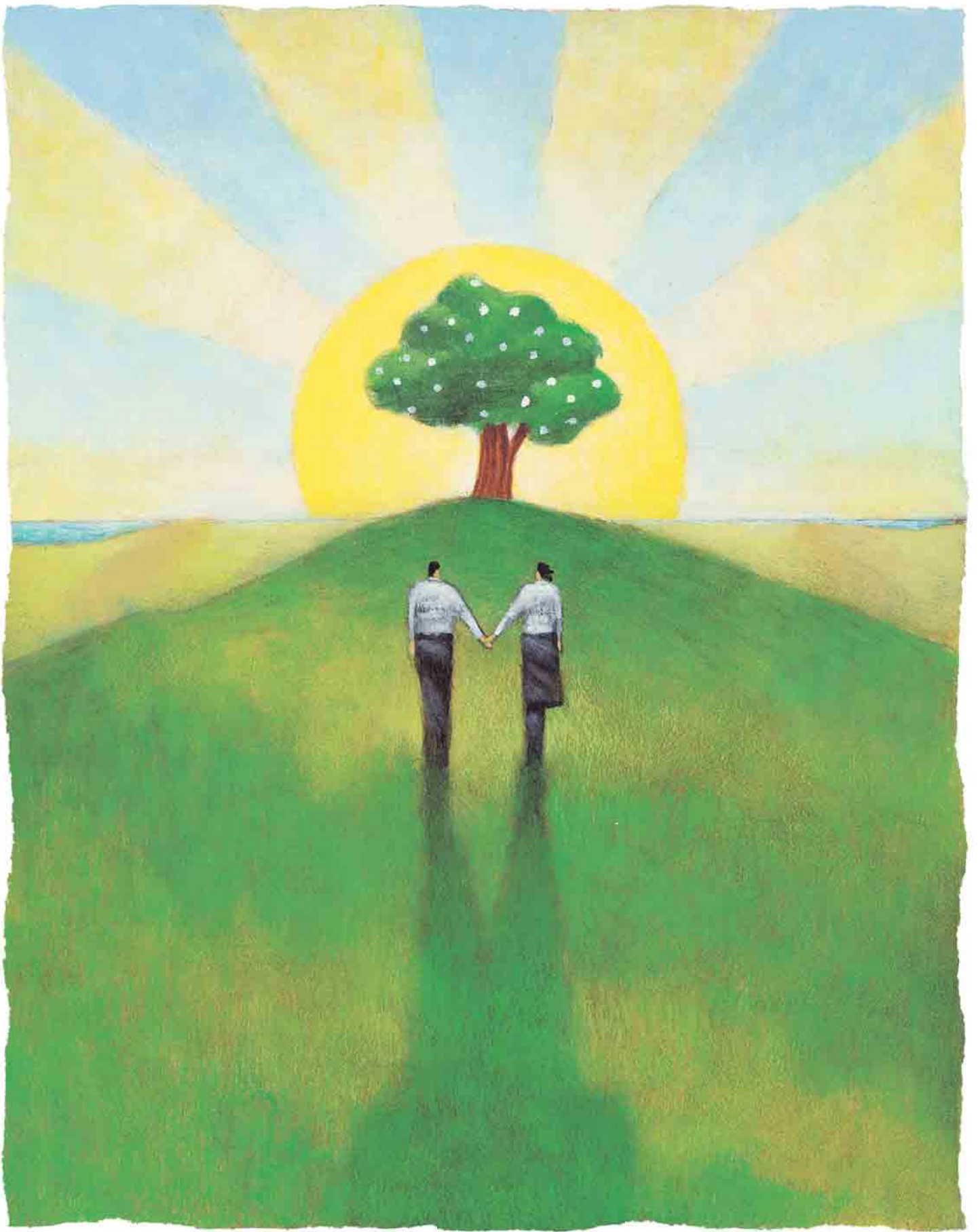
Many of the TV screen shows and stories of fiction end with marriage: "They lived happily ever after."

We have come to realize that the mere performance of a ceremony does not bring happiness and a successful marriage. Happiness does not come by pressing a button, as does the electric light; happiness is a state of mind and comes from within. It must be earned. It cannot be purchased with money; it cannot be taken for nothing.

Some think of happiness as a glamorous life of ease, luxury, and constant thrills; but true marriage is based on a happiness which is more than that, one which comes from giving, serving, sharing, sacrificing, and selflessness.

Two people coming from different backgrounds learn soon after the ceremony is performed that stark reality must be faced. There is no longer a life of fantasy or of make-believe; we must come out of the clouds and put our feet firmly on the earth. Responsibility must be assumed and new duties must be accepted. Some personal freedoms must be relinquished, and many adjustments, unselfish adjustments, must be made.

One comes to realize very soon after marriage that the spouse has weaknesses not previously revealed or discovered. The virtues which were constantly magnified during courtship now grow relatively smaller, and the weaknesses which seemed so small and insignificant during courtship now grow



to sizable proportions. The hour has come for understanding hearts, for self-appraisal, and for good common sense, reasoning, and planning. The habits of years now show themselves; the spouse may be stingy or prodigal, lazy or industrious, devout or irreligious; he may be kind and cooperative or petulant and cross, demanding or giving, egotistical or self-effacing. The in-law problem comes closer into focus, and the relationship of the spouse to them is again magnified.

WORLDLY PRESSURES

Often there is an unwillingness to settle down and to assume the heavy responsibilities that immediately are there. Economy is reluctant to replace lavish living, and the young people seem often too eager "to keep up with the Joneses." There is often an unwillingness to make the financial adjustments necessary. Young wives are often demanding that all the luxuries formerly enjoyed in the prosperous homes of their successful fathers be continued in their own homes. Some of them are quite willing to help earn that lavish living by continuing employment after marriage. They consequently leave the home, where their duty lies, to pursue professional or business pursuits, thus establishing an economy that becomes stabilized so that it becomes very difficult to yield toward the normal family life. Through both spouses' working, competition rather than cooperation enters the family. Two weary workers return home with taut nerves, individual pride, increased independence, and then misunderstandings arise. Little frictions pyramid into monumental ones.

While marriage is difficult, and discordant and frustrated marriages are common, yet real, lasting happiness is possible, and marriage can be more an exultant ecstasy than the human mind can conceive. This is within the reach of every couple, every person. "Soul mates" are fiction and an illusion; and while every young man and young woman will seek with all diligence and prayerfulness to find a mate with whom life can be most compatible and beautiful, yet it is certain that almost any good man and any good woman can have happiness and a successful marriage if both are willing to pay the price.

There is a never-failing formula which will guarantee to every couple a happy and eternal marriage; but like all formulas, the principal ingredients must not be left out, reduced, or limited. The selection before courting and then the continued courting after the marriage process are equally important, but not more important than the marriage itself, the success

of which depends upon the two individuals—not upon one, but upon two.

In a marriage commenced and based upon reasonable standards as already mentioned, there are not combinations of power which can destroy it except the power within either or both of the spouses themselves; and they must assume the responsibility generally. Other people and agencies may influence for good or bad. Financial, social, political, and other situations may seem to have a bearing; but the marriage depends first and always on the two spouses who can always make their marriage successful and happy if they are determined, unselfish, and righteous.

The formula is simple; the ingredients are few, though there are many amplifications of each.

First, there must be the proper approach toward marriage, which contemplates the selection of a spouse who reaches as nearly as possible the pinnacle of perfection in all the matters which are of importance to the individuals. And then those two parties must come to the altar in the temple realizing that they must work hard toward this successful joint living.

Second, there must be a great unselfishness, forgetting self and directing all of the family life and all pertaining thereunto to the good of the family, subjugating self.

Third, there must be continued courting and expressions of affection, kindness, and consideration to keep love alive and growing.

Fourth, there must be a complete living of the commandments of the Lord as defined in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

With these ingredients properly mixed and continually kept functioning, it is quite impossible for unhappiness to come, misunderstandings to continue, or breaks to occur. Divorce attorneys would need to transfer to other fields and divorce courts would be padlocked.

Love is like a flower and needs constant feeding. Love cannot be expected to last forever unless it is continually fed with portions of love, the manifestation of esteem and admiration, the expressions of gratitude, and the consideration of unselfishness.



SHARING AND SACRIFICING

Two individuals approaching the marriage altar must realize that to attain the happy marriage which they hope for they must know that marriage is not a legal coverall, but it means sacrifice, sharing, and even a reduction of some personal liberties. It means long, hard economizing. It means children who bring with them financial burdens, service burdens, care and worry burdens; but also it means the deepest and sweetest emotions of all.

Before marriage, each individual is quite free to go and come as he pleases, to organize and plan his life as it seems best, to make all decisions with self as the central point. Sweethearts should realize before they take the vows that each must accept literally and fully that the good of the little new family must always be superior to the good of either spouse. Each party must eliminate the "I" and the "my" and substitute therefore "we" and "our." Every decision must take into consideration that there are two or more affected by it. As she approaches major decisions now, the wife will be concerned as to the effect they will have upon the parents, the children, the home, and their spiritual lives. The husband's choice of occupation, his social life, his friends, his every interest must now be considered in the light that he is only a part of a family, that the totalness of the group must be considered.

A marriage may not always be even and incidentless, but it can be one of great peace. A couple may have poverty, illness, disappointment, failures, and even death in the family, but even these will not rob them of their peace. The marriage can be a successful one so long as selfishness does not enter in. Troubles and problems will draw parents together into unbreakable unions if there is total unselfishness there. During the depression of the 1930s there was a definite drop in divorce. Poverty, failures, disappointment—they tied parents together. Adversity can cement relationships which prosperity can destroy.

The marriage that is based upon selfishness is almost certain to fail. The one who marries for wealth or the one who marries for prestige or social plane is certain to be disappointed. The one who marries to satisfy vanity and pride or who marries to spite or to show up another person is fooling

only himself. But the one who marries to give happiness as well as receive it, to give service as well as to receive it, and who looks after the interests of the two and then the family as it comes will have a good chance that the marriage will be a happy one.

THE NEED FOR NOURISHMENT

Love is like a flower, and, like the body, it needs constant feeding. The mortal body would soon be emaciated and die if there were not frequent feedings.

The tender flower would wither and die without food and water. And so love, also, cannot be expected to last forever unless it is continually fed with portions of love, the manifestation of esteem and admiration, the expressions of gratitude, and the consideration of unselfishness.

Total unselfishness is sure to accomplish another

When a husband and wife go together frequently to the holy temple, kneel in prayer together, go hand in hand to their religious meetings, keep their lives wholly chaste, and work together for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, then happiness is at its pinnacle.

factor in successful marriage. If one is forever seeking the interests, comforts, and happiness of the other, the love found in courtship and cemented in marriage will grow into mighty proportions. Many couples permit their marriages to become stale and their love to grow cold like old bread or worn-out jokes or cold gravy. Certainly the foods most vital for love are consideration, kindness, thoughtfulness, concern, expressions of affection, embraces of appreciation, admiration, pride, companionship, confidence, faith, partnership, equality, and interdependence.

To be really happy in marriage, one must have a continued faithful observance of the commandments of the Lord. No one, single or married, was ever sublimely happy unless he was righteous. There are temporary satisfactions and camouflaged situations for the moment, but permanent, total happiness can come only through cleanliness and worthiness. One who has a pattern of religious life with deep religious convictions can never be happy in an inactive life. The conscience will continue to afflict, unless it has been seared, in which case the marriage is already in jeopardy. A stinging conscience can make life most unbearable. Inactivity is destructive to marriage, especially where the parties are inactive in varying degrees.

Religious differences are the most trying and among the most unsolvable of all differences.

Marriage is ordained of God. It is not merely a social custom. Without proper and successful marriage, one will never be exalted. Read the words of your Lord, that it is right and proper to be married.

That being true, the thoughtful and intelligent

Latter-day Saint will plan his life carefully to be sure there are no impediments placed in the way. By making one serious mistake, one may place in the way obstacles which may never be removed and which may block the way to eternal life and godhood—our ultimate destiny. If two people love the Lord more than their own lives and then love each other more than their own lives, working together in total harmony with the gospel program as their basic structure, they are sure to have this great happiness. When a husband and wife go together frequently to the holy temple, kneel in prayer together in their home with their family, go hand in hand to their religious meetings, keep their lives wholly chaste—mentally and physically—so that their whole thoughts and desires and loves are all centered in the one being, their companion, and both work together for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, then happiness is at its pinnacle.



CLEAVE TO "NONE ELSE"

Sometimes in marriage there are other cleavings, in spite of the fact that the Lord said, "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else" (D&C 42:22).

This means just as completely that "thou shalt love thy husband with all thy heart and shall cleave unto him and none else." Frequently, people continue to cleave unto their mothers and their fathers and their chums. Sometimes mothers will not relinquish the hold they have had upon their children, and husbands as well as wives return to their mothers and fathers to obtain advice and counsel and to confide, whereas cleaving should be to the wife in most things, and all intimacies should be kept in great secrecy and privacy from others.

Couples do well to immediately find their own home, separate and apart from that of the in-laws on

either side. The home may be very modest and unpretentious, but still it is an independent domicile. Your married life should become independent of her folks and his folks. You love them more than ever; you cherish their counsel; you appreciate their association; but you live your own lives, being governed by your decisions, by your own prayerful considerations after you have received the counsel from those who should give it. To cleave does not mean merely to occupy the same home; it means to adhere closely, to stick together:

"Wherefore, it is lawful that . . . they twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation;

"And that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made" (D&C 49:16–17).

Brothers and sisters, may I say this is the word of the Lord. It is very, very serious, and there is nobody who should argue with the Lord. He made the earth; He made the people. He knows the conditions. He set the program, and we are not intelligent enough or smart enough to be able to argue Him out of these important things. He knows what is right and true.

We ask you to think of these things. Be sure that your marriage is right. Be sure that your life is right. Be sure that your part of the marriage is carried forward properly. □

Adapted from a devotional address given at Brigham Young University on 7 September 1976. The full text is published in a Deseret Book Company book, Marriage and Divorce.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

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

1. Do I strive to be selfless in my marriage—regardless of how I may think my spouse is doing in that category?
2. Do my spouse and I give too much attention to temporal concerns, or are we more focused on eternal objectives in our relationship?
3. When I marry, will I be prepared to make the sacrifices of personal resources and activities that a relationship with a spouse requires?





JOINING IN THE MIGHTY WORK

As women in the Church, let us rejoice in our opportunities to assist priesthood leaders in bringing families to Jesus Christ.

Some time ago my three-year-old grandson, Jacob, came running into the kitchen and called out to his mother, “What are you doing?” She answered, “I am feeding little Emily. What are you doing?” Jacob responded, “I’m keeping the commandments.”

Children have such great potential for learning the significant things of the kingdom. Undoubtedly you too are striving to keep the commandments. You too have great potential for learning and doing the significant work of the kingdom.

Recently I visited a Primary in which the Primary president asked, “Who is our prophet today?”

The children responded without waiting to be called upon: “President Gordon B. Hinckley.”

The leader then asked, “What does President Hinckley do?”

The children were not as ready to respond to this question, so she answered for them: “He conducts the business of the Church.”

I thought, “Yes, and so much more.” Feelings of respect and honor for our prophet and the office he holds filled my being. I wanted to share my testimony of the blessings of having a living prophet of God on earth today. I wanted the children to know that the hymn they sing in Primary “We Listen to a Prophet’s Voice” declares the truth when they sing:

*We listen to a prophet’s voice and hear the Savior too.
With love he bids us do the work the Lord would have us do.
The Savior calls his chosen seer to preach the word of God,
That men might learn to find the path marked by the iron rod.¹*

Our prophet holds the holy priesthood of God, the keys of which enable us to participate in the saving ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Righteous priesthood leaders have the authority and

power to govern and bless the Lord’s people. As sisters in Zion, we can be part of the mighty work of God as we assist priesthood leaders. I would like to suggest a pattern with three steps that will help us learn from our priesthood leaders: sustain, listen, and respond.

SUSTAIN

The first step is to sustain our priesthood leaders. They have received the power of God for the purpose of blessing our lives.

Sister Mary Ellen W. Smoot, former Relief Society general president, and I visited San Salvador in February last year, shortly after the people had experienced three major earthquakes.

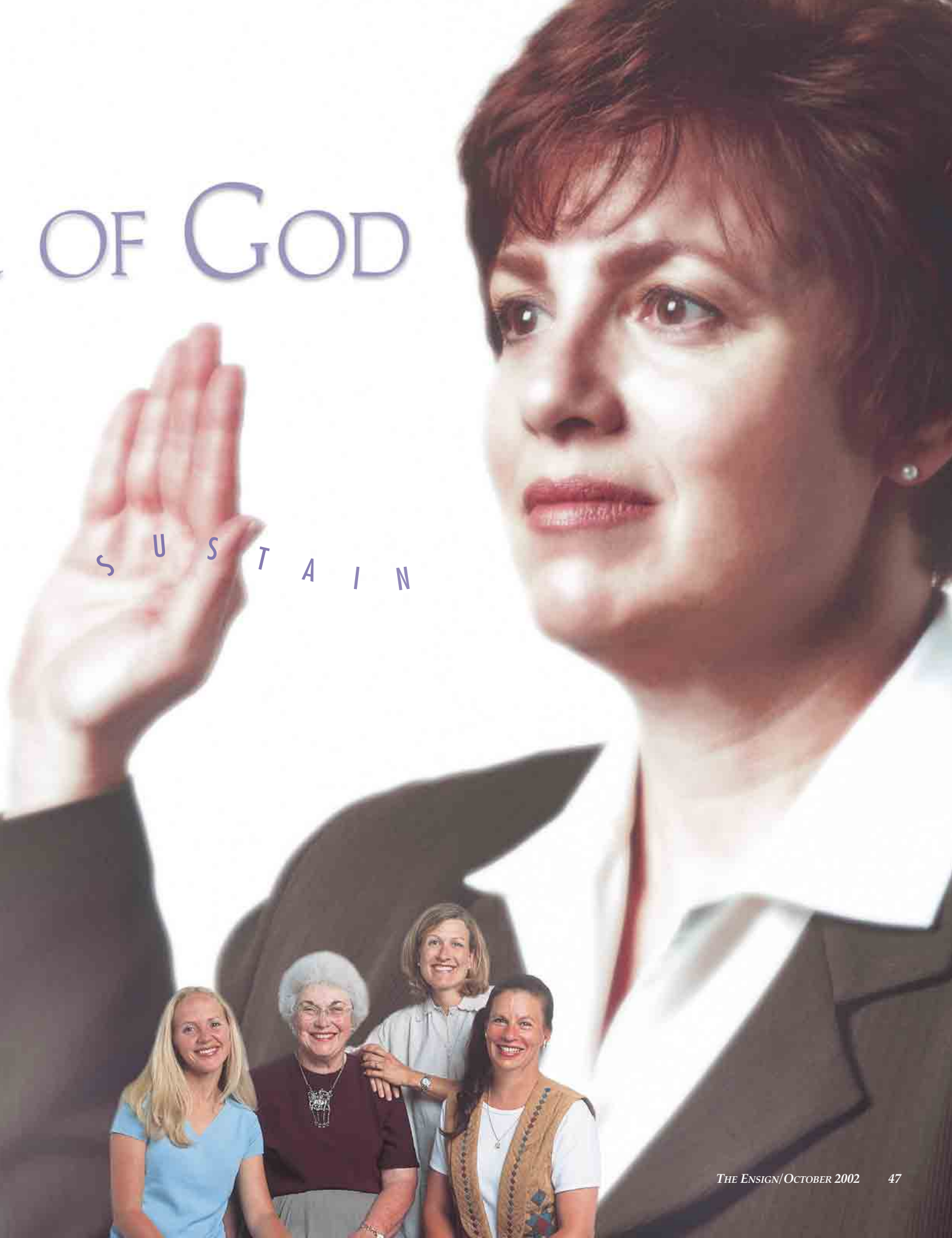
We visited a family who was living in their backyard. The walls of their home had fallen down around their feet just four days before. The father had used the tin from the original roof to make a covered area for cooking and sleeping. He told us how he had managed to get his family, including his 10-year-old daughter who is paralyzed, to safety.

At the time we visited, bricks and cement had been delivered by the Church to rebuild their home. Nevertheless, on this Saturday, this father, as the bishop of the ward, was completing the forms for sustaining the officers of the Church in ward conference the following day. Here in the midst of a disaster, he was preparing to offer the members of his ward the opportunity to raise their hands to sustain the general and local officers of the Church.

Each year millions of Church members throughout the world participate in the act of sustaining. Each has an opportunity to accept the words of the Savior in the Doctrine and Covenants: “Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:38).

OF GOD

S U S T A I N



It requires faith to surrender our will and follow the direction of those in authority. Submitting or surrendering is not something mortals do well. But we are not talking about surrendering to human beings nor to another person's will. We are talking about surrendering to God's will and His authority upon this earth.

President James E. Faust said: "Some women may feel it subverts their agency to be directed by the power of the priesthood. This feeling comes from misunderstanding. There should be no compulsion, duress, or unrighteous dominion involved in priesthood authority."²

Men are called, ordained, and set apart to administer the saving ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is more than the service of organizing the work of the kingdom—this is doing the work of the Savior, which is bringing individuals and families unto Christ. Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, "The Lord's servants must do the Lord's work in the Lord's way or their efforts will come to naught."³

The Lord's way is for men and women to be directed by priesthood authority and for both to receive inspiration from the same source: the Lord. This means we are to follow the true order of heaven for leadership in the Church. It is our privilege and right to know the mind and will of God, but it may come through someone else. Yes, we are entitled to direct personal revelation for ourselves, but that does not preempt inspiration by the priesthood.

All that we love about the gospel is administered by those holding priesthood keys. We are blessed when we sustain our local priesthood leaders with the same conviction and joy that we sustain the prophet—with heart and soul.

LISTEN

The second step in the pattern is to listen with understanding. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: "I cannot stress enough the importance of listening to and following the prophet and the apostles. . . . Think of it! Think about the value of having a source of information that you can always count on, that will always have your eternal interests at heart, and that will always provide inspired truth. That is a phenomenal gift and guide."⁴

In the book of Matthew the Savior counseled, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 11:15). Faith can direct ears and hearts to hear beyond spoken words.

Listen with a desire to understand the perspective of

priesthood leaders. When we listen more and talk less, we learn more. In the book of Timothy we are counseled to "learn in silence" (1 Tim. 2:11).

Listen to allow the Spirit to enlarge and expand learning beyond our own understanding. We can come to know for ourselves of the truth of the teachings of our priesthood leaders. In the Doctrine and Covenants we are taught, "Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart" (D&C 8:2).

Listen for opportunities to be on the same team. President Gordon B. Hinckley admonishes: "In this world, almost without exception, we must work together as teams. It is so obvious to all of us that those on the football field or on the basketball court must work together with loyalty one to another if they are to win. It is so in life with each of us.

We work as

L I S T E N

R E S P O N D

teams, and there must be loyalty among us.”⁵

I have personally found it helpful to record not only the directions I receive from priesthood leaders but also the impressions I feel from the Spirit. I have a well-worn file folder that contains priesthood teachings and my impressions. As I review this folder, I am reminded of principles that need to be applied to various challenges I am facing in my Church calling and in my family.

RESPOND

The third step in the pattern is to respond promptly. In January 2001 I attended a meeting in which the priesthood adviser for the general auxiliaries encouraged us to follow the example of President Gordon B. Hinckley and reach out to lift others.

I felt a desire in my heart to follow President Hinckley’s example and be more encouraging and more appreciative. After the meeting I hurriedly walked over to the distribution center in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building to pick up some supplies. I saw a mother and grandmother there with three children. I generally greet children when I see them, but I was in a hurry this time.

The words of my priesthood adviser came back to my mind. I stopped and spoke to the children. The father and grandfather joined the group. I learned they were in Salt Lake City for a family member’s temple wedding. As I lingered, I expressed words of appreciation for the goodness I felt from this family. Standing in the midst of this family, the Spirit blessed me, and tears flowed as hearts were intertwined. The teachings of a priesthood leader and the promptings from the Spirit can be so simple and yet can bless our lives in important ways.

President Hinckley has said: “I feel to invite women everywhere to rise to the great potential within you. I do not ask that you reach beyond your capacity. I hope

you will not nag yourselves with thoughts of failure. I hope you will not try to set goals far beyond your capacity to achieve. I hope you will simply do what you can do in the best way you know. If you do so, you will witness miracles come to pass.”⁶

As we complete the three steps in this pattern—sustain, listen, and respond—we rejoice in opportunities to learn from priesthood leaders. Not long ago my Relief Society visiting teacher gave me a little “grateful heart” book with blank pages and invited me to record my blessings daily.

As I looked back at the blessings I recorded, I found many entries pertaining to the counsel and blessings I have received from priesthood leaders. I would like to share a few of these with you:

“I am grateful for a bishop who teaches and inspires, for temple ordinances and instructions and a peaceful place to learn, for chosen men who labor to do the work of the kingdom, for a husband’s priesthood hands upon my head to bless and comfort, and for a prophet with a voice of clear direction, encouragement, and appreciation.”

We as women can join the Primary children in testifying that “we listen to a prophet’s voice and hear the

Savior too. With love he bids us do the work the Lord would have us do.”⁷

We have the opportunity to be women whose ears are attuned to the words of prophets and other priesthood leaders as if they are from the Lord Himself. Let us rejoice in the opportunities we have as sisters in Zion to assist priesthood leaders in the work of bringing families unto Christ.

A prophet’s plea is good enough for me. President Hinckley has said: “Stand on your feet and with a song in your heart move forward, living the gospel, loving the Lord, and building the kingdom. Together we shall stay the course and keep the faith, the Almighty being our strength.”⁸ Of this I testify. □

NOTES

1. Hymns, no. 22.
2. “A Message to My Granddaughters: Becoming ‘Great Women,’” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 20.
3. *The Lord’s Way* (1991), 5.
4. “Women of Righteousness,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 70.
5. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 320.
6. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 696.
7. Hymns, no. 22.
8. “Stay the Course—Keep the Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 72.

From an address given at the Brigham Young University women’s conference on 3 May 2001.

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. What are some specific ways in which women can assist priesthood leaders in fulfilling their callings?
2. What do we commit to do when we raise our hands to sustain general and local officers of the Church?
3. How can we make ourselves more receptive to inspiration given through priesthood leaders?





Area Authority Seventies

"To Bear Record of My Name in All the World"



BY ELDER EARL C. TINGEY
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

We are becoming a great global society," said President Gordon B. Hinckley ("This Work Is Concerned with People," *Ensign*, May 1995, 52).

Indeed, the Church now has more than 11 million members throughout the nations, and it continues to carry out the Savior's charge to take the gospel to all the world.

In the Saturday morning session of the April 1997 general conference, President Hinckley announced a new calling in the Church to help meet the needs of this increasing global membership—the Area Authority Seventy, to be assigned to the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy. Today Area Authority Seventies are playing a pivotal role in preaching and administering the gospel worldwide.

Exactly what is the role of Area Authority Seventies? We need first to understand the role of the Seventy.

BUILDING UP THE CHURCH IN ALL NATIONS

The Prophet Joseph Smith announced the establishment of the office of Seventy on 8 February 1835. On 28 February he organized the First Quorum of the Seventy (see *History of the Church*, 2:181, 201–4). A

month later the Lord by revelation gave further instructions through the Prophet Joseph regarding the calling and role of the Seventy. These instructions were recorded in what is now Doctrine and Covenants 107:

"The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world—thus differing from other officers in the church in the duties of their calling. . . .

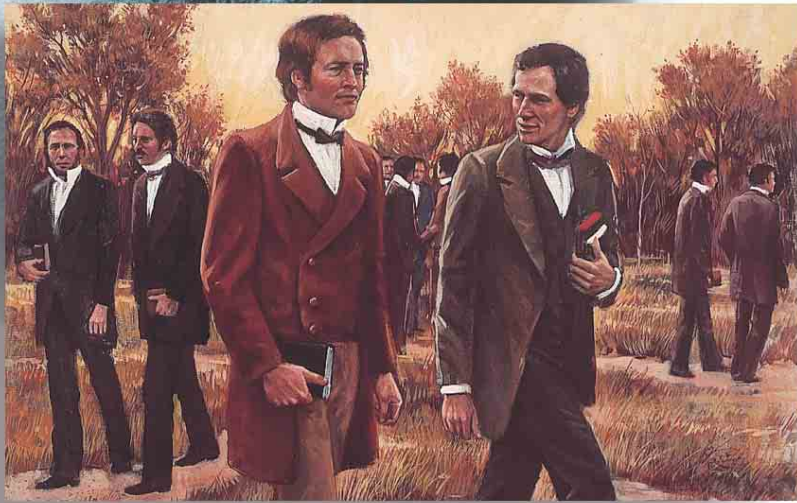
"The Seventy are to act in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Twelve . . . , in building up the church and regulating all the affairs of the same in all nations, first unto the Gentiles and then to the Jews. . . .

"It is the duty of the [Twelve] to call upon the Seventy, when they need



Today Area Authority Seventies are playing a pivotal role in preaching and administering the gospel worldwide, like the brethren seen in action here.





SEVENTIES SENT FORTH, BY DEL PARSON

On 28 February 1835 the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the First Quorum of the Seventy. Their call was “to preach the gospel, and to be especial witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world.”

assistance, to fill the several calls for preaching and administering the gospel, instead of any others. . . .

“And it is according to the vision showing the order of the Seventy, that they should have seven presidents to preside over them, chosen out of the number of the seventy;

“And the seventh president of these presidents is to preside over the six;

“And these seven presidents are to choose other seventy besides the first seventy to whom they belong, and are to preside over them;

“And also other seventy, until seven times seventy, if the labor in the vineyard of necessity requires it.

“And these seventy are to be traveling ministers, unto the Gentiles first and also unto the Jews” (D&C 107:25, 34, 38, 93–97).

The role of the Seventy, then, is to act under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in building up and regulating the affairs of the Church in all nations. The Twelve are to call upon the Seventy to help in preaching and administering the gospel.

Members of the Quorums of the Seventy do not hold priesthood keys as part of their callings as Seventies. But when they receive an assignment from the First Presidency or the Quorum of the Twelve

Apostles, the keys they need to accomplish the task are delegated to them. As President Brigham Young explained to the Seventy, “When we send you to build up the kingdom, we will give you the keys, and power and authority” (*History of the Church*, 7:308). When they are ordained, members of the Seventy do receive apostolic authority to bear witness that Jesus is the Christ and to go forth in all the world as the Twelve may send them.

A GROWING REACH

The need for Area Authority Seventies was anticipated by the Lord when He provided that there be “other seventy, until seven times seventy, if the labor in the vineyard of necessity requires it” (D&C 107:96). Before 1997 the need for help in administering the Church in all the world was served by two other callings—from 1967 until 1995 by regional representatives of the Twelve and from 1995 until 1997 by Area Authorities. (For more informa-

tion, see Elder L. Aldin Porter, “A History of the Latter-day Seventy,” *Ensign*, August 2000, 14–20.)

By 1967 the Church was beginning to experience rapid growth. The first stake outside of North America was created in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1958. Nine years later when 69 brethren were called as regional representatives of the Twelve, there were 29 stakes outside the United States and Canada and a total of 2.6 million Church members. These regional representatives resided in their own homes, continued their employment, and served under the direction of the Twelve to train and strengthen stake leaders. When this calling was concluded in 1995, there were 284 regional representatives serving throughout the world.

When President Hinckley announced the calling of Area Authorities in 1995, Church membership had reached 9 million. President Hinckley explained: “[Area Authorities] will be high priests chosen from among past and present experienced Church leaders. They will continue with their current employment, reside in their own homes, and serve on a Church-service basis. The term of their call will be flexible, generally, for a period of approximately six years. They will be closely tied to the area presidencies.

They will be fewer in number than have been the regional representatives" (*Ensign*, May 1995, 52).

By 1997 when Area Authorities became Area Authority Seventies and three additional Quorums of the Seventy were organized, Church membership had grown to 10 million, with more than 2,400 stakes, 318 missions, almost 25,000 wards and branches, and 56,000 full-time missionaries. Temples were beginning to dot the earth, with 51 temples in operation—a number that would double in the next three years.

Since 1997 Area Authority Seventies have helped carry the heavy responsibilities that rest upon the shoulders of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy in a growing Church. That growth will ever continue, for prophets from ancient to modern times have prophesied of our day:

"The God of heaven [shall] set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed . . . , and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44).

"The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth" (D&C 65:2).

SHARING THE BURDENS

Area Authority Seventies can perform many of the same duties, when assigned, as do Seventies in the First and Second Quorums. And all Seventies go about building up the Church. How then do Area Authority Seventies differ from members of the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy?

First, Area Authority Seventies maintain their employment and serve on a Church-service basis in the areas where they live. Members of the First and Second Quorums give up their own employment to travel and serve full-time wherever they are assigned.

Second, Area Authority Seventies are assigned to quorums by geographical area. Those living in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and the Pacific are assigned to the Third Quorum; those in Mexico, Central America, and South America are in the Fourth Quorum; and those in the United States and Canada are in the Fifth Quorum. Seventies in the First and Second Quorums are called to the First Quorum or to the Second Quorum, which have no geographic limitation.

Third, members of the First and Second Quorums are designated General Authorities; members of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums are designated Area Authority Seventies.

Exactly what do Area Authority Seventies do?



THE PROPHETIC CALLING OF AREA AUTHORITY SEVENTIES

"We have two Quorums of Seventy who serve as General Authorities with jurisdiction across the Church. . . .

"We also have a faithful cadre of Brethren serving as Area Authorities.

These have been called wherever the Church is organized. They are faithful and devoted men. They are men who love the Church and who have served in many capacities. As we have traveled at home and abroad, we have worked with many of them and have been deeply impressed with their remarkable capacity. . . .

" . . . We have determined to present to the conference the names of these Area Authorities to be ordained Seventies. They will then have a quorum relationship presided over by the Presidents of the Seventy. They will be known as Area Authority Seventies, to serve for a period of years in a voluntary capacity in the area in which they reside. They are called by the First Presidency and will work under the general direction of the Quorum of the Twelve, the Presidents of the Seventy, and the Area Presidencies in that part of the world in which they live. . . .

"Consistent with their ordination as Seventies, they become officers of the Church with a specific and definite tie to a quorum. While there will be only limited opportunities for them to come together in quorum meetings, the Presidents of the Seventy will communicate with them, will instruct them, receive reports, and do other things of that kind. They will now have a sense of belonging that they have not experienced up to this time. . . .

"We welcome most warmly these Brethren into quorum membership and activity. They have our confidence, our love, and our esteem.

"With these respective quorums in place, we have established a pattern under which the Church may grow to any size with an organization of Area Presidencies and Area Authority Seventies, chosen and working across the world according to need.

"Now, the Lord is watching over His kingdom. He is inspiring its leadership to care for its ever-growing membership." □

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "May We Be Faithful and True,"
Ensign, May 1997, 5–6.

When President Hinckley announced their calling in April 1997, he listed some of their key assignments:

- Preside at stake conferences and train stake presidencies.
- Create or reorganize stakes and set apart stake presidencies.
- Chair regional conference planning committees.
- Serve on area councils.
- Tour missions and train mission presidents.
- Serve in Area Presidencies. (See "May We Be Faithful and True," *Ensign*, May 1997, 6.)

Three members of the Seventy serve as an Area Presidency in each of the Church's 29 area headquarters located throughout the world. In the past this assignment placed a heavy responsibility on members of the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy and their wives, who often lived away from their families for many years. Now an increasing number of Area Authority Seventies are serving as members of Area Presidencies in the areas where they live.

Many Area Presidencies have included Area Authority Seventies since 1997. But in 2001, the role of Area Authority Seventies in Area Presidencies was

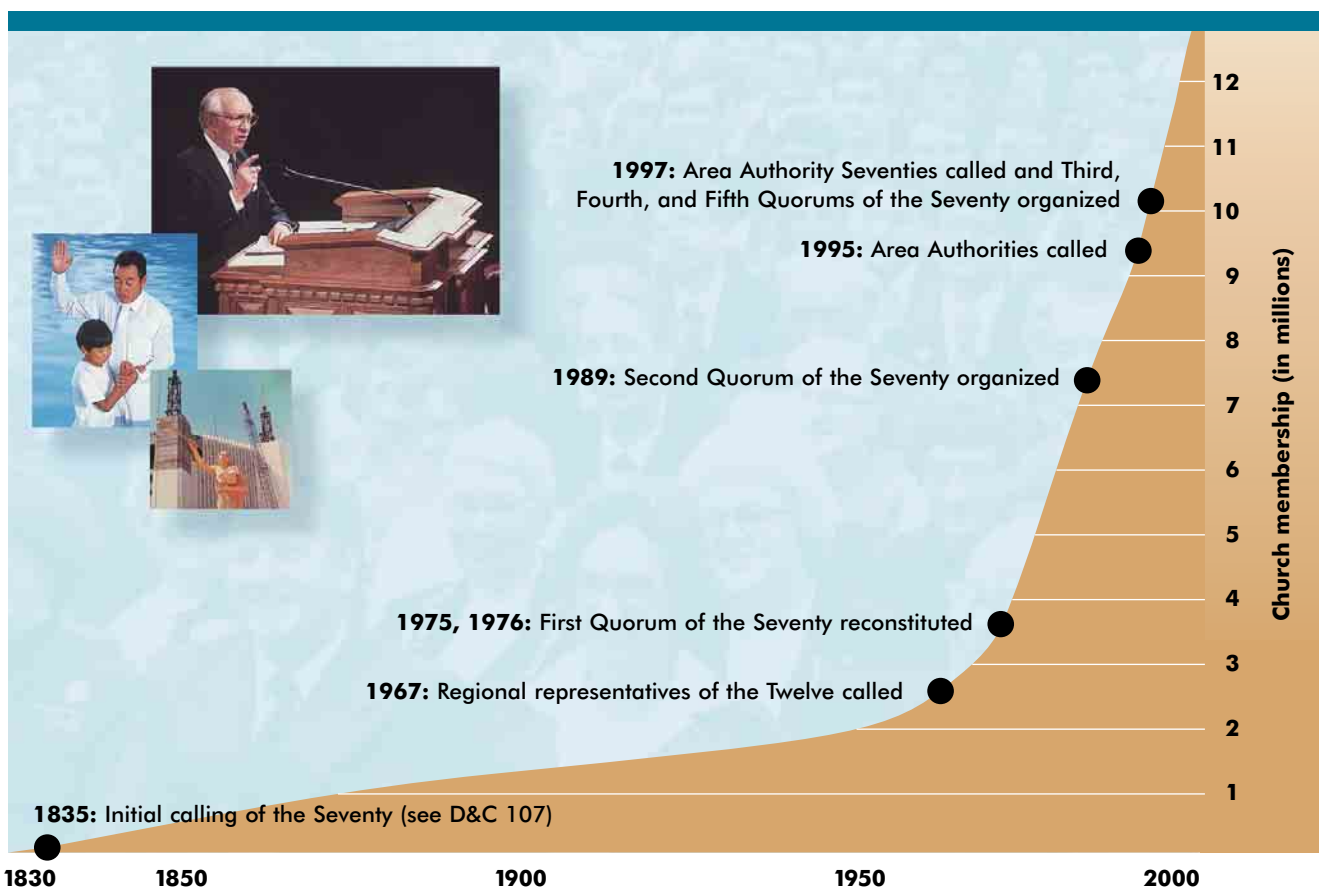
expanded. Two of the Church's Area Presidencies are now made up entirely of Area Authority Seventies.

The Central America Area, for example, is now presided over by three native residents of Guatemala. These men, Elder Enrique R. Falabella, Elder Julio E. Alvarado, and Elder E. Israel Pérez, preside over an area that includes Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Belize and consists of 403,000 members, 78 stakes, and 10 missions.

The newly established Idaho Area is presided over by three Area Authority Seventies who live in Idaho: Elder C. Scott Grow, Elder D. Rex Gerratt, and Elder Ronald L. Loveland. These Brethren preside over an area in southern Idaho consisting of almost 317,000 members, 96 stakes, and 2 missions.

The first Seventies called in 1835 were men who had proven their faithfulness and loyalty to the Church during the march of Zion's Camp. Today we see a similar pattern. The Area Authority Seventies are men of great spiritual capacity. They are responsible and obedient. Many are former stake or mission presidents. They are exemplary husbands and fathers. They are teachers of the gospel. When they are

Church Growth





Third Quorum of the Seventy

*Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, New Zealand,
the Philippines, and the Pacific*



Fourth Quorum of the Seventy

*Mexico, Central America,
and South America*



Fifth Quorum of the Seventy

*United States
and Canada*

released as Area Authority Seventies, they return to serve in the wards and stakes (or branches and districts) in which they live. They continue to contribute to the Lord's kingdom—through whatever callings and assignments they receive.

CONTINUING REVELATION FOR A GROWING CHURCH

And what of the future? The Church will continue to grow. Today we exceed 11 million members. Some, not of our faith, project that our membership will exceed 200 million by the end of this century.

The number of Quorums of the Seventy and members of the Seventy can grow and multiply to meet the needs of the Church. President John Taylor (1808–87) received the following revelation on 14 April 1883 when he inquired regarding the Lord's will concerning the organization of the Seventies:

"Thus saith the Lord unto the First Presidency, unto the Twelve, unto the Seventies and unto all my holy Priesthood, let not your hearts be troubled, neither be ye concerned about the management and organization of my Church and Priesthood and the accomplishment of my work. Fear me and observe my laws and I will reveal unto you, from time to time, through the channels that I have appointed, everything that shall be necessary for the future development and perfection of my Church, for the adjustment and rolling forth of my kingdom, and for the building up and the establishment of my Zion. For ye are my Priesthood and I am your God. Even so. Amen" (in James R. Clark, compiler, *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 volumes [1965–75], 2:354).

We are blessed in this day to have continual revelation from the Lord on the organization of the

Seventy. The calling of Area Authority Seventies and the expansion of the Quorums of the Seventy to five—and the number of quorums will likely continue to expand—are evidences of continuing revelation in the Church. With no basic organizational change, just the calling of additional Area Authority Seventies as needed, the Church can accommodate future growth.

Through continuing revelation to His prophets, the Lord provides the perfect organization needed to accomplish His purposes. The Church is safely under the leadership of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—the 15 men we sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators.

I have both observed and participated in the growth and development of the leadership of the Church during the past 35 years. I served as a regional representative. I was in the Presidency of the Seventy in 1995 when Area Authorities were called. I witnessed the memorable occasion in 1997 when the Area Authorities were informed by the First Presidency that they would be ordained Seventies and assigned to one of the three newly established Quorums of the Seventy. I testify that revelation was experienced at that time. And I have watched as a great sense of brotherhood has developed among the Quorums of the Seventy.

Those who are called as Area Authority Seventies and who serve in the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Quorums of the Seventy are men who share the burden and responsibility to bear a sure witness of Jesus Christ in all the world. In very deed, they are helping fulfill the Lord's charge to the original Seventy: "To bear record of my name in all the world, wherever . . . mine apostles, shall send them to prepare a way before my face" (D&C 124:139). □

Sustaining Priesthood Leaders

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

How are we blessed because the priesthood is on the earth?

D&C 84:19–21, 36: “And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh. . . . For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me.”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “If the power of the priesthood were not upon the earth, the adversary would have freedom to roam and reign without restraint. There would be no gift of the Holy Ghost to direct and enlighten us; no prophets to speak in the name of the Lord; no temples where we could make sacred, eternal covenants; no authority to bless or baptize, to heal or comfort. Without the power of the priesthood, ‘the whole earth would be utterly wasted’ (see D&C 2:1–3). There would be no light, no hope—only darkness” (“Blessings of the Priesthood,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 32).

Mary Ellen W. Smoot, former Relief Society general president: “We see sisters in this great Church who recognize the blessings of the restored priesthood. We rejoice as

each baby is blessed, each child is baptized, as we partake of the sacrament and are set apart for Church callings and watch our husbands give fathers’ blessings. We are grateful for priesthood blessings that light our way and give us direction and hope. We rejoice in and support worthy priesthood holders” (“Rejoice, Daughters of Zion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 94).

How can our actions sustain our priesthood leaders?

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “I give you my testimony that the happiness of the Latter-day Saints, the peace of the Latter-day Saints, the progress of the Latter-day Saints, the prosperity of the Latter-day Saints, and the eternal salvation and exaltation of this people lie in walking in obedience to the counsels of the priesthood of God” (“‘If Ye Be Willing and Obedient,’” *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, 125).

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Do you sustain your bishop? Do you sustain your stake president and the General Authorities of the Church? Or are you among those who are neutral, or critical, who speak evilly, or who refuse calls? Better ask, ‘Lord, is it I?’” (*Follow the*

Brethren, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [23 Mar. 1965], 9).

Elder David B. Haight of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “When we sustain the President of the Church by our uplifted hand, it not only signifies that we acknowledge before God that he is the rightful possessor of all the priesthood keys; it means that we covenant with God that we will abide by the direction and the counsel that comes through His prophet. It is a solemn covenant” (“Solemn Assemblies,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 14–15).

D&C 108:7–8: “Therefore, strengthen your brethren in all your conversation, in all your prayers, in all your exhortations, and in all your doings. And behold, and lo, I am with you to bless you and deliver you forever. Amen.” □

**“He that
receiveth
my servants
receiveth me.”**



ILLUSTRATED BY JULIANNE ALLEN

My *Obsession* with FOOD

BY ALETA GOODMAN BLACKWELL

As I struggled to overcome my challenge, I discovered that a change of attitude was as important as a change in weight.

I am an overweight woman with no health-related excuse. Instead, I eat too much. There are support groups for people like me: "Hello, my name is Mary, and I overeat!" Researchers warn us that obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the United States as well as in some other places in the world and that we are eating ourselves to death, or in some cases starving ourselves to death as a reaction against it. Either extreme is an abuse of our bodies and must not be pleasing to Heavenly Father.

NAPS AND PAJAMAS

As I thought about my situation, I had to admit that I was inconsistent in my behavior. While I wouldn't dream of piercing my body or using recreational drugs or being unchaste, I had gotten in the habit of eating far too much, far too often, and of deliberately eating food I knew wasn't good for my body. I was "self-medicating" with food to relieve feelings of frustration and depression, and I was



a recreational eater besides! Any time spent with someone else was an occasion for eating. Researchers tell us that food can become almost anything a person wants it to be: a drug, a companion, a defense and shield, a comforter.

The self-abuse of overeating does more than just make our clothes tight; it harms both our bodies and our spirits. I found myself sunk in self-loathing that created depression and despair. When I overate I felt very tired and took long naps, waking up with a headache and sore joints, having accomplished nothing except putting myself into a stupor. I was guilty not only of overeating but of sloth! I put "fat pictures" of myself on the fridge as some kind of deterrent to eating. It didn't stop my eating, but it did stop my feeling good about myself, which led to more eating.

After I quit looking in mirrors because of my weight, I quit caring for my body also. Gone were the makeup, the ironed clothes, the fixed hair. Out came the sloppy jeans and sweatshirt, and then I began living in my pajamas! I quit going out because it meant actually getting dressed. Sundays were particularly painful because I had to stuff myself into some kind of dress clothes, and that was the limit! Many Sunday mornings found me with a heap of dresses flung on the bed, with myself flung on top of them in sullen self-pity. I often got back in my pajamas and defiantly stayed home. I stopped attending the temple because I felt ill much of the time, and I quit going any place at all unless absolutely necessary. I didn't want to see anyone, let alone serve them. Eventually, I didn't even want to talk to anyone on the telephone. Locked in my house and my prison of

excess flesh, I even quit praying. There was nothing I wanted to say to or hear from anybody on earth or in heaven!

POWER OF DELIVERANCE

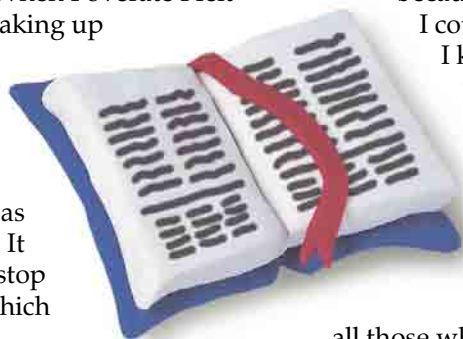
I needed help, and I knew it. One night I started reading the Book of Mormon again at the beginning because it had been so long since I'd read it. I couldn't remember where my place was. I knew all about Nephi and his goodly parents, and my eyes flew mindlessly over the page while my hand kept buttered popcorn in my mouth.

However, my preoccupation with my snack ended when I came to 1 Nephi 1:20: "But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over

all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance." I read the verse again, lingering over "even unto the power of deliverance." Could my faith in the Lord help deliver me from my food addictions and consequent suffering? I had to believe it could.

It became apparent to me that Satan wanted me to stay bound in self-hate and self-indulgence. Soon

I took the pictures off the fridge and replaced them with cards on which I had written inspirational scriptures such as the one that had first caught my attention. I fasted for help. The scriptures tell us that fasting will help us overcome our appetites and passions, and I was in literal need of that promise! I fasted not only for help in controlling my compulsions but for understanding as well. I came to realize, for example, that every time I quarreled with a difficult child I ran for the kitchen and its comforting contents. I realized that reading a fluffy book while I ate a fluffy snack and then taking a fluffy nap was an attempt at escaping problems that seemed too difficult for me to manage in my depressed state. After medicating myself with food and sleep, I then had to medicate myself



WHOLESOME LIVING



"The condition of the physical body can affect the spirit. That's why the Lord gave us the Word of Wisdom. He also said that we should retire to

our beds early and arise early (see D&C 88:124), that we should not run faster than we have strength (see D&C 10:4), and that we should use moderation in all good things. . . . Food can affect the mind, and deficiencies of certain elements in the body can promote mental depression. . . . Rest and physical exercise are essential, and a walk in the fresh air can refresh the spirit. Wholesome recreation is part of our religion and is a necessary change of pace; even its anticipation can lift the spirit."

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), "Do Not Despair," *Ensign*, Oct. 1986, 4.



with pain reliever for the aches and pains my body was suffering at my treatment. Sugar and ibuprofen were my drugs of choice!

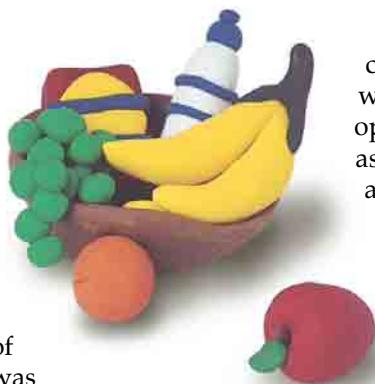
SIDEWALK INSTEAD OF SOFA

In my new attitude, I resolved to get off the couch and get my body in motion in compliance with the natural law that says objects at rest tend to remain at rest and objects in motion tend to remain in motion. I had been doing too much resting, and remaining there was increasing the damage! I didn't lay out an intimidating regimen for myself at first—I just told myself that I could take a little walk each day. This accomplished several things: first, getting me dressed; second, getting me out of the house that had trapped me; third, getting fresh air and natural light. Trading the sofa for the sidewalk proved difficult at first but gradually became easier. I began following the scriptural admonition to retire early and rise early that my body and mind might be invigorated (see D&C 88:124), and I found that it was.

I enjoyed getting out of the house every day into the fresh air and sunshine. Soon I found that the scriptural admonitions in Doctrine and Covenants 88:124 to retire early and rise early did invigorate my body and mind.



I took this advice after a new study of Doctrine and Covenants 88 and 89. I was searching for guidance on overcoming both sloth and gluttony. I began organizing my house better, stocking my kitchen cupboards with healthful foods so I didn't need to order fast-food delivery at dinnertime. I established a house of order and got better control of the chores and activities so my home was clean and uplifting instead of cluttered and depressing. I began by doing just one chore a day and found that the pleasing results gave me impetus to go on. I began following the Word of Wisdom more



closely in my diet. Such things as caffeine were not an issue for me, but I had developed a real habit for sugary drinks as well as chocolate. Eating a lot of meat was not a temptation, but I went way overboard on dairy products and sweets. I overindulged in breads and cereals and did not eat enough fruits and vegetables. I found when I made course corrections with my diet, my energy increased and my health improved. My headaches went away when I stopped eating sweets, and I was overjoyed to realize one day that I hadn't had an all-afternoon nap or taken pain relievers in a couple of weeks!

IT'S MORE COMPLEX THAN OVEREATING BY S. SCOTT ZIMMERMAN

Why are people overweight? Most believe the cause is overeating. While it is true that you can't gain weight from food you don't eat, to claim that overeating is the sole cause of obesity is an oversimplification. In 1995 the Institute of Medicine reported that 59 percent of Americans were clinically obese (at least 20 percent over their ideal weight). Not surprisingly, then, research scientists who study obesity know that losing and maintaining body weight is a complex issue. Let me cite five research findings which indicate that obesity is not just lack of self-discipline in eating habits.

1 Many research studies suggest that obesity is capable of being inherited. For example, studies of adoptees show a strong correlation between their weight class—thin, medium weight, overweight, and obese—and that of their biological parents but little relation between their weight class and that of their adoptive parents.¹

2 An early study showed that most obese people don't eat more than those of normal weight² and that many people of normal weight can eat excessive amounts of food without gaining weight.

3 Increase in obesity is probably linked to reduced levels of exercise. During the past decade, the caloric intake of people in the United Kingdom has slightly decreased, but the prevalence of obesity significantly increased.³

4 Various hormones affect body weight. For example, hormones have been identified that coordinate food digestion and satiety (feeling full) messages, stimulate fat intake and lower insulin levels, and stimulate carbohydrate craving. Variations in levels of activity of these hormones might play a role in obesity.⁴

5 Scientists have discovered genes that help regulate body weight. For example, in 1994, researchers discovered and cloned the so-called ob (obesity) gene from both mouse and human.⁵ This gene produces the protein leptin (from the Greek word for *thin*), which signals the brain to stop eating when fat reserves reach a certain level. Malfunction of leptin or its receptors could be a cause of obesity.

What does all this mean? It probably means that many of us are "pre-programmed" to be obese if we follow our typical cultural lifestyles. But it doesn't mean we have to follow that lifestyle. We can manage our body weight with a program that includes (a) low-calorie meals focused on low-sugar, low-fat, high-nutrition foods; (b) aerobic (cardio) exercise, working up to at least 20 minutes and preferably 40 minutes per day, at least four days per week, of walking or other type of aerobic exercise; (c) strength training (for example, weight lifting two or three days per week, with at least a day of rest between each exercise session);

(d) flexibility exercises (static stretching); and (e) behavioral modification and stress management, which involves attitude adjustments. Although such a program won't ensure that all of us become slender, it will ensure that we maintain the best possible weight for our body type. A feeling of well-being can also come as a result of knowing that we are exercising control and discipline in caring for our bodies. Health rather than an unrealistic body size should serve as our motivation. □

S. Scott Zimmerman is a member of the Heatheridge Fourth Ward, Orem Utah Heatheridge Stake.

NOTES

1. A. J. Stunkard and others, "An Adoption Study of Human Obesity," *New England Journal of Medicine* 314 (1986), 193–98.

2. W. Reis, "Feeding Behaviour in Obesity," *Proceeding of the Nutrition Society* 32 (1973), 187–93.

3. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food, *Annual Report on Food Expenditure, Consumption and Nutrient Intakes* (London: The Stationery Office, 1998).

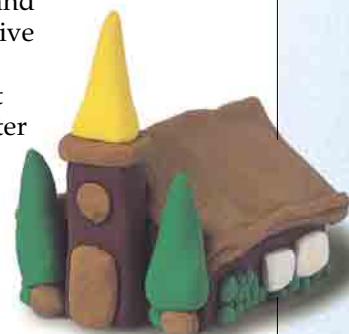
4. See "A Full Plate: Researchers Attempt to Digest the Biochemistry of Obesity," *The Scientist*, 16 Sept. 1996, 12–15.

5. Y. Zhang and others, "Positional Cloning of the Mouse obese Gene and Its Human Homologue," *Nature* 372 (1994), 425–31.

I truly was able to “run” and not be weary for the first time in years.

MOVING FORWARD

I am attending church and the temple again, praying and fasting regularly, and focusing on doing small things rather than not doing anything at all. I am taking comfort when I need it from the Holy Ghost, who is our Comforter, rather than from food. I am working steadily at nourishing my mind and spirit as well as my body. I’m still overweight, but I’m looking in the mirror again and sending positive messages to myself about being in better control and changing things slowly but surely. I am serving others again instead of myself. I am putting my trust in Nephi’s message and putting my faith in the Lord and His power of deliverance. □



Aleta Goodman Blackwell is a member of the Edgemont Seventh Ward, Provo Utah Edgemont Stake.

More on this topic: Mark J. Rowe, “I Have a Question,” Ensign, Feb. 1996, 64; Spencer J. Condie, “Agency: The Gift of Choices,” Ensign, Sept. 1995, 16; “Staying Healthy: Welfare Services Suggests How,” Ensign, Jan. 1981, 10; S. Scott Zimmerman, “Running Away from It All,” Ensign, Feb. 1981, 28; Lora Beth

Larson, “The Do’s in the Word of Wisdom,” Ensign, Apr. 1977, 46; Lindsay R. Curtis, “I Have a Question,” Ensign, June 1975, 21–22; Ronald L. Rhodes, “Don’t Eat Your Heart Out,” Ensign, Oct. 1975, 72.

I’m still overweight, but I’m looking in the mirror again and feeling good about myself. I am in better control and changing things slowly but surely.

Teaching



Good teaching, as the Master Teacher demonstrated, is central in bringing people to Him. A ward in Idaho and a stake in Massachusetts are seeing lives affected as they make efforts to improve teaching.



the Teachers



BY REBECCA M. TAYLOR
Assistant Editor

How do you invite the Spirit of the Lord into your classroom? What can

you do to keep your students' attention? How should you respond when a class member answers a question incorrectly? What if you're nervous about teaching in front of a class?

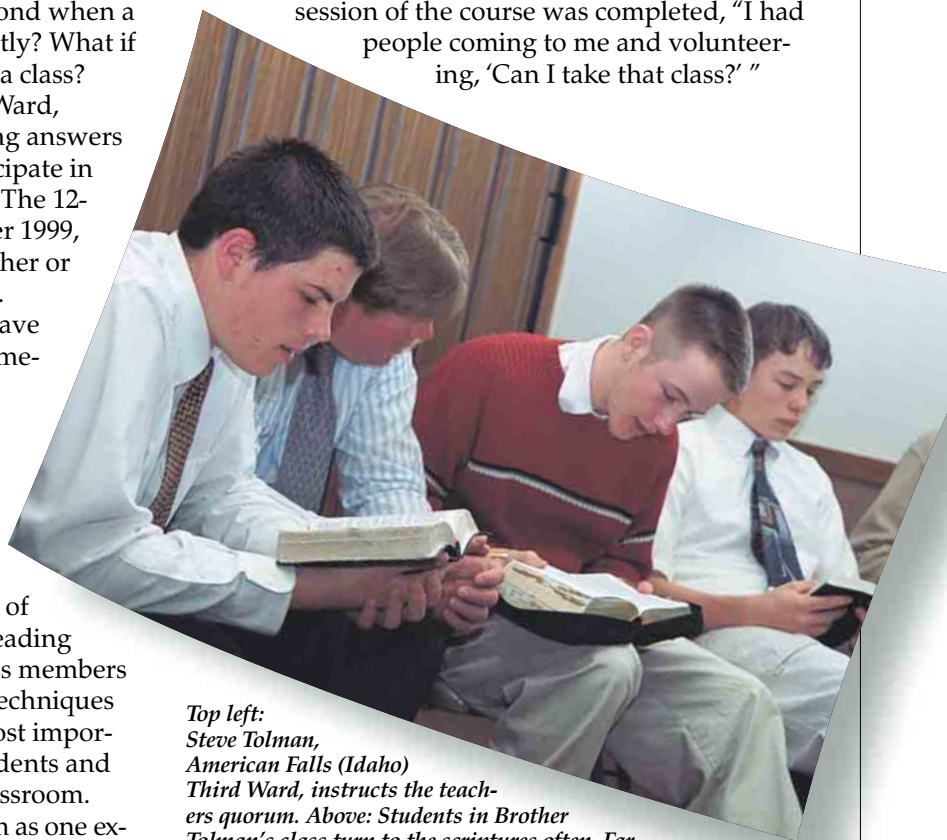
Members of the American Falls Third Ward, American Falls Idaho Stake, are discovering answers to these and other questions as they participate in the Church's Teaching the Gospel course. The 12-week course, first introduced in September 1999, is designed for all Church members, whether or not they currently have a teaching calling. "Every person in the Church is going to have the opportunity at some point to teach someone else," says Michael Crockett, ward teacher improvement coordinator. "If you're not teaching right now, someday you will. And when you have high-quality teaching, you're going to see the effects in so many ways."

Both ward leaders and members say they have indeed seen the positive effects of the program. Fewer teachers are simply reading out of the manual. They are engaging class members in discussions. They are employing easy techniques to keep class members' attention. And, most important, they are focusing on loving their students and bringing the Spirit of the Lord into the classroom.

Brother Crockett cites the elders quorum as one example. "The elders quorum usually does things a little differently than the Relief Society," he notes with a

smile. "We tend to say, 'Here's the lesson; I read over it last night; we'll just discuss it.' But over the last two months, two people who had been through the course taught in elders quorum, and both implemented things we had discussed in class. They came to me after class and said, 'How did I do?' They had made an effort to do something different than they had normally done."

As more ward members have completed the course and started practicing what they have learned, interest in the program has grown. Evan Call, first counselor in the bishopric, says that after the first session of the course was completed, "I had people coming to me and volunteering, 'Can I take that class?'"



Top left: Steve Tolman, American Falls (Idaho) Third Ward, instructs the teachers quorum. Above: Students in Brother Tolman's class turn to the scriptures often. Far left: Home evening with the Michael and Melanie Marcheschi family, Belmont, Massachusetts.



FOR EVERYONE

The course is designed so that the principles and techniques taught can be applied in all kinds of teaching situations—not only in a Church classroom but also in family home evenings, missionary work, and home and visiting teaching.

Kelley Call was serving as a den mother when she was asked to participate in the course. “My first thought was, ‘I don’t need to be here; I’m not teaching on Sunday,’” she recalls. “But as I went through it, I realized I do teach, every week. I need to teach these boys correctly, and I need to show them love, which is one of the things we’re learning in the class.”

Steve Tolman says he’s used the methods he has learned not only in his calling as a teachers quorum adviser but also during family home evening. For example, he uses object lessons more often now, and he changes his approach more frequently during each lesson to retain the interest of the class. He’s found that the young men he teaches are more involved in his lessons, and at home, his children are enjoying the increased creativity he brings to family home evening. “I’ve done lots of new things I never did before,” he says. “It makes it more fun.”

Even the most experienced teachers can benefit from the course. “Some teachers, especially those who’ve been teaching for a long time, find their comfort zone and don’t move beyond that,” says Primary teacher Kryst Krein, who is also a member of the stake Sunday School presidency. “The class teaches you to take a step back and look at how you’re teaching. You can always improve.”

Andra Driscoll agrees. “I have a degree in special education and elementary education, so I know how to teach in a regular classroom,” she says. “But when you apply secular ways of teaching without using the Spirit, it doesn’t work. You really need to learn how to teach the gospel.”

The class is also helpful for members who may be hesitant to teach. “A lot of times there are people you’d consider for a teaching calling, but they express fear about teaching,” says Brother Crockett. “These are some of the people you want to put in the class. It really gives them encouragement.”

LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

Brother Crockett has found that the support of the ward bishopric is a key factor in the success of the

Above: Leon de la Cruz teaches the Gospel Doctrine class in the Revere First Ward, Cambridge Massachusetts Stake.

Below: Teacher Emily Hawkins, foreground, and Teaching the Gospel class members, Cambridge (Massachusetts) University Second Ward, hear instruction from stake leaders.

program. "This program won't work if it doesn't start with the priesthood," he says. "In our ward the bishopric has been the driving force from the beginning."

Evan Call has been an enthusiastic proponent of the program since the ward first implemented it in January 2001. His short-term goal was that every Primary and Sunday School teacher participate in the course, in addition to a member of each of those presidencies. He hopes that eventually every adult member in the ward will have attended.

The bishopric makes it easy for current teachers to participate by formally calling and setting apart substitute teachers to fill in for them while they take the course. After the 12-week course has been completed, the substitutes fill in for other teachers who are asked to participate in the next session. And when the substitute teachers are sustained in sacrament meeting, the purpose of their call is announced—further increasing ward members' awareness of the course.

Ward leaders have found that, as recommended in the course guidelines, holding the class during Sunday School and keeping the numbers small contribute to the effectiveness of the course. Limiting the class to 10 members helps facilitate class participation, they say. And the time slot seems to fit everyone's schedule. "I would say that holding the class at any other time would not be as successful," says Brother Call. "You've got to prepare for it and have substitutes who know they'll be there for the duration. But with enough planning and preparing, it works."

THE COURSE INSTRUCTOR

As Brother Crockett teaches the course, his enthusiasm for the material is evident. On one particular Sunday, he introduces the topic of the lesson with a simple visual aid and asks questions of the class members, immediately involving them in a discussion. And he acknowledges in an affirming way each class member's comments. "He models what he teaches," says Sister Driscoll.

Although Brother Crockett is an experienced gospel teacher himself, he and other ward leaders emphasize that an effective teacher for the course doesn't necessarily need to be a polished teacher.

"It's the material," says Brother Call. "When you go with the attitude 'I want to participate; I want to learn,' you'll learn. It's all in the manual."

When teachers use the manual, they learn right along with the students, says Brother Crockett. "As we start discussing, the students are able to share a wealth of information. Everybody's able to share what they know and feel."

A VITAL INTEREST

When describing the teacher improvement program to the membership of the Church during the October 1999 general conference, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: "Each of us has a vital interest in the content and effectiveness of gospel teaching. We want everyone to have great gospel teachers, and we want those teachers to help all of us find our way back . . . to our Heavenly Father" ("Gospel Teaching," *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 78).

Members of the American Falls Third Ward are finding more and more "great gospel teachers" in their midst as they participate in the course and practice what they have learned.

Steve Tolman summarizes the importance of the course: "A good lesson taught by the Spirit increases the testimony of those who hear it," he says. "As the world continues to go its direction, we need to have stronger testimonies. As teachers become trained to teach with the Spirit, they can help increase the testimonies of those who hear." And countless Church members are benefited as a result. □

BY DON L.
SEARLE
Assistant Managing
Editor



By any statistical measures evident to President Lloyd Baird, the Cambridge

Massachusetts Stake was a

high-performance stake. Yet he sensed a need to raise members to a higher spiritual level.

But how to do it?

Well-planned talks in stake conference would help, but their effect could be temporary and the talks would not focus on individuals. As President Baird thought about it, there seemed to be two more effective ways for members of the stake presidency to touch individual lives. One would be through temple recommend interviews, but those interviews are only once-a-year opportunities. The other way would be to improve teaching in the stake—and that could have a year-round, long-term effect.

So the stake presidency began a top-down effort to emphasize the importance of teaching. A high counselor was assigned as stake teacher improvement coordinator, with that as his only assignment. In all their stake leadership meetings, the presidency began to emphasize that to be a leader is to be a teacher and



The Teaching the Gospel class helped both Paul and Amy Kroff, Arlington Ward, Cambridge Massachusetts Stake, in their respective priesthood and Young Women callings.



Above: Sofia Flynn, Cambridge (Massachusetts) stake Primary president, with some of the children she loves. Far right: Michael Crockett, Teaching the Gospel instructor, American Falls (Idaho) Third Ward.

that teachers can help lift others to a higher level.

There are measures—nonstatistical ones—that indicate this emphasis is having an effect.

Members feel it. Michael and Melanie Marcheschi of the Belmont Second Ward say there has been a definite increase in members' focus on spiritual things over the past two years or so. The dedication of the Boston Massachusetts Temple has contributed to that progress. But so, too, has the stake presidency's emphasis on gospel teaching and learning. In family home evening, for example, the Marcheschis' three oldest daughters—9, 7, and 5—knowledgeably discuss the story of Abraham and how the sacrifice of his son Isaac would have been like the Savior's. It is evident that the girls have had careful teaching, both in the home and in Primary.

Stake Primary president Sofia Flynn feels keenly the responsibility for the teaching the children receive in their meetings on Sunday. The membership of the stake is very diverse—from blue-collar families to homes headed by business leaders or teachers from some of the most prestigious universities in the United States. But it is Sister Flynn's goal to see that children from each of these homes receive high-quality teaching on Sunday to supplement and reinforce

what they learn about the gospel at home, and stake leaders respond to every invitation to help at the ward or branch level. A member of the Somerville First (Spanish) Branch, Sister Flynn is fluent in her native Spanish and in Portuguese and English. Her counselors assist in the stake's 11 English-speaking units, while Sister Flynn responds to the stake's one Portuguese and three Spanish-speaking units.

"It is important for everyone to know that teaching is the most important calling in the Church," she says. "It is important to teach these children. They are the future of the Church."

Sometimes sisters from other units are assigned to help in units where teaching needs to be strengthened. But the Primary presidency invests considerable time and effort in building teachers in each unit. "What I want them to know," Sister Flynn says, "is how to get the Spirit to teach."

It is important as well to help many of them learn teaching techniques. So how does she accomplish both objectives?

"I use my wonderful tool." She holds up her well-used copy of *Teaching: No Greater Call*. "I love this book."

So do some of the members of the stake's

Arlington Ward who have been studying from the book as they take the Teaching the Gospel course. What they are getting from *Teaching: No Greater Call* and from the course has changed their way of thinking about teaching.

"I've realized there's more than one way to teach," says Paula Christiansen, an instructor in the Relief Society. She has become more conscious of her responsibility to draw in *all* the sisters—married and single, those with priesthood in the home and those without. She has become more aware of teaching methods taught in the manual and in other Church materials—an article in the *Ensign*, for example, on effective use of questions in teaching (see "Asking Questions First," *Ensign*, Jan. 2002, 23). She has found it beneficial to use techniques like discussion groups "that help everybody feel like they have a stake in the lesson."

Amy Kroff, a counselor in her ward's Young Women presidency, says the course and the manual have helped her understand her responsibility to prepare better as a teacher. This, she explains, invites the Holy Ghost to testify of what she is teaching. She has benefited from considering more carefully the needs of the age group she teaches and from learning new methods. "It's good to have a broader tool kit to choose from."

Her husband, Paul, a counselor in the elders quorum presidency, is trying to apply in two ways what he has learned in the Teaching the Gospel course. First, he is trying to pass some of it on to home teachers as he works with them. Second, he is trying to share some of what he has learned with the presidency and to influence teaching in quorum meetings. Discussions in the quorum have definitely improved, he says, as efforts have been made to draw in all the elders.

The students in the Cambridge University Second Ward's Teaching the Gospel course seem eager to embrace teacher improvement. Enrolled at nearby institutions such as Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, or the Berklee College of Music, they have been subjected continually, for a major portion of their lives, to instruction of almost every kind and quality. Some plan to be teachers themselves. They have a keen interest in improving teaching.

They listen attentively as Tom DeLong, a counselor

in the bishopric and a faculty member in Harvard's school of business, talks about teaching the individual and about creating a safe environment in the classroom where everyone can feel welcome to participate. He points out that the effect of good teaching in the Church can be multiplied as we all learn our responsibility and become more effective at sharing gospel truths with each other.

The Cambridge stake seems to have a wealth of educated, accomplished leaders and members who are high achievers. It might be logical to assume that teacher improvement comes easily here because of members like these—but that assumption would be wrong. Good teachers in this stake, as in any other, demonstrate that improvement in gospel teaching depends on the love and care they put into their preparation, not on any titles after their names.

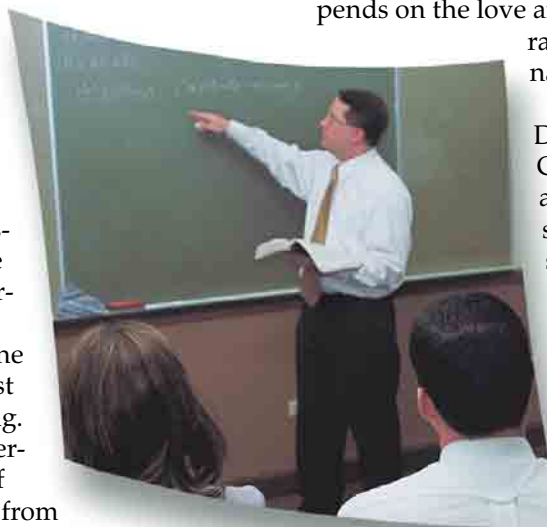
Leon de la Cruz, a native of the Dominican Republic, joined the Church in New York City in 1978 and later moved to Boston. He spends his days working in construction, but his evenings during the week are devoted in part to preparing for his Gospel Doctrine lesson in the Revere First Ward on Sunday.

Early in the week, he reads through the Sunday School lesson. He may call particular class members if he knows there are points in the lesson

with which they could help or if he wants to learn how better to draw them into Sunday's class discussion. On Friday night, he reviews the scriptures in the lesson and fixes its theme in his mind. Then on Sunday morning he gets up at 4:00 A.M. to study the lesson once more, making final preparations and bringing everything together.

While everyday communication in English is no particular stumbling block for Brother de la Cruz, in Spanish he becomes almost lyrical as he leads class members through the scriptures and the lesson. He draws out their own conclusions about its point: just as Noah saved his family by following the Lord's direction, we find spiritual safety for ourselves and our families through obedience.

For anyone who undertook it without laying the spiritual groundwork, preparing and teaching this Sunday lesson might be no less a labor than the construction work that occupies Brother de la Cruz's weekdays. But for him it never seems like work. It feeds his soul. "It is like a medicine I need—I take it for myself." □



If Not for Clyde

By Douglas Springmeyer

It has been 35 years since I was assigned as the junior home teaching companion to Brother Clyde Parkinson. Much has changed in my life since then; much of that change is the result of work begun by Clyde.

In the winter of 1967 I was a

teenager who was actively involved in ski racing and hadn't been to church regularly for several years. On the rare occasion I did attend church, I was alone and always introduced as a visitor, so I stopped going altogether. What prompted someone to assign me as Clyde's home teaching companion, I still don't know.


When my mother found out that I had received the assignment, she hoped that I would become active,

even though my father was not a member. So she told Clyde I would be ready to go the first Wednesday of the month. At 7:00 P.M. that night the doorbell rang; it was Clyde. He introduced himself as my teacher's quorum adviser and home teaching companion. I had never been home teaching before, and had it not been for my mother standing there with my coat, I surely would have come up with an excuse not to go.

After a prayer we left and visited



ILLUSTRATED BY BRIAN CALL



three families in the neighborhood. At the end of each visit, we made return appointments for the following month, and Clyde confirmed with me that I would be able to go. I said yes but meant no. Plans for my excuse were already forming. But back at home I reflected on how good it had felt to be with Clyde and how much interest he had shown in me. He had talked to me about ski racing and even knew I'd won a race two weeks before.

Nonetheless, when the first Wednesday of the following month rolled around, I was not at home when Clyde came to pick me up. He called and tried to talk with me four more times that month before he finally caught me at home the last Saturday of the month after a ski race. Maybe I wanted to tell him about the race, because for some reason I agreed to go home teaching with him. I didn't learn until many months later that Clyde had already visited our families earlier that month and they had all agreed to this second visit.

The message this time was on the priesthood. I know it was for me as much as for our families. Clyde had even arranged for the families to invite me to pray and hinted to me this might happen, making sure I knew what to do. Clyde persisted for months until I actually looked forward to going home teaching with him. After four months of his making repeated attempts to take me home teaching,

I'd never been home teaching, and had it not been for my mother standing there with my coat, I surely wouldn't have gone.

I learned I couldn't avoid him and started being more cooperative.

In March he asked me why I didn't come to church. By then I knew and trusted Clyde well enough to tell him the real reason. I told him I felt singled out and strange. The next Sunday I was in church surrounded by Clyde's family. I never sat alone in church again.

In May Clyde asked me to give the home teaching lesson and helped me prepare. He suggested Sabbath observance and gave me some material. I could never look at skiing on Sunday the same way again. I also was ordained a priest about this time and became fully active.

As the years have passed, I have come to appreciate Clyde even more. At that critical time in my life, Clyde was the manager of an automotive store. He was also a husband and father in his mid-30s with a large family and a multitude of responsibilities. The hours he spent getting to know me and sticking with me never cease to amaze me.

I was on my mission in Germany the day I learned of Clyde's untimely death. I wept for days in quiet moments; truly Clyde had been a savior on Mount Zion to me.

There are turning points in our lives. At age 16 I was faced with many hard choices, and I am convinced that without Clyde I would not be active in the Church today. Less than a month after attending church for the first time with Clyde's family, a close skiing friend of mine got heavily involved in drugs and alcohol. I remember how tough the choice was to lose him as a friend rather than join in his activities. It was feeling comfortable at church with Clyde's family that made the difference for me. I'm grateful that Clyde never gave up on his tough junior companion. □

Douglas Springmeyer is a member of the Cameo Park Ward, Sandy Utah Alta View Stake.

Help Was in the Mail

By Faye V. Bell

I rolled out the last of the microfilm from the parish of Llywell, Breconshire, Wales, realizing I had come to the end of the research for my Welsh ancestors. Clue after clue had been followed, but fruitlessly; prayer after prayer had been offered, but still my efforts were at a standstill. Discouragement swept over me and tears were close. I wanted to do this work. I knew it was important. When I realized further research would likely not be successful, I was devastated. I gathered my books and papers and left the Family History Library with a lost feeling.

My grandfather had been born and reared in a small town named Sennybridge in Wales but came to America in 1878. In 1977 my son had visited the vicarage in Sennybridge and returned home with data for two generations going back to 1793. Years ago I too had gone to my grandfather's birthplace to search out his roots. Research had been limited, since actual surnames had not come into use in Wales until around 1800. Before that time, Welsh family history research is tangled and complex.

During my visit to Wales, I had given an extended family member a copy of my grandfather's life history and American experience. He had loved the book and had shown it to his friends.

Now on my way home from the library, these thoughts were on my mind. Still thinking about my day's disappointing work, I checked my mail. When I opened the mailbox, a package fell into my hands. I opened it to find a book titled *Roots and Branches* by T. O. Evans,

Trecastle, Wales; inside was a letter from the author. Vicar Evans wrote that he had recently seen the history I had given my cousin years before and thought his own book of records might help me in my research. He explained that he was a seventh cousin of mine.

The little paperback was filled with records of my grandfather's ancestors: acquisition of land records and names of homeowners; records of births, marriages, and deaths; occupations of the fathers, titles, and so on. Vicar Evans had even drawn maps of the small farms and villages in Breconshire and identified them. The maps in his book guided me to parishes that might contain valuable ancestral data.

From this source I extended our pedigree charts back a full century along several ancestral lines. Even more amazing was the fact that, before I had determined my research was grinding to a halt, the vicar's book had been on its way into my hands. This incident is a constant reminder to me of the power of prayer and of the Lord's help in family history work. □

Faye V. Bell is a member of the Winder First Ward, Salt Lake Winder West Utah Stake.

Water Rights— and Wrongs

By Abram F. Dalley

I was second counselor to a fine bishop some years ago in a small ward in another state. An alarming situation had come to the bishop's attention, and he counseled with us about two neighbors who were having a serious quarrel over irrigation water. The bishop explained that

he wanted to invite the bishopric, along with our feuding brethren, to meet together in hopes of resolving the dispute and averting a potential disaster.

On the appointed day, the bishopric arrived at the church an hour early. We prayed earnestly to Heavenly Father for guidance. After our prayer, we tried to formulate an approach to this situation, but we could not come up with anything.

The two men arrived a short time later. The first to come in was Frank (names have been changed). He was slight of build and a regular churchgoer, but he could be quite strong-minded and unyielding at times. The second to arrive was big Dale. Broad shouldered and powerful, he seemed to have a quarrelsome disposition and a dark, foreboding spirit about him. He was not active, but he did bring his wife and children to meetings before spending his Sundays at the local pool hall.

The tension in the room was almost frightening. I worried there might be an explosion: either physical, verbal, or a combination of these. We looked to our young bishop for direction. Pure inspiration seemed to flow through this young leader; he was completely in charge. He calmly directed us to place our chairs in a circle with the backs inward. Then he invited us to kneel, saying, "Brethren, we need the Lord's help on this." We all knelt except Dale. He stood in defiance. The bishop said nothing as he knelt there looking up at big Dale's scowling face. Finally the bishop bowed his head as if he were about to start his prayer. At this point, Dale also lowered to his knees.

Usually the bishop was not the most eloquent of men, but on this occasion the Holy Ghost seemed to fill his mouth with inspired utterance. As he prayed, the dark,

foreboding spirit that had been so overpowering moments before was cast out and replaced by a feeling of sweet calmness.

Standing after the prayer, we noticed through our tear-filled eyes that big Dale was still on his knees. His head was bowed, and his huge shoulders were shaking with emotion. When he finally got to his feet he wiped away tears, extended his hand to his neighbor, and, in a voice still choked with emotion, said, "Let's be friends."

The two men shook hands warmly. Then, in a spirit of true brotherhood, we sat down together and worked out an amicable solution to the dispute. All of us left that meeting knowing our Heavenly Father is near and willing to help those who humbly seek Him in faith. □

Abram F. Dalley, a member of the Pacific Drive Ward, American Fork Utah West Stake, recently passed away.

A Living Testimony

By Helen Sturdevant

It would be an understatement to say that my husband and I were surprised to learn that, at age 40, I was expecting a baby. Complications in the

A boy who'd fasted for our baby looked at him and wept. "Look what Heavenly Father did," he said.

pregnancy soon prompted the doctors to order complete bed rest for me. My husband gave me a priesthood blessing in which I was promised that if I would do as I was instructed by the doctors, all would be well.

But bed rest proved to be a difficult challenge as I tried to meet the needs of our two young

children and keep myself occupied while being so confined.

When the ward members realized I would be "confined for the duration," dinners began arriving with regularity. My three-year-old son was often picked up to spend the day with friends, and when my six-year-old son got home from school, someone always seemed to

drop in to check on him. Sisters came frequently to clean the house and do the laundry, often ending up sitting on my bed to visit.

More than two months before the baby was due, I went into early labor and our tiny, frail son was born. He was so ill that the doctors told us we should set our affairs in order and prepare for a funeral. We went in to see our tiny son, covered with wires and IV tubes, in his warming crib. With tears flowing freely, my husband and two other brethren anointed and blessed our little baby, John. John responded by beginning to fight for his life.

While my husband and I spent many days and nights at the hospital, our ward members continued their many acts of service and love for our family. More than once during the pregnancy and at least twice after the baby was born, the entire ward fasted and prayed for us.

On one occasion when we were permitted to take John to church even though he was still on oxygen, a mother approached us with her eight-year-old son. She quietly, almost reverently, asked if her son could see the baby. She explained that her son had caught the vision of service and love through fasting and prayer. He wanted to see how his faith and prayers had been answered. He looked at the baby and wept. He told his mother he was glad he could fast and pray. "After all," he said, "look what Heavenly Father did."

Today our son John is a vibrant, energetic, loving 17-year-old. He is a living testimony to the members of that generous ward and their commitment to faith and charity. Words cannot express the gratitude we feel toward them and our Heavenly Father. □

Helen Sturdevant is a member of the Parkwood Ward, Austin Texas Oak Hills Stake.



Being Grand Grandparents

With longer life expectancies, many adults today spend more years being grandparents than ever before. Grandchildren often enjoy a special relationship with their grandparents and look to them for stability, especially in a changing world. Whether grandparents live close or far away, there are many ways they can build a caring and loving relationship with grandchildren.

Grandparents can:

- Be an anchor in a world of shifting values.
- Nurture a sense of trust, responsibility, and dependability.
- Provide emotional support.
- Give grandchildren an appreciation of the past and a sense of history.
- Be a powerful ally in helping children establish a value system.
- Maintain a close relationship even when older children begin seeking independence.
- Provide stability and love during difficult times.

Grandparents who live nearby can also:

- Give grandchildren the gift of time, since they are often less involved in household and career pressures.
- Help grandchildren succeed in school by asking questions or helping with homework.
- Encourage reading by keeping good books, magazines, and reference materials on hand when grandchildren visit.
- Teach grandchildren sports, skills, or hobbies.
- Praise them often and sincerely without comparing them to others.
- Impart a love of music and drama, and help grandchildren savor life through the arts.

Grandparents who live far away can:

- Maintain correspondence through letters, postcards, holiday greeting cards, or e-mail.
- Take pictures

of important events and send them to the grandchildren.

- Create a newsletter especially for grandchildren.
- Encourage reading by sending books or stories. For younger children, record an audiocassette with you reading the story.
- Share a recipe for something they will enjoy eating or preparing.
- Write a story about ancestors they have never met and send it to them.
- Plant a tree or a special plant in the garden to honor a grandchild, then take pictures of it as it grows.

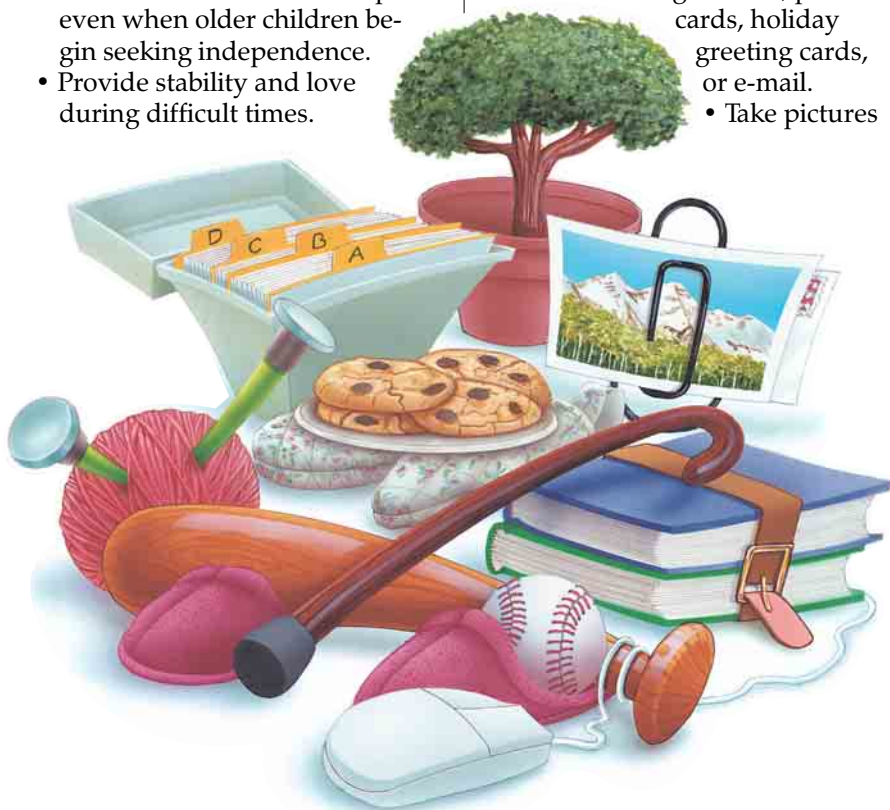
Grandparents have many strengths and experiences they can call upon as they nurture grandchildren. Although not all grandparents can be closely involved with every grandchild, their love and concern adds an important dimension to the lives of extended family members. In today's world, grandparents provide an anchor not only to families but to society as a whole.

—Bernice McCowin, Logan, Utah

Singing with the "Tongue of Angels"

By the time I went on my mission, I was amazed at the number of scriptures, psalms, and hymns I had memorized due to my participation in ward and stake choirs. Because our stake sang the *Messiah* every year, for example, not only did I understand many difficult passages from Isaiah and other Old Testament prophets, I knew they were true.

Since that time I have either





A Debt-Free Family

For decades prophets have warned us about incurring debt. To heed their counsel, we held a series of family home evenings, wherein we discussed with our children ways we could *all* change our spending habits.

For one lesson the children used pretend money to “pay” monthly bills. After paying priority expenses first, they soon saw that little money was left over, and no one wanted to sacrifice needs for short-lived pleasures. I knew this lesson had made an impact when one day our eight-year-old daughter approached us about buying something but changed her mind, saying, “Forget it; we can’t afford it.”

Using pieces of candy to represent money, I also taught a lesson about compound interest and its effect on debt. I started by offering my children jobs to earn three candies a day. Then I let them borrow more candy from me if they committed to pay me back the next day with three times what they had borrowed. We continued this activity for a month, and by the end they were



hundreds of candies short. They soon realized it would take them a long time to earn enough candy to repay just one month of indulgence. A version of this activity could also be used to encourage savings and to show how interest accrued can help ensure financial stability.

For another lesson on debt, we made a “financial freedom meter”—a paper thermometer that we could color to chart our

progress in paying off our credit card bill. We also brainstormed as a family to see how we could reduce the amount we spent on needs. We came up with a list of many options, including eating at home more and buying secondhand items. Since we felt it was important that I continue to be a stay-at-home mom, we decided together how to pay for our needs with my husband’s income.

In addition to our lessons and activities, we diligently prayed for Heavenly Father’s guidance. He has blessed us abundantly as we have strived to do our part in eliminating our family’s debt. We have been able to meet our goal of becoming debt free, and we love the peace of mind that brings. We look forward to building our savings to establish a better future for our family. I know from personal experience that the Lord helps those who earnestly follow the prophets’ counsel to achieve financial peace and freedom.—**Serena Kugath, Crest Haven Ward, Rexburg Idaho East Stake**

sung in, played for, or directed the ward choir whenever possible. Here are two suggestions for choir directors that I’ve learned from my own experiences:

1. Sing often. And remember, not every performance needs to be in sacrament meeting. Many ward choirs sing at firesides, ward Christmas parties, conferences, funerals, memorial services, community events, and care centers. Our choir will long remember the little gray-haired lady in the wheelchair at a local care center

who alternately applauded and cried out, “Please come back, please come back,” between numbers. As the choir members sang, workers and visitors started gathering outside the door to feel the beautiful spirit that was present.

The more you sing, the more needed your choir will feel. The more they feel needed, the more faithfully they will come.

2. Never use guilt. This dampens ward choir enthusiasm fast and drives away potential members. The best way to increase the

size of your choir is to love people into the choir. Just as the Church personalizes the gospel by baptizing and teaching people individually, you will find participants by individually inviting, calling, and assuring ward members of the blessings that await them in the choir. In our ward, we have prayed members into the choir, we have prayed a song to beauty, and the Lord has heard our prayers (see D&C 19:38).—**Brad Thompson, Hughson Ward, Turlock California Stake** □

Mission Presidents Learn from Church Leaders

The “grand theme of our message,” President Gordon B. Hinckley told new mission presidents on 25 June, is “that God has revealed Himself to men, that He has spoken and introduced His beloved Son. There can be no greater declaration than this.”

President Hinckley was the first speaker during the four-day new mission presidents’ seminar held at the Provo Missionary Training Center. During the seminar, the 129 newly called mission presidents and their wives also heard remarks from President Thomas S. Monson and President James E. Faust of the First Presidency and from members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

“You follow a long tradition of men and women who, in response to the calls from the Church, have left whatever they were doing and gone into the mission field,” President Hinckley said. “Thank you very much for your willingness to serve, for your prayers unto the Lord to bless you and make you equal to the responsibility.”

Speaking of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the early Latter-day Saints, President Hinckley said, “I’ve reflected on the great sacrifices which have gone into the building of this cause and kingdom.” He offered examples of early missionary efforts in Canada and of the 1837 missionary call of Heber C. Kimball, who with a few associates accepted the call from the

Prophet Joseph. They undertook the long journey to England, “leaving sick families with practically nothing on their backs and nothing in their pockets.”

President Hinckley spoke of the great success that followed their efforts and the continuing efforts of other early missionaries under extreme hardship. He pointed out that even though most of those days of severe sacrifice are behind us, “the work will not be easy. It will be strenuous. It will be demanding. It will require all of your best efforts and your deepest searching prayers.”



President Gordon B. Hinckley urged mission presidents to put forth their best efforts.

“This is the work of God in which we are engaged,” President Hinckley testified. “It is His work, a part of His eternal plan for the blessing of His sons and daughters of all

generations of time. . . .

“There is no greater message we can give than of the living reality of God, our Eternal Father, and His beloved Son and that They have spoken again in this time of history. You and I both know these things are true. Now we are sent forth to communicate them to others.”

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, pointed out in his address that it is the responsibility of the mission president to see that his missionaries succeed. “Love them, lift them, inspire them,” he said, “[and] your house will be a treasure house of eternal memories.”

New Temple Announced for Downtown New York City

The Church has announced plans to build a temple in downtown New York City.

Located near Lincoln Center in Manhattan, the new temple will occupy the top floors of an existing Church facility, in a pattern already established successfully in Hong Kong. Like the temple in Hong Kong, the New York building is adjacent to other city buildings and blends into the surrounding urban landscape.

Also as in Hong Kong, the Manhattan building will continue to house a chapel and classrooms for Sunday worship services and a cultural hall

for midweek social activities. A Public Affairs Department office and a family history center will remain.

Design and renovation work has already begun.

The temple in Manhattan will be the Church’s second in the state of New York, after the Palmyra New York Temple. The Church also has land and building permission for a temple at Harrison, New York. □



Top floors of this building will be remodeled to serve as a temple. Other floors will house meeting facilities and Church offices.

He then spoke about the three M's of successful missionary labor: the missionary, the message, and the member. The missionary: "If your relationship is sound, that relationship [with the missionaries] will last long after the mission." The message: "You have the answers to man's search for happiness. The message of the plan of salvation, coupled with your testimony, will touch more hearts and souls." The member: "Use members to help missionaries teach, and you will see membership grow."

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, spoke of 10 things he hoped his grandchildren would bring home from their missions: first, a "firm testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior and Redeemer of the world; second, a testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith; third, a love for the gospel; fourth, a knowledge of the scriptures; fifth, a love for the mission president and his wife; sixth, a love for the place and people where they served; seventh, an appreciation for missionary

companions; eighth, an understanding of the importance and the power of prayer; ninth, a desire to serve; and tenth, an enduring faith that will carry them through the challenges of life."

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, addressed the mission presidents and their wives on the topic of lessons learned through missionary service. "It is a great experience to learn that it is not your mission—it is the Lord's mission," he said.

Members of the Quorum of the Twelve gave remarks on other aspects of missionary work: Elder Neal A. Maxwell spoke on how the Book of Mormon helps us solve life's challenges; Elder Russell M. Nelson spoke on understanding the Atonement of Jesus Christ; Elder Dallin H. Oaks spoke on the theme "Every missionary a member"; Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin spoke on involving members in missionary work; and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland spoke about the Restoration of the gospel. □

Church Donates \$1 Million for Famine Relief

A United Nations program to feed millions of starving Africans has received a cash donation of \$1 million from the Church to purchase 2,746 tons of maize.

Drought conditions in southern Africa have caused crop failure, leaving up to 13 million people at risk of starvation.

"Wherever there are people who suffer, wherever there are people who hunger," said Harold Brown, managing director of the Welfare Department of the Church, "we are anxious to reach out to them and help them where and when we can."

The Church's donation to the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) will be used to purchase food grains in South Africa. WFP will ship these grains to several other countries where

famine and other crises are threatening lives.

"This significant contribution comes at such an important time, when millions of people are facing more and more hunger each day, and some are barely surviving," said James Morris, executive director of the WFP. Mr. Morris noted that this cash contribution to the program is the most effective way to help. Cash can be used to purchase the grain and distribute it immediately to the areas of need.

WFP is the United Nations' frontline agency in the fight against global hunger. In 2001 WFP fed more than 77 million people in 82 countries, including most of the world's refugees and internally displaced people.

Before this contribution to the WFP, the Church had already dispatched 6,750



Volunteers in Salt Lake City pack food boxes for famine relief.

emergency food boxes and four large shipping containers of clothing from Salt Lake City to aid the needy in Malawi. An additional 500 tons of maize and beans had already been purchased in Africa a month earlier to help famine victims.

Mr. Morris had made an appeal for \$507 million to feed at least 10.2 million people until March 2003. With the donation from the Church, one-quarter of the needed dollar amount has been received from charitable and other nongovernment organizations. □

Nauvoo Temple Dedication around the World

Satellite broadcasts of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple dedicatory sessions on 27–30 June allowed members gathered at 2,983 sites in 68 countries to take part in the dedication. Through television cameras and the satellite broadcast, members were able to view the proceedings and look into the beautiful new temple from meetinghouses around the world.

Sixteen of these countries had never before received a Church satellite broadcast. But for many of those members, the broadcast, in 37 different languages, was much more than a technical achievement. It was a spiritual feast and in many cases an answer to prayer.

"It was as if I were literally in the Nauvoo temple, listening to the prophet," said Grace Taito of the Nausori Fiji Stake. More than 750 members attended the dedicatory sessions in the Suva Fiji Stake Center. Members of the Lautoka Fiji Stake traveled four hours to arrive early enough to attend a session at the Suva Fiji Temple before the dedication broadcast in the afternoon. "I feel special when I think that President Gordon B. Hinckley has made it possible for us to be part of this dedication by helping provide a satellite for us," said Lanieta Damuyawa of the Lautoka stake.

In Armenia, the new Komitas chapel was used for the first time just a week before the Nauvoo temple dedication. During the preceding weeks, Armenian members had prayed that the anticipated satellite receiving equipment would arrive and be installed in time for the dedication. As they received the broadcast, said Virab Minasyan, "I felt as if I were present at the ceremony, cut off from the world in the temple in Nauvoo."

For months, members in Bulgaria anticipated the temple dedication. A special fireside described the history of the Nauvoo temple, and *Geo Milev Vest*, a monthly bulletin of the Church in Bulgaria, published an issue focusing on the Nauvoo temple dedication. Relief Society sisters prepared white handkerchiefs, and the chapel in Sofia was cleaned and decorated with fresh flowers and pictures of temples. On 28 June, members from



Alema Fitisemanu, director of public affairs for the Church in Samoa, answers questions from a local television interviewer about the Nauvoo temple dedication broadcast.

Bulgaria, Serbia, and Turkey came dressed in Sunday attire and carrying flowers to participate reverently in the dedication, their preparations at last complete.

In the Philippines, Melinda Vitor recalls that she and her friends, Adelaida Lapid and Bellarose Medes, "could not sleep the night before! We woke up every hour, watching the time. We did not want to miss this historic moment!" Filipino members met in

14 different locations to participate in the dedicatory sessions. "I feel the struggles of the early Saints," commented President Ramon A. Baraquiel of the Cavite Philippines Stake after the dedication. "They gave up their property, belongings, and treasures to build the house of the Lord. I believe that is the kind of faith we need."

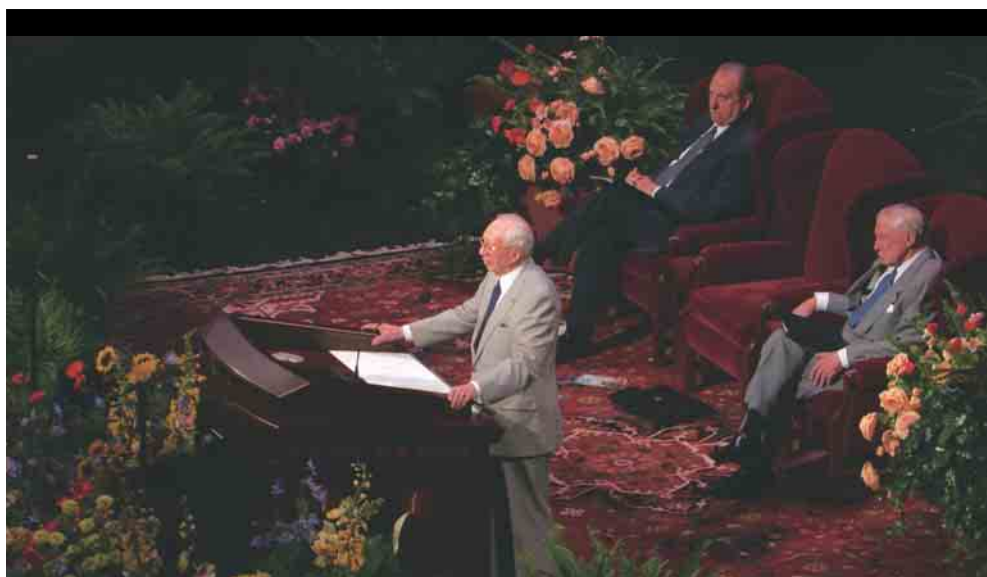
In Russia, members waited in anxious anticipation, praying that the necessary satellite receiving

equipment would be given government approval to enter the country before the dedication. Approval had been in process for weeks. But as late as the evening before the broadcast, prospects looked dim. Elena Nechiporova, director of Church Public Affairs in Russia and an attorney by profession, was told at the customs office at 4:30 that afternoon to return the next day. "We can't wait," she said. "We must have it tonight." There was nothing more she could do, but when a customs official asked why the requests had seemed so earnest and pleading, Sister Nechiporova followed the impression that came to mind. She told him why the equipment was so important to Latter-day Saints in their country, relating the history of Nauvoo and speaking of the thousands of people in Russia awaiting the broadcast.

Moved by what he heard, the customs official signed the necessary papers at 5:45 P.M. The receiving equipment was delivered to the broadcast sites and installed that night. When members, some of whom had been traveling for up to 26 hours, arrived at meetinghouses the next day, they were able to see the prophet of the Church addressing them from the Nauvoo temple. "When the history of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple dedication is written," remarked Elder Douglas L. Callister of the Seventy, President of the Europe East Area, "I hope a chapter explains how the Lord worked a miracle to include these members in Eastern Europe." □



Members from the Makeyevka Ukraine District gathered to participate in the broadcast of the temple dedication.



President Gordon B. Hinckley and his counselors, President Thomas S. Monson, top, and President James E. Faust, right, honored pioneers at a program broadcast from the Conference Center.

Commemorative Service, Parades Mark Pioneer Day

There is not another episode in the history of this great land to compare with the movement of the Mormon pioneers from Nauvoo to the valley of the Great Salt Lake," said President Gordon B. Hinckley, in commemorating the accomplishments and sacrifices of the early pioneers who made their way to Utah in 1847. President Hinckley spoke on Sunday, 21 July, before a full house at the Conference Center in Salt Lake City. The program was broadcast live via the Church satellite system throughout the United States and Canada.

Set before a background depicting interior and exterior views of the Nauvoo Illinois Temple, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Orchestra at Temple Square preceded President Hinckley's remarks with a stirring musical program. They

performed selections from the reconstructed temple's dedicatory services, along with two anthems from pioneer times arranged by Mack Wilberg. The program also included narration by Lloyd Newell, reading selected writings of the Prophet Joseph Smith about the Nauvoo Temple.

"From my childhood, I've had an appreciation for the pioneers," President Hinckley said, "and that initial respect has been enhanced tremendously, far beyond my own

expectations, by two recent events. The first was the Winter Olympics. . . . The other event which has left its mark upon me was the recent dedication of the new and beautiful Nauvoo temple.

"Those glorious days in the house of the Lord in the city on the Mississippi stirred within me an overpowering emotion of gratitude for the courage, for the tenacity, for the faith that were of the very fiber of those who lived there and then left in 1846. I sensed in a new and



President Hinckley, grand marshal of the Days of '47 parade in Salt Lake City, and his wife, Marjorie, respond to paradegoers.

wonderful way the magnitude of the thing they did in building that community and then leaving it."

President Hinckley went on to recount his invitation to those attending the temple dedication to take a walk down Parley's Street in Nauvoo and remember the Saints who left so much behind to build a new home in the West.

Of Salt Lake City, President Hinckley said: "Here in this lonely wilderness, those first settlers laid out a city where we live in comfort today. Now this has become a great metropolitan community, where people of many faiths live together with appreciation and respect one for another. Without forsaking our own faith, we can and must respect the faith of others. As I have said repeatedly, we can practice our own religion without offending others. We can be good neighbors, working together to build our community."

Annual parades were also a part of the 24 July Pioneer Day commemorations in Utah, marking the anniversary of the Latter-day Saint pioneers' arrival in the valley. President Hinckley was grand marshal of the Days of '47 parade in downtown Salt Lake City. The parade heralded heroism. Floats sponsored by local stakes and other organizations or businesses throughout the Salt Lake Valley and surrounding communities celebrated the patriotic spirit of the pioneers and modern-day patriots in the wake of the tragedies of 11 September. President Hinckley and his wife,

Marjorie, brought spectators to their feet in applause as they rode in a convertible near the head of the parade.

The 2002 Days of '47 youth parade was held 20 July with some 4,300 children and youth walking the route of several downtown blocks, symbolizing the pioneers'

entry into the Salt Lake Valley.

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, was grand marshal of the Handcart Days parade in Bountiful, Utah, on 23 July. He and his wife, Frances, waved to thousands of spectators along the parade route. □

Disasters Impact Lives of Members in Four Countries

Church members in Chuuk (Truk Islands) and in Texas, Peru, and the Philippines were affected by recent disasters that struck their areas.

Among 47 confirmed dead in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Chata'an in the Pacific Ocean was a member of the Church, his wife, and three children. The storm dumped over 20 inches of rain on the islands of Chuuk in a two-day period, triggering over 30 landslides. Numerous member families had homes damaged or destroyed.

The Church responded quickly, sending a shipment that included food, water, tents, and medicine. Local leaders also distributed supplies and food to needy families in nine branches throughout the islands.

Torrential rains in south Texas damaged or destroyed an estimated 48,000 homes in early July. Near San Antonio there were reports of two inches of rain falling an hour, some areas receiving 30 to 37 inches. The homes of

11 member families were damaged in the flooding.

Approximately 1,000 members and missionaries turned out to help in massive cleanup efforts. Volunteers—many clad in yellow T-shirts with the insignia "Helping Hands—Flood Relief 2002" and the Church's name—cleaned and helped at 186 houses and other community areas. The owner of one house commented, "A lot of churches profess to be Christians, but your church members came out and *were* Christians."

In southeastern Peru,

unusually heavy snow and freezing temperatures claimed the lives of some 30 people. About 15,000 homes were damaged or destroyed; an estimated 80,000 livestock died from the freeze, and many crops were ruined. Thirty member families living in three stakes received damage to their homes.

The Church provided emergency funds to purchase blankets locally for distribution among the needy. Relief supplies were also shipped from the Latter-day Saint Humanitarian Center in Salt Lake City, including heavy clothing, hygiene kits, and medical supplies.

Monsoon rains caused flooding throughout the Philippines, including metropolitan Manila. Some 65 people were killed, and about 2,000 homes were destroyed or damaged. Members have been affected by flooding in five provinces with damage to their homes. Priesthood leaders assisted members with food and repairs, using local welfare resources. □

Church Helps Feed Hungry Argentine Children

Joining in an effort to help those affected by political and economic crisis in Argentina, the Church recently donated food to feed 4,300 children for five months.

The food went to 31 nongovernment institutions that provide food for needy children, 16 of them in Buenos Aires and 15 in the interior of Argentina.

The number of people living in poverty in Argentina has risen dramatically this year as a result of changes in economic conditions. The Church was among a number of institutions donating to help alleviate the crisis.

Church leaders, including Elder Carlos E. Agüero, Area Authority Seventy, met with Juan Pablo Cafiero, vice chair of the national cabinet, who suggested the institutions to receive the Church's donations. The donated food was purchased locally, and local Church leaders helped with some of the deliveries.

Mr. Cafiero thanked Church leaders on behalf of the government and the people of Argentina for the Church's donations, which he called "a very important act of caring that we appreciate and esteem highly."

Perhaps the strongest expression of thanks for



LDS volunteers help clean out mud left by Texas floodwaters.



Church donations helped workers in Argentine institutions feed a growing number of children.

the donations came from Susana Gomez of the Pantalon Cortito children's home, who told those delivering the Church's

donation: "What you have given us is of first quality. To feed these children we have to do much pleading, and generally what we

receive is that which is left over. You have given us the best and made me feel that I am important to someone." □

Comment

WE DON'T FEEL ALONE

In the March 2001 issue of the *Ensign*, you printed the story of my father and his faith in prayer and priesthood power. It was called "Sand Trap" (p. 44). Our dad passed away on 19 May this year after a long battle with cancer. He died a man without guile, pure and clean. I am dropping this note to thank you not just for publishing his story of faith but also for your ongoing work of publishing peace and increasing understanding of Jesus Christ and the struggles of others. We don't

feel so alone in our daily battles of mortal probation knowing the trials of other Saints.

We have recently faced the death of our infant grandson, and now my wife is battling with cancer. Our focus in life has become much more clear. This is not so much because death knocks at our door but because life has become so much more precious as it gives us the opportunity to repent and prepare for that great day when we will stand before the Savior.

I have just read "Coping with Chronic Illness" (Mar. 2002, 58). We appreciate what we gained from it. Thank you again for your work.

Gary M. Johnson
Needles, California

SEEING NAUVOO—IN BRITAIN

Another landmark: This past week that beautiful temple at Nauvoo was dedicated, and it was possible for the British Saints to participate via satellite. Then four days later my July *Ensign* arrived. When the *Ensign* first came out, there was normally a delay of three months; in fact, we counted ourselves lucky if instructions for cooking the Christmas turkey arrived in time for Easter. Now it normally arrives during the second week of the publication month, and this is marvelous. May I congratulate everyone involved in this effort. It really has made my day. Thank you for this wonderful publication. I really do look forward to

its arrival each month.

R. Ray Moss
Stoke on Trent, England

LIKE OLD FRIENDS

The picture of the 12-year-old boy with "The Case of the Flat Tires" by Marvin Kitchen in Latter-day Saint Voices (July 2002, 62) touched my heart and brought a smile to my face. For me he absolutely captures the essence of a rascally youth who just needed a little guided kindness. I am so grateful for the artists and designers who organize and beautify the Church magazines so magnificently every month. Even if I don't get around to reading every article, I look forward to the new issues coming in the mail so that I can pore through the beautiful, inspiring pages. And even though we haven't kept all of our magazines through the years, when I come across old issues, it's like finding long-lost friends.

Verena B. Beckstrand
Commerce City, Colorado

AN INDISPENSABLE ARTICLE

I am a recent convert from Judaism and was particularly pleased to read the article "An Indispensable Foundation" (Mar. 2002), which placed a strong emphasis on the Old Testament as a basis for understanding the scriptures, both ancient and modern. The article was brilliantly written and was obviously the thoughtful work of quite an inspired author. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has reinforced my belief in the continuation of God's revelations to mankind.

Sandra S. Vinson
Austin, Texas

Making the Most of This Issue

O C T O B E R 2 0 0 2

The Basis of Real Education

"The drive for learning among our people must have a powerful spiritual component," says Elder

Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "That spiritual element, when it is effective, refines and uplifts the aims of our total education." To learn more about our obligation to learn, see page 14.

Single—with a Family

Everyone is part of a family, whether or not they are married or have children. Discover ideas for strengthening your relationships with family members on pages 22–25.

For a Stronger Family

• Stories from Latter-day Saint Voices can help your family learn about principles like the power of prayer. See what lessons a tiny baby taught, page 70.

• Do you or one of your family members wonder if the Lord even knows you exist? See how He met the unspoken needs of two very different people: "If Not for Clyde," page 68, and "Help Was in the Mail," page 69.

• Would you like to be a "grand grandparent"? Review the tips on page 72.

• Debt can be a trap for people of any age. See how one family escaped and how the children learned its perils, "A Debt-Free Family," page 73.

A New Hymn of Praise

Turn to page 7 to become familiar with a moving new hymn, "O Lord, Who Gave Thy Life for Me."

Home Teachers and Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 56.

Did You Know?

You can subscribe to the *Liahona*, the Church's international magazine, which is currently published in 48 languages. The *Liahona* offers many of the same articles found in the *Ensign*, *New Era*, and *Friend*. It also offers news and other gospel-

centered materials for members in specific

language areas.

The *Liahona* can be ordered through ward magazine representatives.

Readers in the United States

or Canada may also

place a credit card order for the *Liahona* in any of its language editions by calling 1-800-537-5971. Readers in other countries can order through the Church distribution center that serves their area. The *Liahona* can be ordered by mail as well. The cost is \$10 U.S. Send orders to Church Magazines, 1999 W. 1700 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84104.

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New Details of a Mobbing

Restoration of the historic John Johnson home in Hiram, Ohio, brought out new details about the night in March 1832 when a mob attacked the Prophet Joseph Smith. See page 32.

Achieving Oneness in Marriage

Want to build a lasting marriage? It truly is a labor of love for two equal partners, President Spencer W. Kimball taught, but the rewards are endless. See page 40.

Surviving Your Own Fiery Furnace

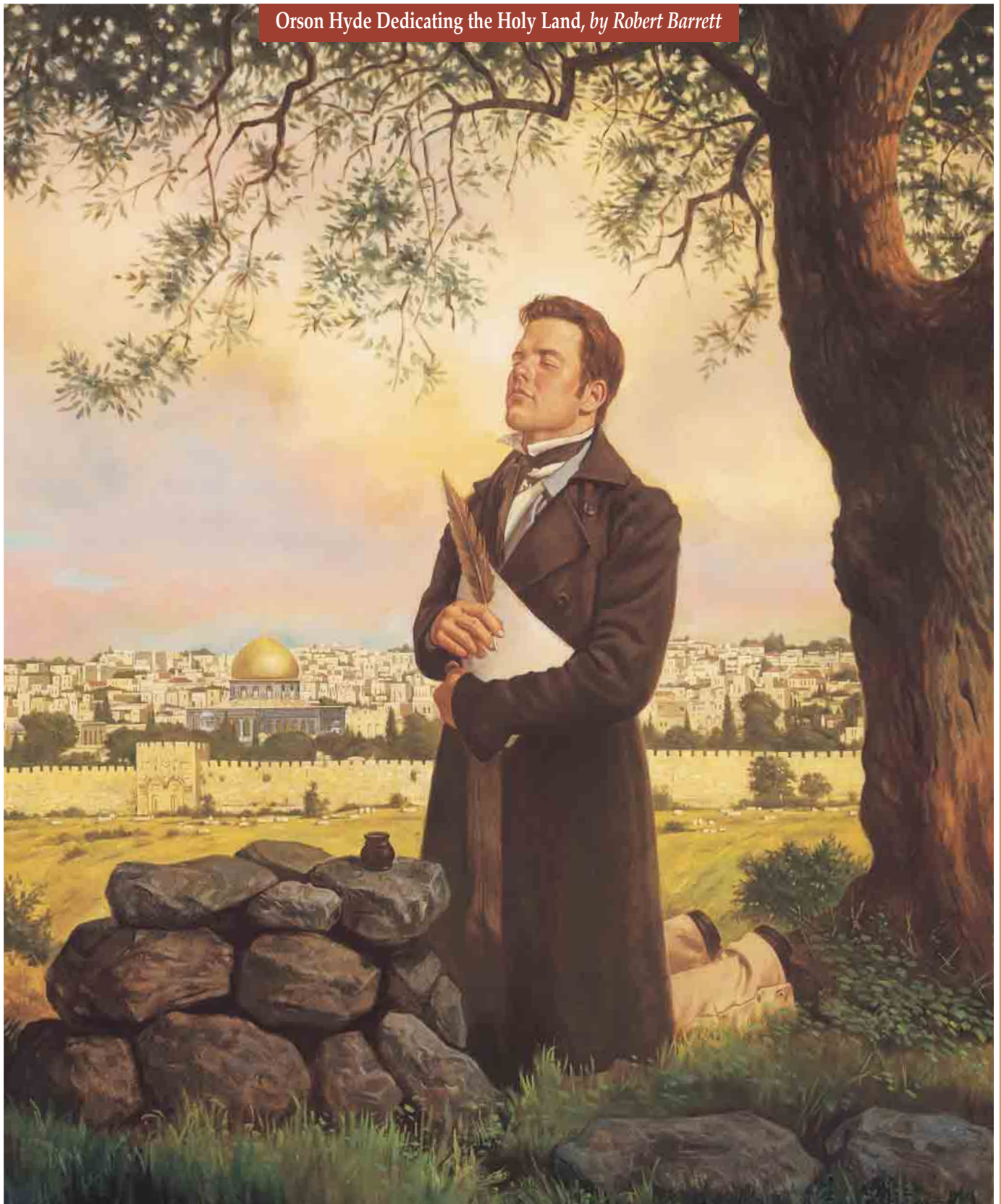
Are you facing a fiery furnace in your own life? Draw courage from the experiences of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, page 8. Draw strength from the faith of the prophet Jeremiah, page 11. Look for how the Lord helped them in their hours of greatest need and why.

Women Supporting the Priesthood

"As sisters in Zion, we can be part of the mighty work of God as we assist priesthood leaders," says Coleen K. Menlove, Primary general president. See page 46.



Orson Hyde Dedicating the Holy Land, by Robert Barrett



Before daybreak on Sunday morning, 24 October 1841, Orson Hyde quietly passed through the open gates of Jerusalem, crossed the Kidron Valley, and climbed the Mount of Olives. He wrote and offered up the prayer that officially dedicated the Holy Land for the return of the Jews and for the building of a future temple in Jerusalem. After this solemn experience, Orson erected a pile of stones as a witness of this occasion according to the ancient custom. This was the crowning event of Elder Hyde's three-year, 20,000-mile missionary journey.



*R*estoration of the historic
John Johnson home focuses
attention on important
developments in Church history that
took place in Hiram, Ohio, during
a one-year period in 1831–32. In an
upper room of the home (front cover),
Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon
received the great vision of the degrees
of glory that became section 76 of
the Doctrine and Covenants.