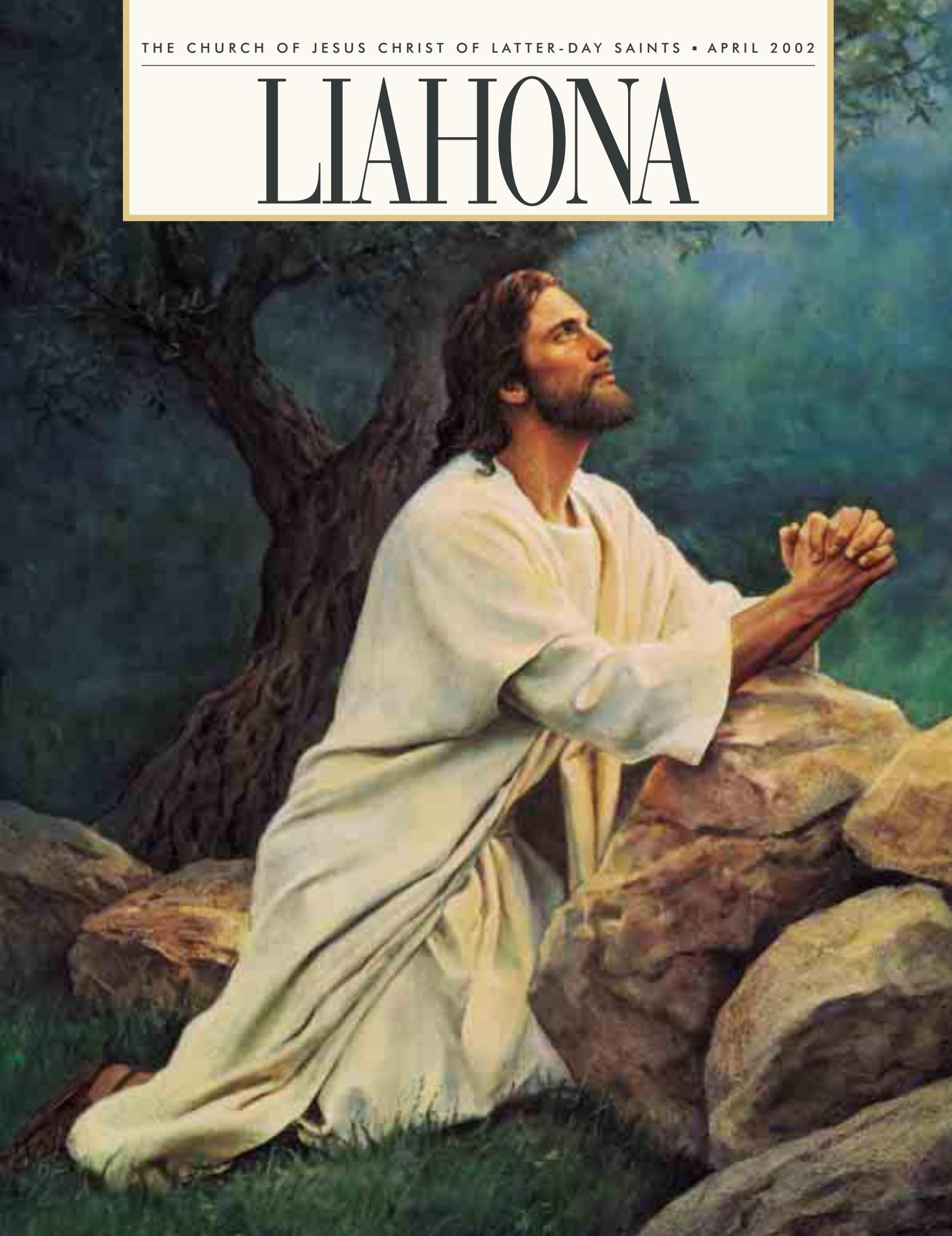


THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • APRIL 2002

LIAHONA



LIAHONA



ON THE COVER

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THE FRIEND COVER

Growing in Wisdom, by Simon Dewey,
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MISSIONARIES' LOVE WROUGHT WONDERS

Please give my love to all Latter-day
Saints who have served so humbly in
Armenia. My happiness is boundless
because I have found my God. Being filled
with this mighty love, I have come to know
many brothers and sisters who have travel-
ed great distances to serve in Armenia.
Their love spread in our cities and villages.
We could not remain indifferent to this
love, and in our devastated, hopeless
hearts this love wrought great wonders. I
testify that our perfect happiness is found
in the love we have received from our
Savior, Jesus Christ.

*Silva Khachatryan,
Achapnyak Branch,
Yerevan Armenia District*

A MIRACLE IN KAZAN'

I live in Kazan', Russia, but my native
land is Armenia. I am 17 years old and was
baptized on 13 June 1999. The Church has
been in Kazan' for several years. Our
missionaries and leaders tried for a long
time to register the Church, but it was not
an easy task. Finally, our prayers were
answered. A miracle happened! We now

have a chapel. I know that miracles are
possible. "God has not ceased to be a God
of miracles" (Mormon 9:15). I am grateful
the work of the Father is going forth upon
all the face of the earth.

*Lelit Karapetyan Tevosovna,
Kazan' Branch,
Russia Samara Mission*



LIAHONA A BLESSING

It is a blessing to have the *Liahona*
(Spanish) in my life. It helps me correct my
mistakes and become more like the Savior.
It is one more thing the Lord has provided
to help me and my family. When I read it I
feel the influence of the Lord's Spirit, and I
know what the Lord wants me to do. I feel
the great love God has for His children
when I hold this wonderful magazine in my
hands and am inspired by the words of the
prophets and the experiences of members
from all over the world.

*Keila Alabrin Coronel,
Santa Victoria Ward,
Chichlayo Perú Stake*



INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS

By President Gordon B. Hinckley



THE SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST

“We belong to this great and marvelous organization which is established on principles which the Lord Himself laid down when He walked the dusty roads of Palestine—the Son of God, who condescended to come to earth, born in a lowly manger in Bethlehem. . . . The miracle of His life is beyond description. He gave that life for each of us on Calvary’s hill in an act of Atonement greater than we can ever really understand. He alone shed His blood for the sins of which we are guilty, that we might have the opportunity of repenting and expecting forgiveness” (meeting, Jerusalem Center, 21 March 1999).

“He alone shed His blood for the sins of which we are guilty, that we might have the opportunity of repenting and expecting forgiveness.”

FAITH IN THE LORD

“Faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ—I hope there is no one here today who isn’t constantly cultivating that faith through reading the scriptures, the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and building the faith which he or she carries in his heart or her heart concerning the Son of God, our Redeemer and our Lord” (meeting, Columbus, Ohio, USA, 25 April 1998).

LIFE AFTER DEATH

“I know as surely as anything in this world that someday I shall die as to the life of this world. But I have an absolute certainty in my heart that I shall go on living and doing good and having the association of my beloved companion and my children” (meeting, Guayaquil, Ecuador, 31 July 1999).

IMMORTALITY

“This life is a part of eternity. This is one stage of our eternal lives. When we die, we will go on to purposeful, active, challenging living. The life on the other side of the veil will be somewhat like the life here. If we have been clean and decent and good here, we will go on in that same spirit. If we have been rascals, we will go in that same spirit. I believe that. I believe in the eternity of life.

It is as much a part of my belief as anything that I know of that this is not

the end, that there will be another life, that we will be accountable to God our Father and to our Lord Jesus Christ, that we will have work to do, and that sometime we will all participate in the resurrection. That is my hope, my faith, my testimony” (interview with Ignacio Carrión, *El País* newspaper, 7 November 1997).

BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD

“When you are 12 years of age, you may go to the Lord’s house and there stand as a living proxy in behalf of someone who is dead. What a marvelous thing that is that you, an ordinary boy or girl, can stand in the place of some great man or woman who at one time lived upon the earth but who is now powerless to move forward without the blessing that you can give to him or her. . . . There is no greater blessing that you can have than to stand as a proxy in a great service to those who have gone beyond. And it will be your privilege and your opportunity and your responsibility to live worthy to go to the temple of the Lord and there be baptized in behalf of someone else” (meeting, Guayaquil, Ecuador, 31 July 1999).

LIVE WORTHY OF A TEMPLE RECOMMEND

“Live worthy to hold a temple recommend. There is nothing more precious than a temple recommend. . . . Whether you can go there frequently or not, qualify for a temple recommend and keep a recommend in your pocket. It will be a reminder to you of what is expected of you as a Latter-day Saint” (meeting, Guam, 31 January 2000).

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

“We are a church, a church in whose name is the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We bear witness of Him, and it is His example and His teachings we try to follow. We give love. We bring peace. We do not seek to tear down any other church. We recognize the good they do. We have worked with them on many undertakings. We will continue to do so. We stand as the servants of the Lord. We acknowledge that we could not accomplish

what we do without the help of the Almighty. We look to Him as our Father and our God and our ever-present helper as we seek to improve the world by changing the hearts of individuals” (remarks to National Press Club, 8 March 2000).

QUIET AND SOLEMN FAITH

“As you go forward with your vocations, as you assume responsibilities of leadership, may you continue to carry in your hearts . . . a quiet and solemn faith, a faith that will carry you through every storm and difficulty and bring peace to your hearts.

“I hope the lessons of the second mile, of the prodigal son, of the good Samaritan, of the Son of God, who gave His life in a great offering of Atonement, will continue to motivate you” (devotional, Brigham Young University alumni, 12 September 2000).

STAND A LITTLE TALLER

“Stand a little taller and work a little harder and value a little greater the marvelous blessing which you have as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That membership will bring with it a strong and moving testimony of the divinity of the Son of God, the Savior of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ.

“You and I are sons and daughters of God, with something of divinity within us. Let us stand tall, my brothers and sisters. Let us live the gospel. Let us be busy in the Church. Let us learn of its doctrine. Let us feed upon its teachings. Let us grow in faith and faithfulness before the world” (meeting, Cairns, Australia, 26 January 2000).

TRUE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

“The true gospel of Jesus Christ never led to bigotry. It never led to self-righteousness. It never led to arrogance. The true gospel of Jesus Christ leads to brotherhood, to friendship, to appreciation of others, to respect and kindness and love” (devotional, Brigham Young University alumni, 12 September 2000).

I KNOW THAT YOU KNOW

“I know that you know that this gospel is true. I have a testimony of this work. But that isn’t as important as that you have a testimony of this work. I believe that as surely as I know it’s true, you know it’s true. I believe that you know as I know that God, our Eternal Father, lives. I know that you know as I know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, who came to earth and took upon Himself a mortal body and in a great sacrifice for each of us died on the cross of Calvary and that He rose the third day. As surely as He rose, we shall rise” (meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, 13 June 2000).

GOD BLESS YOU

“May the sunlight of faith ever warm your hearts. May you grow in strength and capacity as the years pass. May your outreach to others be as that of the good Samaritan. May the service which you render be fruitful for good in the lives of others. May prayer be a part of your daily activity. May reading enhance your knowledge and increase your understanding. May you be true and faithful one

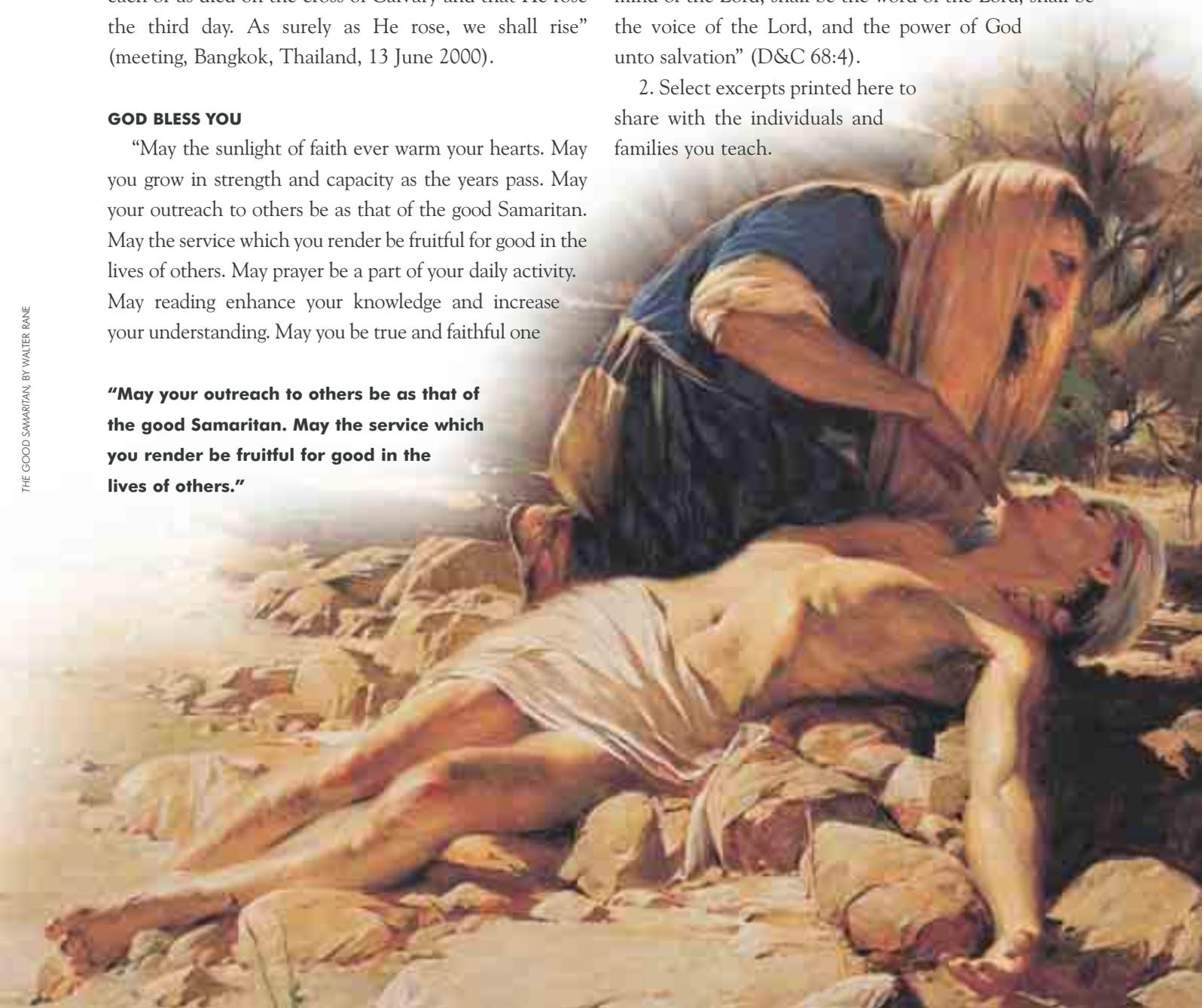
“May your outreach to others be as that of the good Samaritan. May the service which you render be fruitful for good in the lives of others.”

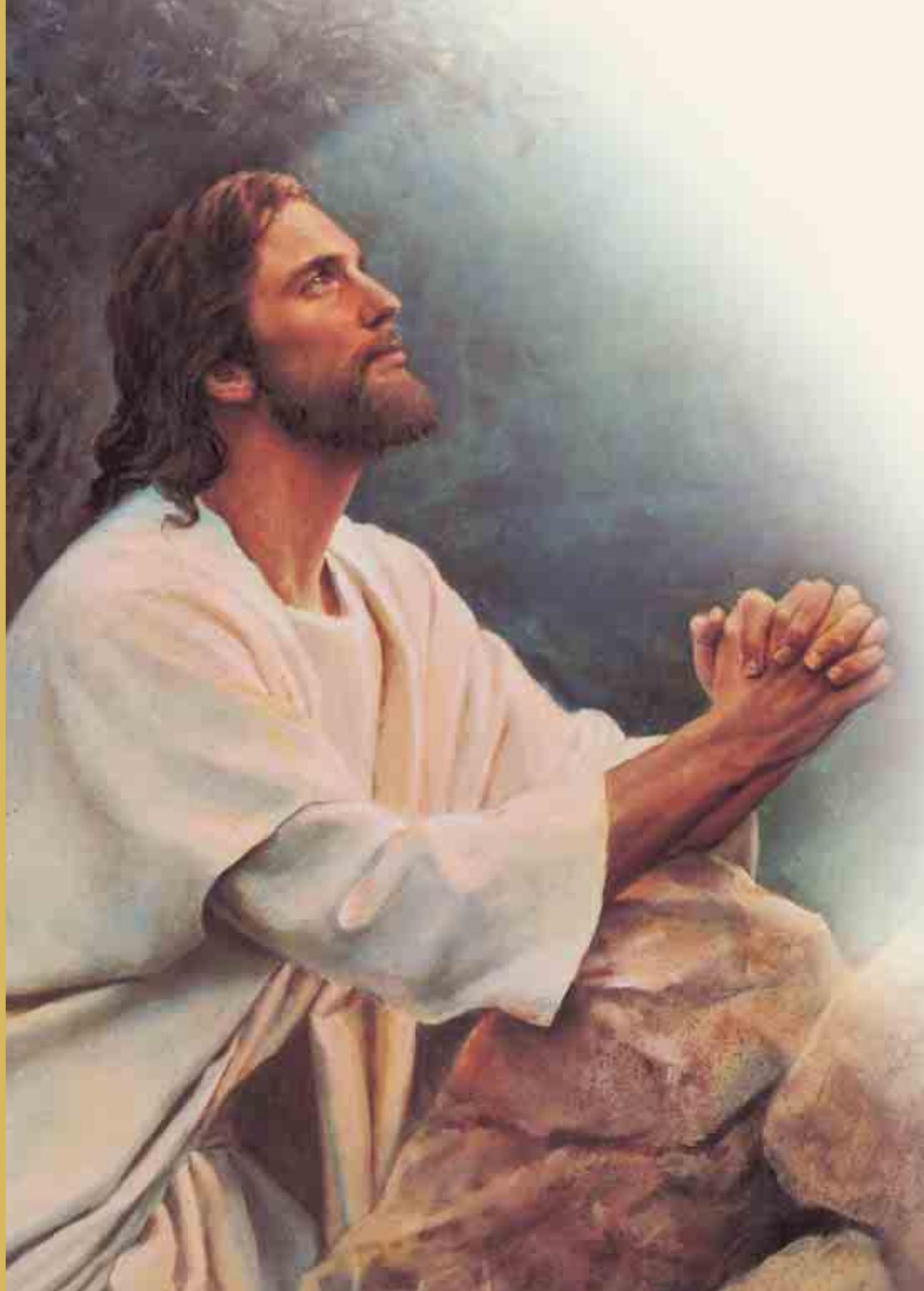
to another, and may the years bring to you that peace which passeth all understanding, the peace which comes of following the precepts of the Master” (devotional, Brigham Young University alumni, 12 September 2000). □

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

1. “Whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost . . . ,” the Lord said of that which His servants speak, “shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation” (D&C 68:4).

2. Select excerpts printed here to share with the individuals and families you teach.





Testifying of the GREAT AND GLORIOUS ATONEMENT

By personally understanding and believing in the Atonement, you and I can teach and testify of it with greater gratitude, greater love, and greater power.

By Elder Neal A. Maxwell

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



The very brevity of the missionary discussions reminds us of what a harvest basket the Restoration really is. Jesus asks us, when we give, to give in “good measure,” using the metaphor of a harvest basket which is pressed down, shaken together, and running over (see Luke 6:38). And out of that marvelous harvest basket we are to teach but a few key truths and concepts.

This reality is a powerful reminder about the need for the Spirit to impel the message we give into the hearts and minds of people—because the great things of eternity are being conveyed in some very brief teaching moments. Hence the need for the Spirit to accompany what we say.

When we share the gospel as members or full-time missionaries, our friends and investigators need to feel our convictions and testimonies about the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Yes, we are teaching a deep concept, but we should also be sharing a deep conviction about that powerful doctrine.

The most important thing we can do in preparing individuals to receive the full blessings of the Atonement is to understand it and to believe in it ourselves. By understanding and believing in the Atonement personally, you and I can teach and testify of the Atonement with greater gratitude, greater love, and greater power.

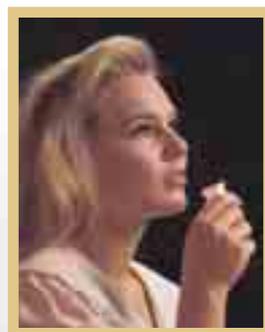
REPENTANCE MADE POSSIBLE

Jesus’ glorious Atonement is the central act in all of human history! It provides the universal Resurrection;

it makes our personal repentance and forgiveness possible. Since all of us “have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), the need for repentance is universal. And mercifully, Christ’s Atonement fits sins of all sizes—whether the smaller sins of omission or major transgressions. Hence, when we turn away from our sins, the required arc of that turning varies from person to person, but it is necessary for all.

The Greek word of which *repentance* is the English translation “denotes a change of mind, i.e., a fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world” (Bible Dictionary, “Repentance,” 760). This means we are to change our thoughts and then behavior until we are turned away from our sins and are aligned with God’s commandments. This change of mind means that we are actually

We can be further fortified after baptism by regularly partaking of the sacrament as we reflect on the Atonement and renew our covenants, including those made at the time of baptism.

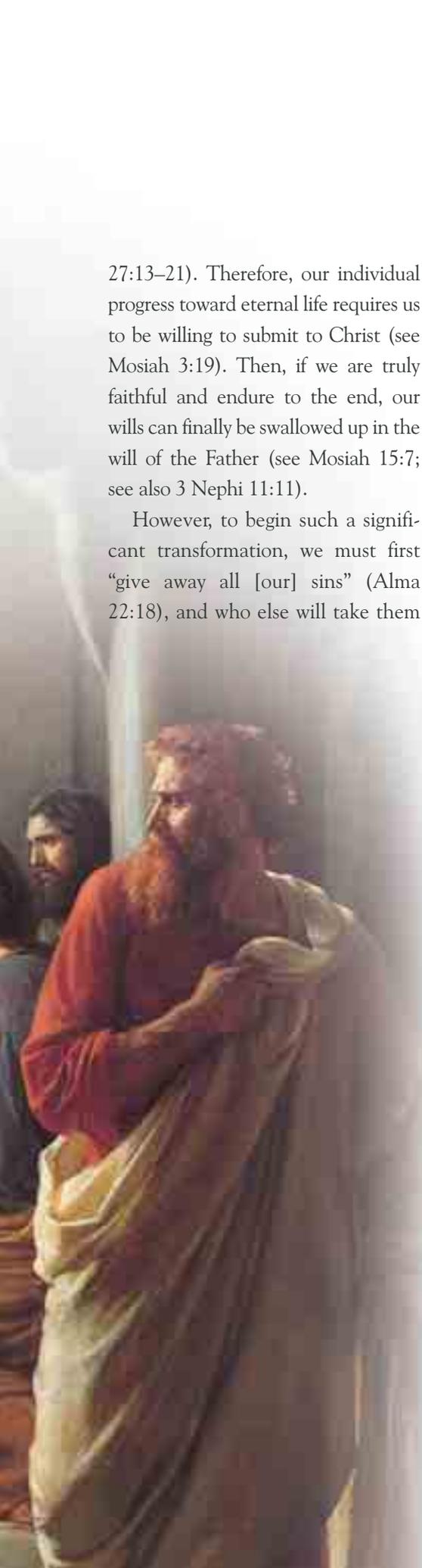


progressing toward what Paul called “the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16). Repentance is thus a continuing process in which each of us needs to draw on the Atonement for real relief, real forgiveness, and real progress.

Christ gave us freely an enormous and unconditional gift: the universal Resurrection. However, Christ’s proffer of the further gift of eternal life is conditional. As our Lawgiver, He sets the terms for receiving this great gift (see 3 Nephi 11:31–41; 15:9–10;



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION OF CONFIRMATION BY ELDON K. LINSCHOTEN; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION OF SACRAMENT BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN; THE LAST SUPPER, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH, COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC MUSEUM AT FREDERIKSBORG IN HILLERØD, DENMARK



27:13–21). Therefore, our individual progress toward eternal life requires us to be willing to submit to Christ (see Mosiah 3:19). Then, if we are truly faithful and endure to the end, our wills can finally be swallowed up in the will of the Father (see Mosiah 15:7; see also 3 Nephi 11:11).

However, to begin such a significant transformation, we must first “give away all [our] sins” (Alma 22:18), and who else will take them

anyway except Jesus? (see Alma 36:18–20).

No wonder there is such an urgency underlying our need to share the gospel! President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) declared:

“A great indicator of one’s personal conversion is the desire to share the gospel with others. For this reason the Lord gave an obligation to every member of the Church to be a missionary.

“Those of us who have partaken of the Atonement are under obligation to bear faithful testimony of our Lord and Savior. For he has said, ‘I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain steadfast in your minds in solemnity and the spirit of prayer, in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you’ (D&C 84:61)” (“The Atonement and Missionary Work” [seminar for new mission presidents, 21 June 1994], 2).

Thus, all of us are to “remain steadfast . . . in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto [us]” (D&C 84:61). The forgiveness we need is correlated with our steadfastness in the work of the Lord.

BAPTISM AND THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST

Real repentance, therefore, requires the emancipating effects of baptism; it washes us clean. Think

about it: how merciful when our yesterdays no longer hold our tomorrows hostage!

After the cleansing and emancipating effects of baptism, we experience further fortifying effects by receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. We desperately need the Holy Ghost to help us choose the right. He will also help by preaching to us necessary sermonettes from the pulpit of memory. He will also testify to us of the truths of the gospel.

Given where we must go, we need the Holy Ghost as a constant companion, not just as an occasional influence.

We can also be further fortified after baptism by regularly partaking of the sacrament as we reflect on the Atonement and renew our covenants, including those made at the time of baptism. This process of emancipation and fortification is made possible by applying Jesus’ Atonement to ourselves as well as those we teach. We should regularly apply the Atonement for self-improvement, while enduring to the end. If we choose the course of steady improvement, which is clearly the course of discipleship, we will become more righteous and can move from what may be initially a mere acknowledgment of Jesus on to admiration of Jesus, then on to adoration of Jesus, and finally to emulation of Jesus. In that process of striving to become more

The Lord has said, “I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain steadfast in your minds in solemnity and the spirit of prayer, in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you.”

like Him through steady improvement, we must be in the posture of repentance, even if no major transgression is involved.

DEVELOPING THE ATTRIBUTES OF CHRIST

As we turn from transgression and strive to become more loving, more meek, more patient, and more submissive, the remaining sins, for most of us, are the less visible sins of omission. However, these must also be given away. Jesus has designated the attributes in that process for which we are to seek, such as faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, and patience. He further denotes the attributes of faith, hope, and charity, and having an eye single to the glory of God, and tells us that these qualify us for doing the Lord’s work (see D&C 4:5–7; 2 Peter 1:4–8). No wonder we are admonished to ask, seek, and knock in order to receive these gifts of the Spirit so that we can be much more effective in doing this grand work of the Lord. In this



process of discipleship, we must never forget that the Atonement continues to be absolutely vital for all of us!

Jesus instructs us, for instance, that we are to come unto Him (see Alma 5:34; Matthew 11:28–30). However, as you have noticed, when we strive to come unto Him, we come to see how He will then make our weaknesses better known to us, sometimes painfully, in order to help us to progress. Christ even promises us that He will make some weaknesses into strengths (see Ether 12:27).

As to the location, nation, time, and circumstances in which our personal discipleship is placed, we should, as the scriptures say, be content with the things allotted to us (see Alma 29:3, 6). Yet there will be an accompanying divine discontent in order to spur us on as we strive to become more like Jesus.

Whether the needed attribute is good cheer, patience, submissiveness, meekness, or love, this process requires the steady help of the Holy Ghost. He will prompt us to repent further, such as when we are too proud, too impatient, or less loving than we should be, including in marriages, missionary companionships, and other relationships. However, since such progress is not

cost-free, we also need the Holy Ghost to comfort us as we pay the price.

Yes, it is by means of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, mercifully, that we can be forgiven. But it is through the Holy Ghost that we can know that we have been forgiven—a tremendously important knowledge for us to achieve. So we need not despair nor live a life in which we “droop in sin” (2 Nephi 4:28). Indeed, we can “press forward with a . . . brightness of hope” (2 Nephi 31:20).

CHRIST’S SECOND COMING AND THE RESURRECTION OF MANKIND

If we need any additional reminders as to the importance of our further developing the virtues of Christ, we should contemplate His glorious Second Coming. Then, among other things, the stars will fall dramatically from their places in heaven. Yet there will be no mortal comments about that, for the mortal explanations and exclamations will be about Jesus and will be words of praise for two of His many attributes: His goodness and His loving-kindness (see D&C 133:52). Remember, not only are we to have faith in Christ, but we are to strive to become more



like Him in our goodness and loving-kindness (see 3 Nephi 27:27).

At that Second Coming, Jesus will not mention His having endured the crown of thorns, the awful scourging, the Crucifixion, the vinegar and gall. He will, however, cite His awful aloneness: “And his voice shall be heard: I have trodden the wine-press alone, . . . and none were with me” (D&C 133:50; see also Isaiah 63:3).

No wonder the Atonement lies at the very heart of Christ’s gospel.

In fact, the Restoration’s central messages are really about Jesus and the Resurrection, and they fulfill this prophecy given to Enoch anciently: “And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth.” Why? “To bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men” (Moses 7:62). Nothing is more central.

Yes, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Jesus and His Atonement represent the most profound expression of Heavenly Father’s love for His children. How important the free gift of the Resurrection is for all mankind, and the proffer of the greatest gift which even God can give—eternal life for those willing to so live and to so qualify (see D&C 6:13; 14:7).

ADVERSITY

In this process of working out our salvation, adversity will provide part of the perspiration. Again and again for you and me, experience upon experience, we will have cause to ponder upon and rejoice in the great Atonement. For me, several scriptures have proved to be especially relevant and reassuring. When read aloud with and by some who suffer, these verses have been far better than anything I could say, especially to

those valiant souls who have reached that point where they are sick of being sick.

First, consider what a perplexed but remarkable Nephi said: “I know that [God] loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things” (1 Nephi 11:17). We really do not need to know the meaning of all things if we know God loves us!

Likewise, our submissiveness to Him needs to grow, as in the words of King Benjamin, in order to become “a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and [become] as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father” (Mosiah 3:19).

King Benjamin’s use of the word *inflict* suggests to us customized challenges and tutoring which will require from us special submissiveness.

Similarly, our knowing of Jesus’ perfect empathy for us individually will help us greatly to endure our pains of various kinds. Christ “shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

“And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and

he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:11–12).

Jesus fully understands! His empathy is perfect! He knows how to help us!

BLESSINGS OF THE ATONEMENT

In summation, the Atonement of Jesus Christ blesses us in so many ways. Through it and it alone, a remission of our sins, bringing the needed emancipation discussed earlier, can occur.

Likewise, the Atonement makes significant personal progress possible by what the Book of Mormon calls “faith unto repentance” in Jesus, in the Atonement, and in the Father’s plan of salvation (see Alma 34:15–17). Otherwise, individuals who do not have faith unto repentance will wrongly reason, “Why bother to repent?” Little wonder the scriptures say that human “despair cometh because of iniquity” (Moroni 10:22). The Atonement, instead, can bring us a “brightness of hope” (2 Nephi 31:20) even amid our losses, crosses, sorrows, and disappointments.

The spiritual submissiveness which is central to the blessings of the Atonement was well exemplified by Melissa Howes as she led her family in prayer a short while before her father

died of cancer. Melissa was only 9 and her father 43. Consider unselfish Melissa Howes’s pleading, in her own words as reported to me by her mother: “Heavenly Father, bless my daddy, and if you need to take him and need him more than [we do], you can have him. We want him, but Thy will be done. And please help us not to be mad at you” (letter from Christie Howes, 25 February 1998).

How many individuals, bereft of such an understanding of the plan of salvation, are angry with God instead of being grateful to Him and to Jesus for the glorious Atonement?

Not only is the Atonement the grand expression of Heavenly Father and Jesus’ love for us, but through it we can come to know of Their personal love for us.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

We must never underestimate the power of the Spirit to stir people’s souls beyond any teaching capacity or skills we may have. As you know, such occurred with Alma when he was in his extremity. And what did he remember? He said he remembered the words of his father about the Atonement of Jesus and said, “My mind caught hold upon this thought” (see Alma 36:17–18).

The Spirit can help those to whom you testify to likewise catch hold of your words in a way that their minds and hearts will grasp

them, especially when those words concern the deep doctrines of the kingdom, like the Atonement.

In another inspirational moment that reflects cumulative teaching, mothers of the Nephite stripling warriors were aware that their sons had been given special promises before they went off to war. They were not as spiritually mature as their mothers, yet these dramatic promises were such that they were sustained by them. And we read that they did “not doubt [their] mothers knew it” (Alma 56:48).

Some of those whom you teach, under the direction of the Spirit and in like manner, will feel the power of your words about the Atonement and the restored gospel, and they will not doubt that you know it! These individuals are, to use Alma’s phrase, “in a preparation to hear the word” (Alma 32:6).

THE GLORIOUS ATONEMENT

I give you my testimony of the glory and the reality of the great and glorious Atonement. I praise Jesus for enduring what He endured and for descending below all things in order to comprehend all things. I praise the Father for all that He experienced as He watched His Firstborn, His Beloved, and His Only Begotten, with whom He was well pleased, suffer all that Jesus suffered. I praise the Father for that divine empathy

and whatever He endured and experienced in that moment.

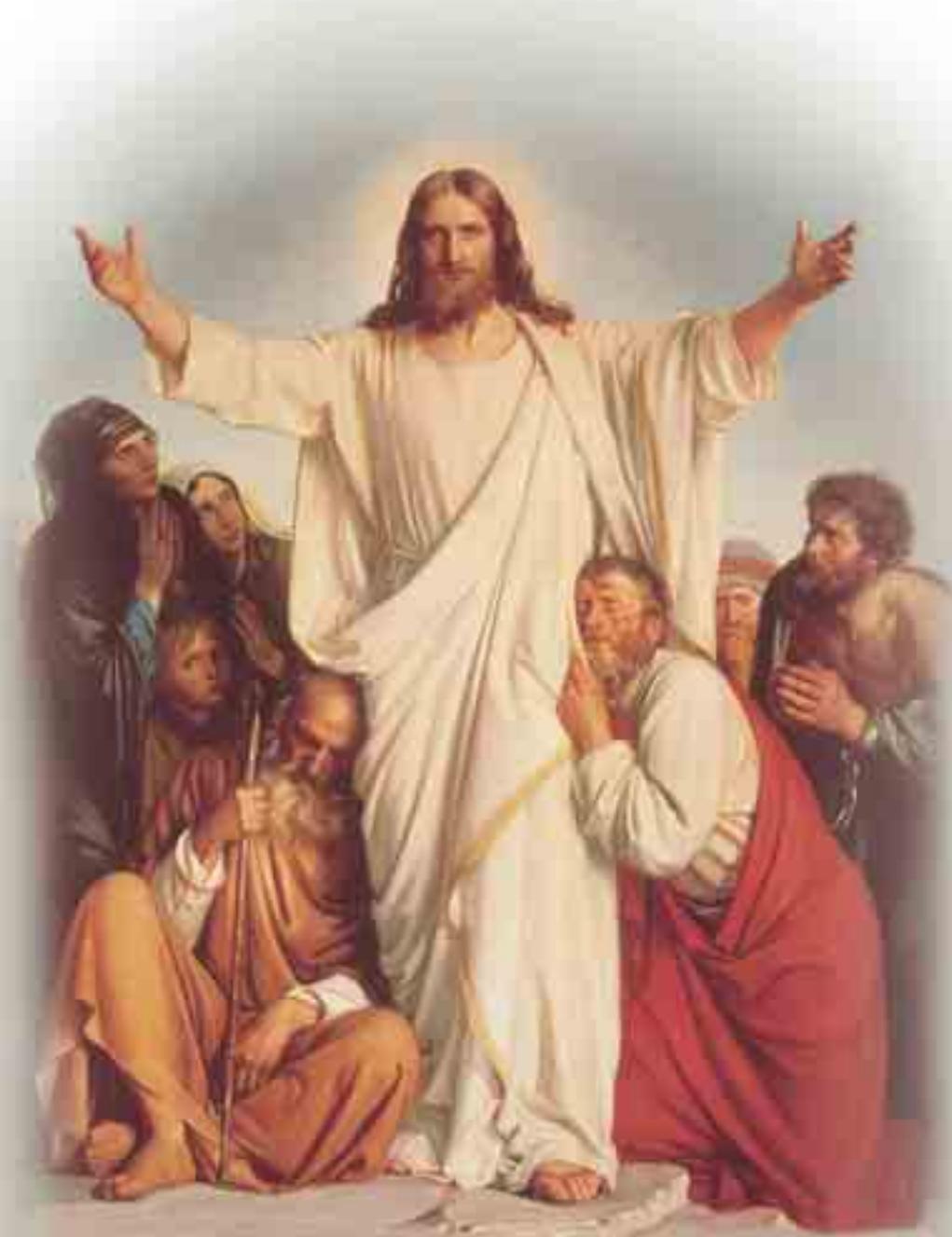
I testify that Jesus' grip on Himself in that atoning axis between Gethsemane and Calvary was really mankind's grip on immortality. Jesus finished His preparations, as He said, unto the children of men (see D&C 19:19). Now it remains for us as mortals to claim the blessings of the

great Atonement. Our gratitude for Christ and His Atonement will grow with the years and the decades. It will never cease growing. And the scriptures foretell that we will praise Him forever and ever (see D&C 133:52).

I so praise Him for the glorious and great Atonement and ask Him to bless all of us that we personally will claim, and in our ministries will

help people claim, the blessings of that great Atonement, won at so great a cost. Indeed, "there was no other good enough to pay the price" ("There Is a Green Hill Far Away," Hymns, number 194). □

From a Church satellite broadcast on conversion and retention given at the Provo Missionary Training Center on 29 August 1999.



Our gratitude for Christ and His Atonement will grow with the years and the decades. It will never cease growing. And the scriptures foretell that we will praise Him forever and ever.

DO YOU KNOW HOW TO REPENT?



By Elder Jay E. Jensen of the Seventy

Twenty years ago my bishop was interviewing me for my temple recommend. Because I was a member of a stake presidency, I knew all the temple recommend interview questions. I asked them weekly to other members, and I was prepared to answer each question that my bishop asked me. But following the formal questions, he caught me totally off guard with an additional inquiry about my understanding of the gospel.

He asked, “Jay, do you know how to repent?” My first thought was to say, “Yes, of course I know how to repent.”

I paused for a moment to think about it, and the more I thought about it, the more uncertain I was of my answer. The standard five or six words we use to describe repentance (recognition, remorse, restitution, reformation, resolution, and so on) did not seem adequate. In

fact, they were meaningless to me at that time. They seemed to be too trite, too compartmentalized.

I know there are some great doctrines and principles in those repentance words, but I did not feel comfortable giving an immediate answer or using them in my answer. Finally I said rather hesitatingly, “Yes, Bishop, I think I do.” I do not remember any other details of the interview because I was so struck with that one question. “Jay, do you know how to repent?” Since then I have thought a lot about that question and the associated doctrine.

THE POWER OF REPENTANCE AND THE ATONEMENT

Some years ago I worked in the Missionary Department of the Church. We were developing materials to help missionaries be better and do better. One of the General Authorities shared this experience about repentance:

“A little over a year ago, I had the privilege of interviewing a young man to go on a mission. Because he had committed a major transgression, it was necessary for him under then-existing policy to be interviewed by a General Authority. When the young man came in, I said, ‘Apparently there’s been a major transgression in your life, and that has necessitated this interview. Would

“We can be forgiven for our transgressions, but we must understand that just to stop doing something is not repentance.”



you mind telling me what the problem was? What did you do?’

“He laughed and said, ‘Well, there isn’t anything I haven’t done.’ I said, ‘Well, let’s be more specific then. Have you . . . ?’ And then I began to probe with some very specific questions. The young man laughed again and said, ‘I told you; I’ve done everything.’

“I said, ‘How many times have you . . . ?’ He said very sarcastically, ‘Do you think I numbered them?’ I said, ‘I wish you could if you can’t.’ He said, again quite sarcastically, ‘Well, I can’t.’

“I said, ‘How about . . . ?’ And then I probed in another direction. He said, ‘I told you. I’ve done everything.’ I said, ‘Drugs?’ He said, ‘Yes,’ in a very haughty attitude. I said, ‘What makes you think you’re going on a mission then?’ He said, ‘I know I’m going. My patriarchal blessing says I’ll go on a mission, and I’ve repented. I haven’t done any of those things for this past year. I have repented, and I know I’m going on a mission.’

“I said, ‘My dear friend, I’m sorry, but you are not going on a mission. Do you think we could send you out with those clean, wholesome young men who have never violated the code? Do you think we could have you go out and boast and brag about your past? You haven’t repented; you have just stopped doing something.

“Sometime in your life you need to visit Gethsemane; and when you have been there, you’ll understand what repentance is. Only after you have suffered in some small degree as the Savior suffered in Gethsemane will you know what repentance is. The Savior has suffered in a way none of us understands for every transgression committed. How dare you laugh and jest and have a haughty attitude about your repentance? I’m sorry; you are not going on a mission.’

“He started to cry, and he cried for several minutes. I didn’t say a word. Finally, he said, ‘I guess that’s the first time I have cried since I was five years old.’ I said, ‘If you had cried like that the first time you were tempted to

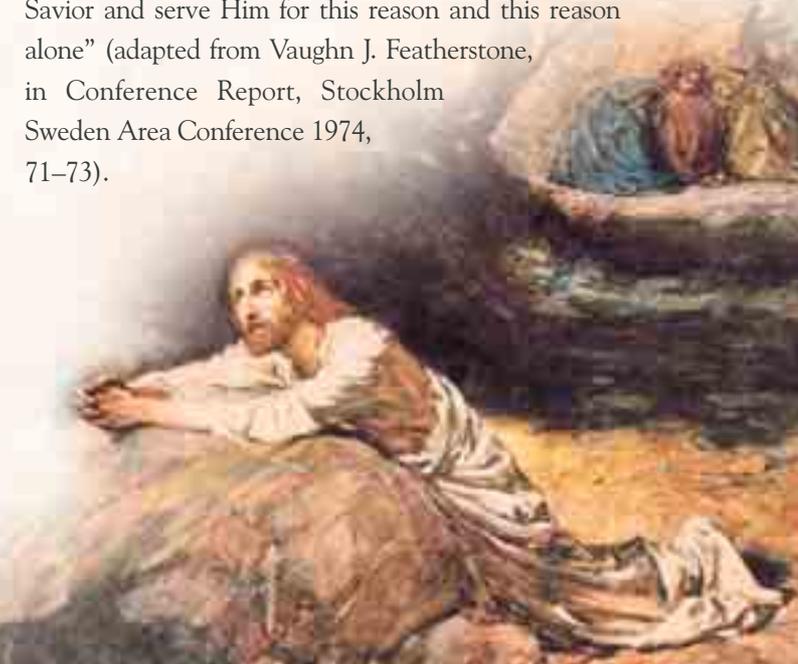
violate the moral code, you possibly would be going on a mission.’

“He left the office, and I think he felt I was really cruel. I explained to the bishop and the stake president that the boy could not go on a mission.”

About six months later the same General Authority returned to that city to speak in a lecture series held in the evening. When he finished, many young adults lined up to shake hands with him. As he shook hands one by one, he looked up and saw the young man that he had previously interviewed standing in the line about four back. The General Authority related the following:

“My mind quickly flashed back to our interview. I recalled his laughing and haughty attitude. I remembered how sarcastic he was. Pretty soon he was right in front of me. I was on the stand bending over, and as I reached down to shake his hand, I noticed a great change had taken place. He had tears in his eyes. He had almost a holy glow about his countenance. He took my hand in his and said, ‘I’ve been there; I’ve been to Gethsemane and back.’ I said, ‘I know. It shows in your face.’

“We can be forgiven for our transgressions, but we must understand that just to stop doing something is not repentance. If it had not been for the Savior and the miracle of forgiveness, this young man would have carried his transgressions throughout all eternity. We ought to love the Savior and serve Him for this reason and this reason alone” (adapted from Vaughn J. Featherstone, in Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference 1974, 71–73).





We are saved only through the merits, the mercy, and the grace of the Holy One of Israel. He is our only hope.

CONDITIONS OF REPENTANCE

The words “conditions of repentance” (see Helaman 5:11; 14:11; D&C 18:12) have great meaning. I have studied and pondered the scriptures to learn what those conditions are and discovered that these conditions could also be called prerequisites to the five or six words describing the process of repentance. These concepts are important and much needed, but the following conditions need to precede them.

- The first condition is to know that God lives. He is in heaven. He knows us by name. We cannot hide from Him. He has a fulness of divine attributes and perfections, including all knowledge. In order for repentance to begin, we must start with God and our relationship to Him.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles made a very insightful comment about repentance and God: “Someone once said that repentance is the first pressure we feel when drawn to the bosom of God” (“The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom,” *Ensign*, November 1996, 83).

- We are fallen, mortal, unclean, and we need help. We are estranged from God—being mortal—and cannot live with Him.

- We need to know the doctrine that one day we will die. Some die early, some late. But that day will come; it is absolute.

- There will be a final judgment. An important condition of repentance is to believe that one day we will all stand before the judgment bar. That day will come.

- Another prerequisite or condition to repentance is to know that no unclean thing can dwell with God (see 1 Nephi 10:21; 15:34; Alma 7:21; 40:26; Helaman 8:25). You can hide sins from your bishop; you can hide them from your parents and friends. But if you continue and die with unresolved sins, you are unclean—and no unclean thing can dwell with God. There are no exceptions.

- We are saved only through the merits, the mercy, and the grace of the Holy One of Israel (see 2 Nephi 2:8). He is our only hope. When we finally realize where we are in this life, we turn to Him. I am so grateful for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, a message of hope. There is hope, and He can make us clean.

I have worked with many, including my own self, and have seen the miracle of forgiveness, the miracle of cleansing, and I bear witness of Him, as one of His witnesses. I know that He lives. May you ever be blessed to stay on that straight and narrow path that leads you to God. □

From a devotional address given at LDS Business College on 6 May 1998.

“BRIGHTNESS OF HOPE”



In this process of working out our salvation,” writes Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “adversity will provide part of the perspiration. Again and again for you and me, experience upon experience, we will have cause to pour upon and rejoice in the great Atonement. . . . Our knowing of Jesus’ perfect empathy for us individually will help us greatly to endure our pains of various kinds” (see this issue, page 11). ❁ The challenges and sorrows of mortality may

be overwhelming at times, but they have a purpose: to bring us to the Savior and the blessings of His Atonement. As the following stories illustrate, trials and adversity—whether in the form of physical pain or an aching need to know the truth—cause us to reach out to Jesus Christ and seek His peace. “The Atonement . . .,” Elder Maxwell teaches, “can bring us a ‘brightness of hope’ even amid our losses, crosses, sorrows, and disappointments” (see this issue, page 12).

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Fixing Everything

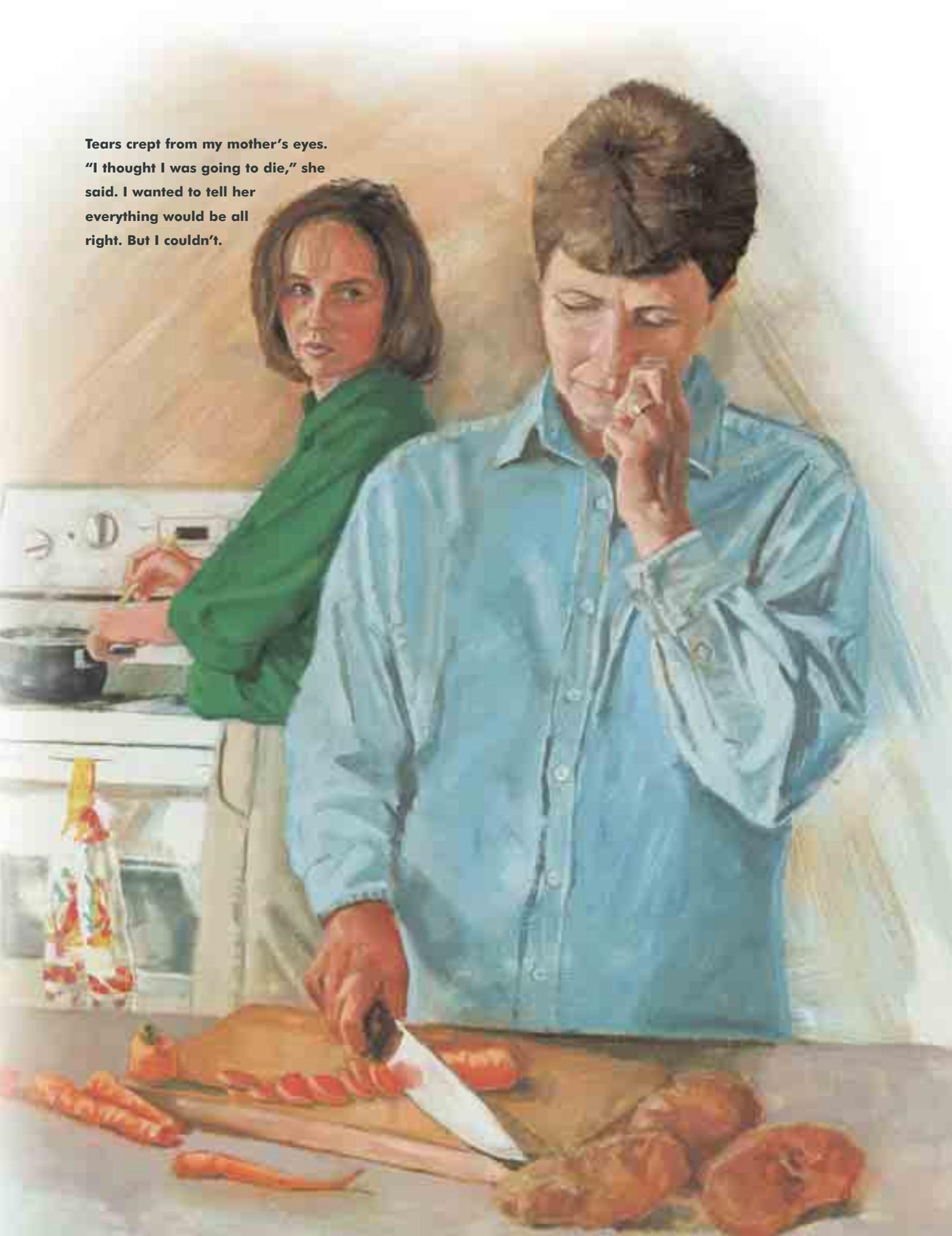
By Catherine Matthews Pavia

It had been four years since I had come home for Easter, so I had looked forward to the break from school and the Easter activities with my family. We were in the kitchen fixing supper Friday night when I asked Mom about the family reunion she was organizing. “Everyone wants to go back to the lake,” she told me as she chopped vegetables. “But during the six-hour car trip last year . . .” I looked up as

the chopping ceased and her voice broke. Tears crept from the corners of her eyes, and her face crumpled. “I thought I was going to die. I really thought I was going to die.” I didn’t know how to respond to my gentle, patient mother when she talked about the possibility of her death. I wanted to hug her until her shoulders stopped shaking. I wanted to tell her everything would be all right—the doctors would find out

what this disease was and give her medicine and fix everything. But I couldn’t. I had refused to think of death throughout the year of her sickness, even as I fasted and prayed and hoped. Still I watched her weaken and suffer. She wasn’t vocal in her suffering. She just worked harder because she was unable to sleep at night or even sit down. The pain clutched at her heart and made her

Tears crept from my mother's eyes.
"I thought I was going to die," she
said. I wanted to tell her
everything would be all
right. But I couldn't.



shake whenever she tried to relax. But soon her suffering became visible in the dark circles around her eyes and the fatigue deep in her eyes themselves.

Discouragement soon accompanied the pain. After a full year of visiting doctors and undergoing tests, she was distressed when the specialists were unable to discover what was causing the intense pain around her heart. The test results all came back normal. Nothing was wrong, the doctors said.

But we knew the situation wasn't normal. My mother did not normally pace the floor at night or stop in the middle of vacuuming to sob. And my mother, who had faced many types of pain in her life without ever complaining, did not normally talk about dying.

During the two days before Easter, I tried again to think of something I could do to help her. But her disease had left us all feeling powerless. Even my father, a doctor, could not fix the situation, in spite of his years of training, experience, and knowledge. I could not alleviate her burdens—she even wanted to do most housework herself, because resting made the pain worse. So she was always working, working to the point of exhaustion. And because there was so little we could do to relieve her suffering, she seemed to suffer alone.

We went to church on Easter morning. As I glanced at my mother sitting beside me, my thoughts wandered back to her high, cracked voice and the chilling sentence that had consumed me since Friday night—"I thought I was going to die."

Suddenly my mother rose from the bench and made her way to the pulpit.

"On this Easter Sunday," she began, "I want to bear my testimony of Jesus Christ's Atonement. King Benjamin said that Christ 'shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, *even more than man can suffer*' (Mosiah 3:7; emphasis added). Many of you may not know that I have been sick lately. The nights have been long"—her voice softened as she continued—"but not lonely. During the worst of it, the Savior has been my friend, my support. I testify that Jesus Christ knows our suffering because He experienced it—and more. He will lift us from our sorrows just as He lifted us from an eternal death."

As my mom bore her testimony, a new picture of suffering replaced my former preoccupation with my mother and myself. It was a picture of the Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane, full of such anguish that He bled from every pore as He suffered for all, including my mother's physical agony and my own emotional pain.

I realized then that I did not need to tell my mother that it would be OK. We couldn't fix everything, but she was comforted by her knowledge that the Savior already had.

Catherine Matthews Pavia is a member of the Oxford Ward, Springfield Massachusetts Stake.

Rescued from the Darkness

By Heri Castro Veliz

The accident happened while I was riding home after a soccer game in a town south of Santiago, Chile. My younger brother had played for one of the teams, and while my parents waited for him, I went ahead on my bicycle. My eight-year-old cousin asked if he could go with me. I set him on the bar of my bike and took off.

As I pedaled, I felt a twinge of guilt. The night before, after celebrating the triumph of my own team in another local game, I had become intoxicated. At 18 years of age, I wasn't doing much with my life.

The wind buffeted our faces, and my cousin shifted uncomfortably. As he did so, one of his feet caught between the tire and the bike frame. The bike flipped forward, and I hit the rough asphalt face first. When I touched my face, I thought my nose was damaged beyond repair.

Suddenly I saw my younger brother at my side, pulling me away from the darkness and into the light.

Fortunately, my cousin was fine. My parents arrived shortly, then a police officer, and finally an ambulance. I was taken into surgery, where they stitched up part of my nose and placed some tissue on my forehead. After a few hours of observation in the hospital, I was sent home. That night I experienced intense pain that kept me from sleep.

The following night the pain was even worse. Finally, exhausted from the intensity of the pain, I fell asleep. In a frightening dream, I seemed to see myself lying on the bed with my arms folded over my chest—the only position I found comfortable. Then I saw a dense vapor of darkness and felt a hand pulling me toward it. Terrified, I struggled to get free.

Suddenly I saw my younger brother at my other side, pulling me away from the darkness and into the light. But his help was not enough; I became desperate and cried out. As I did, I woke up. My father came in to calm me. The pain came back, and for the first time in my life, I saw my father cry.

I was moved into my parents' room, next to Mama. Mama and my brother had been baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day

Saints a few months before, and I had seen how much she loved the Book of Mormon. She read to me from it as I fell asleep again.

Almost immediately, I had the same dream. This time when my brother started to pull on my arm, I understood the significance of it. The darkness represented the world in its fallen state, and my brother represented the gospel and a life of hope—the life he wanted for me. I knew I had fallen into bad habits. I had not opened my heart to what the missionaries taught us, and I had never prayed to find out if what they taught was true. At that moment, I promised my Father in Heaven I would be baptized.

I woke up crying. Mama cried too and prayed for me.

The pain continued the following day, and Mama asked the missionaries

to give me a priesthood blessing. After that, I began to get better. Throughout my recovery, my desire to be baptized grew stronger.

I began to receive the missionary discussions again, and this time I opened my heart. I did not yet have a great deal of gospel knowledge—but the dream, combined with my mother's faith and the priesthood blessing, helped me know God loved me and had provided a way for me to obtain eternal life. I took an important step toward that goal on the day I was baptized.

I used to think I had plenty of time to worry about finding the true Church, if it existed. But the accident helped me understand that we must not postpone making good choices. □

Heri Castro Veliz is a member of the Puente Alto First Ward, Santiago Chile Puente Alto Stake.



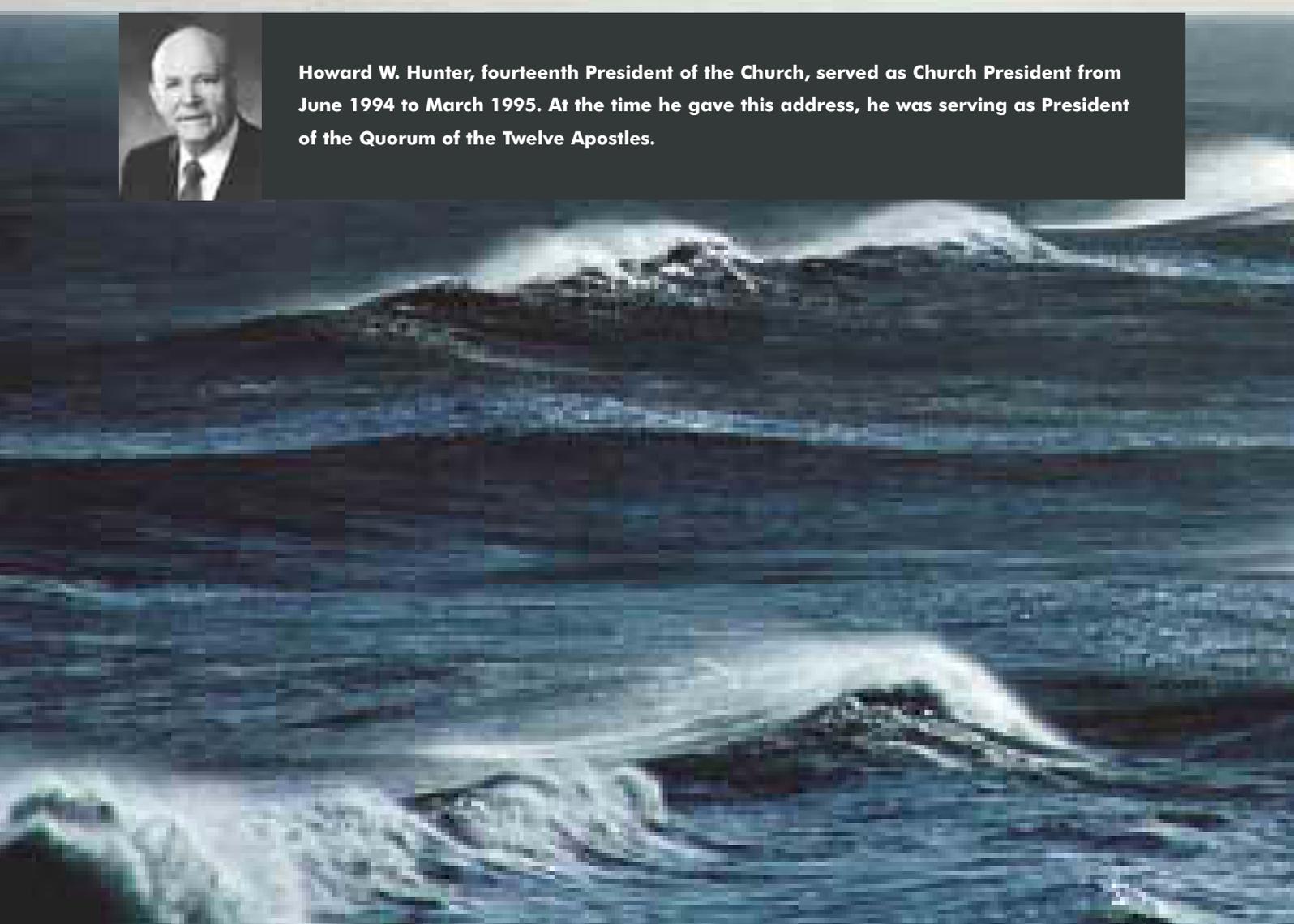
LIAHONA CLASSIC

The Beacon in the Harbor of Peace

By President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95)



Howard W. Hunter, fourteenth President of the Church, served as Church President from June 1994 to March 1995. At the time he gave this address, he was serving as President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



In spite of hopeful progress seen in recent years, many parts of the world are still filled with strife and sorrow and despair. Our hearts are torn and our emotions touched when each day's coverage of local or global news brings yet another story of conflict and suffering and, all too often, open warfare. Surely our prayer is to see the world made a better place in which to live, to see more care and concern for one another, and to see the cause of peace and reassurance increased in every direction and extended to all people.

In the pursuit of such peace and reassurance, may I quote a great voice from the past. He said: "[In order to make . . . to live, . . . the first

is to choose as a leader one whose leadership is infallible, whose teachings when practiced have never failed. In . . . [any] tempestuous sea of uncertainty, the pilot must be one who through the storm can see the beacon in the harbor of peace" (David O. McKay, *Man May Know for Himself* [1967], 407).

There is but one guiding hand in the universe, only one truly infallible light, one unfailing beacon to the world. That light is Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world, the light which one Book of Mormon prophet described as "a light that is endless, that can never be darkened" (Mosiah 16:9).

As we search for the shore of safety and peace, whether we be individual women and men, families,

PHOTOGRAPH © PHOTODISC



communities, or nations, Christ is the only beacon on which we can ultimately rely. He is the one who said of His mission, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).

In this age, as in every age before us and in every age that will follow, the greatest need in all the world is an active and sincere faith in the basic teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the living Son of the living God. Because many reject those teachings, that is all the more reason why sincere believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ should proclaim its truth and show by example the power and peace of a righteous, gentle life.

Consider, for example, this instruction from Christ to His disciples. He said, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44).

Think what this admonition alone would do in your neighborhood and mine, in the communities in which you and your children live, in the nations which make up our great global family. I realize this doctrine poses a significant challenge, but surely it is a more agreeable challenge than the terrible tasks posed for us by the war and poverty and pain the world continues to face.

How are we supposed to act when we are offended, misunderstood, unfairly or unkindly treated, or sinned against? What are we supposed to do if we are hurt by those we love, or are passed over for promotion, or are falsely accused, or have our motives unfairly assailed?

Do we fight back? Do we send in an ever-larger battalion? Do we revert to an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth?

We all have significant opportunity to practice Christianity, and we should try it at every opportunity. For example, we can all be a little more forgiving. In latter-day



If we could, like the Apostle Peter, fix our eyes on Jesus, we too might walk triumphantly over “the swelling waves of disbelief” and remain “unterrified amid the rising winds of doubt.”

revelation the Lord said: “My disciples, in days of old, sought occasion against one another and forgave not one another in their hearts; and for this evil they were afflicted and sorely chastened.

“Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

“I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men” (D&C 64:8–10).

In the majesty of His life and the example of His teachings, Christ gave

us much counsel with secure promises always attached. He taught with a grandeur and authority that filled with hope the educated and the ignorant, the wealthy and the poor, the well and the diseased.

It is my firm belief that if as individual people, as families, communities, and nations, we could, like the Apostle Peter, fix our eyes on Jesus, we too might walk triumphantly over “the swelling waves of disbelief” and remain “unterrified amid the rising winds of doubt” (see Frederic W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ* [1994], 313). But if we turn away our eyes from Him in whom we must believe, as it is so easy to do and the world is so much tempted to do, if we look to the power and fury of those terrible and destructive elements around us rather than to Him who can help and save us, then we shall inevitably sink in a sea of conflict and sorrow and despair.

At such times when we feel the floods are threatening to drown us and the deep is going to swallow up the tossed vessel of our faith, I pray we may always hear amid the storm and the darkness that sweet utterance of the Savior of the world: “Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid” (Matthew 14:27). □

From an October 1992 general conference address.

FOLLOWING THE PROMPTINGS OF THE HOLY GHOST

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

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US TO HAVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST?

John 14:26: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

2 Nephi 32:5: “If ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do.”

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency: “Latter-day Saints, having received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, are entitled to personal inspiration in the small events of life as well as when they are confronted with the giant Goliaths of life” (“Communion with the Holy Spirit,” *Liahona*, March 2002, 4).

HOW DOES THE HOLY GHOST SPEAK TO US?

D&C 8:2–3: “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.

“Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation; behold, this is the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.”

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We can be too busy to pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit. . . . It is a spiritual voice that comes into the mind as a thought put into your heart” (“The Cloven Tongues of Fire,” *Liahona*, July 2000, 10).

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR ABILITY TO FEEL THE PROMPTINGS OF THE SPIRIT?

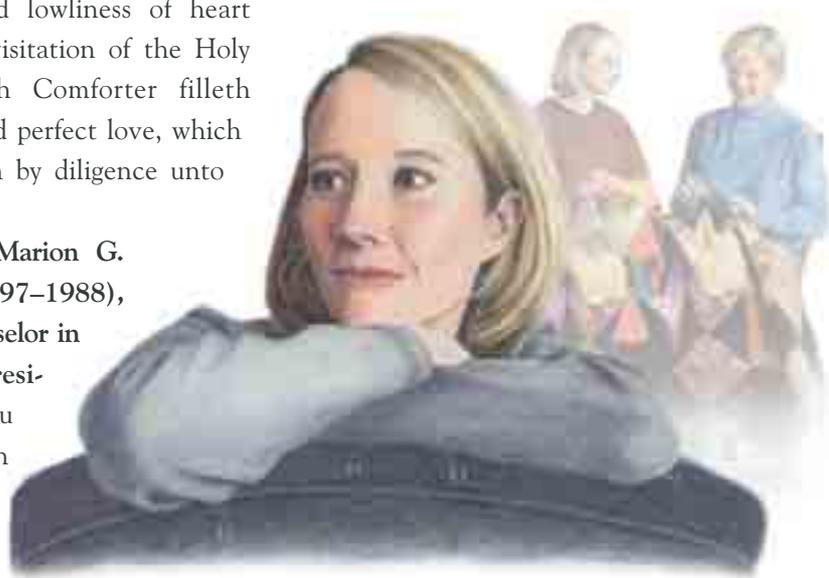
Moroni 8:26: “The remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer.”

President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), Second Counselor in the First Presidency: “If you want to obtain

and keep the guidance of the Spirit, you can do so by following this simple four-point program. One, pray. Pray diligently. . . . Second, study and learn the gospel. Third, live righteously; repent of your sins. . . . Fourth, give service in the Church” (“Guidance of the Holy Spirit,” *Tambuli*, August 1980, 5).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “There is no greater blessing that can come into our lives than . . . the companionship of the Holy Spirit to guide us, protect us, and bless us, to go, as it were, as a pillar before us and a flame to lead us in paths of righteousness and truth. That guiding power of the third member of the Godhead can be ours if we live worthy of it” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 259).

■ *What changes can I make to receive this remarkable gift and enjoy it more fully in my life?* □



Questions & Answers

Is It Morally Wrong to Be Rich in a World Where So Many Are Poor?

Answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

LIAHONA'S ANSWER

Wealth—whether we possess it or not—is a great challenge in mortality. The Apostle Paul wrote that “the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Timothy 6:10).

Someone else once quipped that the *lack* of money is the root of all evil. The first statement is scripture. The second, though made in jest, also contains a kernel of truth.

King Benjamin spoke to “the poor, . . . all you who deny the beggar, because ye have not; I would that ye say in your hearts that: I give not because I have not, but if I had I would give. And now, if ye say this in your hearts ye remain guiltless, otherwise ye are condemned; and your condemnation is just for ye covet that which ye have not received” (Mosiah 4:24–25).

The key is to avoid coveting—the loving of money. We can love money just as much when we don’t have it as when we do. And evil comes into the world not only through those who have wealth and use it selfishly or dishonestly, but also through those who do not have it and yet covet it. Perhaps this is why the Lord has shown us glimpses of the kind of society He wishes us to achieve. In Zion, there are neither rich nor poor (see 4 Nephi 1:3).

Being wealthy is not morally wrong. The danger, as the Book of Mormon repeatedly emphasizes, is

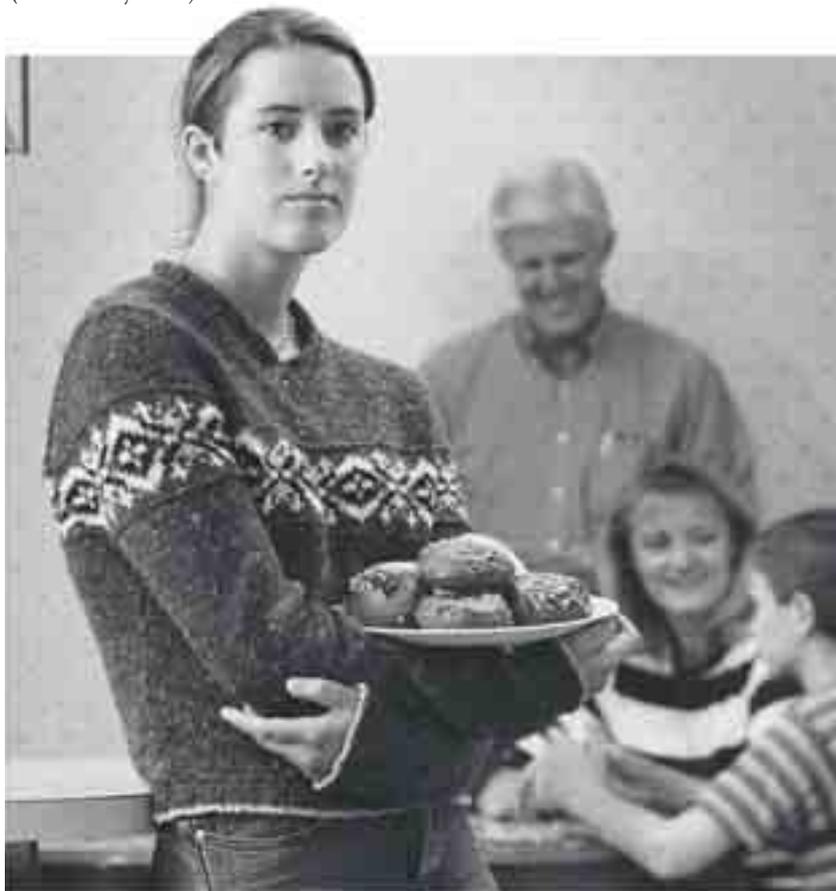


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CRAIG DIMOND

that when people become wealthy they sometimes forget the Lord and His commandments.

President Brigham Young (1801–77) said: “The worst fear that I have about [members of this Church] is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and his people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true. But my greater fear for them is that they cannot stand wealth; and yet they have to be tried with riches” (quoted in Preston Nibley, *Brigham Young: The Man and His Work* [1936], 128).

If we are to “stand wealth,” as President Young said, we must remember why the Lord might bless us with wealth and understand both why and when we should seek it. Jacob explained, “After ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted” (Jacob 2:19).

One of the best ways to help those in need is to pray for the Lord’s guidance. The Spirit can guide us to those in need of our help—as can our bishop or branch president.

If we use wealth to bless those in need, we show the Lord that our hearts are right and He can trust us. If

on the other hand, we hoard wealth or use it for selfish purposes, we are as the wicked servant who hid his talent in the earth, and the Lord will likewise condemn us (see Matthew 25:14–30).

READERS’ ANSWERS

Heavenly Father often chastises those who give their riches first priority, forget God, and think themselves superior to others. But we’re here on earth to progress temporally as well as spiritually. The Lord doesn’t want His people to be idle. He wants us to obtain knowledge and be useful in society. If one person earns more money through his or her effort than another, I don’t think it is wrong. It is bad only if he or she doesn’t have the pure love of Christ and doesn’t share that wealth with the poor.

*Lorena Mendoza,
Anacleto Medina Branch,
Parana Argentina District*

I believe that when the wealthy read the Book of Mormon, they will have a special feeling in their hearts to love the poor. We are to love our neighbors. The poor are our neighbors, and we can share with them.



*Latai Fonohema,
Humble Ward,
Kingwood Texas Stake*

Some people in the Book of Mormon became rich then forgot



Attitudes and Priorities

“Those who set their hearts upon the things of the world usually focus on some combination of that worldly quartet of property, pride, prominence, and power. When attitudes or priorities are fixed on the acquisition, use, or possession of property, we call that condition materialism. . . .

“From the emphasis given to this subject in the scriptures, it appears that materialism has been one of the greatest challenges to the children of God in all ages of time. Greed, the ugly face of materialism in action, has been one of Satan’s most effective weapons in corrupting men and turning their hearts from God. . . .

**“The Apostle [Paul] did not say that there was anything inherently evil about money. . . . It is not money but the love of money that is identified as the root of all evil.”
—Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (*Pure in Heart* [1988], 73–74, 78)**

Heavenly Father. We should seek to be self-reliant, but we should give glory to God for everything. Let us seek spiritual riches as our first priority. That is what will lead to exaltation.



*Roberto Paula de Freitas
Campos,
Copacabana Ward,
Uberlândia Brazil Stake*

The scriptures often warn of the dangers of wealth. Many people have misinterpreted this to mean wealth is bad, in and of itself, and that all rich people will be denied an opportunity to dwell with God. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Job had great riches, but they were also faithful and upright.



*José Ariel Espinola Olmedo,
Fernando de la Mora Ward,
Fernando de la Mora
Paraguay Stake*

We are our brothers' keeper, and we should remember that everything, including our physical body, is not ours but is God's. We should put wealth to good use, whether it is money, expertise, knowledge, service, time, or even just a smile. Share it, because God often blesses others through us. We can be an answer to others' prayers.



*Milika M. Paletu'a,
Pangai Ward,
Ha'apai Tonga Stake*

It is not wrong to be rich as long as you get rich honestly—with hard work. And when you are rich, you should not judge yourself to be better than people who have less power of acquisition.



*Ângela Marciane Assenheimer,
Santa Rosa Branch,
Santo Angelo Brazil District*

It is morally wrong to be rich in a world where so many are poor if you don't help the poor with your riches.

*Ebenezer Kwesi Aboah,
Mpintsin Ward,
Takoradi Ghana Stake*

The Lord said we should seek riches only to do good. We should first seek the kingdom of God, and then we will obtain riches for the purpose of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and comforting the sick and afflicted (see Jacob 2:18–19).



*Elder Eduardo Luiz Mendes,
Brazil Maceió Mission*

If we use wealth to help the poor, we are showing our thanks to Heavenly Father. We will be rich spiritually.



*Elder Carlos Alberto García,
Colorado Denver
North Mission*

It is not wrong to be rich as long as you pay tithing and fast offerings, give generously, and help the poor. Don't judge anyone on his or her outward appearance. Pray for those who are less fortunate than you are, that they may be rich in spirit and might have the greatest of all the gifts of God (see D&C 14:7).



*'Ilaisaane Vaine Satini,
Deanwell Ward,
Hamilton New Zealand
Glenview Stake*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS is a youth feature, and we hope to print a representative selection of youth answers from a variety of countries. Please mail your answer to arrive no later than 1 May 2002. Send it to QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 05/02, Liahona, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3223, USA; or e-mail to CUR-Liahona-IMag@ldschurch.org. Your answer may be typed or clearly written in your own language. For your answer to be considered, it must include your full name, age, home address, and ward and stake (or branch and district). Please include a photograph of yourself; this photograph will not be returned. If your answer is of a sensitive nature, your name may be withheld from publication.

QUESTION: I know the Holy Ghost can guide me, but how can I tell the difference between my own thoughts and feelings and the inspiration of the Spirit? □

Put It On



The enemy is aiming at you. Protect yourself with the armor of God.
(See Ephesians 6:11–18.)

THE EXODUS REPEATED

Scriptures given to both ancient and modern Israel speak of the strength of the Lord's hand in their deliverance.

By Elder Russell M. Nelson

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Many instructive parallels exist between the exodus from Egypt of the Israelites under Moses and the exodus from the United States of the Latter-day Saint pioneers under Brigham Young. We can learn much from these stalwarts of ancient and modern Israel.

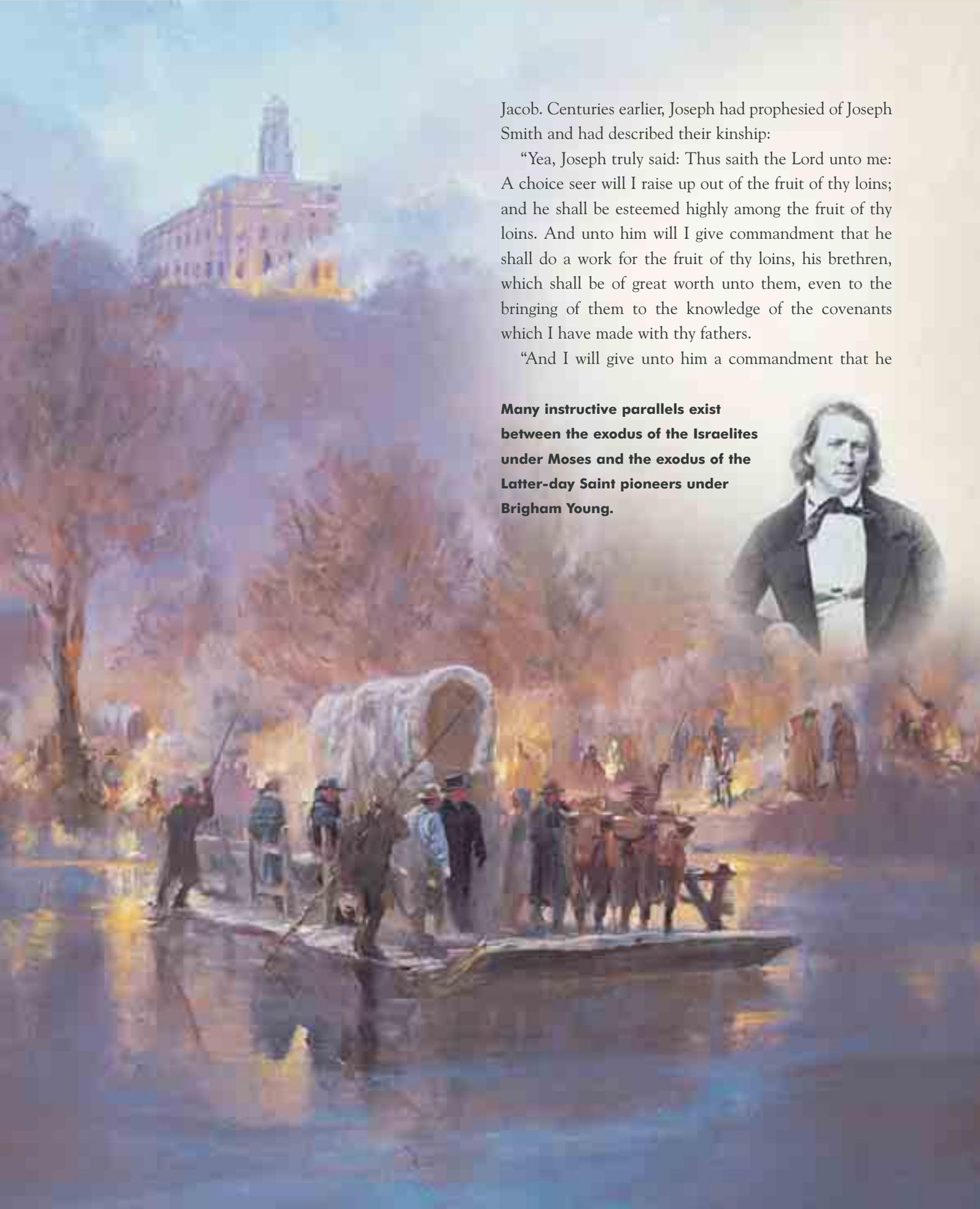
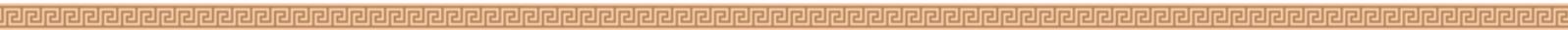
Generally, historical sketches and pageants have portrayed well what the pioneers did. But only a few writers have delved deeply enough to explain why. Even fewer have reported the similarities between the pioneer trek and the exodus from Egypt. An obvious likeness is that both groups had their inland sea of salt water and a Jordan River. But there were many other very significant similarities. Ancient Israel and modern Israel are linked arm in arm.

THE JOSEPHS

Ancient Israel had leaders before Moses, and modern Israel had a prophet-president before Brigham Young (1801–77). The predecessors for each group also bore a resemblance to each other. A name common to both was Joseph—Joseph who was sold into Egypt and the Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–44). Few men in the Old Testament are of greater importance to Latter-day Saints than is Joseph of Egypt. Many of us claim lineage from him through his sons Ephraim or Manasseh. The Book of Mormon reveals:

“A part of the remnant of the coat of Joseph was preserved and had not decayed. . . . Even as this remnant of garment . . . hath been preserved, so shall a remnant of the seed . . . be preserved by the hand of God, and be taken unto himself” (Alma 46:24).

The pioneers were remnants of that precious seed. They knew that Joseph Smith had been chosen by the Lord to take up the labors of the tribe of Joseph, son of

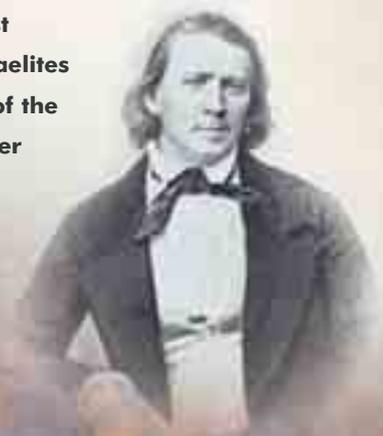


Jacob. Centuries earlier, Joseph had prophesied of Joseph Smith and had described their kinship:

“Yea, Joseph truly said: Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers.

“And I will give unto him a commandment that he

Many instructive parallels exist between the exodus of the Israelites under Moses and the exodus of the Latter-day Saint pioneers under Brigham Young.





shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work” (2 Nephi 3:7–8).

The name of Joseph applied not only to Joseph Smith Jr. but to the Prophet’s father as well. Again I quote from Joseph who was sold into Egypt:

“Behold, that seer [Joseph Smith] will the Lord bless; . . . for this promise, which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, shall be fulfilled. . . .

“And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation” (2 Nephi 3:14–15; see also Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:26–38).

Jacob’s son Joseph and Joseph Smith had even more in common. At age 17 Joseph was informed of his great destiny (see Genesis 37:2–11). At the same age Joseph Smith was informed of his destiny regarding the Book of Mormon. At age 17 he was first visited by the angel Moroni, who informed the boy prophet that “God had a

Anciently, when “all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.”

work for [him] to do.” He was to translate a book written upon golden plates containing the fulness of the everlasting gospel. His “name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues” (Joseph Smith—History 1:33; see also verses 34–41).

Both Josephs endured persecution. Joseph of old was falsely accused of a crime he did not commit and was put into prison (see Genesis 39:11–20). Joseph Smith suffered incarceration on trumped-up charges and false accusations.

Joseph’s coat of many colors was taken from him by his brothers in a cruel attempt to convince their father that Joseph had been killed (see Genesis 37:2–33). Joseph Smith’s life was cruelly taken from him, largely because of betrayals by false brethren.

Anciently, when “all the land of Egypt was famished,

the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do” (Genesis 41:55). In the latter days, people starving for nourishment that only the gospel can provide are again to be fed—by Joseph. The Lord declared that “this generation shall have my word through [Joseph Smith]” (D&C 5:10). Today we may “feast upon the words of Christ” (2 Nephi 32:3) because of Joseph Smith.

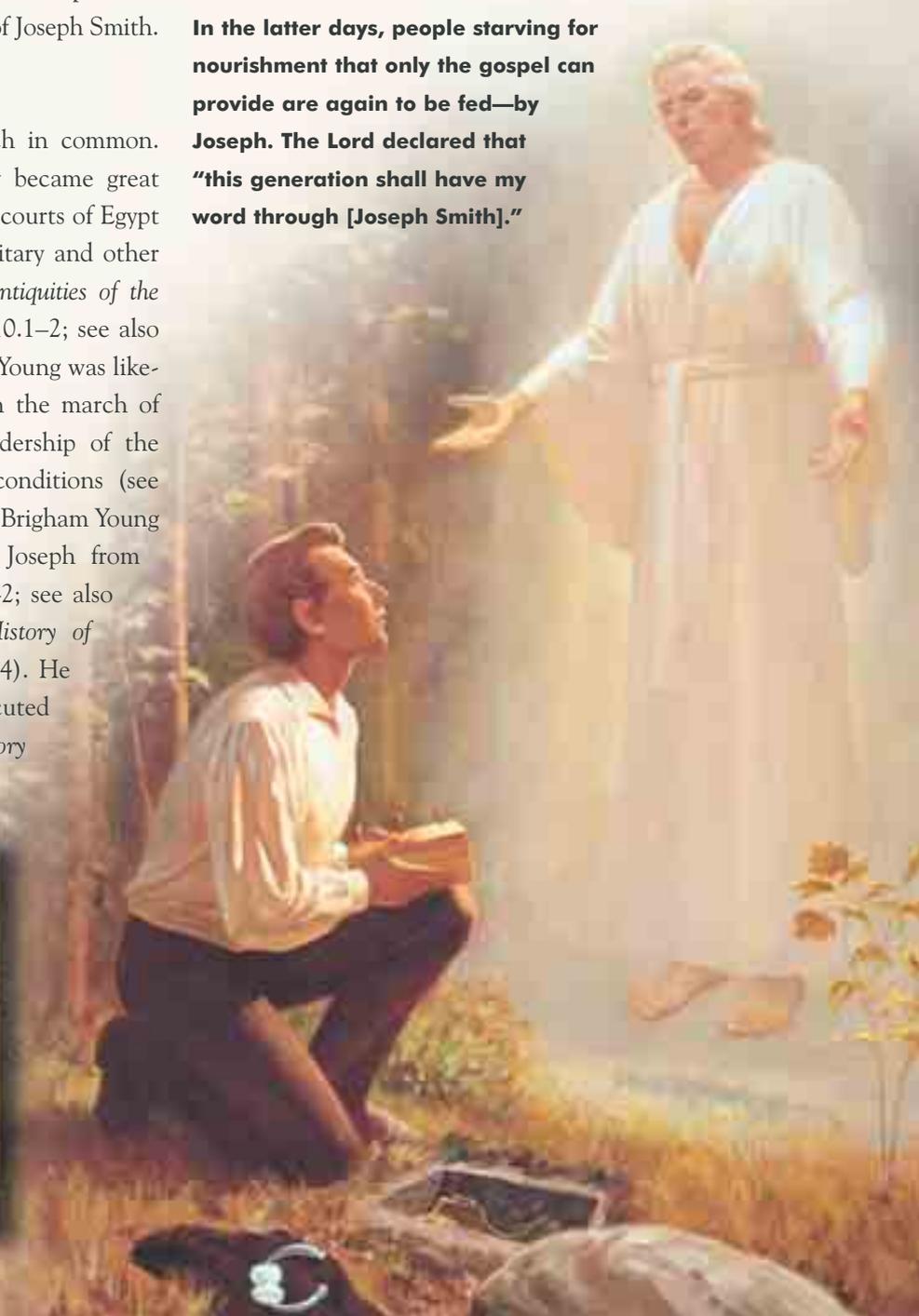
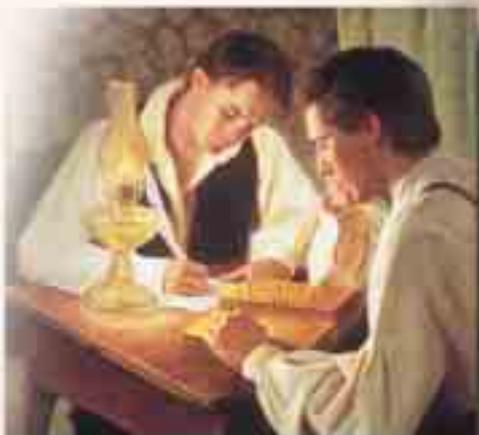
MOSES AND BRIGHAM YOUNG

Moses and Brigham Young had much in common. They were astute followers before they became great leaders. Moses had been prepared in the courts of Egypt and had gained much experience in military and other responsibilities (see Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, translated by William Whiston, 2.10.1–2; see also Acts 7:22; Hebrews 11:24–27). Brigham Young was likewise prepared for his leadership role. In the march of Zion’s Camp he had observed the leadership of the Prophet Joseph Smith under difficult conditions (see *History of the Church*, 2:61–134, 183–85). Brigham Young aided in the removal of the Prophet Joseph from Kirtland (see *History of the Church*, 3:1–2; see also Elden J. Watson, editor, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young, 1801–1844* [1968], 23–24). He also directed the move of the persecuted Saints from Missouri to Nauvoo (see *History of the Church*, 3:250–52, 261; see also

John K. Carmack, “Missouri Era: Residue of Wisdom,” in *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: Missouri*, edited by Arnold K. Garr and Clark V. Johnson [1994], 2–3).

For both the Israelites and the Saints, civil and ecclesiastical law were unified under one head. Moses bore

In the latter days, people starving for nourishment that only the gospel can provide are again to be fed—by Joseph. The Lord declared that “this generation shall have my word through [Joseph Smith].”



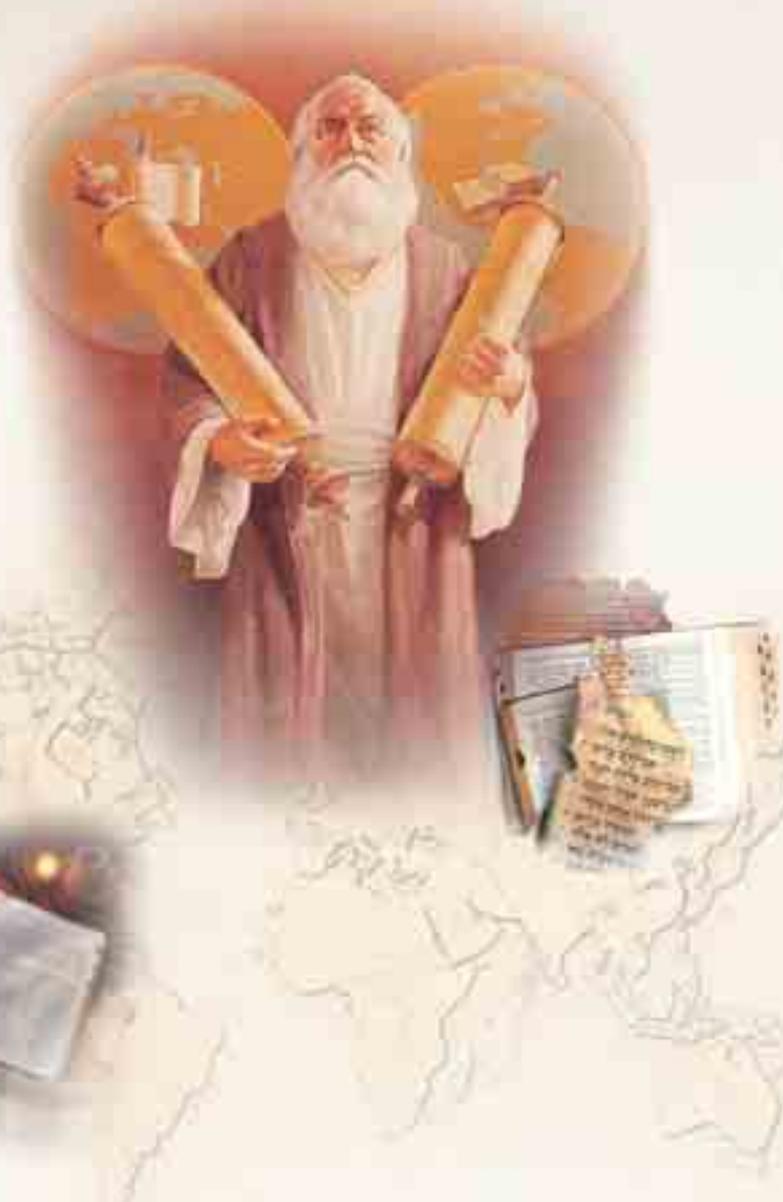
that responsibility for his people (see Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected by Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 252). Brigham Young—the modern Moses (see D&C 103:16)¹—led the Latter-day Saints’ movement west, with the Lord’s blessing (see D&C 136). Moses and Brigham Young followed parallel patterns of governance (see Exodus 18:17–21; D&C 136:1–3). Brigham Young organized the large group of men, women, and children for an orderly migration to the West.

We lament that leaders of both groups had to endure dissension from their close associates. On occasion Moses encountered opposition from his beloved Aaron and Miriam (see Numbers 12:1–11). Latter-day leaders also suffered contention among their trusted associates (see *History of the Church*, 1:104–5, 226). Nevertheless, the same unified pattern of government will come again when the Lord shall be “King over all the earth” (Psalm 47:2; see also Zechariah 14:9) and govern from Zion and Jerusalem (see Isaiah 2:1–4).

The journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai took about three months (see Exodus 19:1). The journey from Winter Quarters to the valley of the Great Salt Lake also took about three months (111 days). The destination for each group was described by the Lord as a land flowing with milk and honey.² The pioneers turned their wilderness into a fruitful field and made the desert blossom as a rose—precisely as prophesied by Isaiah centuries before (see Isaiah 32:15–16; 35:1).

MIRACLES SHARED

Both groups shared many miracles that are memorialized annually. The celebration of Passover relates to the travels of the ancient Israelites. And each July we repeat



Ezekiel prophesied that the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph would become one: “Take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.”

legendary stories of our pioneers. Both groups traversed deserts, mountains, and valleys of untamed wilderness. Ancient Israelites left Egypt via the parted waters of the Red Sea “as by dry land” (Hebrews 11:29). The pioneers left the United States crossing the wide waters of the Mississippi River—frozen to become a highway of ice.

The book of Exodus reports that quail were miraculously provided to feed the hungry people of ancient Israel (see Exodus 16:13; Numbers 11:32; Psalm 105:40). The pioneers had an equivalent experience. After the last of them had been driven out of Nauvoo, many were sick and some had died. Their provisions were meager. On the river bottoms near Montrose, Iowa, on 9 October 1846, many quail miraculously flew into camp. The quail were cooked and fed to some 640 destitute people (see Stanley B. Kimball, "Nauvoo West: The Mormons of the Iowa Shore," *BYU Studies*, winter 1978, 142).³

It was also miraculous that a permanent settlement survived in the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Seagulls that saved the crops were part of that miracle.

God preserved ancient Israel from plagues sent upon Egypt (see Exodus 15:26). Similarly, God preserved the Saints from the plague of the United States Civil War, which caused more American deaths than any other war.

SPIRITUAL STRENGTHS SHARED

Both the Israelites' and the Saints' travail forged great spiritual strength. They both endured trials of their faith, during which the weak were winnowed away and the strong were empowered to endure to the end (see Ether 12:6; D&C 101:4–5; 105:19). They had to leave their homes and earthly possessions and learn to rely wholly upon God. Protection was provided for ancient Israel by the Lord, who "went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire" (Exodus 13:21; see also verse 22; Numbers 14:14; Deuteronomy 1:33; Nehemiah 9:19). The same has been said of the divine watch-care afforded to the pioneers (see *History of the Church*, 3:xxxiv; see also Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, April 1967, 56).

Scriptures given to both societies speak of the strength of the Lord's hand in their deliverance. To those of ancient Israel, Moses said, "Remember this day, in

which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place" (Exodus 13:3).

To the Latter-day Saints, a comparable scripture was revealed: "For I, the Lord, have put forth my hand to exert the powers of heaven; ye cannot see it now, yet a little while and ye shall see it, and know that I am" (D&C 84:119).

The children of Israel had a portable tabernacle wherein covenants were made and ordinances were performed to strengthen them on their journey.⁴ Many Latter-day Saints were endowed in the Nauvoo Temple before their arduous trek westward.

The Israelites gratefully celebrated their exodus from Egypt. The Latter-day Saints commemorated their exodus with the establishment of the world headquarters of the restored Church in the tops of the mountains. All celebrants acclaimed their deliverance by God (see Jeremiah 23:7–8).

TIMELESS GOSPEL PRINCIPLES

Scriptures available to ancient and modern Israel include timeless principles of the gospel. You may be familiar with the prophecy of Isaiah: "Thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust" (Isaiah 29:4).

Could any words have been more descriptive of the Book of Mormon, coming as it did "out of the ground" to "whisper out of the dust" to people of our day?

Other Old Testament passages foretold the Book of Mormon. One such came to mind when I attended a prayer breakfast in January 1997 at the White House in Washington, D.C. During an informal reception that preceded the breakfast, I was chatting with a distinguished and scholarly Jewish rabbi from New York. Our conversation was interrupted by another rabbi, who

asked his colleague from New York if he could recall the scriptural reference to the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph that would come together one day. My friend paused for a moment, stroked his chin pensively, and then replied, “I think you will find that in the book of Ezekiel.”

With that, I could not restrain myself. “You might look in chapter 37 of Ezekiel,” I interjected. “There you will find the scriptures that you seek.”

My rabbi friend expressed surprise: “How did you know that?”

“This doctrine,” I concluded, “is very important in our theology.” Indeed it is. I would like to quote from it:

“Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:

“And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand” (Ezekiel 37:16–17).

Saints of modern Israel throughout the world are blessed to hold the Bible and the Book of Mormon as one in their hands. The worth of this privilege must never be underestimated. Isaiah described the spirit of the Book of Mormon as “familiar” (see Isaiah 29:4). It resonates with people who know the Old Testament, especially those who are conversant with its Hebrew language. The Book of Mormon is rich with Hebraisms—traditions, symbolisms, idioms, and literary forms. It is familiar because more than 80 percent of its pages came from the same time frame as parts of the Old Testament.

Whenever the Lord has had a people on the earth who will obey His word, they have been commanded to build temples in which the ordinances of the gospel and other spiritual manifestations that pertain to exaltation and eternal life may be administered.

Timeless truths and principles of the gospel were and are important to people of ancient and modern Israel. The Sabbath day, for example, was honored for different reasons through the generations. From the time of Adam to Moses, the Sabbath was observed as a day of rest from the labor of creation (see Exodus 20:8–11; 31:16–17). From the time of Moses to the Resurrection of the Lord, the Sabbath also commemorated the liberation of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt (see Deuteronomy 5:12–15; Isaiah 58:13; Ezekiel 20:20; 44:24; Mosiah 13:19). In latter days, Saints keep the Sabbath day holy in memory of the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10; D&C 59:9–19).

The restoration of the priesthood rejuvenated the principle of tithing, linking to the Old Testament teachings of Genesis and Malachi (see Genesis 14:20; Malachi



SALT LAKE AND OTHER TEMPLES, BY LARRY WINBORG

3:8–12). Saints of modern Israel know how to calculate their own tithing from this simple instruction: “Those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord” (D&C 119:4).

Turning our attention again to the timeless truths of the gospel, none are more vital than those associated with temple worship. They are another connection between ancient and modern Israel.

Whenever the Lord has had a people on the earth who will obey His word, they have been commanded to build temples in which the ordinances of the gospel and other spiritual manifestations that pertain to exaltation and eternal life may be administered (see Bible Dictionary, “Temple,” 780).

The best-known temple of ancient Israel was Solomon’s temple. Its baptismal font and dedicatory prayer provided patterns that are employed for temples today (see 2 Chronicles 4:15; 6:12–42; D&C 109). Old Testament scriptures refer to special clothing (see Exodus 28:4; 29:5; Leviticus 8:7; 1 Samuel 18:4) and ordinances (see Exodus 19:10, 14; 2 Samuel 12:20; Ezekiel 16:9) associated with temples (see D&C 124:37–40). How thankful we are that the Lord chose to restore the highest blessings of the priesthood to His faithful sons and daughters. He said, “For I deign to reveal unto my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world, things that pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times” (D&C 124:41).

Revealed truth that we know as the Word of Wisdom came to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1833. Every Latter-day Saint is familiar with it as one of the enduring hallmarks of our faith. The final verse of that revelation forges another link back to ancient Israel: “And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them” (D&C 89:21). This reference to the Passover

shows that the Lord wanted obedient Saints of modern Israel to receive physical and spiritual protection just as He had provided for His faithful followers centuries before.

THE COVENANT, THE SCATTERING, AND THE GATHERING

Other divine teachings revered by both societies include doctrines of the Abrahamic covenant and of the scattering and gathering of Israel. About 4,000 years ago, Abraham received a promise from the Lord that blessings would be offered to all of his mortal posterity (see D&C 132:29–50; Abraham 2:6–11). Included were promises that the Son of God would come through his lineage, that certain lands would be inherited by his posterity, that nations and kindreds of the earth would be blessed through his seed, and more. Affirmations and reaffirmations of this covenant are evident in many scriptures of the Old Testament (see Genesis 26:1–4, 24, 28; 35:9–13; 48:3–4).

Although certain aspects of that covenant have already been fulfilled, many have not. The Book of Mormon teaches that we of modern Israel are among the covenant people of the Lord (see 1 Nephi 14:14; 15:14; 2 Nephi 30:2; Mosiah 24:13; 3 Nephi 29:3; Mormon 8:15). And, most remarkably, it teaches that the Abrahamic covenant will be fulfilled only in the latter days! (see 1 Nephi 15:12–18). The Lord once again bestowed the Abrahamic covenant, this time upon the Prophet Joseph Smith, to be a blessing upon him and his posterity after him (see D&C 124:58).

Did you know that Abraham is mentioned in more verses of modern revelation than in all verses of the Old Testament?⁵ Abraham—this great patriarch of the Old Testament—is inextricably linked to all who join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.⁶

Doctrines relating to the scattering and gathering of the house of Israel were also among the earliest lessons taught in the Book of Mormon. I quote from 1 Nephi:

“After the house of Israel should be scattered they should be gathered together again; . . . the natural branches of the olive-tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer” (10:14).

Saints of modern Israel know that Peter, James, and John were sent by the Lord with “the keys of [His] kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel for the last times; and for the fulness of times,” in which He would “gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth” (D&C 27:13; compare Ephesians 1:10).

The travels and travails of our pioneers were of eternal consequence. Their mission was not limited to an international immigration or a transcontinental migration with wagons and handcarts. They were to lay the foundation of an endless work that would “fill the world” (Joseph Smith, quoted in Wilford Woodruff, *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, selected by G. Homer Durham [1946], 39). They were essential to Jeremiah’s prophecy: “Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jeremiah 31:10).⁷

They got the message. Missionaries were sent very early to “the isles afar off” to commence the work of the Lord. As a result, the Church was established in the British Isles and in the islands of French Polynesia years before the pioneers entered the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

The lineage of Joseph, through Ephraim and Manasseh, is the seed appointed to lead in the gathering of Israel. The pioneers knew—through their patriarchal blessings and the Old Testament, amplified by scriptures and revelations of the Restoration—that the long-awaited gathering of Israel was to commence with them. This “ball” was in their court!

SUMMARY

Early converts to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were pioneers of modern Israel. Regardless of the time or place in which Saints may live, all faithful members of the Church will receive their just reward. “All things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs and they are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s” (D&C 76:59).

Ancient and modern Israel subscribe to an ageless message of the Old Testament: “Know therefore that the Lord thy God . . . keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations” (Deuteronomy 7:9).⁸

Upon our shoulders lies the responsibility to keep the faith through our own generation. This “ball” is now in our court! We of modern Israel are destined to be “a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exodus 19:6). We know that we are children of the covenant (see Acts 3:25; 3 Nephi 20:25–26). We are remnants of the seed now to be gathered and gleaned into God’s eternal garner (see Alma 26:5).

As Saints of modern Israel, we speak with one voice. We love our Heavenly Father. We love the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. We are His people. We have taken His holy name upon us. We know the Book of Mormon to be the word of God and hold it as one with the Holy Bible. We proclaim Joseph Smith as the great prophet of the Restoration. And we sustain President Gordon B. Hinckley as God’s gifted prophet of today. □

From a Church Educational System fireside address given at Brigham Young University on 7 September 1997.

NOTES

1. Concerning Brigham Young’s role in that exodus, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) wrote: “Since Adam there have been many exoduses and promised lands: Abraham, Jared, Moses, Lehi, and others led groups. How easy it is to accept those distant in time as directed by the Lord, yet the ones near at hand as human calculations and decisions. Let us consider for a moment the great trek of the Mormon refugees from Illinois to



Doctrines relating to the scattering and gathering of the house of Israel were among the earliest lessons taught in the Book of Mormon. The pioneers knew that the long-awaited gathering of Israel was to commence with them.

Salt Lake Valley. Few, if any, great movements equal it. We frequently hear that Brigham Young led the people to make new tracks in a desert and to climb over mountains seldom scaled and to ford and wade unbridged rivers and to traverse a hostile Indian country; and while Brigham Young was the instrument of the Lord, it was not he but the Lord of heaven who led modern Israel across the plains to their promised land” (*Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 28).

2. For the ancient Israelites, see Exodus 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Leviticus 20:24; Numbers 13:27; 14:8; Deuteronomy 6:3; 11:9; 26:9, 15; 27:3; 31:20; Joshua 5:6; Jeremiah 11:5; 32:22; Ezekiel 20:6, 15; Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 33:1. For the pioneers, see D&C 38:18–19.

3. An oil painting depicting this event is *Catching Quails*, by C. C. A. Christensen, located in the Museum of Art at Brigham Young University.

4. Ordinances and covenants of ancient Israel are cited in 1 Corinthians 10:1–3; for those of modern Israel, see D&C 84:26–27. The tabernacle of ancient Israel had been intended to be a movable temple before the people lost the higher law (see D&C 84:25; 124:38).

5. Abraham is mentioned in 506 verses of scripture, 289 of which are in modern revelation.

6. The covenant may also be received by adoption (see Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8; Galatians 3:27–29; 4:5–7).

7. The word *gather* comes from the Hebrew verb *qabats*, which means “to gather, assemble.”

8. See also Deuteronomy 11:1, 27; 19:9; 30:16; Joshua 22:5; 1 John 5:2–3; Mosiah 2:4. Other Old Testament scriptures refer to rewards for those obedient to God’s commandments through “a thousand generations” (see 1 Chronicles 16:15; Psalm 105:8).

TONGA

A LAND OF BELIEVING PEOPLE

By LaRene Porter Gaunt

The gospel of Jesus Christ has grown strong in Tonga, where devotion to God, love for family, and faith are already part of the culture.

It is late Saturday afternoon on the island of Vava'u. Samisoni and Meleane Uasila'a, who have raised 20 children in addition to their own 12, are preparing for the Sabbath. The setting sun shines through the freshly washed white shirts hanging on the clothesline and reflects off the lush green foliage surrounding the house. A child sweeps the steps as others clean up the yard. Inside, Sister Uasila'a and her daughters prepare Sunday dinner. Each wraps a taro leaf around meat mixed with coconut milk, then wraps it in a banana leaf to be cooked slowly overnight in an outdoor oven made of heated rocks covered by banana leaves. Brother



Uasila'a, a stake patriarch and principal of Saineha High School, and some of his sons work in their taro field. They toss weeds and debris into a smoldering fire. Yellow light from the setting sun streams through the gently rising smoke, silhouetting one of the boys tending the fire.

Similar scenes of preparation are repeated in tens of thousands of Tongan homes each week, for in Tonga

Right: A young Latter-day Saint is one of many who make up this land of believing people. Inset: Salesi and Saane Fifita of the Te'ekiu Ward, Nuku'alofa Tonga West Stake, with some of their family members.

G A





keeping the Sabbath day holy is required by law. Christianity began to take root here with the August 1831 baptism by Wesleyan missionaries of Taufa'ahau, who became King George Tupou I. Tradition says that he committed the islands of Tonga to God by scooping up a handful of soil and lifting it heavenward in prayer. Today Tongans reverence the Sabbath—willingly. Nearly all stores and businesses are closed. No taxis or buses run. Everything is quiet.

Elder Pita Hopoate, an Area Authority Seventy, says: "King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV emphasizes keeping the Sabbath holy, so Tongans go to church on Sunday. Then they come home and eat their best meal of the week."

Parallels between Tongan culture and the gospel do not end with Sabbath observance. "Family comes first to us," says Elder Hopoate. "Mother, father, children, grandparents, uncles, aunties, cousins, nieces, and nephews are all called *family*, not *relatives*. The Church emphasizes family, and this is one reason the Church is growing."

And The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is growing here. Of the 106,000 people in Tonga, more than 46,000 are Latter-day Saints—just over 40 percent—the highest percentage of Latter-day Saints in any country in the world.

This statistic comes as no surprise to many. "When Tongans become Latter-day Saints, the gospel just refines their already good values," says Helen Latu, a teacher at Liahona High School. "It's like a double dose of the gospel."

Mele Taumoepeau, the principal of Liahona High School, agrees. "We live our lives mostly on faith," she says. "Our society is built on a belief in God."

'ALOFANGA AND 'ANA MOLI

'Alofanga ('Alo) Moli's life has been refined as a result of the gospel. As a young boy on Vava'u, he was unable to attend school regularly because of severe headaches and nosebleeds. Though not a member of the Church, he fell in love with 'Ana, who was. 'Alo was baptized in December 1957 and a short time later was called to serve as a labor missionary, helping to construct meeting-houses. But health problems still plagued him. One day as he lay stricken, he was given a priesthood blessing and promised that if he served the Lord, these ailments would never return. This blessing has been fulfilled.

'Alo's knowledge and understanding increased as he magnified his Church callings. In 1960 he and 'Ana married, and in 1962 they served



a two-year mission together. Brother Moli was called as branch president in each place they served.

After their mission the Molis and their two baby daughters moved to the island of 'Eua to farm with 'Ana's brother. 'Alo served as counselor to the district president. "Our mission prepared us for the callings we received," he says. "Later I served as branch president for 11 years. The rest of our 14 children were born here."

This gospel training carried over into his personal life. "After Hurricane Isaac hit in 1982, our crops were ruined and I needed work," says Brother Moli. "An unexpected opportunity came for me to manage a general store for three years. My experience as branch president helped me know what to do. No one believed I could do it because I had not gone to school, but the Holy Ghost had taught me."

Now 'Alo serves as a temple sealer, 'Ana as a temple worker. "Though I have only been a farmer on a tiny Pacific island," says 'Alo, "I stand as a witness of the truthfulness of the gospel and the reality of Jesus Christ."

A TRADITION OF SERVICE

The first Latter-day Saint missionaries arrived in Nuku'alofa, the capital city, in 1891 and started the Tongan District of the Samoan Mission. The first Tongan Mission was created in 1916, but in 1922 a law prohibited all but a few North Americans from getting visas. To meet this challenge, the mission president called Tongans to serve as missionaries in their own country. After two decades Tonga had built up a large core of faithful Melchizedek Priesthood leaders. So in

Left: Samisoni and Meleane Uasila'a.

Above right: The harbor at Vava'u.



1940, when foreigners left Tonga because of World War II, strong local leadership was already in place. And an important missionary tool came on 7 June 1946, when the Book of Mormon was published in Tongan. In 1954 Tongan Saints began receiving a Church magazine in their own language.

Today serving a mission is an established tradition among young Tongans. Kelikupa Kivalu served as president of the Tonga Nuku'alofa Mission, which is one of the most successful local missionary programs in the Church. President Kivalu explains: "The mission here averages 160 missionaries at any given time, and it's rare when they are not all Tongans. They often know each other and the people they teach. They know the culture and the language. Members know them, feed them, and house them."

In September 1968 the first stake in Tonga was created. Church membership was just over 10,000, and the mission had 10 districts and 50 branches.

Among early local leaders was Tonga Paletu'a. Laughter still comes easily to this 78-year-old man, who was the first Tongan to serve in each of the following callings: mission president, regional representative, temple president, and patriarch. He and his wife, Lu'isa Hehea Kona'i, like many Tongan couples, have provided strong leadership. Scrapbooks and hundreds of pictures of decades of service fill one end of their living room. The other end is unadorned and serene. Here Brother Paletu'a gives patriarchal blessings, continuing his life of devoted service.



SIONE TU'ALUA LATU

Ninety-nine percent of the students at the Church's Liahona High School are members of the Church. Sione Tu'atau Latu, who attended in the 1950s, was not. Like many students not of our faith who attend, Sione gained a testimony and was baptized. He remembers: "I came from a poor family with nine children. We lived on a small island. My father died before I was born, and I wanted to do something to help. I decided to try and go to the Church College [now Brigham Young University—Hawaii], but I knew I would have to pass a difficult government exam. I was afraid. I had been taught that if you fast and pray, the Lord will give you the answer. So I began to look for a place to pray in private. On my way home from school, I passed a taro field with its tall, broad-leafed plants. I thought, *If Joseph Smith can pray in a grove of trees and get an answer to his prayers, then I can pray here and get an answer to my prayers.* I began to fast and returned to the taro patch. I made sure nobody was around, and then I knelt beneath the broad taro leaves. I prayed for what seemed like a long time. I felt so close to my Heavenly Father. When I got up, my shirt was wet with tears."

Sione Latu passed the test and got a scholarship. "I knew these things came to me in answer to my prayer under the taro plant," he remembers. "I knelt and thanked the Lord and promised Him I would come back and help my family and my country."

Brother Latu did come back and has served his people as a longtime Church leader and a gifted businessman. He is well suited for his calling as director of public affairs for the Church, where he sees the growing positive effect Latter-day Saints are having on the nation of Tonga.

For example, one community leader, who was a member of a television panel on Tongan youth, said

he admired Church missionaries because at a critical time in their lives, these young people turned their time to studying the scriptures and learning the ways of Jesus Christ.

PUTTING FAMILY FIRST

"Here children have respect for their parents," says Lani Hopoate. "It's our culture, our tradition. You always try to behave yourself. Family pressure is real, but it's a good pressure. You live in a village; everybody knows you. People watch over each other. You even have a chaperon when you date."

Suliasi Ve'a Kaufusi, head of temporal affairs for the Church in Tonga, agrees. "Tongans tend to think of their family before they think of themselves. When my father died while I was at the Church College, I came home to help my mother provide for my 12 brothers and sisters. That is typical here. Sometimes adult children leave Tonga to get better jobs and then send part of their salary back to their family. In fact, that is an important source of income for many families. But even when Tongans leave, they still feel a strong connection to Tonga because of their sense of family and community. My own brothers and sisters now live in Tonga, New Zealand, and the United States, but we are all close."

Of course, there are times when a family suffers because of divorce. Being part of a large extended family and a loving ward helps families heal. Gospel teachings help them remain faithful. Says one sister, whose husband left her and their seven children six years ago: "Though my husband was not a Latter-day Saint, the children and I always had family home evening, family prayers, and scripture study, including memorizing scriptures. After he left, I found work in a bakery, and my older children found jobs too. Family and ward members helped us also." In this family, three sons and a daughter have served missions and married in the temple. The

younger children are still living at home. “The priesthood of my sons and our testimonies of the gospel have sustained our family,” says this sister.

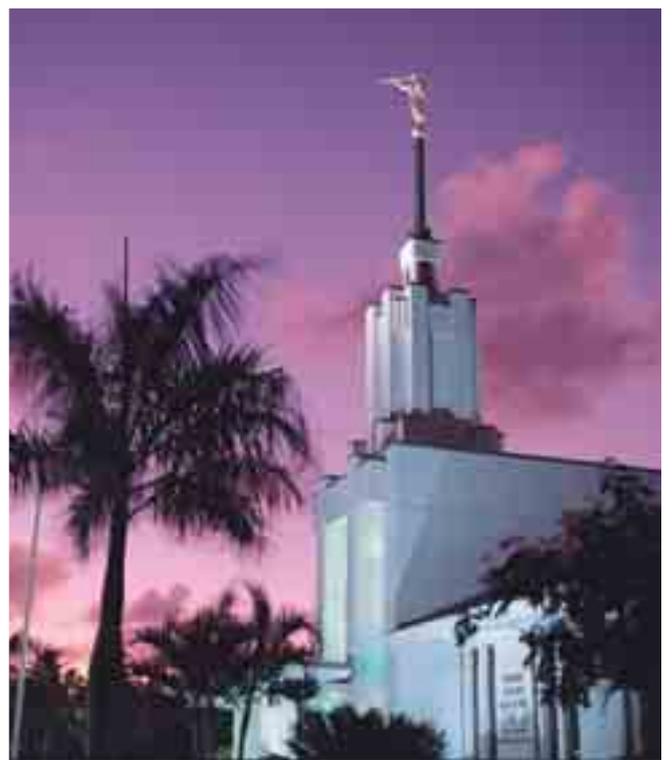
NUKU’ALOFA TONGA TEMPLE

The gleaming white Nuku’alofa Tonga Temple is a landmark. Dedicated by President Gordon B. Hinckley on 9 August 1983, the temple is open six days a week and stays open all night on the last Friday of every month—busy with members performing temple ordinances for their ancestors.

Because family has always been important here, Tongans have great interest in their ancestry. Many graves are decorated not only with flowers but also with a hand-made quilt held in place by a wooden frame. The quilt remains in place until it naturally deteriorates. These quilts are a reflection of the love and respect Tongans have for their deceased ancestors.

In the past, Tongans recorded information about their ancestors on long rolls of tapa cloth (rough paper made from pounded bark). Many families know their family history back hundreds of years. In modern times, many

Below: Sione Tu’alau and Helen Kaleoaloha Kaneakua Latu with several of their children and grandchildren. Above: Nuku’alofa Tonga Temple.



Church members have transferred this information onto paper or typed it into a computer in preparation for performing temple ordinances.

Everyone benefits from the temple. “Having a temple here brings a special feeling to all of Tonga,” says temple president Sione Fineanganofa.

BLESSINGS OF BELIEVING

Testimonies abound in Tonga of the power of the priesthood as a means of bringing comfort or healing to those in distress. When 44-year-old Sione Siaki of Tongatapu fell ill with fever and pain, many feared he would die. The hospital in Tonga was full, but a nurse brought medication to his home. Day after day he suffered, for more than a month. “I was waiting to die,” says Brother Siaki. “Then our Relief Society president suggested a ward fast. She talked with our bishop, and twice our ward of 300 members fasted for me. Before the fasts, I couldn’t move. Two weeks after the second fast, I sat up and gradually got better. Now I am a temple worker. When I am in the temple, it comes straight into my mind that maybe this is why I was saved.”

Mele, daughter of ‘Ahongalu and ‘Ana Fulivai of Vava’u, was also healed. Nine years ago, Mele collapsed





with an unknown illness. From March to December she lay in the hospital with fever, seizures, and hallucinations. Her mother stayed with her during the day. At night her father, who had worked all day, came to the hospital and sat by her bed. Mele would relax as she held her father's hand all night, drawing comfort from the knowledge that he held the priesthood.

Mele has recovered gradually, with only occasional problems. "We have learned to trust in the Lord," says 'Ana. "He has blessed us in ways we did not expect."

Says Mele Taumoepeau: "I appreciate how peaceful it is here, how safe. What we don't have in monetary terms is more than made up for in the love we share and the faith that prevails. We may not have all the worldly things, but we are surely blessed with things of the Spirit."

ESTABLISHING THE COVENANT

It is Monday evening in Vava'u. It is dark, but a warm light glows from the windows of many homes. Through the night air come the strains of "I Am a Child of God" from one of several family home evenings being held. From the home of Tukia and Linda Havea the giggling of children is mixed with the words and music of Primary songs.

"Music is the language wherein we unite our children and teach them the principles of the gospel," says Linda. "They sing and at times do not know the meaning, but it stays with them, and eventually they will understand."

Across town, the Uasila'a family is also holding family home evening. As usual, several friends of their children have joined them as they sing hymns and then discuss which friends and neighbors to invite to hear the missionary discussions.

In home after home, there are believing people— Latter-day Saints as well as those of other faiths. All enjoy the promise found in Leviticus: "Ye shall keep my sabbaths. . . . Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. . . . And ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land. . . . For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you" (Leviticus 26:2, 4–6, 9).

In Tonga, these promised blessings are poured out abundantly upon the land and upon believing people. □

Latter-day Saint missionaries are a common sight in Tonga.



Did You Know?

IT HAPPENED IN APRIL

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

6 April 1830: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized (see D&C 20).

3 April 1836: The Savior, Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple (see D&C 110).

30 April 1844: Addison Pratt arrived at the Tubuai Islands. Elder Pratt was the first Latter-day Saint missionary in the South Pacific.

6–24 April 1893: The Salt Lake Temple was dedicated by President Wilford Woodruff in 31 sessions.

1–2 April 2000: General conference was held in the new Conference Center in Salt Lake City, Utah.

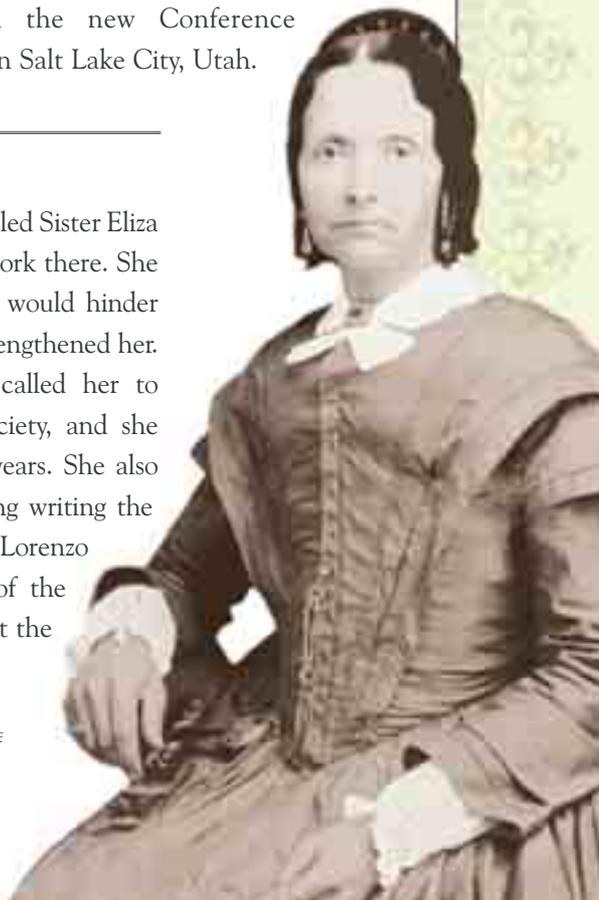
ZION'S POETESS

Eliza R. Snow, second Relief Society general president, was born on 21 January 1804. Even before her conversion at the age of 31, she was a poet of great promise. But when she joined the Church her poetic themes shifted from patriotism to uplifting the Saints and praising God. Her talent led the Prophet Joseph to give Eliza the title “Zion’s Poetess.” Despite her many trials as the Saints were driven from place to place, she inspired others with her poems, many of which were set to music. One of her well-known hymn texts is “O My Father” (*Hymns*, number 292).

When the Endowment House was dedicated in Salt Lake City in May 1855,

President Brigham Young called Sister Eliza to preside over the sisters’ work there. She was concerned poor health would hinder her service, but the Lord strengthened her. In 1866 President Young called her to preside over the Relief Society, and she served as president for 21 years. She also continued to write, including writing the biography of her brother, Lorenzo Snow, the fifth President of the Church. She died in Utah at the age of 83.

FROM TOP: ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH IN THE WHITMER CABIN, BY PAUL MANN; ELIJAH RESTORING THE KEYS OF THE PRIESTHOOD, BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; PHOTOGRAPHS OF ADDISON PRATT, THE SALT LAKE TEMPLE, THE CONFERENCE CENTER, AND ELIZA R. SNOW; CHRIST CALLING PETER AND ANDREW, BY HARRY ANDERSON



LEADERSHIP TIP

Jesus exemplified His trust in His disciples by calling them to participate in His work. If you are in a position of responsibility, you can involve others by delegating portions of the work:

- Know and understand the assignment.

- Ask a person to accept the assignment.
- Be specific.
- Set a date for completion.
- Ask the person to return to you and report.
- Give generous praise for successfully completed assignments. □

Using the April 2002 *Liahona*

LESSON IDEAS

■ “Inspirational Thoughts,” page 2: President Gordon B. Hinckley says that our character will be the same in the next life as it is here. What role do our desires play in shaping our words and actions? How can we develop righteous desires?

■ “Testifying of the Great and Glorious Atonement,” page 6: What does Elder Neal A. Maxwell say we can do to be grateful to God when life doesn’t unfold the way we want it to?

■ “Do You Know How to Repent?” page 14: How would you answer the question Elder Jay E. Jensen’s bishop asked him in a temple recommend interview?

■ “Jesus the Christ,” page F2: Ask class or family members what they know about the Savior. Compare their ideas with Elder Robert D. Hales’s list of 14 ideas describing what Jesus Christ has done for us.

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TITHING BLESSINGS

If you have had a faith-building experience from living the law of tithing, we would like to hear from you. Please send your story to Tithing Blessings, *Liahona*, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3223, USA; or e-mail to CUR-Liahona-IMag@ldschurch.org. Please include your complete name, address, telephone number, and ward and stake (or branch and district).



The Friend

FOR CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS ■ APRIL 2002



JESUS THE CHRIST



By Elder Robert D. Hales

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Jesus Christ is a God; He is Jehovah of the Old Testament; He is the Savior of the New Testament.

Jesus Christ dwelt in the heavens with His Father, and we dwelt with Them as spirit children of God the Father.

Jesus Christ presented His Father's eternal plan, that plan of which we are all part. We come to this earth to undergo testing for a probationary period and to have opposition in all things. Through the eternal principle of agency, we are free to choose liberty and eternal life and return with honor to God's presence if we live righteous lives or to choose captivity and spiritual death.

Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things on earth, under the direction of His Father.

Jesus Christ came to this earth, born of Mary, a mortal mother. His Father was Almighty God.

Jesus Christ was baptized by immersion by John the Baptist, and the Holy Ghost was manifest in "the Spirit like a dove descending upon him" (Mark 1:10). And His Father spoke: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11).

Jesus Christ organized His Church and selected twelve apostles, also prophets, seventies, and evangelists (patriarchs).

Jesus Christ's message is unique. He stands between

us and His Father; He is the Mediator. Through Him shall all mankind be saved, and by Him shall all mankind be saved.

Jesus Christ is the Redeemer, our Savior; only He with a mortal mother and an immortal Father could fulfill the Atonement and die to save all mankind. He did so of His own free will and choice.

Jesus Christ was resurrected and appeared to many after His Resurrection. He taught us the physical characteristics of a resurrected being and told us that we could follow His example and that we would be able to progress and be like Him.

Jesus Christ's Ascension into heaven before the eyes of His disciples was accompanied by the promise that in like manner He would come again.

Jesus Christ appeared with His Father and restored, through Joseph Smith the Prophet in these latter days, the same organization He had established during His ministry on earth. In addition to the Bible, the Book of Mormon was revealed to the world as another witness to testify of His divine calling and ministry.

Jesus Christ leads and guides His Church today through revelation to a prophet, his counselors in the First Presidency, and the Twelve Apostles—the same organization He established when He was here on earth.

Jesus Christ's admonition to "come . . . follow me" is the challenge that He gave to each of us (see Matthew 19:21). He is the Son, Jesus Christ. □

From an April 1994 general conference address.



Mystery Activity

By **Stacey A. Rasmussen**

Based on an actual event

What were you assigned to bring?" Melissa asked Clara as they walked to Sister Wilson's house for their achievement day activity.

"Flour," Clara answered. "What are you bringing?"

"Some yeast," said Melissa.

"I wonder what we're doing today," Clara continued. "Hannah is bringing flour too. Sister Wilson has kept it such a secret."

"I know," Melissa agreed. "All she would say was it's going to affect many Church members this Sunday."

The girls were still talking about the mystery when they reached Sister Wilson's house. Tina, Jenny, and Susan were already there. Just as Clara and Melissa sat down, Hannah arrived. Now all the girls were

present, and they hoped the mystery project would soon be revealed.

Sister Wilson offered the opening prayer, asking that they might understand the importance of the great sacrifice Jesus Christ made for them. She also prayed that the food they would prepare might be blessed for the sake of all who would eat it.

After the prayer, they went to the kitchen with their assigned ingredients.

"Let's see," Sister Wilson began, "who was assigned to bring the yeast?"

"I was," Melissa said.

"Good," said Sister Wilson. "We're going to put the yeast into a small bowl with some warm water and let it dissolve. We will put



the other dry ingredients into a larger bowl. Who has the flour, sugar, and salt?"

"I do," Clara, Hannah, and Jenny answered together.

As the girls worked, they talked and laughed. Amid the chatter, Clara asked, "What are we making, and how will it affect the Church members?"

"Can anyone guess?" Sister Wilson asked.

"Are we making cookies?" Susan asked.

Sister Wilson smiled. "We are making the bread that will be used next Sunday for the sacrament."

The giggling stopped suddenly, and the girls spoke reverently. They weren't making bread just to learn how. They were making bread for use in a sacred ordinance!

When the yeast was dissolved, Susan poured in the milk she had brought and Tina added her oil. Then the girls mixed the liquid and dry ingredients together. They took turns kneading the dough, then covered it with a cloth and allowed it to rise. They shaped it into two loaves, and while they waited for it to rise the second time, they had a lesson on the sacrament.

"Can anyone tell me what the bread and water represent?" Sister Wilson asked.

"The flesh and blood of Jesus Christ," Melissa answered.

"That is right," said Sister Wilson. "Shortly before His Crucifixion, Jesus gathered His Apostles around Him in an upstairs room. He knew He was going to die, and He wanted the Apostles to always remember Him and to be faithful to His teachings. He blessed bread and broke it into pieces. He gave it to His disciples to eat in memory of His body. He blessed wine and gave it to them to drink in memory of His blood.

"When we partake of the sacrament, we renew the covenants we made when we were baptized," Sister Wilson continued. "Can anyone tell me what we promised to do?"

"I know," Clara said. "We promised to keep the commandments."

"We promised to remember Jesus Christ," Jenny added.



“Very good,” Sister Wilson said. “We also promised to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ. The way we act, the things we do, and the words we say should



show others that we are followers of Christ. The Lord promised us that if we keep our covenants, we will always have His Spirit to be with us.

“Is there anything special we should do during the sacrament?” Sister Wilson asked.

Hannah raised her hand. “My mom always tells us we should be reverent.”

“She’s right,” said Sister Wilson. “And we should remember the Atonement and think about the promises we are renewing. We also need to think about ways to improve ourselves and become more like Christ.”

The girls talked about things they could do to be more Christlike. Then it was time to put the bread into the oven. While the bread baked, the girls planned upcoming activities.

Then they took the golden brown loaves from the oven, and Sister Wilson said, “After they cool, I’ll slice them. Then I’ll give them to Bishop Carmichael.”

On Sunday the girls sat with their families in sacrament meeting. They sang the sacrament hymn

reverently as the priests broke the bread for the congregation. They listened carefully as a priest blessed the bread, and when they said, “Amen,” they really meant it. Then the deacons passed the bread. When Clara took a piece of bread from the tray, she was filled with gratitude for all the Savior had done for her. She thought about the Last Supper and what Jesus taught His disciples about the sacrament. She also thought about ways she could keep the commandments better.

Clara glanced at Melissa. From the look on her friend’s face, Clara knew the sacrament had touched Melissa’s heart too.

After the meeting, the girls stopped outside the meetinghouse to talk for a moment before going home.

“I’m glad Sister Wilson let us help make the sacrament bread,” Jenny said.

“I thought it made the sacrament extra special,” Tina added.

“It wasn’t just the bread,” Melissa replied thoughtfully. “It was really thinking about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and what the sacrament means.”

Clara smiled. “I felt the same way. It wasn’t the bread that made the difference. It was the Savior.” □

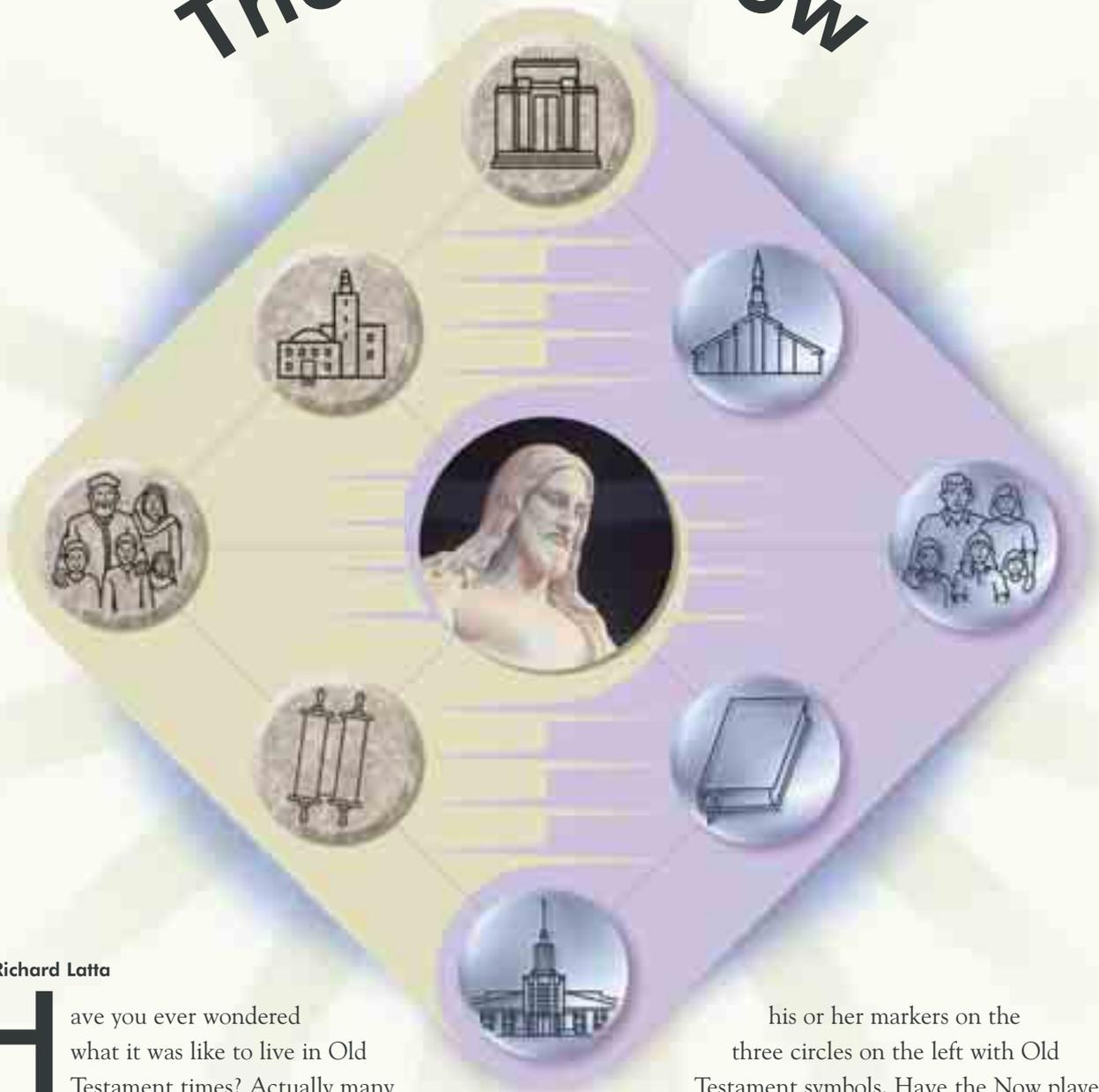


When we take the sacrament we promise to:

- Take upon us the name of Jesus Christ.
- Always remember Him.
- Keep His commandments.

(See D&C 20:77, 79.)

Then and Now



By Richard Latta

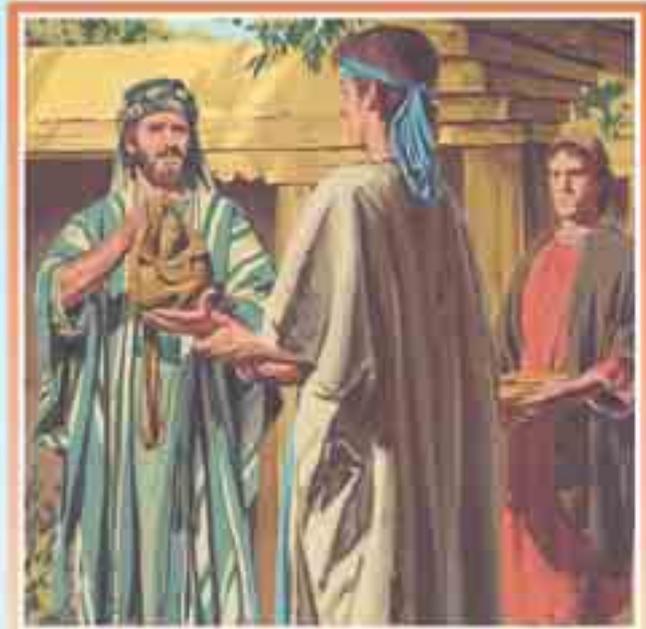
Have you ever wondered what it was like to live in Old Testament times? Actually many things then were not much different from how they are now. For instance, families were important both then and now. People met together then to learn the gospel of Jesus Christ as we do now.

In this game, one player represents Old Testament times (Then); the other player represents modern times (Now). Each will need three small markers such as buttons, coins, or beans. Have the Then player place

his or her markers on the three circles on the left with Old Testament symbols. Have the Now player do the same on the three circles on the right with modern symbols. On each turn, a player may move one of his or her markers one circle. Players may not jump over a marker to get to an open circle but must wait until a circle opens up. Markers may be moved in any direction along a line. The first player to get all three markers to where the other player's markers were originally wins the game. □

THE LOST SON

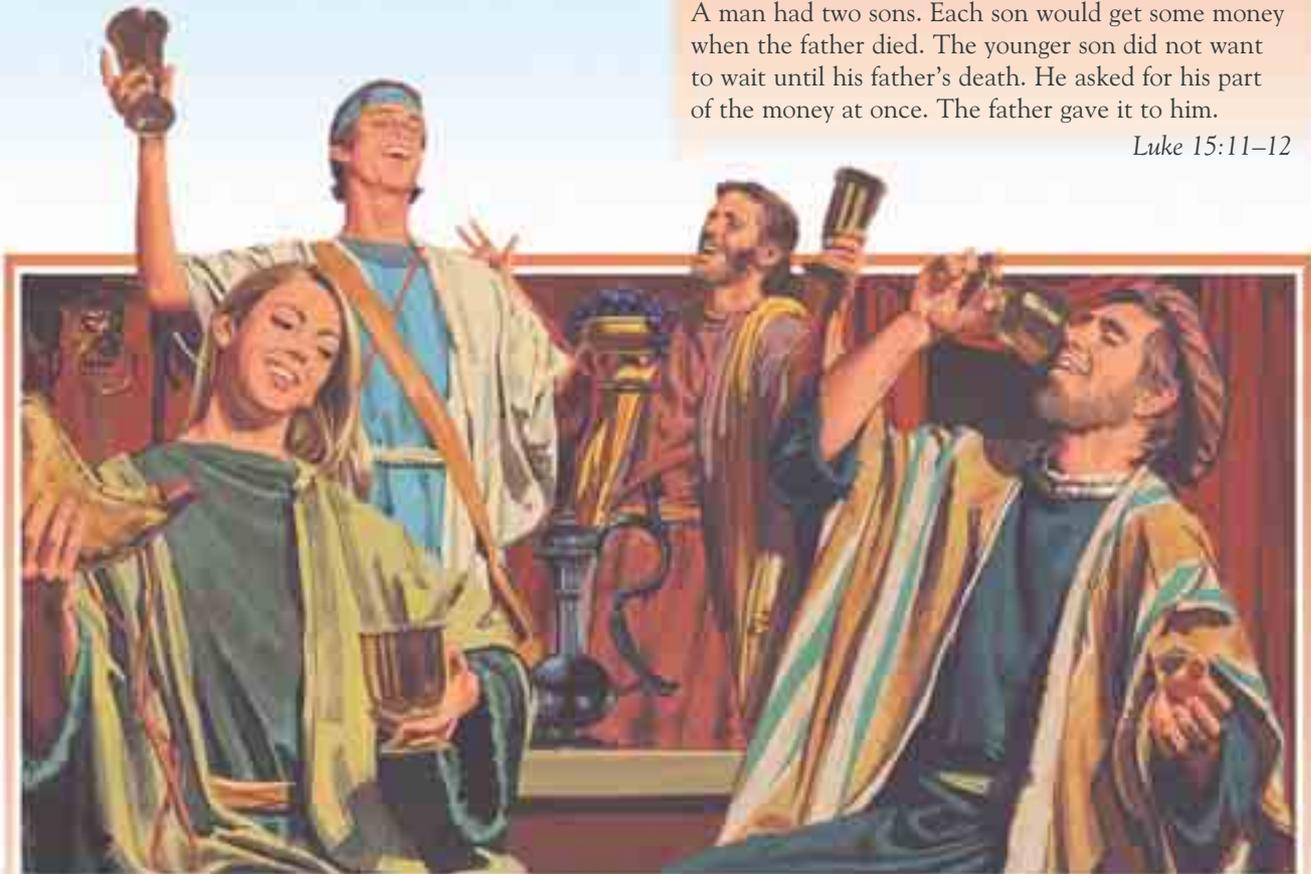
The Third Parable



ILLUSTRATIONS BY PAUL MANN

A man had two sons. Each son would get some money when the father died. The younger son did not want to wait until his father's death. He asked for his part of the money at once. The father gave it to him.

Luke 15:11-12



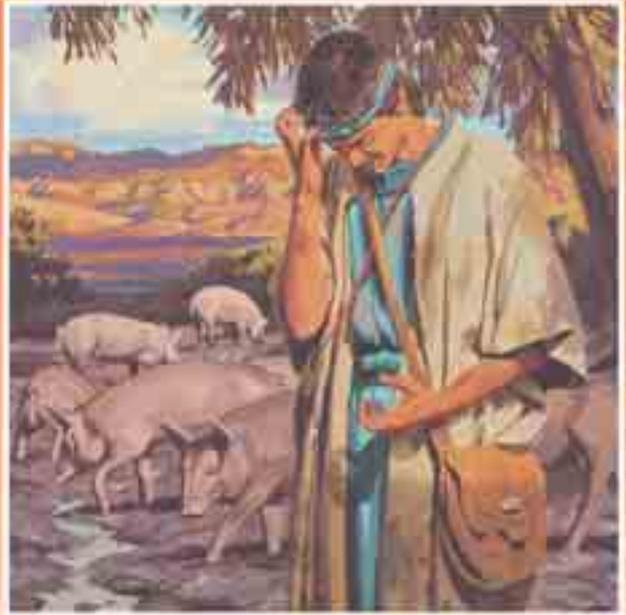
The son took the money and left home. He went to another land, where he spent all of it. And he sinned again and again.

Luke 15:13



Finally he had no money to buy food. Very hungry, he asked a man for help. The man sent him to feed pigs.

Luke 15:14-15



The son was so hungry he wanted to eat the pigs' food. The servants in his father's house had better food to eat than he did. He decided to repent and ask to be a servant in his father's house.

Luke 15:15-19



When he went home, his father saw him coming.

Luke 15:20



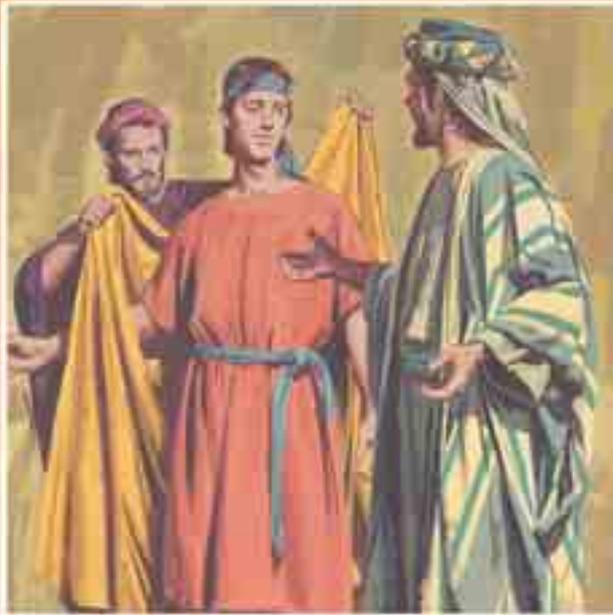
The father ran to meet his son, and he put his arms around his son and kissed him.

Luke 15:20



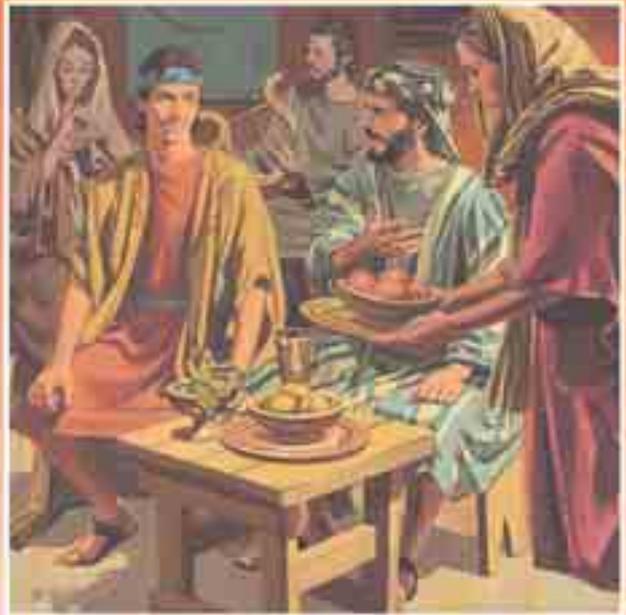
The son told his father that he had sinned.

Luke 15:21



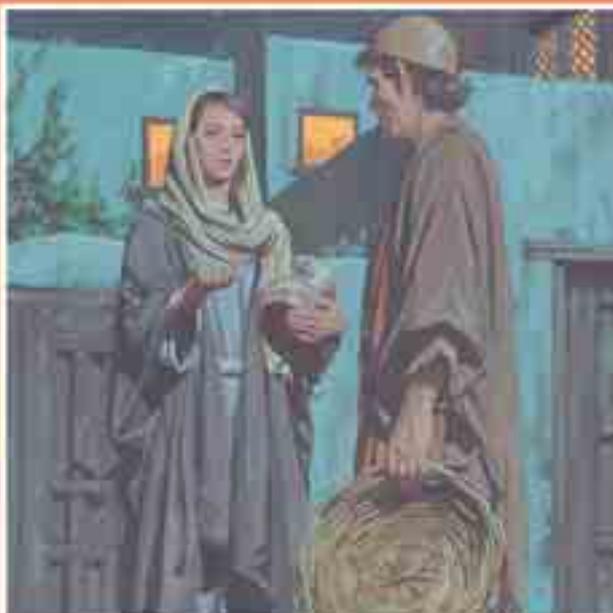
The father told a servant to bring the best clothes and put them on the son. The servant put shoes on the son's feet and a ring on his finger.

Luke 15:22



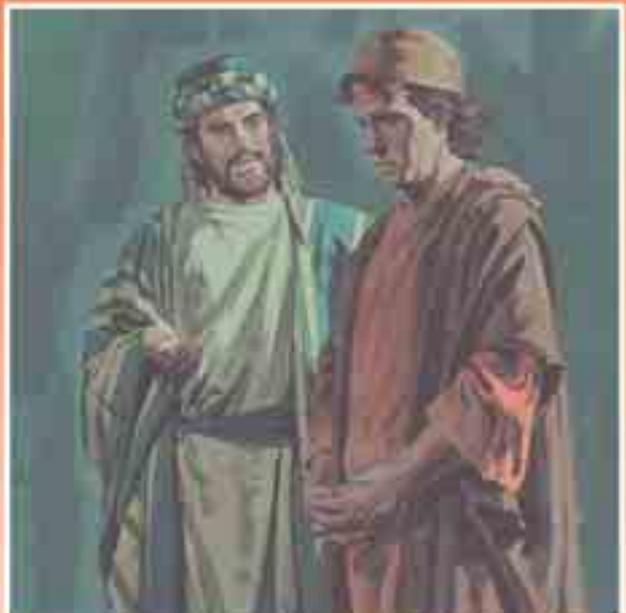
Then the father told the servant to make a feast for the son. He wanted everyone to celebrate because the son who had gone away was now home. The son who had sinned had now repented.

Luke 15:23-24



The older son had been working in the field. When he came home, he heard music and dancing. A servant told him the younger son had come home and their father wanted everyone to celebrate with him.

Luke 15:25-27



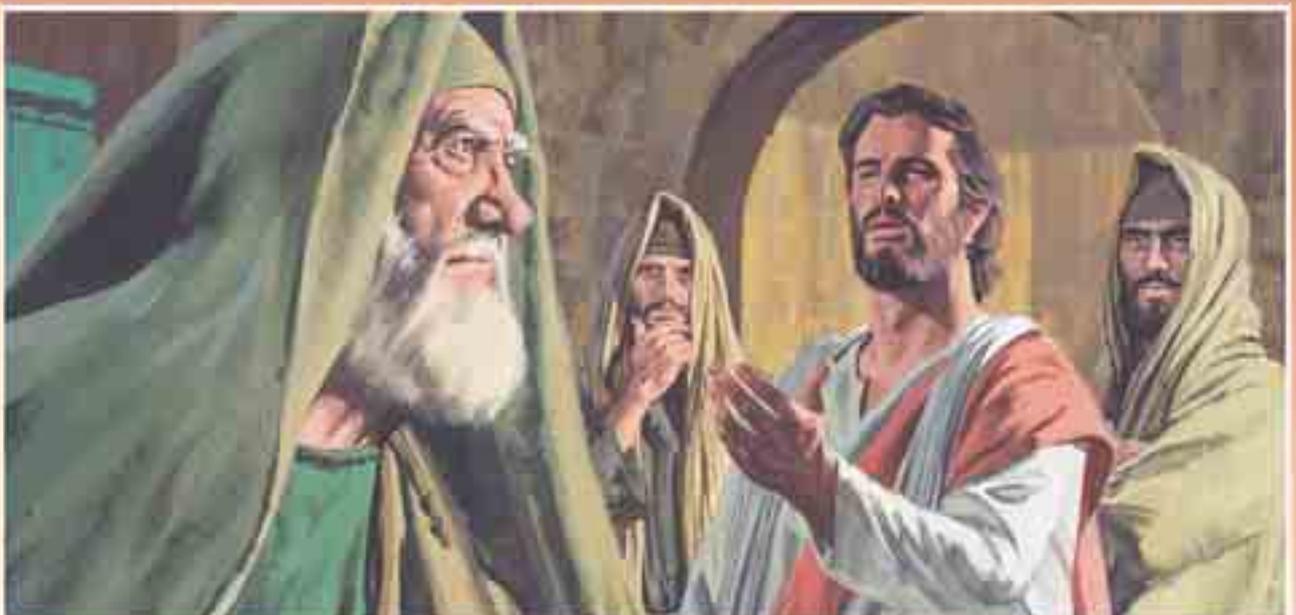
Angry, the older son would not go into the house. His father came out to talk with him.

Luke 15:28



The father said the older son had always stayed with him and enjoyed all that was there. And everything the father now had would belong to the older son. But his younger son had gone away. And because he had come home, it was right to celebrate. His younger son had sinned, but now he had repented.

Luke 15:31–32



Jesus ended the story. He had told the Pharisees three parables to show them why He talked to sinners. The Savior wanted the Pharisees to know how much Heavenly Father loves *everyone*. He loves people who obey Him. He also loves sinners. He wants sinners to repent so they can come back to Him.

John 3:16–17



Thy Holy Temple

Reverently ♩ = 76-88

F C Dm G C Dm

mp

1. Thy tem - ple shines with heav'n - ly light A - gainst the dark - ness
 (2. Thy) tem - ple stands ma - jes - ti - cally, In - vit - ing me, re -

E⁷ Am Dm Em Am Dm G

of the night. My heart re - joic - es at the sight. I love Thy ho - ly tem - ple. Each
 mind - ing me To be the best that I can be. I love Thy ho - ly tem - ple. For

p *slower* *mp*

C Dm E⁷ Am Dm

time I see Thy tem - ple shine, I think of prom - is - es di - vine And all the bless - ings
 tem - ple mar - riage I'll pre - pare. I'll seek Thy or - di - nan - ces there. With Thee I'll cov - e -

a tempo

Em Am 1. Dm G C F C Dm G

that are mine. I love Thy ho - ly tem - ple. 2. Thy
 nant in prayer. I

p *slower* *a tempo*

2. Dm Em Am Dm G⁷ C F Dm C

love Thy ho - ly tem - ple. I love Thy ho - ly tem - ple.

slower

Words: Marvin K. Gardner, born 1952
 Music: Vanja Y. Watkins, born 1938
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Psalms 138:2
 D&C 109:13-16

THE GREATEST GIFT

By Vicki F. Matsumori

“And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 14:7).



Isaac and Rebekah were to be married in the covenant. Because they were marrying in the covenant, they would be sealed by the holy priesthood and married to each other for eternity. Isaac and Rebekah knew that if they married in the covenant and lived righteously, they would receive many wonderful blessings.

Isaac and Rebekah sound much like men and women you know who marry in the covenant by being sealed in the temple. The difference is that Isaac and Rebekah lived during Old Testament times, and they did not even know each other before becoming engaged.

Isaac’s father, Abraham, knew how important it was for Isaac to marry in the covenant. For this reason, Abraham sent his servant to search for the woman who had the same religious beliefs as Isaac and who was chosen by God for Isaac to marry. The Lord helped Abraham’s servant find Rebekah. She agreed to marry Isaac. (See Genesis 24.)

When you are married in the covenant, the Lord promises you the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Genesis 22:17–18). One of these blessings is that you and your family, through priesthood power, can be sealed together forever.

When you grow up and go to the temple, you will learn more about the blessings of salvation and the great plan of happiness. You will make covenants. If you keep your covenants, Heavenly Father will bless you with “the greatest of all the gifts of God,” which is eternal life (see D&C 14:7).

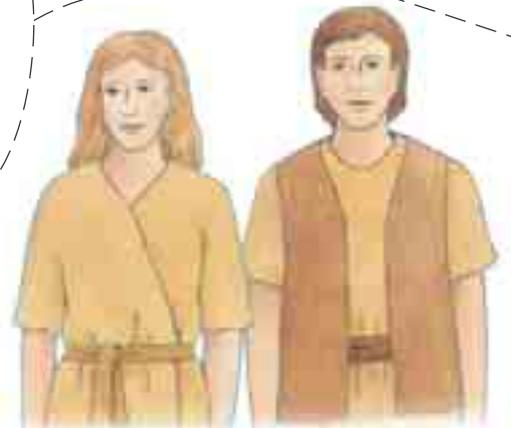
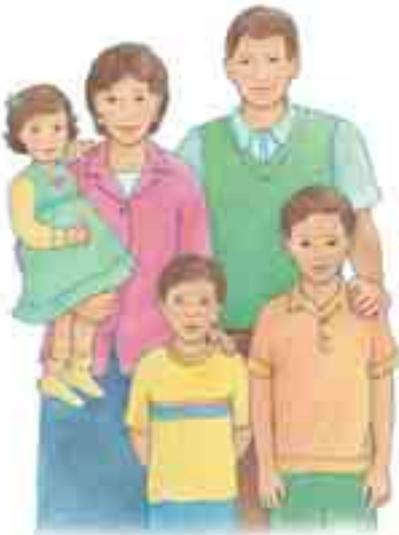
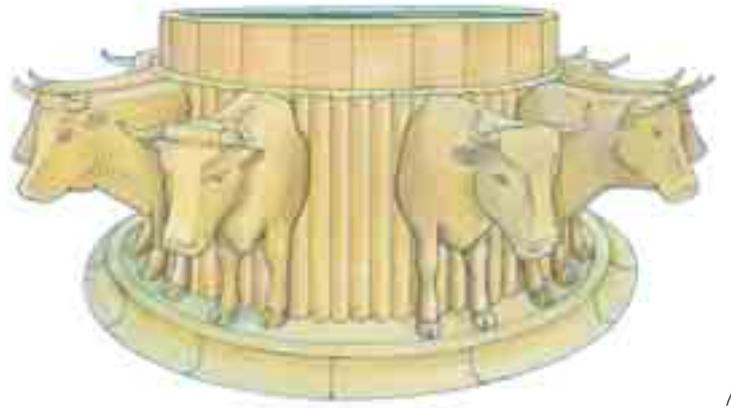
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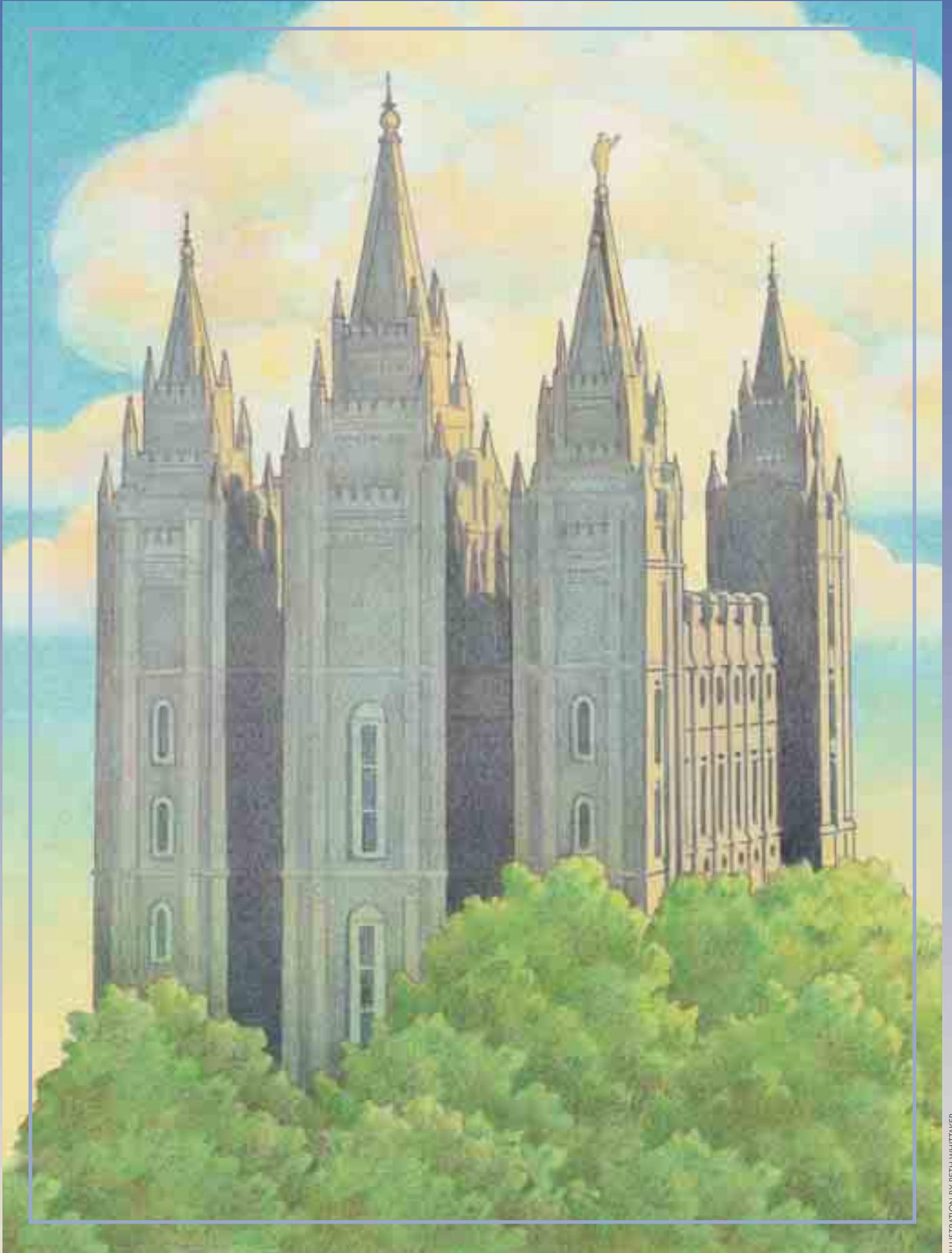
Remove page 15 from the magazine, and cut along the dotted lines. Put the puzzle together. Then turn the puzzle pieces over, and put the puzzle together again. In the temple, we learn how to fit the many parts of the gospel together to obtain exaltation.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Invite four adults to tell about prophets who received revelation in the temple. Have them explain what was revealed and how it was revealed in the following instances: (1) Samuel—1 Samuel 3:1–20; (2) Joseph Smith—D&C 110, 137; (3) Spencer W. Kimball—Official Declaration 2; (4) Lorenzo Snow—Primary 1 manual, lesson 26. Emphasize that the temple is the house of God and we can receive personal revelation there. Cut several copies of the ninth article of faith into separate words. Divide the Primary into groups of about five children. Have each group put the words in order as you repeat the article of faith. As each group completes the activity, have them say the article of faith with you until they have memorized it.

2. Read John 14:26. Explain some of the ways the Holy Ghost can reveal or help us remember things. Explain that we can receive personal revelation in the temple and other places as well and that personal revelation may be received as a result of praying, reading the scriptures, and keeping the commandments. Display simple pictures of the outdoors, a jail, a mountain, and a room in a house. Divide the children into four groups, and have the groups rotate to each picture. Have adults talk about the following revelations: outdoors—Enos (see Enos 1:1–5), Joseph Smith (see Joseph Smith—History 1:14–19), or Mary Fielding Smith (see Primary 5 manual, lesson 42); jail—Joseph Smith (see D&C 122); mountain—Moses (see Exodus 3:1–6; 24:12–25:8); room—Joseph F. Smith (see D&C 138), Lehi (see 1 Nephi 1:5–8), or Mary (see Luke 1:26–38). Sing songs or hymns as the children move between pictures. □







The Ascension, by William Henry Margetson

"And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:51-52).



“Jesus and His Atonement represent the most profound expression of Heavenly Father’s love for His children. How important the free gift of the Resurrection is for all mankind, and the proffer of the greatest gift which even God can give—eternal life for those willing to so live and to so qualify.” See Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “Testifying of the Great and Glorious Atonement,” page 6.