

Liahona

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THE
CHURCH
IS HERE

Reykjavík Iceland





With snow-covered Mount Esja in the background, Reykjavik, Iceland's colorful capital, bids welcome to an island nation more than 1,000 miles (1,609 km) from the European mainland. First settled by the Vikings in AD 874, Reykjavik is the heart of Iceland's cultural, economic, and governmental activity, as well as one of the cleanest, greenest, and safest cities in the world.

The first two Icelanders were baptized in Denmark in 1851. They soon returned to Iceland, and in 1853 the first branch was organized. Today there are nearly 300 members in Iceland in three branches, in Reykjavik, Akureyri, and Sellfoss. The nearest temple is in London, England, 1,177 miles (1,894 km) from Reykjavik.

Though the number of members is small, the Church continues to grow. Despite challenges of isolation, translation of Church materials, unfavorable weather, and cultural barriers, Church leaders have promised that one day Iceland will be a beacon to other countries. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) visited Iceland and reminded members that they are “people of ‘strength and power and capacity’ to do great things” (“Wonderful to Have Sweet, Good Land,” *Church News*, Sept. 21, 2002, 10).

- The Icelandic Mission was organized in 1894, but proselyting was discontinued in 1914. Iceland became part of the Denmark Copenhagen Mission in 1975.
- In 1977, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008), then a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, officially dedicated Iceland for the preaching of the gospel.
- In 1981 the Book of Mormon was published in Icelandic—a language spoken nowhere else in the world.



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When You Are Discouraged

Life has its ups and downs. Sometimes when we're down, we wonder what God is doing—why is a loving Father allowing this to happen? This quandary can bottom out with us asking, “Does God even really care about me personally?”

In situations like this, I've found these scriptures to be helpful:

- **Psalm 8:4-5:** “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? . . . For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”
- **John 10:14:** During His life here upon the earth, Jesus described Himself as “the good shepherd” and added, “[I] know my sheep.”
- **Moses 1:39:** This is one of my favorite verses, where the Lord revealed His purpose to the Prophet Joseph Smith: “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man”—thus highlighting His interest in us as individuals.
- **Luke 7:11-16:** Of all of Jesus's miracles, few are as tender and compassionate as His ministering to the widow of Nain. For me, it represents the best example of His acute awareness of us individually. As I share in my article (see page 12), this account demonstrates the Savior's interest in and love for each of us.

Keith Wilson

Associate professor, Brigham Young University



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He is risen!
He is risen!
Tell it out with
joyful voice.

He has burst his three days' prison;
Let the whole wide earth rejoice.
Death is conquered; man is free.
Christ has won the victory.

(“He Is Risen!” Hymns, no. 199.)



As you remember the Savior this Easter, you can visit lds.org/go/4195 to see beautiful art and testimonies from Apostles about the Savior's qualities that made His Atonement and Resurrection possible.



Bob and Lori Thurston

Served in the Cambodia Phnom Penh Mission



On their first mission together, Bob and Lori Thurston learned that meaningful ministering can happen despite language barriers and cultural differences because we are all children of God.

LESLIE NILSSON, PHOTOGRAPHER

Bob:

One day we could hear music blaring, and we noticed a tent was being set up. In Cambodia, that either means somebody is getting married or somebody has died.

Lori:

We found out that a mother of five or six kids had just died. There was no husband to speak of. The children just woke up and realized their mom was dead.

One daughter was just sobbing. Through a translator, she said, "I'm the oldest. I've got all these siblings. I don't know what I'm going to do."

I just scooped her up in my arms. How could I not? This girl just lost her mother. I spoke to her in English and said, "I know you don't understand me, but I promise you will see your mother again. You are going to be OK. You are not going to be left alone."

So many experiences like this have given us a special connection with the people of Cambodia.

DISCOVER MORE

For those considering serving as senior missionaries, you can find service opportunities at seniormissionary.lds.org. Find more Portraits of Faith at lds.org/go/18.



Ministering Principles

MAKING MINISTERING Joyful

Serving with love brings joy to both the giver and the receiver.

Sometimes our search for happiness in this life can seem like running on a treadmill. We run and run and still feel like we haven't gotten anywhere. For some, the thought of ministering to others simply feels like adding more to do.

But our Heavenly Father wants us to experience joy and has told us “men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25). And the Savior taught that ministering to others is an essential part of how we bring joy into our lives and the lives of others.

What Is Joy?

Joy can be described as “a feeling of great pleasure and happiness.”¹ Latter-day prophets have provided important clarification on where joy comes from and how it is found. “The joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives,” said President Russell M. Nelson. “. . . Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy.”²



Ministering Brings Joy

When Lehi partook of the fruit of the tree of life, his soul was filled “with exceedingly great joy” (1 Nephi 8:12). His first desire was to share this fruit with those he loved.

Our willingness to minister to others can bring this kind of joy to us and to them. The Savior taught His disciples that the fruit we bring forth when we are connected to Him helps bring us a fulness of joy (see John 15:1–11). Doing His work by serving and seeking to bring others to Him can be a joyful experience (see Luke 15:7; Alma 29:9; Doctrine and Covenants 18:16; 50:22). We can experience this joy even in the face of opposition

and suffering (see 2 Corinthians 7:4; Colossians 1:11).

The Savior showed us the perfect example that one of the greatest sources of true joy in mortal life is found through service. When we minister to our brothers and sisters like the Savior, with charity and love in our hearts, we can experience joy that goes beyond simple happiness.

“As we embrace [ministering] with willing hearts, we will . . . be closer to becoming a Zion people and will feel surpassing joy with those whom we have helped along the path of discipleship,” taught Sister Jean B. Bingham, Relief Society General President.³

A SOURCE OF TRUE JOY

The Savior showed us the perfect example that true joy in mortal life can be found through service.



How Can We Make Ministering More Joyful?

There are many ways to bring greater joy into our ministering. Here are a few ideas:

- 1. Understand your purpose in ministering.** There are many reasons to minister. Ultimately, our efforts should align with God's purposes "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). As we accept President Russell M. Nelson's invitation to help others along the covenant path, we can find joy in participating in God's work.⁴ (For more on the purpose of ministering, see "Ministering Principles: The Purpose That Will Change Our Ministering," in the January 2019 *Liahona*.)
- 2. Make ministering about people not tasks.** President Thomas S. Monson often reminded us: "Never let a problem to be solved become more important than a person to be loved."⁵ Ministering is about loving people, not about things to do. As we grow to love as the Savior did, we will be more open to the joy that comes from serving others.
- 3. Make ministering simple.** President M. Russell Ballard, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,

tells us: "Great things are wrought through simple and small things. . . . Our small and simple acts of kindness and service will accumulate into a life filled with love for Heavenly Father, devotion to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a sense of peace and joy each time we reach out to one another."⁶

- 4. Take the stress out of ministering.** It's not your responsibility to work out someone's salvation. That's between the individual and the Lord. Our responsibility is to love them and help them turn to Jesus Christ, who is their Savior.

Don't Put Off the Joy of Service

Sometimes people are reluctant to ask for needed help, so offering our service could be just what they need. But serving without asking isn't always the answer, either. When you notice a need, asking permission before ministering is a good idea.

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles told about a single mother who got chicken pox—and then her children got sick too. The normally spotless house became cluttered and messy. Dishes and laundry piled up.

In a moment when she felt completely overwhelmed, Relief Society sisters knocked on her door. They didn't say, "Let us know if we can help." When they saw the situation, they sprang into action.

"They cleared up the chaos, brought light and clarity into the home, and called a friend to bring over some much-needed groceries. When they at last finished their work and said their good-byes, they left that young mother in tears—tears of gratitude and love."⁷

Both the givers and the receiver felt the warmth of joy.

Cultivate Joy in Your Life

The more joy, peace, and contentment we can cultivate in our lives, the more we will be able to share with others as we minister. Joy comes through the Holy Ghost (see Galatians 5:22 and Doctrine and Covenants 11:13). It is something we can pray for (see Doctrine and Covenants 136:29) and invite into our lives. Here are a few ideas for cultivating joy in our own lives:

- 1. Count your blessings.** As you examine your life, write in your journal the things that God has blessed you with.⁸ Take notice of the good all around you.⁹ Pay attention to what might be keeping you from feeling joy and write down ways to resolve or better understand them. During this Easter season, take time to search for a greater connection with the Savior (see Doctrine and Covenants 101:36).
- 2. Practice mindfulness.** Joy can find you more easily in moments of quiet meditation.¹⁰ Listen closely to what brings you joy (see 1 Chronicles 16:15). Time away from media can sometimes be necessary to practice mindfulness.¹¹
- 3. Avoid comparing yourself.** It has been said that comparison is the thief of joy. Paul warned that those “measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise” (2 Corinthians 10:12).
- 4. Seek personal revelation.** The Savior taught: “If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal” (Doctrine and Covenants 42:61).

Invitation to Act

How can you increase the joy you find in your life through ministering? ■

The principles in this article can be applied in our everyday interactions but are intended to help ministering brothers and sisters in their efforts to bless the individuals and families assigned to them.

NOTES

1. “Joy,” en.oxforddictionaries.com
2. Russell M. Nelson, “Joy and Spiritual Survival,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 82.
3. Jean B. Bingham, “Ministering as the Savior Does,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2018, 107.
4. See Russell M. Nelson, “As We Go Forward Together,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Apr. 2018, 4–7.
5. Thomas S. Monson, “Finding Joy in the Journey,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 86.
6. M. Russell Ballard, “Finding Joy through Loving Service,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2011, 49.
7. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Living the Gospel Joyful,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 120–123.
8. See Henry B. Eyring, “O Remember, Remember,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 67.
9. See Jean B. Bingham, “That Your Joy Might Be Full,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 87.
10. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Of Things That Matter Most,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 21.
11. See Gary E. Stevenson, “Spiritual Eclipse,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 46.







In Times of Discouragement, Remember *the Widow of Nain*

Especially when we feel forgotten or overlooked, we must remember: Jesus came to the widow's aid precisely in her time of need, and He will come to us as well.

By Keith J. Wilson

Associate Professor of Ancient Scripture, Brigham Young University

Sometimes in the ups and downs of life, we can feel like God is not very active in our day-to-day lives. Our patterns seem rather tedious and monotonous. Not much changes, and it is sometimes hard to point to one area where God has directly intervened in our circumstances. Whenever I am hit with these feelings of insignificance in my own life, I often think of a woman in the New Testament who may have felt this way. She is not named in the scriptures but is simply known by the name of her village and by her marital status.

The woman is the widow of Nain, and only the evangelist Luke records her amazing story. For me she represents the essence of the Savior's personalized ministry and how He reached out to the discouraged, common people of His society. This account soundly settles the issue about whether God knows us and cares about us.

A brief synopsis of the miracle from Luke chapter 7 depicts Jesus intercepting a burial procession and miraculously bringing a dead young man back to life. But there is much more to understand about the setting. As with all miracles, but especially so with this one, the context is vital to understanding this incident. Having taught at the Brigham Young University Jerusalem Center, I will share with you some personal insights about this miracle.

Nain was a small farming village at Jesus's time, nestled up against Mount Moreh, which defined the east side of the Jezreel Valley. The town itself was off the beaten path. Access to it was limited to a single road. During Jesus's time, this settlement would have been small and relatively poor, and it has remained that way ever since. At times in its history, this town has encircled as few as 34 homes and just 189 people.¹ Today it is home to about 1,500 inhabitants.

Luke begins his account by noting that Jesus was in Capernaum the day before and had healed the Centurion's servant (see Luke 7:1–10). Then we learn that "*the day after*" (verse 11; emphasis added), the Savior went into a city called Nain, accompanied by a large group of disciples. This sequence is very important. Capernaum is situated on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, 600 feet (183 m) below sea level. Nain is about 30 miles (48 km) southwest of Capernaum at 700 feet (213 m) above sea level, thus requiring an arduous, uphill climb to Nain. In order to walk from Capernaum to Nain, it would have taken at least one or two days. Recently, it took a group of youthful BYU Jerusalem Center students 10 hours to walk this route on paved roads. This means that Jesus probably had to arise very early or possibly even walk during the night in order to intercept the burial procession "*the day after*."²

As Christ approached the city after a very taxing journey, a young man probably in his 20s³ was being carried out on a burial slab. Luke tells us that this young man was a widow's only son, and some scholars interpret the Greek text to imply that she had no other offspring.⁴ A large group of villagers accompanied her in this most unfortunate family tragedy.

Obviously, having a son die would be a tragedy for anyone, but consider the implications

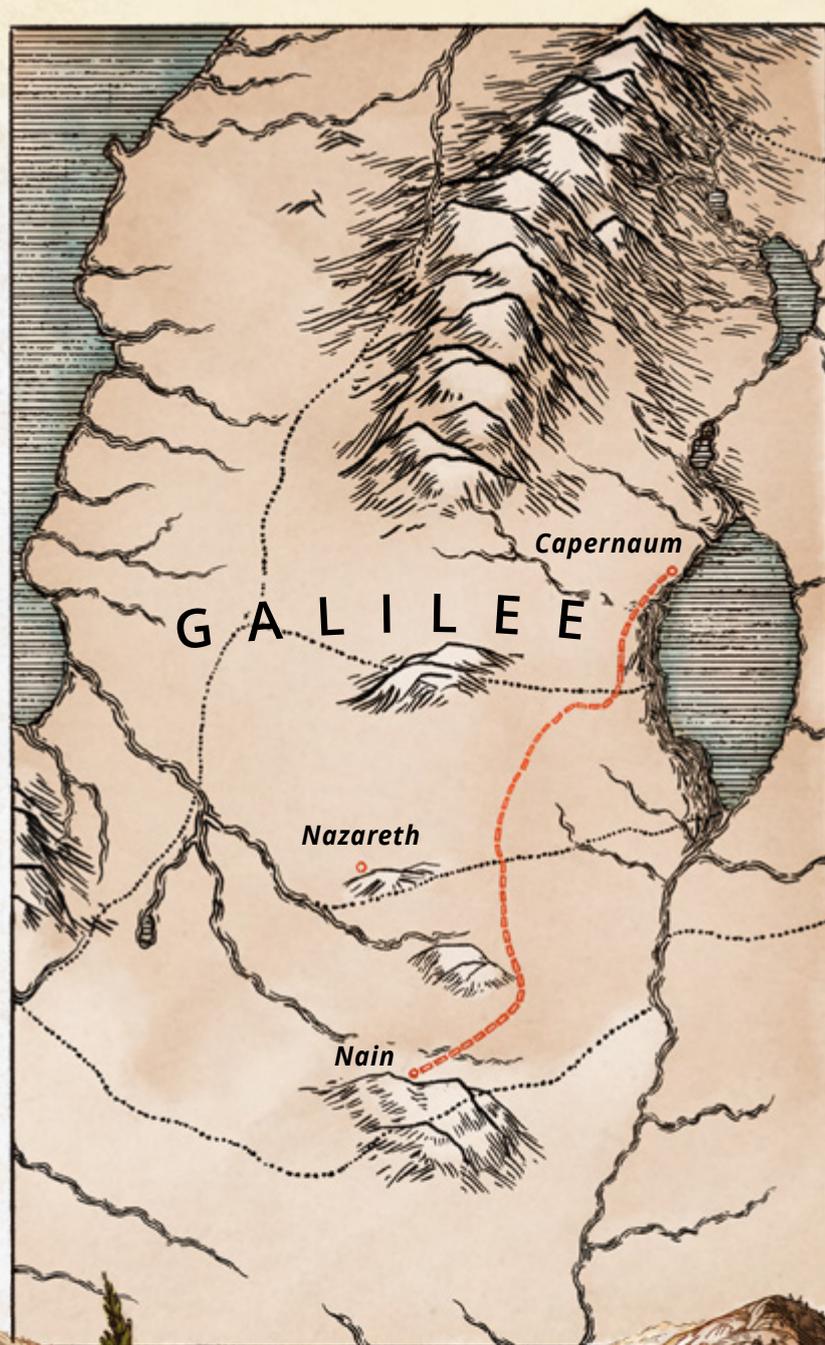


ILLUSTRATION BY KEITH BEAVERS



for this widow. Just what would it have meant socially, spiritually, and financially to be a widow without an inheritor in ancient Israel? In Old Testament culture, it was believed that when a husband died before old age, it was a sign of God’s judgment for sin. Thus, some believed that God was meting out punishment upon this surviving widow. In the book of Ruth, when Naomi was widowed at an early age, she bemoaned, “After all, the Lord is against me, and the Almighty has broken me” (Ruth 1:21, International Standard Version).⁵

Not only was there spiritual and emotional pain, but this widow of Nain was also facing financial ruin—even staring starvation in the face.⁶ Upon marriage, a woman was assigned to her husband’s family for financial protection. If he died, then her care was delegated to her birthright son. Now that this widow’s birthright and only son was dead, she was at the end of her rope financially. If her son was in his 20s, she was probably a middle-aged woman, living in a small, secluded farm town, and now found herself spiritually, socially, and financially destitute.

Precisely at the narrow window of time when the villagers were carrying this woman’s son out to be buried, Jesus met the procession and “had compassion on her” (Luke 7:13). Actually, this





might be Luke’s greatest understatement. Jesus somehow sensed the utterly desperate situation of this widow. Perhaps she had spent the night sprawled on her dirt floor, begging Heavenly Father to know why. Perhaps she had even openly questioned why He was requiring her to live any longer on this earth. Or perhaps she was terrified of the pending loneliness that she would face. We do not know. But we do know that the Savior chose to leave Capernaum, which could have required Him to walk through the night in order to intercept the burial procession right before they put the body in the ground.

Yes, when He saw her tear-stained face as she walked behind the procession, Jesus felt great compassion for this woman—but it appears that His compassion came from feelings He experienced long before He just “happened” to intercept that burial entourage. He arrived there precisely in her moment of need.

Jesus then told the widow to “weep not” (verse 13). Unafraid of ritual uncleanness, He “touched the bier,” and the

procession “stood still.” He then commanded, “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

“And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And [Jesus] delivered him to his mother” (verses 14–15). Naturally, the crowd of villagers and Jesus’s followers were awestruck as their shared grief turned to pure joy. They all “glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us” (verse 16). But this miracle was also about rescuing one desperate soul. Jesus was aware that something was very wrong for this woman—someone who was looked down on in their culture. Her situation cried out for His immediate attention, even if He had to travel far to be there precisely at the right moment. He knew her desperate situation, and He came quickly. President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) spoke undeniable truth when he said, “One day, when we look back at the seeming coincidences of our lives, we will realize that perhaps they weren’t so coincidental after all.”⁷

Now, as uplifting as this incident is, it must become much more than a cool Bible story to us. It verifies unmistakably that

Jesus knew about this poor, forgotten, and destitute widow. Especially when we feel forgotten or overlooked or insignificant, we must remember: Jesus came to the widow in her time of desperate need, and He will come to us as well. Additionally, a second lesson we could gain from our Savior's example is the importance of reaching out to bless others around you. Many within your circle will be discouraged from time to time. If you can tell them about "Sister Nain" and how the Lord knew precisely her discouragement and great personal crisis, it could change night to day. Remember President Spencer W. Kimball's (1895–1985) poignant observation: "God does notice us, and he watches over us. But it is usually through another person that he meets our needs."⁸

Of all Jesus's miracles during His time on earth, for me, few are as tender and compassionate as His ministering to the widow of Nain. It reminds us that we matter to Him and that He will never forget us. We cannot forget that. ■

NOTES

1. See E. Mills, *Census of Palestine 1931: Population of Villages, Towns, and Administrative Areas* (1932), 75.
2. See S. Kent Brown, *The Testimony of Luke* (2015), 364.
3. See Brown, *The Testimony of Luke*, 365.
4. See Brown, *The Testimony of Luke*, 365.
5. In Isaiah 54:4, the Lord tells the widow Israel that she will "no longer remember the disgrace of [her] abandonment" (New English Translation).
6. See Brown, *The Testimony of Luke*, 365.
7. Thomas S. Monson, in Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Lessons Learned in the Journey of Life," *Ensign*, Dec. 2000, 7; *Liahona*, May 2001, 38.
8. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 82.



To watch the Bible video "Widow of Nain," visit lds.org/go/041917.





**By President
Henry B. Eyring**
Second Counselor
in the First
Presidency

TRUST IN THE SAVIOR'S Deliverance

The Savior's Atonement and Resurrection
give Him the power to strengthen us in our trials
or deliver us from them.

For those of us who have lost loved ones, the road ahead can be sad and lonely—even more so for those without a knowledge and testimony of the Atonement and Resurrection of the Savior Jesus Christ. You recall His two doubtful disciples on the road to Emmaus. The resurrected Lord drew near to them and asked why they were sad. Luke gives us the answer:

“And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

“And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

“But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel” (Luke 24:19–21).

We draw comfort from our knowledge and testimony that it *was* He who redeemed Israel. It *was* He who “[broke] the bands of death” (Mosiah 15:23). It *was* He who became “the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). It *was* He who made possible temple covenants that bind us forever to those we “have loved long since, and lost awhile!”¹

At this Easter season, I would like to share part of a devotional message I delivered a few years ago about the Savior's power of deliverance. It strengthened me as I prepared it and delivered it. I pray that it will strengthen you as you read it.

The Savior Knows Our Grievs

Life ends early for some and eventually for us all. Each of us will be tested by facing the death of someone we love.

The other day I met a man I had not seen since his wife died. It was a chance meeting in a pleasant social holiday situation. He was smiling as he

approached me. Remembering his wife's death, I phrased the common greeting very carefully: "How are you doing?"

The smile vanished, his eyes became moist, and he said quietly, with great earnestness, "I'm doing fine. But it's very hard."

It is very hard, as most of you have learned and all of us will sometime know. The hardest part of that test is to know what to do with the sorrow, the loneliness, and the loss that we can feel as if a part of us has been lost. Grief can persist like a chronic ache. And for some, there may be feelings of anger or injustice.



DETAIL FROM LORD OF PRAYER BY YONGSUNG KIM, COURTESY OF HAVEN LIGHT

*The Savior could have
known our griefs by the inspiration
of the Spirit, but He chose instead
to know by experiencing them
for Himself.*

The Savior's Atonement and Resurrection give Him the power to deliver us in such a trial. Through His experience, He came to know all our griefs. He could have known them by the inspiration of the Spirit, but He chose instead to know by experiencing them for Himself. This is the account:

"And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.

"And he 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 7:10–12).

Good people around you will try to understand your grief at the passing of a loved one. They may feel grief themselves. The Savior not only understands and feels grief but also feels *your* personal grief that only you feel. And He knows you perfectly. He knows your heart.

Invite the Holy Ghost

The Savior knows which of the many things you can do that will be best for you as you invite the Holy Ghost to comfort and bless you. He will know where it is best for you to start. Sometimes it will be to pray. Sometimes it will be to go comfort someone else. I know of a widow with a debilitating illness who was

inspired to visit another widow. I wasn't there, but I am certain that the Lord inspired a faithful disciple to reach out to another and thus was able to succor them both.

There are many ways the Savior can succor those who grieve, each fitted to them. But you can be sure that He can and will do it in the way that is best for those who grieve and for those around them. One constant when God delivers people from grief is that they feel childlike humility before Him. A great example of the power of faithful humility comes from the life of Job (see Job 1:20–22). Another constant, which Job also had, is abiding faith in the power of the Savior's Resurrection (see Job 19:26).

We all will be resurrected, including your loved ones who die. The reunion we will have with them will not be ethereal but with bodies that will never die nor age nor become infirm.

When the Savior appeared to His Apostles after the Resurrection, He not only reassured them in their grief but also all of us who might ever grieve. He reassured them and us this way:

"Peace be unto you. . . .

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:36, 39).

The Lord can inspire us to reach out for the power of deliverance from our grief in the way best suited to us. We can choose to serve others for the Lord. We can testify of the Savior, of His gospel, of the restoration of His Church, and of His Resurrection. We can keep His commandments.

All of those choices invite the Holy Ghost. It is the Holy Ghost who can comfort us in the way suited to our need. And by the inspiration of the Spirit, we can have a testimony of the Resurrection and a clear view of the glorious reunion ahead. I felt that comfort as I looked down at the gravestone of someone I knew—someone I know that I can at some future time hold in my arms. Knowing that, I was not only delivered from grief but also filled with happy anticipation.

Had that little person lived to maturity, she would have needed deliverance in another set of trials. She would have been tested to stay faithful to God through the physical and spiritual challenges that come to everyone. Even though the body is a magnificent creation, keeping it functioning is a challenge that tests us all. Everyone must struggle through illness and the effects of aging.

“Be Thou Humble”

The power of deliverance from our trials is in place. It works in the same way as the deliverance from the trial that comes in facing the death of a loved one. Just as that deliverance is not always to have the life of a loved one spared, the deliverance from other trials may not be to remove them. The Lord may not give relief until we develop faith to make choices that will bring the

*You can be sure that the
Savior can and will succor
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those who grieve and
for those around them.*

power of the Atonement to work in our lives. He does not require that out of indifference but out of love for us.

A guide for receiving the Lord’s power of deliverance from opposition in life was given to Thomas B. Marsh, then the President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He was in difficult trials, and the Lord knew he would face more. Here was the counsel to him that I take for myself and offer you: “Be thou humble; and the



Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand, and give thee answer to thy prayers” (Doctrine and Covenants 112:10).

The Lord always wants to lead us to deliverance through our becoming more righteous. That requires repentance. And that takes humility. So the way to deliverance always requires humility in order for the Lord to be able to lead us by the hand where He wants to take us through our troubles and on to sanctification.

Trials can produce resentment or discouragement. The humility you and I need for the Lord to lead us by the hand comes from faith. It comes from faith that God really lives, that He loves us, and that what He wants—hard as it may be—will always be best for us.

The Savior showed us that humility. You have read of how He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane while He was suffering a trial on our behalf beyond our ability to comprehend or to endure or even for me to describe. You remember His prayer: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

He knew and trusted His Heavenly Father, the great Elohim. He knew that His Father was all-powerful and infinitely kind. The Beloved Son asked in humble words—like those of a little child—for the power of deliverance to help Him.

Take Courage and Comfort

The Father did not deliver the Son by removing the trial. For our sakes He did not do that, but He allowed the Savior to finish the mission He came to perform. Yet we can forever take courage and comfort from knowing of the help that the Father did provide:

“And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

“And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

“And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

“And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation” (Luke 22:43–46).

The Savior prayed for deliverance. What He was given was not an escape from the trial but comfort enough to pass through it gloriously.

Jesus Christ paid the ransom for all of our sins and those of all of Heavenly Father’s children so that we could be delivered from death and sin.

His command to His disciples, who were themselves being tested, is a guide for us. We can determine to follow it. We can determine to rise up and pray in great faith and humility. And we can follow the command added in the book of Mark: “Rise up, let us go” (Mark 14:42).

From this, you have counsel for passing the physical and spiritual tests of life. You will need God’s help after you have done all you can for yourself. So rise up and go, but get His help as early as you can, not waiting for the crisis to ask for deliverance.

I bear you my solemn witness that God the Father lives and loves us. I know that. His plan of happiness is perfect, and it is a plan of happiness. Jesus Christ was resurrected, as we will be. He suffered so that He could succor us in all of our trials. He paid the ransom for all of our sins and those of all of Heavenly Father’s children so that we could be delivered from death and sin.

I know that in the Church of Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost can come to comfort and to cleanse us as we follow the Master. May you receive His comfort and succor in your times of need, through all the tests and trials of your life. ■

From a devotional address, “The Power of Deliverance,” delivered at Brigham Young University on January 15, 2008.

NOTE

1. “Lead, Kindly Light,” *Hymns*, no. 97.



DETAIL FROM GETSEMANE, BY J. KIRK RICHARDS; OLIVE BRANCHES FROM GETTY IMAGES

In a Sacred Garden Place

Thoughtfully ♩ = 60-68

Words and music by Tammy Simister Robinson

1. In a sac - red gar - den place, I was ran - somed by Thy grace.
 2. I have seen Thy wound - ed flesh, Sym - bols of Thy will - ing gift.
 3. With this cup pressed to my lips, I will rev - 'rence, as I sip,

Plead - ing in Geth - se - ma - ne, Sav - ior, Thou didst pray for me.
 Though for all, Thy suff - 'rings be, Sav - ior, Thou didst die for me.
 Bo - dy, bro - ken, off - ered me. I will wit - ness now for Thee.

Sav - ior, Thou didst pray for me. Take this bro - ken heart of mine;
 Sav - ior, Thou didst die for me. Take this bro - ken heart of mine;
 I will wit - ness now for Thee. Take this bro - ken heart of mine;

Let my will be one with Thine. Plead - ing in Geth - se - ma - ne,
 Let my will be one with Thine. Though for all, Thy suff - 'rings be,
 Let my will be one with Thine. May no more Thy suff - 'rings be:

Sav - ior, Thou didst pray for me. Sav - ior, Thou didst pray for me.
 Sav - ior, Thou didst die for me. Sav - ior, Thou didst die for me.
 Sav - ior, I will live for Thee. Sav - ior, I will live for Thee.

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By Brian K. Ashton
Second Counselor
in the Sunday School
General Presidency

Three Lessons on Love, Joy, and Peace

Following these three steps can make a big difference in your life and help you feel the fruits of the Spirit.

When I was a college student, I thought a lot about my future. Once I got to the future—meaning life after college—I learned three critical lessons that made a big difference in my life. I want to share these lessons with you with the hope that you don't take as long as I did to learn them. They can help you find greater joy in life—and ultimately obtain exaltation with your Heavenly Father.

1. Seek Happiness, Peace, and the Holy Ghost

I met my wife, Melinda, during my sophomore year of college, about six months after I had returned from my mission. I knew immediately that I wanted to marry her. Melinda, however, did not have the same experience. It wasn't until five years later that she finally received an answer that it would be “OK” if she married me.



*As you do the
small things
and trust in the
sacrifice of
Jesus Christ,
you can find love,
joy, and peace
regardless of your
circumstances.*

During those five years, I had one of the more difficult trials of my life. I knew whom I was supposed to marry, and the Spirit urged me on, but I couldn't seem to reach that goal.

Shortly after I graduated, Melinda decided to go on a mission—in part, I am convinced, to get away from me. There were times while she was on her mission when I was miserable because I focused on what I didn't have. However, I was studying the scriptures and praying daily, serving in the Church, and striving to do the things that brought the Holy Ghost into my life.

One early, very cold Sunday morning in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, while I was driving to a Church meeting, I thought, "I should be really miserable right now. Nothing seems to be going the way I want. But I'm not miserable. I feel unbelievably happy!"

Now, how could I be happy if I was going through what, for me, was a difficult trial?

The answer is found in Galatians 5:22–23: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Because I was doing the things that brought the Spirit into my life, I felt God's love. I felt joy and peace. I could suffer long and still be happy.

Having love, joy, and peace in our lives, our families, and our marriages does not come from having a big house, nice cars, the latest clothing, career success, or any of the other things the world says bring happiness. In fact, because feelings of

love, joy, and peace come from the Spirit, feeling them doesn't have to be connected to our temporal circumstances at all.

Please understand that I am not saying that we will always be happy or that our temporal circumstances never affect our happiness. In fact, if we do not taste the bitter, we cannot know the sweet (see Doctrine and Covenants 29:39; see also Moses 6:55).

We need to struggle at times. Furthermore, some physical and emotional conditions can cause us great suffering and make it very difficult for us to feel the Spirit. But if we are striving to have the Spirit in our lives and are trusting God, we can, in general, be happy.

I testify from personal experience that this is true. Since my experience while Melinda was on her mission, I have noticed that if I am doing the things that bring the Spirit into my life, including choosing to believe and accepting that things will work out as God intends, I am usually happy (see Jacob 3:2).¹

2. Don't Fall for the Counterfeits

Satan offers counterfeit alternatives to all that God does in an attempt to confuse and deceive us. Despite Satan's attempts to convince us otherwise, the Savior teaches us that "a corrupt tree [cannot] bring forth good fruit" (3 Nephi 14:18). Because Satan is a corrupt tree, he cannot cause us to feel "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, [and] temperance" (Galatians 5:22–23). Rather, Satan wants to make us miserable (see 2 Nephi 2:27).

So what does Satan do? He tries to deceive us.

A friend of mine, one of the elect, was deceived. My friend served a mission and was an outstanding missionary. When she came home from her mission, she intended to do all the little things that had brought the Spirit into her life and had strengthened her on her mission. And for a time, she did.

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(3 Nephi 14:18).

However, she saw friends, many of whom were returned missionaries, come to church each Sunday but outside of church live as the world lives. They seemed happy. They were doing “fun” things. And their lifestyle didn’t seem to require as much work as hers did.

Slowly she stopped doing the little things that had brought her spiritual strength on her mission. She still had a testimony, but she told me that she had concluded, “If I was just attending my Church meetings, I was OK—I was on track.” Nevertheless, she said, “Spiritually, I was inactive.”² As she lived as the world lives, one bad choice led to another, and soon she became pregnant.

Her unrighteous choices eventually caught up with her. She wasn’t happy, and she knew it. Fortunately, my friend recognized that she had been deceived, and she repented.

Her story highlights that even the best of us can be deceived. Furthermore, her story points out that we must constantly guard against deception. We accomplish this by doing the little things that bring the Spirit into our lives.

I am happy to report that today my friend is happy, is striving to keep the commandments, and is physically and spiritually active in the gospel.

Satan’s deceptions come in many ways. I will only mention a few.

Satan tries to convince us to prioritize temporal things over spiritual things. We can tell if our priorities are out of place by noticing how often we say, “I’m just too busy or too tired right

now to _____.” Fill in the blank: attend the temple, minister, study and ponder the scriptures, fulfill my calling, or even say my prayers.

One reason we feel so busy is that Satan works hard to distract us. He uses the smartphone in our hand, the radio in our car, the televisions in our home, and myriad other things to keep us distracted almost all the time. As a result, we feel busier than we actually are.

Another result of this distraction is that we are pondering less and less. Satan works to distract us because he knows that pondering, especially the scriptures, leads to greater conversion and revelation.

Another of Satan’s deceptions comes through the idea that our outward actions matter more than our inward motivations. When we lack the proper motivation for doing spiritual things, we fail to experience the joy of the gospel. As a result, keeping the commandments starts to feel like drudgery, and Satan knows that if he can get us to feel this way, we are likely to stop doing what we know we should.

Satan also deceives us into believing that joy and happiness come from having an easy life or from simply having fun all the time. They do not. The truth is that there is no joy or happiness without something to overcome (see 2 Nephi 2:11, 23).

The last of Satan’s deceptions I will mention is that he tries to convince us that wickedness, with its temporary pleasures, really is happiness. Satan knows that, at least in the moment, certain feelings or emotions may (1) make us think we are feeling the fruits of the Spirit, (2) mask our desire for those fruits, or (3) feel like acceptable substitutes.



For example, Satan can tempt us to seek for lust in place of love. He can allure us with excitement instead of enduring joy. He attempts to distract us rather than grant us peace. He would have us be self-righteous, zealous, and politically correct in lieu of selfless, consistently obedient, and appropriately spiritually focused. His temptations can cause us to be confused, which in turn may lead us to think that breaking the commandments will bring happiness.

3. Do the Small Things

It is usually little things that bring the Spirit into our lives, keep us from being deceived, and ultimately help us obtain the strength to keep the commandments and gain eternal life. The Savior taught this principle to the elders of the Church in Kirtland, Ohio: “Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great” (Doctrine and Covenants 64:33).

Why are the small things so important? In the next verse, the Savior explained that “the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind” (Doctrine and Covenants 64:34). Why did the Savior link doing small things with the heart and a willing mind? Because in consistently doing the small things, we yield our hearts and minds to God, which purifies and sanctifies us (see Helaman 3:35).

This purification and sanctification changes our very nature, little by little, so that we

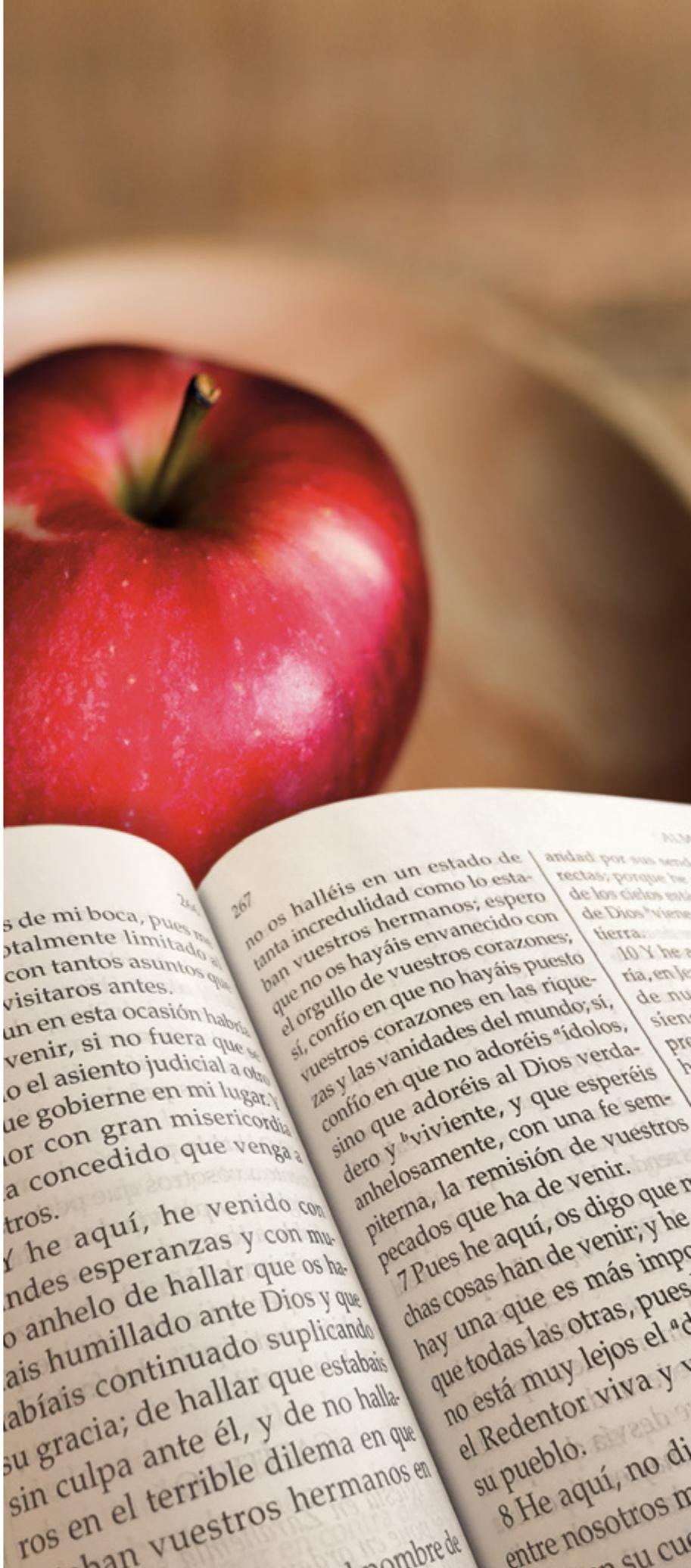
become more and more like the Savior. This also causes us to be more receptive to the promptings of the Holy Ghost, which makes us less likely to be deceived.

In my senior year of high school, my dad taught me seminary in our home. Because the topic that year was the Book of Mormon, my dad decided that we would read it together, verse by verse, and discuss what we learned. As we read, my dad would ask questions that got me thinking about what we were reading, and he would explain things I didn't understand. I still remember learning about the Savior and sensing that He really did visit the Nephites and that I really could be forgiven of my sins because of His Atonement.

I trace my foundation in the scriptures to those sessions my dad and I had together. I felt something as we read. And maybe more important, my desires, motivations, and actions changed. I wanted to be better. I began to see where I was being deceived. I repented more often. By the end of my freshman year of college, I was reading the scriptures every day.

Around this time, President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) asked Church members to read the Book of Mormon daily and apply what they learned.³ So, in addition to whatever else I was reading, I read at least something from the Book of Mormon.

On my mission I learned how to really study and feast upon the scriptures. Not only did I feel the Holy Ghost as I read, but I also started to feel



*I promise
that if you
will feast
upon the
scriptures daily,
especially
the Book of
Mormon,
you will invite
the Spirit into
your life.*

joy as I searched the scriptures to find answers to my problems and those of my investigators.

After my mission, I continued to feast upon the scriptures daily. Because this practice invited the Holy Ghost into my life, I received His direction to help me use my time more efficiently. As a result, I did better in school and, later, at work. It became easier to make good decisions. I prayed more and was more diligent in fulfilling my callings. Feasting upon the scriptures daily didn't solve all my problems, but life was easier.

In August 2005, President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) issued a challenge to read or reread the Book of Mormon before the end of the year.⁴ Because I was reading from the Book of Mormon daily anyway, I was already in Ether or Moroni. Consequently, upon finishing a week or two later, I concluded that I had completed President Hinckley's challenge.

But then a faithful home teacher came to visit our family. He asked how I was doing with President Hinckley's invitation.

I told him that I had the good fortune of having started the Book of Mormon before President Hinckley's challenge. Then, with some self-righteousness, I announced that I had completed the task.

Fortunately, my home teacher saw things differently. As he gently corrected me, the Spirit whispered to me that my home teacher was right.

Now I had to read two chapters a day to finish again by the end of the year. As I increased how

much I read in the Book of Mormon, I noticed that even more power came into my life. I had more joy. I saw things more clearly. I repented even more frequently. I wanted to minister to and rescue others. I was less susceptible to Satan's deceptions and temptations. I loved the Savior more.

That November I was called to be the bishop of our ward. Completing President Hinckley's challenge prepared me for that calling. Since then, I have noticed that the busier I become either at work or at church, the more I need to study the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon.

You can have the same blessings and power in your life if you too will feast upon the scriptures daily. I promise that if you will feast upon the scriptures daily, especially the Book of Mormon, you will invite the Spirit into your life and you will naturally pray daily, repent more often, and find it easier to attend church and partake of the sacrament weekly.

I testify that as you do the small things and trust the Lord, you can find love, joy, peace, and happiness regardless of your circumstances. I also testify that this is made possible because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. All good things come because of Him (see Moroni 7:22, 24). ■

From a devotional address, "Happiness, Deceit, and Small Things," delivered at Brigham Young University on December 5, 2017.

NOTES

1. When we are firm in the faith of Christ, we can feast upon God's love no matter our circumstances.
2. Interview notes and transcript in the author's possession.
3. See Ezra Taft Benson, "A Sacred Responsibility," *Ensign*, May 1986,

77–78; see also "The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion," *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 4–7.

4. See Gordon B. Hinckley, "First Presidency Message: A Testimony Vibrant and True," *Ensign*, Aug. 2005, 2–6.

We Put Our Trust in the Lord

Shortly after I returned from my mission, I received an invitation to go to a dance. At the dance, I misplaced my phone and a young man offered to help me find it. As we talked, we discovered we were both returned missionaries and shared many ideas and goals.

Our relationship continued to develop, and we became engaged. It was our dream to be sealed in the Washington D.C. Temple before it closed for remodeling in March 2018. But after making that decision, we were tested. First, I lost my job and had no way to save money for our trip to the temple. Next, a hurricane was on track to hit Puerto Rico just before our wedding date.

When Hurricane Maria struck, it devastated our beautiful island. Stores closed. We lost electricity; water, food,

and other basic items became hard to find. We lost everything we had planned to use for our reception. We had to cancel the reception, and it looked like we would also have to cancel our wedding. Travel in and out of Puerto Rico was limited, and no one knew for how long. I began to feel discouraged, and I was filled with doubt and confusion.

One night, my fiancé and I talked about our situation. Travel was uncertain, and we would have no reception or wedding clothes, but the Spirit confirmed that we needed to trust the Lord. The most important thing was to be sealed in the temple. We prayed to Heavenly Father for help.

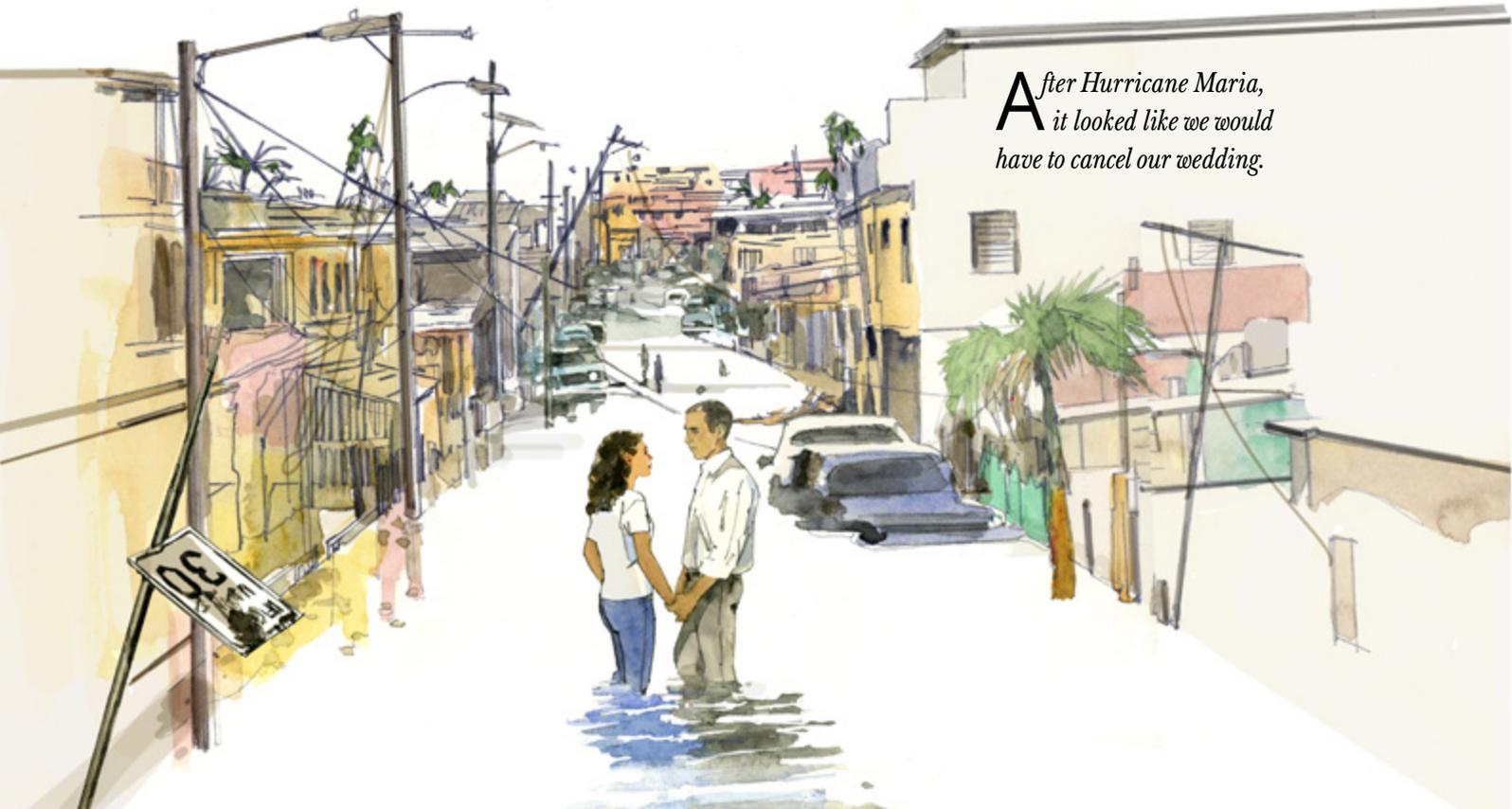
Once flights out of Puerto Rico resumed, we had to make new flight plans and reschedule our sealing date.

We were without communication for weeks after the hurricane, but a friend's cell phone worked. She let us use it to contact the temple. We were able to rearrange everything so we could still be sealed! A few weeks before our trip, family members and friends donated shoes and clothing and helped us obtain many things for our wedding.

When we finally entered the temple, we left all our worries behind. We held each other's hand to enter our future together. I can truly say I felt the Lord's hand guiding and reassuring us that as long as we trusted Him, everything would be OK. Today, we are blessed with a beautiful son and we are a family sealed for all eternity. ■

**Koraima Santiago de Jesus,
San Juan, Puerto Rico**

*After Hurricane Maria,
it looked like we would
have to cancel our wedding.*





“This Is It!”

I arrived home late one winter night after conducting many interviews as bishop. I was exhausted. Work had been stressful for weeks, and family and Church responsibilities made me feel stretched beyond my limits.

That evening, I had to fix my car so I could get to work the next morning. As I put on my coveralls, I changed roles from bishop to mechanic. I lay on the cold garage floor underneath the car and began working. Why did I have to be freezing, exhausted, and busting my knuckles after I had already worked so hard that day? I was losing my patience and began a whining, pleading prayer to Heavenly Father.

“Is it possible You could help me a little?” I said. “I’m trying my best to be a good father, husband, and bishop and to live the commandments. Wouldn’t I serve better if I could get some rest? Please help me get this done so I can go to bed.”

Suddenly, three clear, distinct words came boldly to my mind: “This is it!”

“What?” I responded.

The words came again: “This is it!”

Understanding began to fill my mind and heart when the words came a third time: “This is it!” These words carried a message to my spirit. “It” was mortal life, and I was experiencing a moment of growth designed to help me become what Heavenly Father wants me to become. It was as if the Spirit said to me, “Did you expect this earthly journey not to have struggles?” When I arose from that freezing concrete floor, I was not the same.

Depending on how we respond to them, trials can be seen as gifts from a loving Father in Heaven. He provides us the opportunity to face trials so we can learn to turn to Him. When we do, we are blessed with learning and spiritual growth.

The three words that came to my mind during that cold night on the concrete floor of my garage have blessed me for more than 35 years. I try hard to see that no trial is wasted. I see trials as opportunities to learn things I may never learn in any other way. ■

Richard J. Anderson, Utah, USA

I was working on my car when a clear message came boldly to my mind.

Seeing Dad Sing

I had been on my mission in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, for only four and a half months when I had a major seizure and was subsequently diagnosed with epilepsy. The ensuing months brought hospital visits, countless tests, and a new medication with frustrating side effects.

Until then, I had been so focused on missionary work that I hadn't experienced much homesickness, but from the moment of my seizure, my heart ached. I missed my parents and felt alone even while surrounded by wonderful, caring people. I didn't want to go home, but I wanted to feel peace.

With my mission president's permission, I spoke with my parents on the phone about my medication. My father, who had just fulfilled his lifelong

dream of joining the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, assured me that he would be singing his heart out for me in general conference, which began the next day.

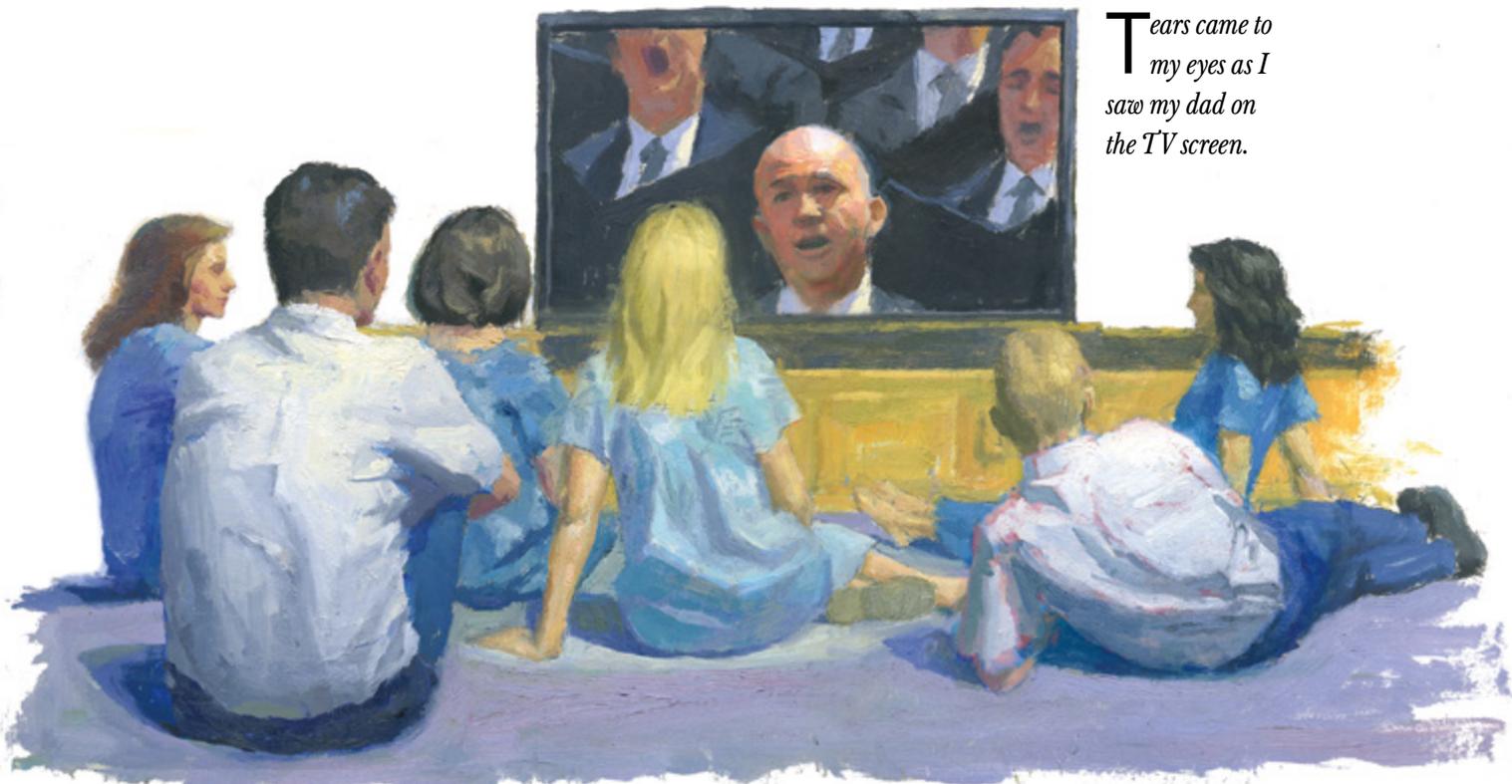
The next morning, I prayed fervently for the peace I so desperately needed. I had received answers to specific questions during general conference before, and I trusted that I could receive guidance again. As conference opened, the choir sang "Dearest Children, God Is Near You" (*Hymns*, no. 96). Within the first minute, I saw my dad on the TV screen. The camera zoomed in on his face for quite some time.

Tears came to my eyes as a tremendous feeling of peace enveloped me. I knew that God loved me. He knew

exactly what I needed that day—a simple assurance that He was near and was aware of me. I felt God's love, and by extension, the love of my family, my companions, and my mission president. Instead of feeling burdened, I now saw an opportunity to grow closer to the Lord.

My health challenges didn't disappear. I had to leave my mission early after all, but I knew that God was there and that He loved me. That assurance has followed me through many more heartaches and has given me hope in my darkest hours. Others may call it a coincidence, but I know that seeing my dad sing about God's love was a small miracle in my time of need. ■

Maria Oka, California, USA



Tears came to my eyes as I saw my dad on the TV screen.

An Invitation for Ricardo

When I hear about a Church activity, I always invite 10 people who are not members of the Church to attend. I have done this for years. I make invitations and place each in a white envelope and pray for the Spirit to guide me. Then I hand out the invitations. Rarely do all 10 attend, but even if only one attends, I feel I have been successful.

Several years ago, I prepared ten invitations to a fireside for married couples. I handed out nine to people at work and had one left. I didn't know whom to give it to. Minutes later, Ricardo, a sales representative, passed by my desk. I felt prompted to invite him, even though he had declined an invitation from a co-worker to attend an event at his church. I didn't think Ricardo would be interested.

But when Ricardo passed by my desk again on his way out, I felt the prompting again. However, he exited so quickly that I didn't have a chance to talk to him. I prayed that Ricardo would return if I was supposed to give him the invitation.

After I had finished praying, Ricardo came back to ask me a question. Afterward, I said, "Ricardo, my church is having an activity for married couples. We are going to share experiences about how to live happily each day. Afterwards, there will be dancing. If I invite you, will you come?"



I handed out nine invitations to people at work and had one left. I didn't know whom to give it to.

"Of course!" Ricardo said, but his answer didn't convince me.

"At least I did my part," I thought.

My wife and I arrived at the activity early to greet people as they arrived. Suddenly, I saw Ricardo with his wife, Regina. I introduced them to my wife and the others attending. All evening long, Ricardo and Regina looked like they were enjoying themselves. I was surprised when they said they would come to church on Sunday to learn more.

Ricardo, Regina, and their two children did learn more. Eventually, they joined the Church. Later, they were sealed in the temple. Ricardo once told me that he and his wife had been talking about a divorce, but then the Lord led Ricardo to my office.

I have since asked God to forgive me for thinking that Ricardo would not accept my invitation. I have learned that it is important to invite everyone. You never know who will accept. ■
Martin Apolo Cordova, Paraná, Brazil

Business Is Booming

By Joshua J. Perkey
Church Magazines

Thanks to what he learned in self-reliance classes, when one door closed on Teddy Reyes, another soon opened.

It's 4:00 a.m. in Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic, and Teddy Reyes is already up and working. He has a lot to do today to maintain his booming business. He begins slicing tomatoes and bread. Then he makes his special sauce.

By 6:00 a.m., two employees arrive to help him, and preparations speed up. By 8:00 a.m., they have made 300 sandwiches, wrapped individually in plastic wrap and loaded in bags. Six more employees show up, and the whole crew goes out to sell.

By 9:00 a.m., all but a few sandwiches—three or four that Teddy saved to feed his team—have been sold.

Business is good for Teddy. But things haven't always been easy. In fact, for the past five years, he hasn't been able to find steady work in his chosen profession as a lawyer.

So how did Teddy make the switch from counseling clients to selling sandwiches? It took a lot of hard work, of course, but it also took a careful application of principles he learned in classes offered through the Church's Self-Reliance Services initiative.



Losing His Job

Five years ago, life for Teddy looked amazing. He had a good job as a lawyer, he had recently gotten married, and he had baptized his wife. “But we had some challenges,” he says, “and I lost my job.”

For the next four years Teddy struggled to find work. “There was a lot of work I could do, but no one wanted to pay me. I tried starting different jobs on my own, but that didn’t work.”

His wife, Stephany, had a good job, but her salary alone couldn’t cover the bills. Soon the couple had a child. They were elated, but their finances grew tighter. They lost their house, had to sell their car, and used up all their savings. Eventually they had to move into a small house owned by Stephany’s mother.

But Teddy didn’t give up. Soon an unexpected opportunity presented itself.

The Power of Self-Reliance

After years of struggling, Teddy knew it was time for a change.

“I decided to take the Church’s self-reliance courses,” he says. “I had heard about them but always thought they weren’t for me. I thought they were just about doing things on your own. The classes were marvelous.”

First, Teddy joined a Personal Finances group. Then he joined a Starting and Growing My Business

group. Group classes helped Teddy with his business knowledge but also helped him develop spiritually.

“I decided to do everything they taught,” he says, “and my finances changed immediately. I started paying a full tithe, praying daily, studying the scriptures, and exercising faith. And things changed—I started to save money and to keep the Sabbath day holy. Every principle blessed me.”

In his Starting and Growing My Business group, Teddy learned how to identify a potential product that might benefit customers where he lives. As he evaluated what people were looking for, the inspiration started to flow. In his area, people liked fresh sandwiches, but they also liked to have them made to order—and delivered.

“Many restaurants have a special sauce that makes their food stand out,” Teddy says. “So I developed my own sandwich special sauce!”

Growing His Business

On the day he launched his business, Teddy made 30 sandwiches.

“Thirty minutes later, I was back home,” he says. “My wife became concerned when she found me on the couch. She asked me what I was doing home already—wasn’t I supposed to be selling sandwiches? I had already sold all of them!”

Over the next few weeks, Teddy contacted local businesses and schools. Many were eager to buy his sandwiches, and his business began growing. He learned quickly how to take care of fresh vegetables so that they last. He also knows exactly how long his special sauce will keep. He orders and picks up bread each evening. He buys discounted vegetables on Saturdays, which cost less but will still be good on Monday.

Soon he was receiving orders for specific types of sandwiches, and even large numbers for special occasions. He needed help, so he began hiring employees.

By creating positive relationships with local schools and businesses, Teddy created an active, consistent clientele. Within four months, he had eight employees and was selling 300 sandwiches a day, five days a week. His sales team was so efficient that they sold every sandwich even during the summer when the schools were closed. Now Teddy is ready to expand again.

Because he took the self-reliance classes, he was inspired to come up with the idea of the sandwich business. “Because of this guidance from the Church and the blessings I have received,” he says, “I have a very strong testimony of the Church and Jesus Christ.” ■



Our Son Is Heavenly Father's Son

By Jerlyn Murphy

Our sweet little son, Hayden, came into this world blue, not breathing, and struggling for life. No crying. No movement.

As doctors and nurses rushed around the hospital room, I knew something was terribly wrong. My husband and my father quickly gave Hayden a priesthood blessing, and Hayden was rushed off to intensive care. He was soon diagnosed with a rare heart malfunction. Within days he underwent several heart surgeries.

Through the miraculous power of priesthood blessings, fasting, and prayers, Hayden beat all odds and survived. We were overjoyed to bring our son home and begin our new lives together.

Hayden brought immeasurable joy into our lives. We cherished and adored him. But as time passed, I began to worry that he was not progressing as expected. Although specialists reassured us that he would eventually catch up, the nagging anxieties continued as I struggled to help my son.

My husband and I studied to learn all we could about Hayden's illness. We did everything the doctors told us to do. Yet progress didn't come.

I grew tired and frustrated. I pleaded with my Father in Heaven to help me find someone who could help Hayden, but help didn't come. Hayden's condition worsened. He started having seizures. We were scared. We thought we were losing him.

One night, I was up late searching for answers. I wrote Hayden a letter. I told him how much I loved him and how hard I was trying to make his life easier. I promised I would spend the rest of my life trying to get him the help he needed.

Frustration and uncertainty momentarily overwhelmed me. I knelt and asked my Father in Heaven, “Why?” I thought He had sent Hayden to me because He knew I would never give up trying to help my son. So why couldn’t I find any answers? Why did each new doctor and each new treatment lead to another roadblock? Didn’t Heavenly Father love Hayden?

I will never forget that moment. An overwhelming feeling of love suddenly embraced me. Words that were not my own entered my mind: “Jerlyn, do you think you love him more than I do?”

I froze. Time stood still. Tears flooded down my face—not out of frustration like before, but out of hope, understanding, and love.

In that one moment, everything changed. My heart softened. My questions changed. I understand now that my Father in Heaven loves Hayden with a perfect love. Hayden was sent

here in a body that is suited for his needs and his opportunities for growth and learning. He has his own unique set of abilities and challenges, just like each of us. I have come to know that children with disabilities are precious and beloved children of Heavenly Father who have a special mission here on this earth.

My husband and I constantly receive answers and blessings, but they come in the Lord’s tim-

ing, not our own. We have been led to the right books, therapies, schools, and teachers to help Hayden succeed in his mortal life. We strive to search for the path that our Father in Heaven has put in place for Hayden instead of the path we wanted him to walk. We are doing all we can to help Hayden reach his divine potential and live the life his Heavenly Father has designed for him. Our understanding of Heavenly Father’s plan has been so much clearer now that we understand that Hayden was His before Hayden was ours. ■

The author lives in Arizona, USA.

Words that were not my own entered my mind: “Do you think you love him more than I do?”



THE BODY: A PRICELESS GIFT

“For reasons usually unknown, some people are born with physical limitations. Specific parts of the body may be abnormal. Regulatory systems may be out of balance. And all of our bodies are subject to disease and death. Nevertheless, the gift of a physical body is priceless. Without it, we cannot attain a fulness of joy.

“A perfect body is not required to achieve a divine destiny. In fact, some of the sweetest spirits are housed in frail frames. Great spiritual strength is often developed by those with physical challenges precisely because they are challenged. Such individuals are entitled to all the blessings that God has in store for His faithful and obedient children.”

President Russell M. Nelson, “We Are Children of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 86–87.

Coping with Tragedy

Sooner or later, children will encounter tragedy, whether it's close to home or far away. But “even when the world is in turmoil all around us, we can receive the blessing of inner peace.”¹ Here are some things you can do to help children feel that peace.



Stability

When something tragic happens, children may feel like their world is out of balance. Be an example of steadfastness for them. Speak calmly and confidently about the issue. Maintain a routine as much as you can. Do all you can to keep holding family home evening, scripture study, prayer, and other family habits. With time, children can learn that even when their world is shaken, the gospel brings perspective and life goes on.

Respect

Show respect for children's emotions. Listen to children and acknowledge how they feel. Show them that you are taking their concerns seriously. Give them space if they need it but let them know you're available when they're ready to talk. Honestly answer questions as they arise in an age-appropriate way. Let your children know they can always talk to you about their fears and worries.



Guidance

Your children may ask, “Why does God let bad things happen?” Explain that both good times and bad times are part of life and part of God's eternal plan. He allows each person to make their own choices, and sometimes people make bad choices that cause suffering. Other times, tragedies are no one's fault but are just a part of nature. No matter what, Heavenly Father is there for us. With His help, we can learn and grow, even from painful experiences. We can turn to Him to find peace.

Empowerment

Show children that they have the power to make a difference by giving them a way to help. For example, they could help gather donations for disaster victims, visit an ill or injured friend in the hospital, cheer up someone who is dealing with a family loss, or pray for those who are struggling. We can't fix everything, but we have the capacity to do much good, and "we work for peace whenever we help relieve the suffering of another."²



Comfort

Remind your children that God loves them and that you love them. Don't give false promises that nothing bad will ever happen to them, but assure them that they're safe right now and that you will do all you can to protect them. Reassure them that Heavenly Father will help them get through any trial that comes their way.

When you find yourself disheartened by adversity, remember that in the end, good will triumph over evil. "We are waging a war with sin, . . . but we need not despair," taught President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018). "It is a war we can and will win. Our Father in Heaven has given us the tools we need in order to do so. He is at the helm. We have nothing to fear."³ ■

NOTES

1. "Peace," Gospel Topics, topics.lds.org.
2. "Peace," Gospel Topics.
3. Thomas S. Monson, "Looking Back and Moving Forward," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 90.

FOR CHILDREN

In this month's *Friend*:

- "I Will See Him Again" (page F20)
- "Comfort Cards" (page F21)

For other resources, visit lessonhelps.lds.org and click "Lesson Helps by Topic."



FOR TEENS

In this issue:

- "Finding Peace for Yourself and Others in Troubled Times" (pages 52–53).

For other resources, visit youth.lds.org.



Is God Guiding Me?

Our lives are full of big choices: what career path to take, whom to marry, where to go to school, etc. Our lives are also filled with daily concerns: choosing the best use of time, trying to understand doctrine, and finding peace amidst trials. All in all, **we need personal revelation.** But sometimes it can be hard to know how to receive it and how to recognize it when we do. When we aren't getting or recognizing answers, we may wonder, "Was that the Spirit or just my idea?" "Why did I feel inspired to do that and then failed?" "Why do I feel like God doesn't answer my prayers?"

Fortunately, in "Making Decisions: Agency vs. Revelation" (page 44), Erin shares her story about personal revelation when she had to make a life-changing decision. While **God wants to guide us,** He also wants to help us learn to rely on our agency to make good choices.

Learning how the Holy Ghost speaks to you personally is another vital part of receiving and recognizing revelation. It can be different for each of us. On page 48, many **young adults share how they receive revelation.**

In a digital-only article, Aspen explains that personal revelation requires "Exercising Your Spiritual Muscles."

Thinking of the future can be overwhelming, even frightening. Especially as a young adult. But when I remember how **God has led my life** in the past, it gives me courage to move forward and act, trusting that **He will continue to give me the guidance I need** along the way.

Sincerely,

Katie Sue Embley



BEST ADVICE . . .

Young adults share the best advice they've ever received about receiving personal revelation:

"My EFY counselor once told me, 'Develop your relationship with God as your literal spirit Father. The stronger your relationship with Him, the more you will understand and be guided.' That has made a huge difference in my prayers."

—**Grant Goolsby, California, USA**

"Our stake patriarch has everyone memorize one single phrase: 'to receive revelation, read revelation.' It has helped me so much as I have read the scriptures."

—**Shellby Tippetts, Missouri, USA**

"Take time to ponder. Joseph Smith pondered James 1:5 before he resolved to act. Sometimes Heavenly Father wants us to invest in prayer and study before He gives us answers. We learn the most that way."

—**Natasha Herbst, Utah, USA**

"Listen with your heart, not your ears."

—**Sai Tua, American Samoa**

What's the best advice you've ever received about repentance? Send us your response at liahona.lds.org by April 30, 2019.

ABOUT THE YOUNG ADULT AUTHORS

Erin Rider is an attorney and co-hosts a podcast. She just ran her first half marathon. In her free time she enjoys reading, hiking, wakeboarding, and spending time with family and friends.



Aspen Stander is a writer and editor from Utah, USA. She likes hiking, traveling, reading, and playing the piano.



Katie Sue Embley thinks the world is full of beautiful people whose stories should be shared. She studies journalism and Spanish, with the goal to #sharegoodness.



SHARE YOUR STORY

Do you have an amazing story to share? Or do you want to see articles about certain topics? If so, we want to hear from you! You can submit your article or your feedback at liahona.lds.org.

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Find these articles and more:

- At liahona.lds.org
- In **YA Weekly** (under "Young Adults" in the Gospel Library)
- At facebook.com/liahona

DIGITAL ONLY

Exercising Your Spiritual Muscles

By Aspen Stander



When it comes to big decisions, how much do we need to rely on God to tell us what to do?

Making Decisions: Agency ^{VS.} Revelation

By Erin Rider

Every day each of us faces many decisions. Some are more mundane, like, “What should I wear?” “What should I eat for lunch?” “Is it time to buy a new car, or can I hold onto my old one a little longer?” But every so often we come across a big decision—“Should I go back to school?” “Should I accept this job?” “Should I move to a new city?” “Should I buy a house?” “Should I date this person?” “Should I marry this person?” and so on.

When confronted with big decisions, we tend to—appropriately—take a little longer to make a choice. We follow the advice given to Oliver Cowdery in Doctrine and Covenants 9:8–9, where the Lord says:

“But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

“But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you

to forget the thing which is wrong.”

Although this is certainly good counsel, when it comes to big decisions, sometimes we rely a little too much on the part where God tells us what is right and not enough on the part where He tells us to study it out in our minds. We become so bogged down waiting for God to confirm our decisions that we let incredible opportunities pass us by. We may even recognize the role of agency, but we’re terrified of making a decision that could take us off course from our predetermined “plan” and end up assuming that anything other than a burning in the bosom or a voice from heaven means that our decision is wrong. For many of us, this unspoken tension between agency and personal revelation leads to one significant question: What is God’s role in helping us make decisions?

God’s Role in Our Decision-Making

Perhaps this question is best addressed through the story of the



brother of Jared. There's an interesting pattern of growth in this story that teaches us about the way God expects us to make decisions. After the languages were confounded at the Tower of Babel, Jared asks his brother to inquire of the Lord whether they should leave the land, and if so, where they should go (see Ether 1:36–43). The brother of Jared asks, and the Lord leads them to the seashore. As they travel, the Lord speaks to them in a cloud and directs every step of their journey. Eventually they reach the seashore, where they stay for four years.

At the end of the four years, God tells the brother of Jared to build barges and to get ready to cross the ocean. When the brother of Jared realizes the ships will have no air, he follows the same familiar pattern of going to God to ask what he should do. As expected, the Lord responds by giving him detailed instructions to make holes in the tops and bottoms of the ships. Notice the pattern of revelation so far: God gives them a plan, they ask questions about how to fulfill the plan, and God responds with detailed and definitive answers.

But after he makes holes in the ships, the brother of Jared realizes that the ships will have no light. He once again asks God what he should do. Instead of answering, however, God asks, "What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels?" (Ether 2:23). Rather than giving detailed instructions as He had

before, this time the Lord waits for the brother of Jared to decide what to do.

This kind of answer from the Lord is perhaps the hardest to understand when trying to make a decision. We are taught to pray and wait for an answer, so naturally we worry when we hear nothing in response. Often we wonder if the lack of a clear answer qualifies as a “stupor of thought” indicating our choice is wrong. Other times we wonder if it means we are not righteous enough to hear the answer or if we are not asking with “real intent” (see Moroni 10:4). But there is a third option that sometimes we don’t consider—maybe, like with the brother of Jared, God is waiting for *us* to make our *own* decision.

Making a Decision

I recently encountered a situation that challenged the way I thought about agency and personal revelation. As I was

nearing the end of graduate school, I had a few different job offers in different cities and could not decide which one to take. Like the brother of Jared, I had experienced many moments where I had prayed about a major decision and God answered with a pretty definitive response. Relying on those prior experiences, I began to pray and ask God to help me decide which job I should take. I was also doing my part by learning about each job opportunity and counseling with many people. But no matter how much I prayed or fasted, the heavens stayed silent, and I received no answer.

The deadline to make a decision was approaching, and I began to panic. Surely this was the kind of decision the Lord must care about, so why wasn’t He answering? Maybe He didn’t care about which job I chose, but He must care about which city I moved to since it would

undoubtedly have an impact on my life. The Lord had always cared about my decisions in the past, so why would He not care about this one too?

Yet no matter how hard I tried, no answer came. I started to wonder if I had drifted far enough away from God that I could not hear His answer. I also wondered if I could not hear because I subconsciously did not *want* to hear the answer. Finally, the day before the deadline, I knew I had to make a choice, so I used my judgment and made a decision. That night I simply prayed, asking if He would tell me if my answer was wrong. Still no response came, so I went ahead and took the job.

Several months later, I was still questioning my decision, so I asked for a priesthood blessing to receive reassurance. In the blessing I was told that I didn’t get an answer to my prayer because the Lord was happy with any decision I made.



This blessing reinforced advice previously given to me by my mission president, who told me that oftentimes it doesn't really matter what decision we make. God wants us to learn how to stand on our own two feet and decide how to live our lives. My mission president also reminded me that God, as our Heavenly Father, won't punish us and take away promised opportunities if we are sincerely trying to figure out what to do.

The brother of Jared likely could have suggested almost any solution to lighting the barges, and the Lord would have been fine with it. The point of the experience was not only for the brother of Jared to strengthen his faith but also to learn how to make a decision.

Exercising Agency

From an eternal perspective, exercising agency is a necessary component to

personal growth. Without it, we cannot make the kinds of decisions that will help us achieve our full potential. Growth, like everything else in the gospel, comes "line upon line, precept upon precept" (2 Nephi 28:30). God wants us to be a prepared people, not a paralyzed people, and He expects us to use our agency to live our lives as best we can.

Once we learn to find the balance between agency and revelation, we can experience true spiritual growth. This is what happened to the brother of Jared. After thinking it through, he worked to molten 16 stones out of a rock and asked God to touch them and make them glow (see Ether 3:1-5). This time, when God responded, everything changed. Rather than hearing the voice of God in a cloud, the brother of Jared actually *saw* the Lord, who not only appeared in person but also showed the brother of Jared

incredible visions of the world and everything that was to come (see Ether 3:6-26). It is possible that the brother of Jared would not have been spiritually prepared to receive that vision if he had not first experienced the personal growth that came from making his own decision.

As we make decisions, we should certainly follow Alma's advice to "counsel with the Lord in all [our] doings" (Alma 37:37). When the Lord needs us to make a specific decision, He will let us know and help prevent us from going astray. But we must also be prepared to stand up and move forward in faith, whether or not an answer comes. As long as we are keeping our covenants and staying true to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can feel confidence in our righteous decisions and peace that the Lord is pleased with our efforts. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.



How do you tell the difference between revelation and your own thoughts?



PERSONALIZED Personal Revelation

We live in a world of many opportunities. We have the freedom to choose our own career, school, spouse, where we want to live, and so much more. It's truly a blessing of our generation. But on the other hand, it makes all these choices more difficult because it's hard to make decisions when there are so many paths and opportunities that will lead to good things. How do we choose the right when there are so many opportunities that are good? When you feel lost and confused in this storm of decisions, know that Heavenly Father wants to guide you. You can choose the right path and get the answers you're seeking if you follow His voice. Recognize how He speaks to you, trust Him, follow the prophet, be patient, be more optimistic, and have faith, and ultimately you will be led in the right direction.

—*Vira Vashchenko, Kyiv, Ukraine*

Throughout my life I have seen how the Lord has guided me, and I recognize that all I have achieved is thanks to Him and His guidance. Even in the moments when I think I walk alone, at the end, He lets me know and feel that He has always been there with me. That is why I have made the decision to always continue forward with faith, even when I feel that I am on my own. For me, my path is not always clear at times, and I can't always see what awaits me in the future, but I always take steps of faith, and then I begin to see the light and recognize God's hand in my life. I know that our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, love us and that They are willing to guide us, but They also expect us to put our faith in Them and act when we receive promptings from the Spirit.

—*Indhira Mejia, Dominican Republic*



I think that one of the most amazing techniques we must master is the ability to recognize the soft whisperings of the Holy Ghost. Diligent scripture study has pushed me further to master it. I have always believed that he who seeks diligently will find; and the mysteries of God will be unfolded before him by the power of the Holy Ghost (see 1 Nephi 10:19). In other words, if I want to recognize the Spirit, I can't let myself be led into useless thoughts or the everyday concerns of life, but instead I must dive into the work and forget myself. That is when I will be better able to recognize the Spirit because I'm ready for it! In the same way a ship cannot easily travel through a storm, we cannot hear the Spirit if we are carried away by the cares of life that are outside of our control.
—*Emmanuel Borngreat Dogbey, Accra, Ghana*

As I've gotten older, I've had to learn the language of the Spirit. The Spirit talks to me through simple thoughts. It has taken some practice to get used to, but usually the Spirit comes to me in quiet places, like driving to work in my car. I know it's not my thoughts because the Spirit will often jump in when I wasn't even thinking of the subject.
—*Clarissa Mae Taylor, Utah, USA*

In our little family, we recognize the Spirit because of the peace we feel, especially my husband and I together as a couple. When it's our own thoughts, we never feel that it's definitely the right thing—there's always an underlying doubt or fear. But when it's revelation, we always feel peace, even if we try to rationalize and things don't seem to make very much sense at first. When we follow it and make it through, we always see things falling into place and everything works out. That's when we look at each other and say, "Oh, now it makes sense!"
—*Maryana Wright, Utah, USA*



Although we may all receive personal revelation in different ways, one thing is undoubtedly true: God speaks to us often. We just need to be willing to put in the effort to increase our ability to recognize and hear His voice. As President Russell M. Nelson counseled: "Pray in the name of Jesus Christ about your concerns, your fears, your weaknesses—yes, the very longings of your heart. And then listen! Write the thoughts that come to your mind. Record your feelings and follow through with actions that you are prompted to take. As you repeat this process day after day, month after month, year after year, you will 'grow into the principle of revelation'" ("Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 95). ■



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When I first

went to senior high school, there was one thing I struggled with: when a new subject was introduced, I would find it difficult to understand. One evening I prayed to Heavenly Father to help me understand and overcome that challenge. I had faith, and I was able to understand better. Since then, prayer and faith have been on my to-do list in school and everywhere I go.

Being in a boys school is challenging because of some of the immoral things students do. When that happens, the words of my parents come to my mind: "Don't do something that will drive the Holy Ghost away." I am grateful to my mum, who always reminds me to listen to the Holy Ghost. When we do what is right, God blesses us.

Nyame S., age 16, Ghana

FINDING PEACE

Sometimes life turns us upside down and inside out. You may be worried about family concerns, health issues, problems at school, or any number of troubling events in the world today. How can we find personal peace in a troubled world? Whether your lack of peace comes from events outside your control or from things you can influence and change, here are some ideas to help you find inner peace through Jesus Christ.

4 WAYS TO FIND PEACE FOR YOURSELF

1. Focus on the eternal

It's hard to feel at peace when you're focused only on short-term worries. But if you focus on the big picture, God's plan of happiness, you can find peace in knowing that what hurts right now won't last forever. For example, the temple helps us focus on eternity. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said that in the temple "you will know a peace that you will find nowhere else."¹

2. Let go of what you can't control

When something outside your control takes away your peace, it's tempting to feel hopeless or angry. But it doesn't help to linger on things you can't change. Instead, draw close to the Savior to find inner peace even when life deals you a bad hand. He has promised to send you the Comforter, the Holy Ghost (see John 14:26–27).

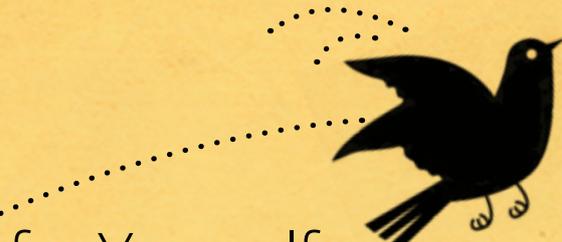
3. Forgive others

Often the hardest thing to let go of is the negativity you feel when someone wrongs you. But Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: "We will receive the joy of forgiveness in our own lives when we are willing to extend that joy freely to others. . . . As a result, the Spirit of the Lord will fill our souls with the joy accompanying divine peace of conscience (see Mosiah 4:2–3)."² Turning to the Savior can help you be free of emotional burdens and be filled with peace.

4. Repent and rely on Christ

No matter what else is going well in your life, carrying the burden of sin will always rob you of peace. Sometimes we need our bishop to help us fully repent. But we all need to regularly repent and, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, become clean of everything that keeps us from becoming more like Him.





for Yourself and Others in Troubled Times

By Alex Hugie and Aspen Stander
Church Magazines

*Here are eight ways to help
yourself and others feel
peace when life gets tough.*



4 WAYS TO HELP OTHERS FIND PEACE

1. Share the gospel of Jesus Christ

Just as we can find peace for ourselves by focusing on the Savior, we can point others to Him as “the founder of peace” (Mosiah 15:18). For example, try sharing a scripture or a quote from general conference that helped you learn more about Jesus Christ.

2. Be a peacemaker

Help your friends or siblings resolve conflicts. Like the Anti-Nephi-Lehies in the book of Alma, we can bury our weapons of war—weapons like gossiping, seeking revenge, or being selfish—and trade them instead for instruments of peace: speaking kindly, obeying God’s commandments, and forgiving others (see Alma 24:19).

3. Be a good listener

Sometimes people who are struggling need to talk openly about their thoughts and feelings instead of keeping them inside. We don’t have to solve their problems for them, but we can simply listen to their concerns and provide support, showing Christlike love and understanding.

4. Minister to those in your ward and community

You could volunteer at a homeless shelter, serve as a peer tutor, or bring treats to a new family in your neighborhood. Help people find peace in the small things. Having a consistent place to eat and sleep, a reliable mentor, or a small assurance that someone cares can go a long way.

Jesus spoke these words of comfort to all who struggle to find peace: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). If we bring ourselves and others closer to Jesus Christ, we can find peace even when life gets tough. ■

NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, in “Rejoice in the Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2002, 63; *Liahona*, Dec. 2002, 33.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Point of Safe Return,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 101.



LIFE IS A **MAR**



ATHON

These young Latter-day Saints live today where the Apostle Paul lived during New Testament times. And they live by his words.

By Sally Johnson Odekirk
Church Magazines

A few months ago, a seminary class met at Mars Hill, near Athens, Greece, where the Apostle Paul once delivered a powerful sermon (see Acts 17:22–34). The students talked about the influence of seminary in their lives, including the teachings of Paul.

“Living in Greece makes the New Testament come alive,” says Alexis H., age 18. “My father likes to go to different ruins where Paul taught and will share a scripture or tell us a story about where the event happened.”

Just as Paul faced challenges in his time, youth in Greece also deal with social, political, and economic issues. Youth conferences and Young Women camp are rare events in Greece, and even attending seminary can be difficult. Despite these and other challenges, youth in Greece put into practice Paul’s encouragement to “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (Philippians 1:27).

Living in Greece means these young members get to enjoy warm weather, beaches, food, and dancing. They also really enjoy getting together with each other. As they meet in seminary and branch activities, they have become stronger in faith and friendship.

Seminary on Mars Hill

When seminary began in Greece a few years ago, there were only five students. They meet three mornings a week, with some joining via online video



"I have learned that the gospel is the same everywhere. Living overseas, I have learned to focus on the gospel truths and to feel the Spirit instead of getting distracted by culture."

—Bryana W., 15



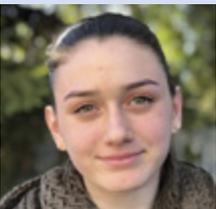
"I wrote the word remember on my mirror to remember all that's happened this year: FSY, Young Women camp, seminary. It helps me remember where I came from."

—Marie H., 17



"I know that when I go to seminary I can feel satisfaction knowing that I'm doing what I need to do, and I know that everything will be OK."

—Lizzie T., 17



Loukia C., 15, bore her testimony for the first time at Young Women camp and was later baptized.



The seminary group in front of the Athens meetinghouse.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF LEEANN HEDER

conferencing. They also meet on Wednesday afternoons for seminary, followed by an activity. They have drawn close to each other and become a light to their friends, who notice their example. When their friends ask questions, the youth bring them to seminary and Mutual activities.

One young man, Pavlos K., 15, says, "Going to seminary is a good way to start the day and helps me to stay strong. It puts me in the mind-set of being an example to others. It helps to begin the day thinking about Jesus Christ."

As the youth grow in strength and unity, blessings and opportunities come. For example, in 2017 they were blessed to attend For the Strength of Youth (FSY), a large regional youth conference. The young women also participated in the first-ever Young Women camp in Greece. As a result, they have grown even closer as a group, and two young women joined the Church.

International FSY Conference

The conference, held in Germany, brought together young Latter-day Saints from across

Europe. Youth from Greece and Cyprus came from hundreds of miles away, and the conference experience had a profound impact on them. For Maximos A., 14, "the most memorable thing at FSY was when we shared our testimonies. Everybody felt the Spirit, and it inspired me to develop my own testimony."

"At first only four youth were going to go," adds Loukia C., 15, "but in the end, we had 15 attend—a record for Greece—including 3 non-member friends." "It was so nice to be together somewhere where you share the same gospel and you're not the different one. We were all together, and we were feeling the same Spirit. These things help me."

"My father isn't a member and wouldn't let me go to FSY or be baptized," says Jesiana, 16. "But then branch members fasted for me, and my grandmother talked with my father. After that he said I could go!"

At FSY, she experienced many firsts, such as, "participating in the lessons and activities and bearing my testimony helped me understand

what it is really like to feel the Holy Ghost. I had never felt the Spirit like that before, and I was so happy and excited. I bore my testimony for the first time.”

In addition to being spiritually fed, the youth were able to relax and have fun together at the conference. Haig T., 14, came to the conference from Cyprus. “I learned to be more social, to have real friendships, and to have fun, even in the hard times.”

Young Women Camp

The Young Women camp had a similar effect. Twelve young women met with their leaders near the ancient battle site of Marathon. They spent three days together, learning to rely on each other for strength and encouragement.

“When I was 12,” says Loukia, “I went to church for the first time and was so happy, but then I realized that I was the only one my age. Now, two years later, we have so many young women that for the first time we were able to have Young Women camp.” As they met together, she says, “I realized what it means to be a Latter-day Saint. When we live the gospel, a light surrounds us.”

For Bryana W., 15, FSJ and Young Women camp helped her open up and talk to others. “My family moves often, and I had a hard time



“My favorite part of FSJ were sports, dance, and the group meetings, which were morning devotionals and review. It helped me be more helpful and patient and to appreciate the scriptures more.”
—Haig T., 14



On the way to FSJ in Stuttgart, Germany.



At the FSJ conference, spelling the word “Ask,” from James 1:5.

“Stand fast
in one
spirit, with
one mind.”

Philippians 1:27



“At FSJ, we started becoming a group and it strengthened us. It helped shape and influence the youth program in Greece because now we know each other much better.”
—Alexis H., 18



“Singing on the stage at FSJ was one of the most courageous things I’ve ever done and one of the most magical moments I’ve ever had. At the moment, I learned how important we are in this beautiful world.”
—Irlini S., 17



Irlini S. performs at FSJ.



“At Young Women camp I learned that life is like a marathon. It helped me grow my faith, knowing that we have to continue in the right path, just like we are running a marathon. That experience helps me grow my testimony and continue to have faith and stay on the right path.”

—Winifred K., 14

“Life is a marathon, not a sprint.”

Young Women camp theme



Young women at Marathon, Greece.



“We are all unique, just like the pebbles on the beach are each unique.” —Bryana W.



“Watching the sunrise brought a calming, beautiful spirit.” —Lizzie T.

bonding with others because I was shy,” she says. “But because I became close with our group at FSY, I made some really good friends. During testimony meeting, we shared our feelings, and I realized that others felt the same way that I did.”

Marie H., 17, remembers the camp theme, “Life is a marathon, not a sprint.” The young women and their leaders discussed the importance of enduring and finishing the race, she says. “It reminded me that I can endure, pace myself, and stay focused on the finish line. Then I can accomplish the things that Heavenly Father needs me to do.”

One of the highlights of the camp was a sunrise devotional at the beach on their last morning. Lizzie T., 17, says, “We took our scriptures, had our devotional, and watched the sun rise. We all felt the love of God. It was a wonderful ending to the time we spent with each other.”

Fearlessly Facing the Future

“From FSY and Young Women camp, I learned a lot about the gospel and how it can help me in my life,” says Irini S., 17. “I made a lot of friends and learned how important it is to express my thoughts and feelings. I felt the Holy Ghost deeply and the love of our Savior, Jesus Christ.”

Being around other Latter-day Saint youth, she says, strengthened her confidence. “Before FSY I couldn’t see the good and beautiful things that God made for us and the plans that He is still making for us.”



Young Women camp, 2017—the first ever in Greece.

“We shouldn’t be affected by anyone or anything else around us that would try to pull us away from living the gospel,” Manasseh A., 17, says. “The gospel is the same everywhere and we should always stay on the right path.”

And whether it’s in Greece or elsewhere in the world, sharing that path together allows us to be one in spirit. ■

The Church in Greece



In the early 1900s, Rigas Pofantis, a printer from Athens, sent a request to leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for information. The president of the Church’s mission in Turkey taught Pofantis, who was baptized in October 1905.



The Church experienced little growth in Greece until the 1950s, when Greek-American Church members in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, organized the Hellenic Latter-day Saint Society to retain their heritage and maintain ties with their homelands.



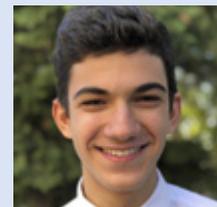
Church leaders organized a small congregation in Athens in 1965 and reorganized it in 1967. They established the Greece Athens Mission in July 1990 and completed construction of the first meetinghouse in Greece in May 1999.



Athens, Greece, meetinghouse in Halandri



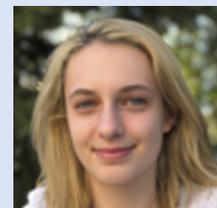
Church
Membership: 802
Congregations: 3



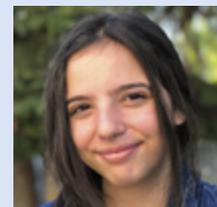
“I really liked to see what it is like to be around youth who have the same beliefs. I felt like we were all connected in some special way, more than just knowing each other’s names.” —Pavlos K., 15



“I’m glad that I had the opportunity to meet other youth that go through the same things that I do every day.” —Joshua K., 17



“FSY and Young Women camp have the same feeling no matter where you go in the world. I enjoyed the smaller Young Women camp because it was easier to connect with each other.” —Olivia H., 15



“I am not a member of the Church, but I come every week I can. I adore what the young women stand for.” —Irene C., 14

“How can my patriarchal blessing help me make decisions?”

“A patriarchal blessing is a revelation to the recipient, even a white line down the middle of the road, to protect, inspire, and motivate activity and righteousness. A patriarchal blessing literally contains chapters from your book of eternal possibilities. . . .

“. . . It is a Liahona of light to guide you unerringly to your heavenly home.”

President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018), “Your Patriarchal Blessing: A Liahona of Light,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 65, 67.



Our Personal Liahona

Patriarchal blessings are a way that Heavenly Father helps us know our pre-mortal, mortal, and eternal identity. By knowing these three special truths about ourselves, it helps us follow the plan God has for us. We know who we are, why we are here, and where we can be. As the Liahona worked according to the faith and diligence of Nephi and his family in following its counsel (see 1 Nephi 16:28), we too can be faithful and diligent in following our own Liahona and its counsel, which will guide us to our divine potential.

Elder Utai, age 20, Argentina Salta Mission



An Eternal Perspective

Whenever I feel clueless in making decisions, I turn to my patriarchal blessing and ponder its divine revelation. And then deciding becomes easy. It not only helps me endure my earthly life and reap promised blessings, but it also reminds me of preparing myself to worthily enter the Lord’s kingdom someday. It continually helps me grow in faith, trust in the Lord’s will, and live with an eternal perspective.

Abegail F., age 18, Cagayan Valley, Philippines



Heavenly Counsel

My patriarchal blessing gives me counsel from my Heavenly Father. If I follow that counsel, I know

I will get revelation on decisions I need to make. He answers some of my questions even before I ask them.

Cami H., age 16, Utah, USA

Listen to the Spirit

If you are searching for comfort and guidance or for an answer to a burning question, you can pray sincerely about it and read your patriarchal blessing with real intent of heart, while listening to the Spirit. Searching the scriptures helps too. I believe that if you do this with real faith, the Lord will answer you, in His own time, in the best way.

Kezia B., age 15, Hawaii, USA

Promised Blessings

Patriarchal blessings tell us what God wants to bless us with. He gives us warnings and explains how we can become more like Him. When we know what Heavenly Father has in store for us and how to get it, we will choose and act accordingly to receive it.

Hunter H., age 18, Utah, USA

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



As a young woman, should I be more focused on an education and career or on becoming a wife and mother?

We know that “the family is central to the Creator’s plan” and that “mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children.”¹ And we also know that, for a variety of good reasons, both men and women have been counseled by prophets to get an education.² In addition, we know that many women will either need or want to pursue careers.

President Dallin H. Oaks, First Counselor in the First Presidency, has said that for women, the choice is not between either family or education and career. “Timing is what we have to choose,” he said. “And we seek the inspiration of the Lord and the teachings of His servants in doing that.”³

Plan to get an education, and plan to have a family. You can also plan to have a career. In all of this, your focus should be on following Heavenly Father’s plan and seeking His will.

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” familyproclamation.lds.org.
2. See *For the Strength of Youth* (2011), 9.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, Face to Face event with Elder Oaks and Elder Ballard (worldwide young single adult event, Nov. 19, 2017), broadcasts.lds.org.

At lds.org/go/41961, a young adult shares her story of not being sure if she should focus on her career or her family. See what President Russell M. Nelson said to her.

What Do You Think?

“What do you say when your friends don’t believe that things like the First Vision could happen?”

Submit your answer and, if desired, a high-resolution photograph by May 15, 2019, at liahona.lds.org (click “Submit an Article or Feedback”). Or email your answer and photograph to liahona@ldschurch.org. Include your full name and names of your ward and stake (or branch and district).

Responses may be edited for length or clarity.

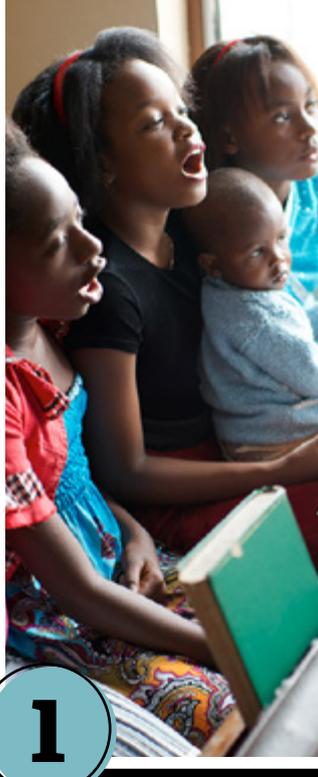


By David Dickson
Church Magazines

Christmas usually gets the most attention when it comes to holidays. Yet without the long-ago events we celebrate each Easter, Christmas wouldn't exist.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) once taught, “There would be no Christmas if there had not been Easter. The babe Jesus of Bethlehem would be but another baby without the redeeming Christ of Gethsemane and Calvary, and the triumphant fact of the Resurrection.”¹

Here are a few traditions you might consider adding to your yearly celebrations.



1

Go Easter Caroling

Setting aside the whimsical versions about reindeer and elves, Christmas carols are all about Jesus Christ. Easter is the perfect time for music about the Savior, and yes, even when sung at the front doors of your neighbors.

If you're stuck for ideas, check out the “topics” section of the hymnbook under “Easter” and “Atonement” for songs. Any song celebrating Jesus Christ is a match for Easter caroling.



2

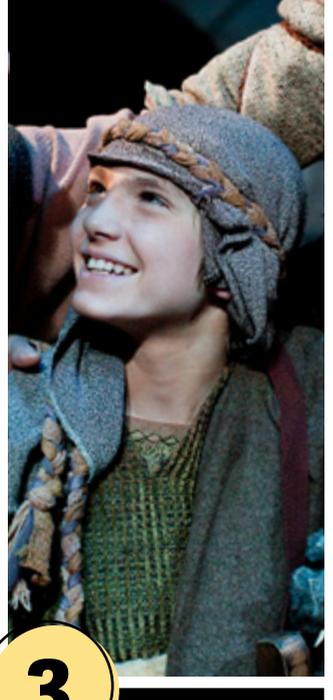
Forgive Someone

How often have you been grateful for the gift of repentance? Easter offers a chance to put more thought into how we extend that same spirit of forgiveness to others.

Jesus taught: “Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another. . . .

“I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men” (Doctrine and Covenants 64:9–10).

Ask yourself: Whom are you harboring bad feelings toward? Pray for strength to forgive this person, and let the Savior help those painful feelings disappear.



3

Put on a Play or Other Performance

You can arrange an Easter performance. A simple example might be a scriptural reading for family home evening or a community singalong concert.

Did you know that the materials for the musical *Savior of the World* are available on LDS.org?² You can download the script, the music, and even accompaniment tracks. The second act is ideal for Easter. You might even simply perform a single scene from the production.

Try Some --- New Easter Traditions



4

Visit Graves of Loved Ones

Because of Jesus Christ, death has lost its sting (see 1 Corinthians 15:55). Spend time visiting the graves of loved ones to ponder this great news.

You might even read out loud some favorite scriptures that deal with the Resurrection as you visit these graves. A few (of the *many*) scriptures to consider for this are 1 Corinthians 15:20–22; Alma 11:42–44; and Doctrine and Covenants 88:14–16.



5

Be a Little Better

Easter honors the events of Gethsemane, what transpired on the cross, the Savior rising from the dead on the third day, and then His ministering for 40 days before ascending to heaven.

Additionally, not long after ascending to heaven, Jesus Christ appeared to the Nephites and ministered to them (see 3 Nephi 11–28). That’s a lot to celebrate!

Why not expand your Easter season? Let your soul delight longer in the miracles of Easter. Make a conscious effort to be more Christlike

during the 40 days after Easter. For inspiration, consider the following invitation from President Russell M. Nelson: “Consecrate a portion of your time each week to studying *everything* Jesus said and did as recorded in the Old Testament, for He is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Study His laws as recorded in the New Testament, for He is its Christ. Study His doctrine as recorded in the Book of Mormon, for there is no book of scripture in which His mission and His ministry are more clearly revealed. And study His words as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, for He continues to teach His people in this dispensation.”³

Your Traditions Are Waiting

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught, “To find the most important day in history, we must go back to that evening almost 2,000 years ago in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus Christ knelt in intense prayer and offered Himself as a ransom for our sins.”⁴

The most important events in history are worth taking time to ponder each year. Traditions help us do that, whether the ones from this list or any of your own choosing.

What will you add this year? ■

This Easter, spend some more time remembering the greatest gift ever given.

NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Wondrous and True Story of Christmas,” *Ensign*, Dec. 2000, 5.
2. Visit [lds.org/callings/music/savior-of-the-world](https://www.lds.org/callings/music/savior-of-the-world).
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Prophets, Leadership, and Divine Law” (worldwide devotional for young adults, Jan. 8, 2017), [broadcasts.lds.org](https://www.broadcasts.lds.org).
4. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Behold the Man!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2018, 108.

The Greatest Expression of God's Love

By President M. Russell Ballard

Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

God expresses His love for us by providing the guidance we need to progress and reach our potential. He who knows most about us, our potential, and our eternal possibilities has given us divine counsel and commandments in His instruction manuals—the holy scriptures. When we understand and follow these instructions, our lives have purpose and meaning. We learn that our Maker loves us and desires our happiness. In an incomparable manifestation of this divine love for us, He sent His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:16–17).

Jesus was born into mortality. He led a perfect life and, in so doing, marked the path for us to follow. He taught His disciples: “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

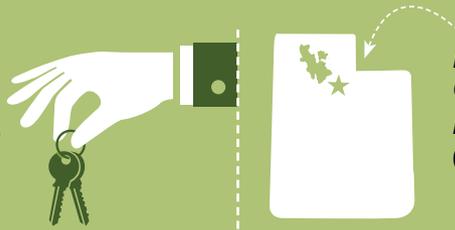
We may begin to understand the depths of Christ's love for us when we consider that He was willing to atone and suffer the pain for our sins, “which suffering caused [him], even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit” (Doctrine and Covenants 19:18).

This Easter, let us give special thanks to God for the Atonement and Resurrection of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. For in Him, by Him, and through Him, this temporary mortal condition can be made into a permanent, perfect existence, for which words cannot express our joy.

All the marvels of nature are glimpses of His divine power and expressions of His love. Yet the greatest of all miracles awaits us. It will occur when, by His power, we will come forth from death and the grave to a new world that will not pass away, where, if we are worthy, we will be with Him and our Father in Heaven forever and ever. ■

From an April 1988 general conference address.

Worked for his father's **car dealership** in the early 1950s and was the **top salesperson.**



Born on **October 8, 1928,** in **Salt Lake City, Utah.**



Attended the **University of Utah.**

President **M. RUSSELL BALLARD**



Served a full-time mission to **England.**



Served as **mission president** in the **Canada Toronto Mission** from 1974 to 1977.



Met his wife, **Barbara Bowen,** at the University of Utah **"Hello Day Dance."**



Married **Barbara Bowen** in the **Salt Lake Temple** on **August 28, 1951.**



Grandfather: Elder **Melvin J. Ballard** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Grandfather: Elder **Hyrum Mack Smith** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Sustained to the **Quorum of the Twelve Apostle** on **October 6, 1985.**



Set apart as **Acting President** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on **January 14, 2018.**

After the **October 1980** general conference, he wrote more than **600 letters** of encouragement to members who were struggling with their testimonies.



Has **7** children, **43** grandchildren, and **91** great-grandchildren.

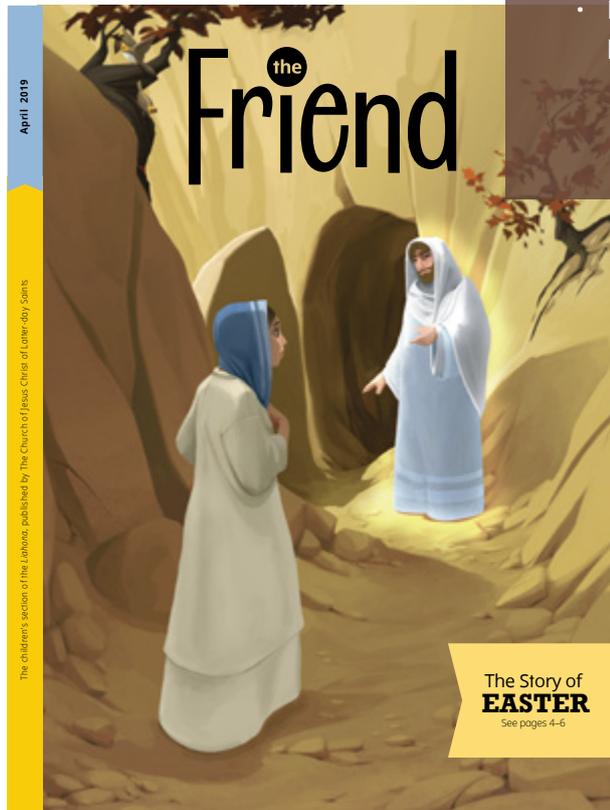
Keeps an **Oreo cookie** encased on his desk as a reminder of a boy who had just made a long journey to a refugee camp, received a package of cookies, and offered the first one to President Ballard.



MORE PAGES FOR CHILDREN

Put the new *Friend* to good use. If you don't have children in your home, you can:

- Share the *Friend* with a family who doesn't receive the *Liahona*.
- Give it to a friend or neighbor.
- Pass it on to a Primary leader or teacher.



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THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

the Friend

The children's section of the *Liahona*, published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



The Story of
EASTER

See pages 4-6



By President
Russell M.
Nelson

God's Great GIFT

One day Sister Nelson and I saw some tropical fish at an aquarium. Fish with bright colors and different shapes and sizes darted back and forth. I asked a nearby worker, "Who feeds these beautiful fish?"

She answered, "I do."

Then I asked, "Have the fish ever thanked you?"

She replied, "Not yet!"

Some people are like those fish. They are not aware of God and His goodness to them. How much better it would be if we could be more aware of God's love and express gratitude to Him.

Thankful for Jesus Christ

God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to help us. He did that because He loves us so much.

Jesus came to **redeem** us.

Because of His **Atonement**, we can be resurrected after we die.

Because of His Atonement, we can return to live with Heavenly Father forever.

Jesus explained:

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"

(John 11:25–26).

This is the wonderful message of Easter! ●

*From "Thanks Be to God," Ensign or
Liahona, May 2012, 77–80.*



redeem:

pay for our sins so we can return to God

Atonement:

when Jesus suffered for our sins in the Garden of Gethsemane and died on the cross at Calvary



Jesus Is My Savior

Jesus was resurrected on Easter morning. Read the sentences to find out what He has done for us. Color in a sun ray after you read each sentence. Then color the rest of the picture.

Jesus suffered in Gethsemane and on the cross to save us from our sins.

Jesus died and was resurrected to save us from death.

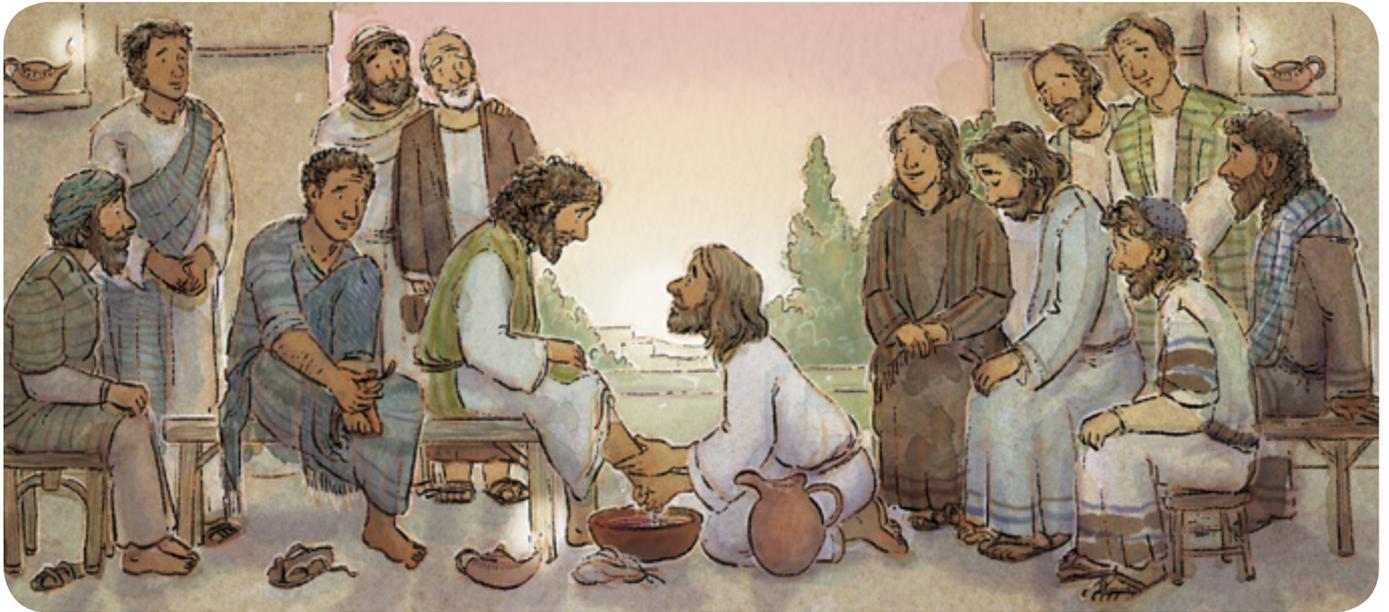
Jesus gave us the sacrament to help us remember Him.

Jesus taught us to forgive others.

Jesus showed us how to be kind.

Because of Jesus, we will all be resurrected after we die.

The Story of Easter



Jesus loved His friends. He washed their feet. Then He gave them the sacrament. He told them to remember Him. He told them to love one another.

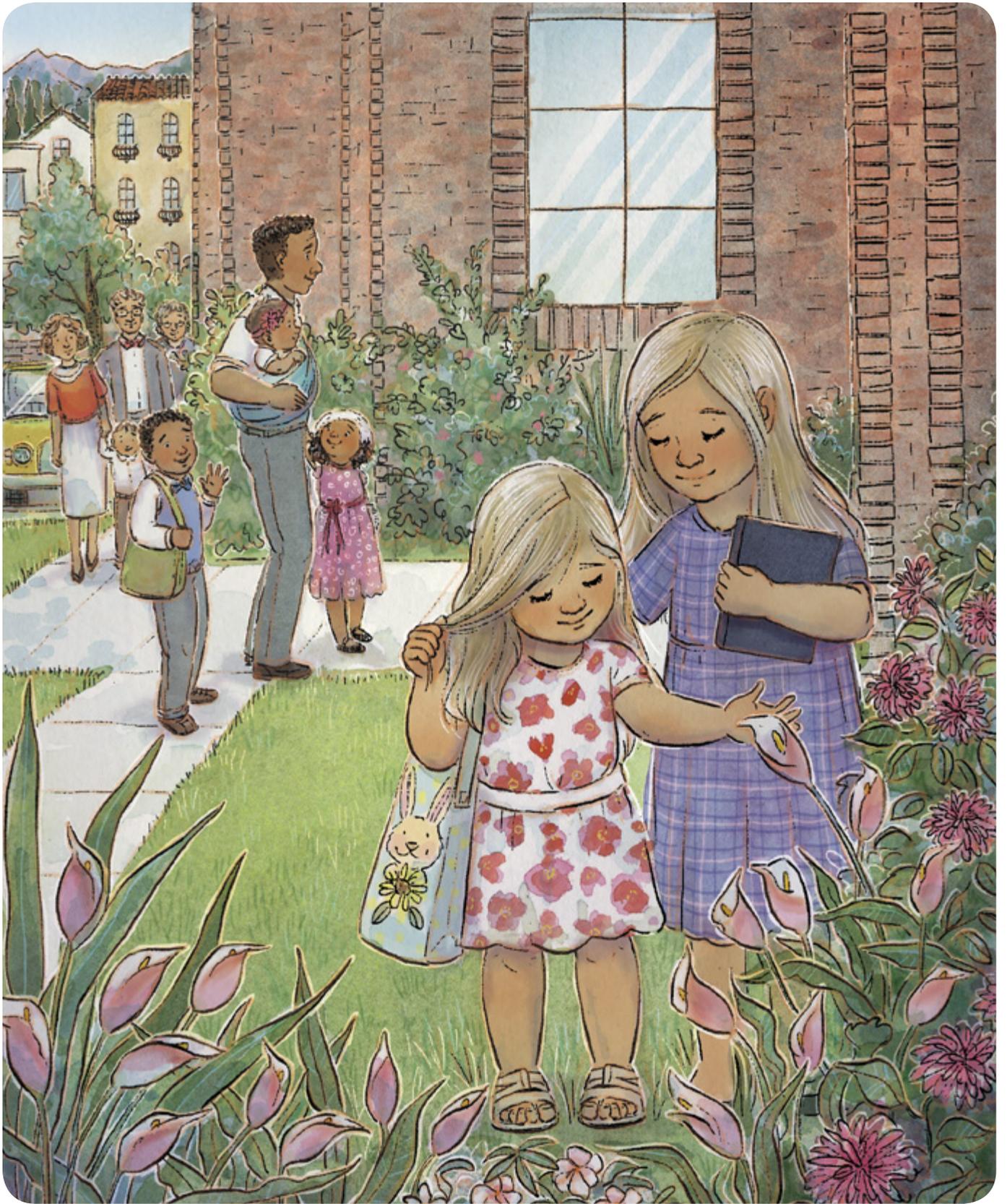


Later, Jesus went to a garden. He prayed for all of us. He felt the pain of our sicknesses. He felt the pain of our sins.

Angry people took Jesus away.
They hurt Him. He died on
the cross for us. His friends
put His body in a tomb.



Three days later, His friends came back. The tomb was empty!
Angels told them, "He is risen." Jesus was alive again! Because of
Jesus, we will all live again after we die.



Jesus loves me. I can make Easter special by remembering Him. ●

Read about Easter morning in Matthew 28.

When I Return to Him

Gladly ♩ = 90-96

Words and music by Sally DeFord

F C Dm B^b C F

1. The Shep-herd loves His lit-tle lambs, And when they go a-stray, He
 2. The Sav-ior loves His lit-tle ones, And if I leave His side, He
 3. The Sav-ior marks the path for me; He shows me how to live. And

C⁷ Am Dm Gm C⁷

seeks them as they wan-der; He calls each one by name. They
 seeks me as I wan-der By day or dark-est night. I'll
 if I stray or wan-der, I know He will for-give. So

F Dm Gm C⁷ A A⁷ Dm

lis-ten for the Shep-herd's voice; They run to Him, and then He
 lis-ten for the Sav-ior's call. I'll come to Him, and then He'll
 I will heed the Sav-ior's voice; I'll turn a-way from sin, And

B^b C⁷ F Dm B^b C⁷ F

wel-comes them with lov-ing arms When they re-turn to Him.
 wel-come me with lov-ing arms When I re-turn to Him.
 He will fill my heart with joy When I re-turn to Him.

By Jane McBride

Based on a true story

“Do that which is honest” (2 Corinthians 13:7).

“I need you to watch your brother,” Mama said. “Your pa and I are going to help someone who is sick.”

I looked up from sweeping the floor of our small house and nodded. Mama was the Relief Society president, and she often went to visit sisters in our ward.

“Thank you, Arlyn,” Mama said, kissing the top of my head. “John’s asleep. And there’s bread dough rising on the counter. Please don’t touch it.”

I watched through the doorway as she and Pa rode the wagon down our dusty road. I felt proud that Mama trusted me.

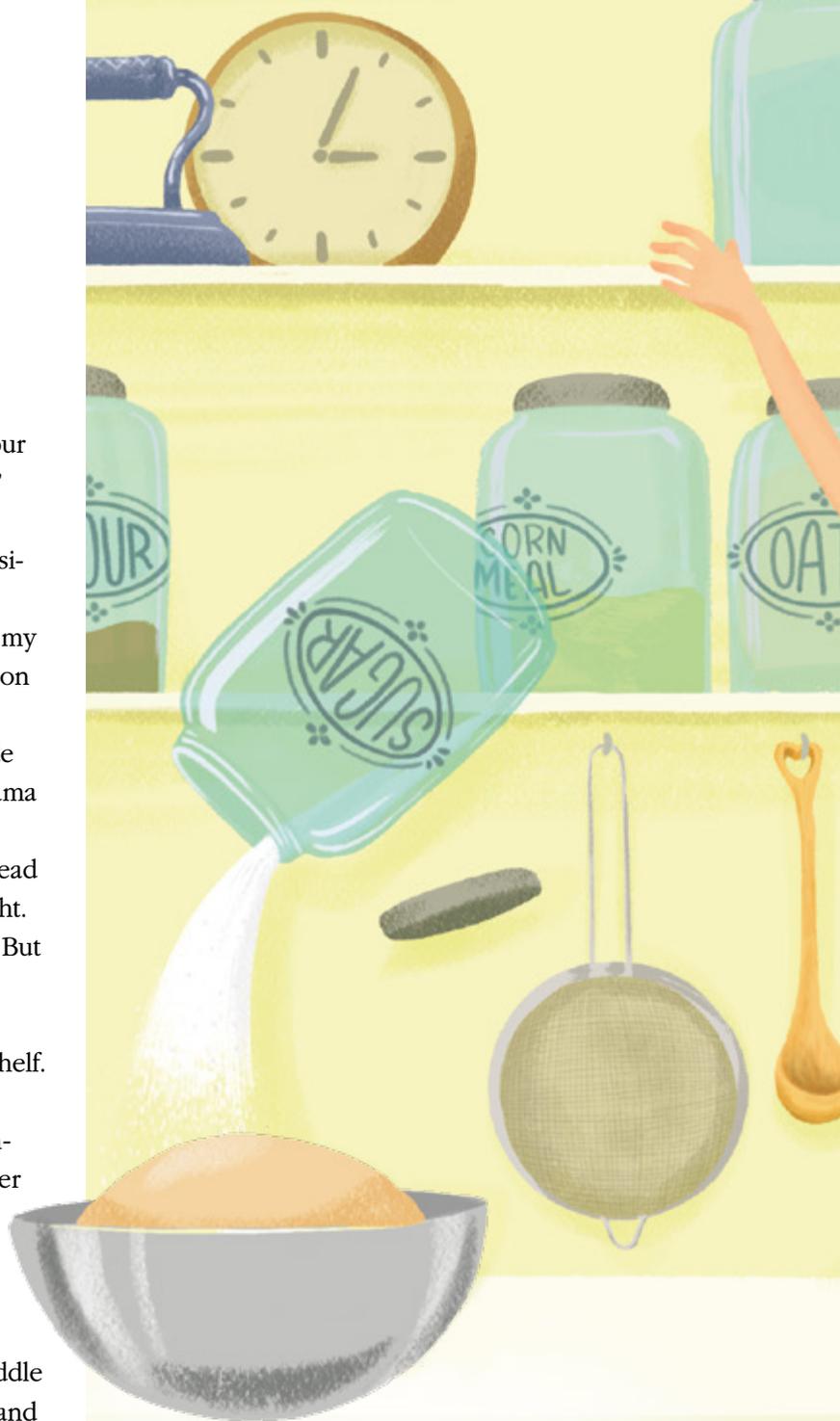
As I swept the kitchen, I stopped to look at the bread dough. I could hardly wait for Mama to bake it tonight. Usually we ate the fresh bread with homemade jam. But we had run out of jam three months ago.

Jam! The thought made me hungry for something sweet. I glanced up at the sugar jar, high up on the shelf. I knew Mama was saving it to make more jam.

But the more I thought about the sugar, the hungrier I felt. Finally, I pulled a chair up to the counter and reached up. My fingers just barely touched the jar of sugar. I pulled it closer to the edge of the shelf. . . .

And then the jar slipped right off the shelf! I tried to catch it, but it fell with a loud plop right in the middle of the bread dough. Sugar spilled all over the bread and counter and onto the floor.

“Oh no!” I yelled. That woke my baby brother up. He started crying. *I* wanted to cry too. What would Mama say about this mess?



Sweet Honesty

ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH GRAMELSPACHER



After I got John calmed down, I did my best to clean up the sugar. I pulled the jar out of the dough and washed it. I wiped the sugar off the counter and floor. But there was nothing I could do to get the sugar out of the dough.

I thought about putting the jar back on the shelf. Maybe Mama wouldn't notice it was empty. But I knew that wasn't right. So I set the jar on the table and waited for Mama and Pa to come home.

When they got home, Mama noticed the sugar jar right away.

I took a deep breath. "I just wanted a taste of sugar. But I knocked the jar off the shelf. I tried to clean it up, but I couldn't get it out of the bread dough." The words rushed out as I looked down at the floor.

Mama was quiet for a minute.

"I'm so sorry," I whispered.

Mama let out a sigh. "Well, I guess the bread will be extra sweet tonight," she said. I looked up. She gave me a little smile. "Thank you for telling us what happened."

As we ate the sugary bread that night, Mama and Pa and I talked about honesty.

"We all make lots of mistakes in life," Pa said. "But when we are honest and try to repent, Heavenly Father and Jesus are happy. We will always be blessed for being honest—even if it seems harder at first."

I was still sad that I had spilled the sugar. I knew we probably wouldn't have as much jam this year because of my mistake. But I was glad I had told the truth. That was a sweet feeling no amount of sugar could give. ●

The author lives in Colorado, USA.

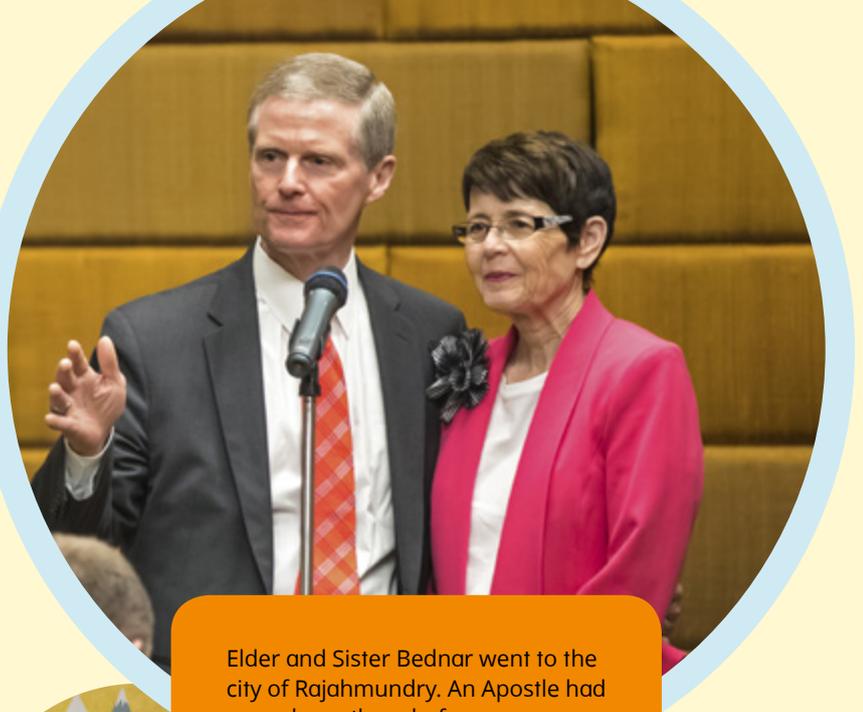


"Keeping divine commandments brings blessings, every time! Breaking divine commandments brings a loss of blessings, every time!"

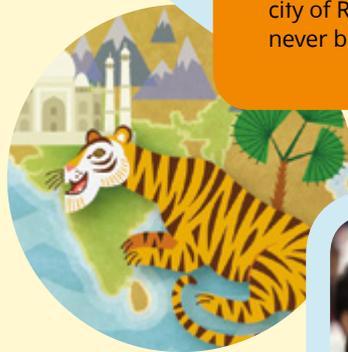
President Russell M. Nelson, "Let Your Faith Show," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 30.

Elder Bednar Visits India

Elder David A. Bednar traveled with his wife, Susan Bednar, to share his testimony of Jesus Christ with members of the Church in India. India is one of the biggest countries in the world. And soon it will have its first temple!



Elder and Sister Bednar went to the city of Rajahmundry. An Apostle had never been there before.



Children got to shake Elder Bednar's hand.



At a meeting in the city of Hyderabad, this girl got to ask Elder Bednar a question.



The more I travel the world, the more nations I visit, the more people I'm blessed to learn from, the more I find that in all the world people are basically the same.



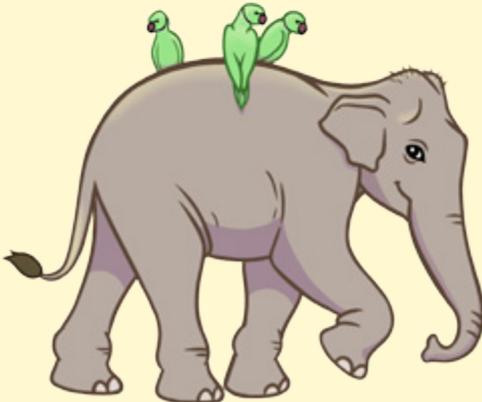
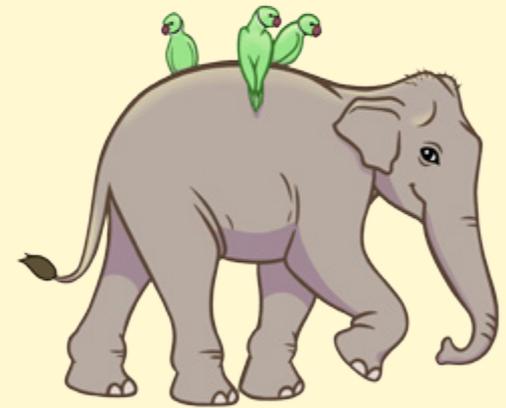
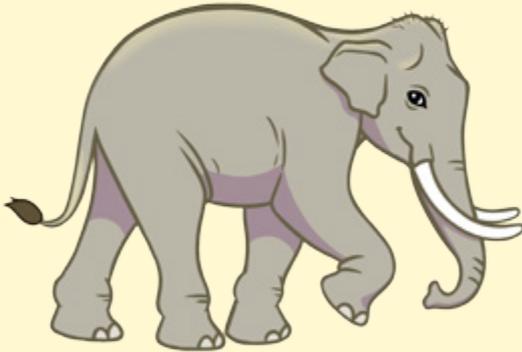
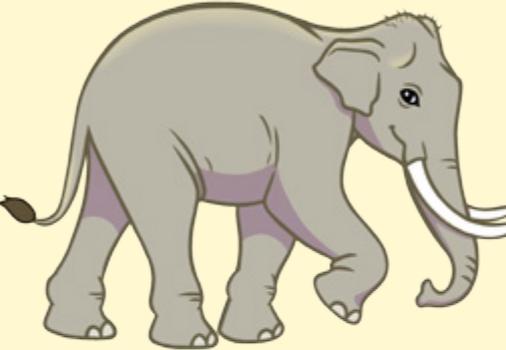
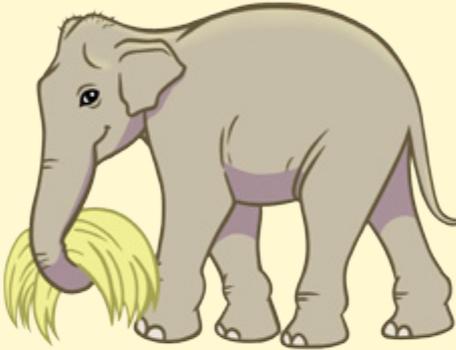
Everyone was happy to hear the testimony of an Apostle of God!



MATCH THE ELEPHANTS

India has about 30,000 elephants. How many matching pairs can you find below?

What are some of your favorite animals that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ created?



Jesus Christ leads The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints through prophets and apostles. Read about them below. Then **cut out the pictures on page F23** and tape them in place on the chart. Put tape at the top of each picture so you can lift them to read the facts underneath!



Our PROPHETS and APOSTLES

- Cleaned a radio repair shop as his first job
- Became a lawyer and Utah Supreme Court judge
- Was president of Brigham Young University



President Dallin H. Oaks
First Counselor in the First Presidency

- Was a heart surgeon
- Studied several languages, including Mandarin
- Has 10 children: 9 daughters and 1 son



President Russell M. Nelson
17th President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

- Played basketball in high school
- Learned physics from his father on their family chalkboard
- Was president of Ricks College, now BYU-Idaho



President Henry B. Eyring
Second Counselor in the First Presidency

- Was nicknamed “the bishop” in college because of his high standards
- Owned a car dealership
- Served as a missionary in England and as a mission president in Toronto, Canada



President M. Russell Ballard
Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Was a mission companion with Elder Cook in England
- Worked for the Church Education System
- Was president of BYU



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Was a refugee twice as a child
- Was an airplane captain
- Enjoys skiing with his children and grandchildren



Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Was a quarterback on his high-school football team
- After serving a mission in Germany, he baptized his father a member of the Church
- Was president of Ricks College when it became BYU-Idaho



Elder David A. Bednar
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Gained a testimony after studying scriptures and praying with his older brother
- Saw his future wife at a junior high school talent show
- Served as a Church leader in the Philippines and Pacific Islands



Elder Quentin L. Cook
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Baked homemade bread for his family growing up
- Participated in the Hill Cumorah Pageant in New York as a teenager
- Worked as a lawyer before being called as an Apostle



Elder D. Todd Christofferson
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Served as a missionary and later as mission president in Japan
- Started a business building and selling exercise equipment
- Served as bishop over the whole Church



Elder Gary E. Stevenson
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Grew up on a dairy farm in Idaho, USA
- Served as a missionary and mission president in France
- Speaks French, Portuguese, Spanish, and English



Elder Neil L. Andersen
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Likes animals, including penguins
- Loves meeting people in every country
- Has family history records back to First Dragon Gong in AD 837



Elder Gerrit W. Gong
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Was a mission president in New York City, USA
- His motto is "It's people that matter most"
- Dedicated the first Latter-day Saint building in the Czech Republic



Elder Ronald A. Rasband
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

- Is from Brazil and served as a missionary there and as mission president in Portugal
- Learned about the Church with his family as a young boy
- Started getting ready for a mission when he was 12



Elder Ulisses Soares
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Check your answers on [lds.org/prophets-and-apostles](https://www.lds.org/prophets-and-apostles).

The MISSING COAT

By Sheila Kindred

Based on a true story

“I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men” (Doctrine and Covenants 64:10).

“Mom, my coat’s gone!” Brad said. It was time to go home from church, but Brad couldn’t find his coat on the rack.

“Are you sure that’s where you hung it up?” Mom asked.

“Yes. It was right here.” Brad’s coat was bright blue and red. It was hard to miss.

“Maybe it got moved. Let’s look around the building,” Dad said.

Mom, Dad, and Brad split up to check different rooms. They looked in the lost-and-found box, in the chapel, in Brad’s Sunday School classroom, in the Primary room, and on every coat rack. They even looked in the bathrooms, but they didn’t find the coat.

“Somebody probably took it by accident. I’m sure they’ll return it next week as soon as they realize it isn’t theirs,” Dad said.

“In the meantime, you can wear your old coat,” Mom said.

Brad frowned. He didn’t like his old coat. It was thin, faded, and too small for him. He loved





how his new red-and-blue coat made him look like a superhero.

“Someone probably saw how cool my coat is and stole it,” Brad thought. How could that happen at church? Everyone there was supposed to be honest. Brad wouldn’t let that robber get away with it. He had a plan. Next Sunday, he would watch carefully to see who was wearing his coat. Then he would snatch it back and yell, “Stop, thief!” They would be sorry they ever took it.

Brad could hardly wait for Sunday to carry out his plan. But the next Sunday was too warm for coats, and so was the next Sunday.

The Sunday after that, Brad looked around suspiciously in Primary at all the boys, wondering who stole his coat. Was it that tall boy? Or maybe it was a girl. He felt like he couldn’t trust anyone. Brad didn’t like that feeling.

After church Brad hurried around the building, watching families put on their coats. But he didn’t see his coat

anywhere. He even checked the lost-and-found box again . . . but no coat. Where could it be?

On the way home, Brad thought of a new plan. He would pray. He knew Heavenly Father could find lost things. That night Brad prayed and said, “Heavenly Father, please tell me who took my coat. I want it back.”

Brad waited for the robber’s name or face to come to mind. But instead he started thinking about his friend Carl. Brad usually sat by Carl in Primary. They joked and laughed together a lot. But Carl hadn’t been to church in a few weeks. Brad missed him.

What if *Carl* had taken his coat? Maybe Carl was afraid to come to church now because he thought Brad wouldn’t be his friend anymore. Brad wanted Carl to come to church again. If Carl had taken his coat, Brad decided, he wouldn’t yell at him. He would forgive him.

Brad climbed into bed, feeling better.

The next Sunday in Primary, Carl wasn’t there, but a new boy was. He was wearing a red-and-blue-striped tie.

“Cool tie,” Brad said, sitting by the new boy. “It makes you look like a superhero.”

The boy smiled.

Brad smiled too. He wasn’t looking for robbers anymore. He was looking for friends. ●

The author lives in Iowa, USA.

Hello
from
Estonia!



We're Margo and Paolo. This year we're traveling around the world to learn about God's children. Join us as we visit Estonia!



This is Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. It has been around for 800 years! Estonia has lots of wild places, like woods and bogs. In fact, more than half of Estonia is covered in forest. Lots of people in Estonia like spending time in nature.

Here's how to say "hello" in Estonian:

Tere!

And here's how you say the Church's name:

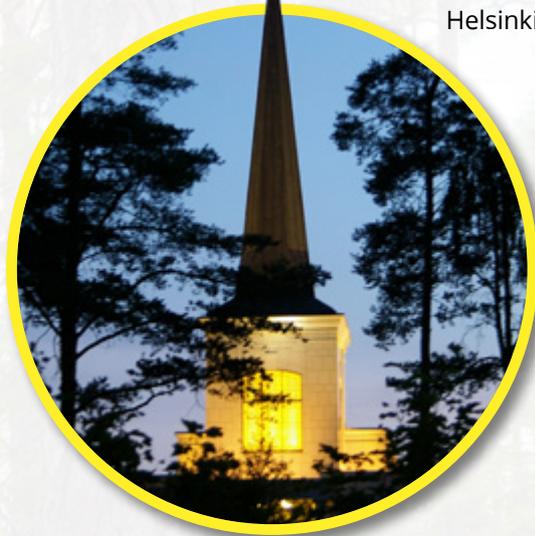
Viimse Aja
Pühade Jeesuse
Kristuse Kirik

Estonia is in northern Europe. It has more than 2,000 islands. About 1.3 million people live in Estonia.





What's for dinner in Estonia? Maybe pork or pickled fish with potatoes, cabbage, sour cream, and black bread. That's called a sprat sandwich.



The Church in Estonia is small but strong. There are about a thousand Church members. Their closest temple is in Helsinki, Finland.



Do you like singing in Primary? Every five years, Estonians gather at a big festival to celebrate their country with singing and dancing.

Are you from Estonia?
Write to us! We'd love to hear from you.

Thanks for exploring Estonia with us. See you next time!



Meet two sisters from Estonia!



One night when I wanted to go to bed, my teddy was missing. I looked for it but couldn't find it. I prayed. Then I found my teddy bear and had good dreams.

Bianka J., age 7



Our family likes to serve others. Serving helps us to feel the Holy Ghost, which gives us a warm feeling of peace. My sisters and I make presents for others because we want them to feel loved.

Piibe J., age 10

Feeling NEW



By Jessica Larsen

Based on a true story

Estonia

“I have a surprise!” *Ema* (Mom) said when she picked Rasmus up from school. They walked together down the narrow streets lined with colorful buildings.

“*Rosolje* for dinner?” Rasmus guessed hopefully. They had eaten it just last week for his seventh birthday. But he could always eat more beet-and-potato salad with pickled herring!

Ema shook her head with a smile. “I met two young women on the bus this morning. Missionaries. They’re coming to visit tonight to talk about their church.”

Rasmus looked up curiously. He had never met missionaries before.

He was in his bedroom playing with his fire truck when the missionaries came. “*Tere! Tere!* Hello!” they greeted *Ema* as they walked into the apartment. They

removed their heavy boots and put on the house slippers *Ema* kept for visitors. *Ema* led them to the orange couch. But Rasmus hung back by the door.

The taller woman noticed him and smiled. Her black name tag said Õde Craig (Sister Craig). “Your mother told us you just had a birthday,” she said. “We brought you something.” She held out a small card. Rasmus looked at it closely.

It was a picture of a man. He wore a white robe, and his hand was stretched out.

“Do you know who that is?” Õde Craig asked.

Rasmus didn’t know the man’s name. He had never seen this picture before. But the man looked kind and powerful. “I think he’s a king!” Rasmus said.

Both missionaries smiled. “Yes, He is! He is the King of kings! His name is Jesus Christ.” Õde Craig pulled

out a book with a blue cover. “And this is a book that teaches about Him, the *Mormoni Raamat*. The Book of Mormon.”

He and *Ema* began reading the Book of Mormon every day before he went to school. During school, Rasmus and his class went on nature walks and then took a nap. After school, he and *Ema* often met with the missionaries. They talked with the missionaries about what they had read in the Book of Mormon. Sometimes *Ema* fed everyone *kringel*, braided cinnamon bread. On weekends he and *Ema* rode bikes or picnicked on the beach. Sometimes they took long walks in the forest or along their favorite river.

On one of those forest walks, *Ema* told him she wanted to be baptized. Rasmus grinned. The missionaries had asked *Ema* to pray about whether or not to get baptized. It sounded like she had gotten her answer!

“And I know just where I’m going to be baptized,” she told him with a smile. “Can you guess?”

Rasmus thought about the missionaries’ lesson on baptism. They had held up a picture showing Jesus with John the Baptist in a river. . . .



“The river!” he exclaimed. “Our favorite river.”

One week later, Rasmus stood on the riverbank with the missionaries and some other people from church. *Ema* was ready to be baptized. She went all the way under the water, just like Jesus did. When she came up, she was smiling. Rasmus wanted to remember this moment forever—the blue water, the white wildflowers in the green grass, and his mother’s smile.

“What did getting baptized feel like?” he asked later, when everyone was eating cookies the missionaries had brought.

“Wonderful,” she told him. “I wanted to stay in the river forever. I feel so new!” She hugged him tight.

“For my next birthday, I want to be baptized, just like you and Jesus,” he told her. “I want to feel new too!” ●

The author lives in Texas, USA.





By Reyna I. Aburto

Second Counselor in the
Relief Society General
Presidency

I Will See Him Again



I grew up in Nicaragua. When I was little, I did everything with my older brother. We walked to school together. We went to the store together. We had all sorts of adventures in our backyard. We were happy.

Then, when I was nine, something very sad happened. My brother died in an earthquake. At first it didn't feel real that he was gone. I used to imagine that he would knock on our front door. He would tell us he had just been away somewhere. I used to stare at the door, wishing for it to happen. I wanted so much to see him again.

Over time, it got a little easier. I still missed my brother, but I was able to feel happy again.

Back then, I wasn't a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But when I grew up, I learned about the Church and got baptized. One day I was washing my dishes. It was Easter time. I was thinking of the Resurrection and thought of my brother.

Suddenly a feeling came over me. I remembered the daydream I had about my brother. I realized that it wasn't silly at all! It came from the Holy Ghost, to comfort me and guide me. Someday my brother really will be resurrected. And I really will see him again.

If someone you love has died, it's OK to miss them and feel sad. Talk to your family or a grown-up when you feel ready. Pray to Heavenly Father about how you feel. He can help you feel peace again.

No matter what, remember that Jesus Christ loves you. At Easter we remember His sacrifice for us. Because of Him, we will all be resurrected and we can live with our families forever. ●

Comfort Cards

Cut out these cards. You could fold them in half or use them as bookmarks.
Keep them in your scriptures or another place to look at when you feel sad, lonely, or scared.



“I will not leave
you comfortless:
I will come to you.”

John 14:18



“And God shall
wipe away all tears
from their eyes.”

Revelation 21:4



“Be of good cheer, and
do not fear, for I the
Lord am with you, and
will stand by you.”

Doctrine and Covenants 68:6



Show and Tell

I love to see the temple.

Rebecca C., age 9, Aragua, Venezuela



One day when we got in the car, it would not start. We checked the engine, but nothing happened. I felt that I should pray, so I did. A few minutes later the car turned on. I'm so glad that Heavenly Father can always help me.

Brooklyn B., age 9, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala



Two years ago a new boy joined our class at school. He was unkind to others. Everyone started to dislike him and be unkind to him. It seemed to make him sad, so I didn't do what the others did. Several of my friends noticed and followed my example. I believe that if I do what God wants me to do, I will be happier and safer. I believe that if I have courage and speak my mind, I will find friends who will like me just the way I am.

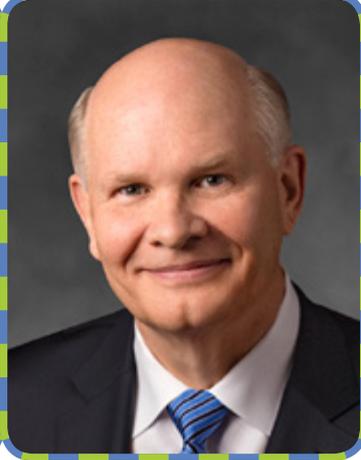
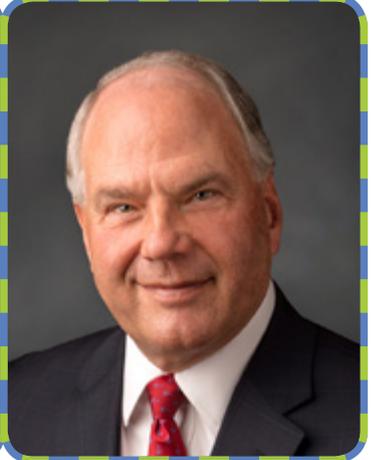
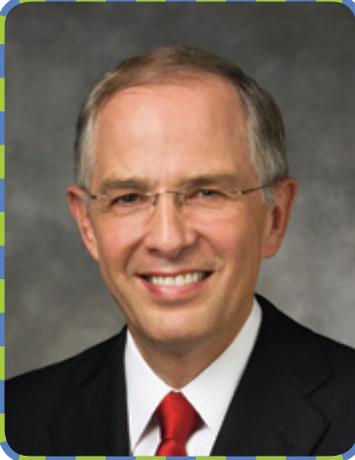
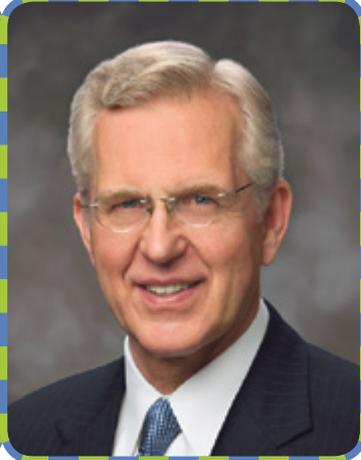
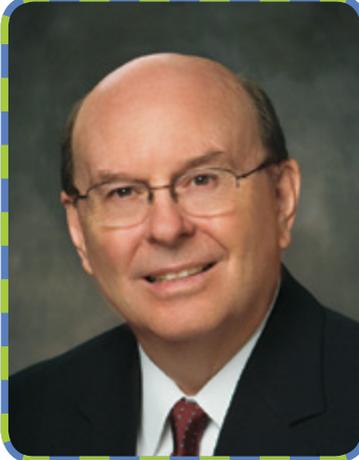
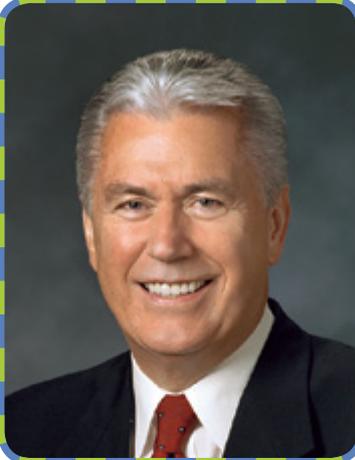
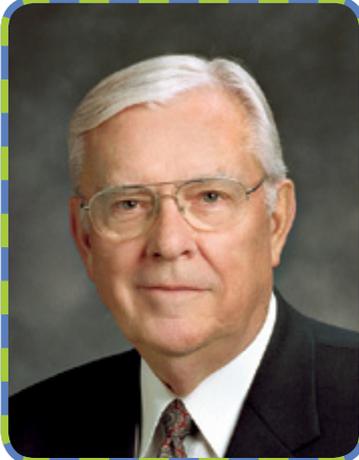
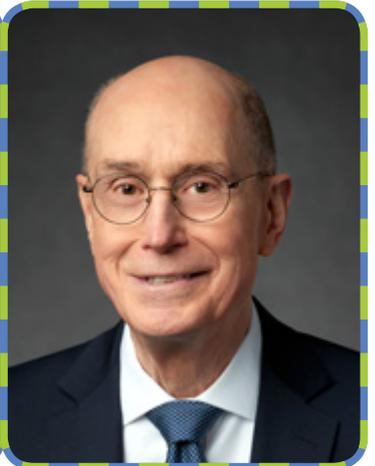
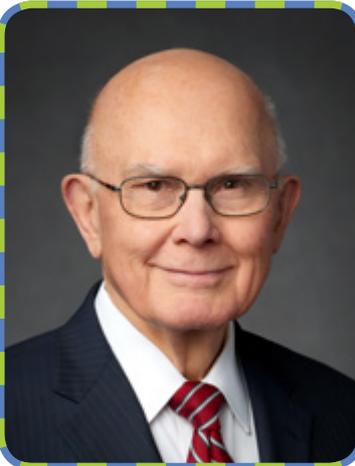
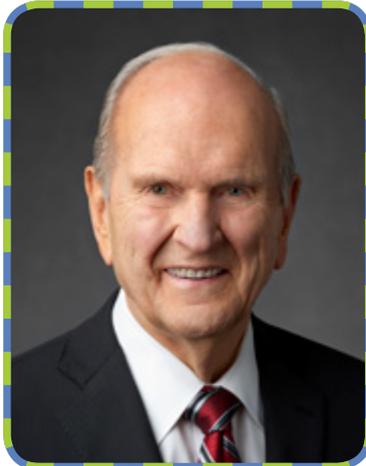
Vestina K., age 11, Vilnius, Lithuania



I like to play football with younger kids and teach them new skills. It is one way I like to serve.

Sasha K., age 11, Moscow, Russia

Use these photos to fill in the chart on pages F12–F13.



Dear Parents

This month, the *Friend* has stories and activities to help your family celebrate Easter. We hope your family will enjoy thinking about Easter all month long!

- “God’s Great Gift” (F2)—An Easter message from President Russell M. Nelson
- “Jesus Is My Savior” (F3)—A coloring activity about Jesus’s Atonement and Resurrection
- “The Story of Easter” (F4–F6)—An illustrated scripture story
- “When I Return to Him” (F7)—A beautiful new song about repentance
- “Feeling New” (F18)—A story about a boy from Estonia who learns about Jesus
- “I Will See Him Again” (F20)—Sister Reyna I. Aburto’s testimony of the Resurrection

Please write to let us know how your family used these stories and activities.

Have a blessed Easter!

The *Friend*

New *Friend*

50 E. North Temple Street,
Room 2393
Salt Lake City, UT 84105 USA
liahona@ldschurch.org



Find the Liahona hidden inside!

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- F2** From the First Presidency: God’s Great Gift
- F4** Scripture Stories: The Story of Easter
- F7** Music: When I Return to Him
- F8** Sweet Honesty
- F10** Apostles around the World: Elder Bednar Visits India
- F12** Our Prophets and Apostles
- F14** The Missing Coat
- F16** Hello from Estonia!
- F18** Feeling New
- F20** I Will See Him Again
- F22** Show and Tell
- F23** Prophets and Apostles Photos