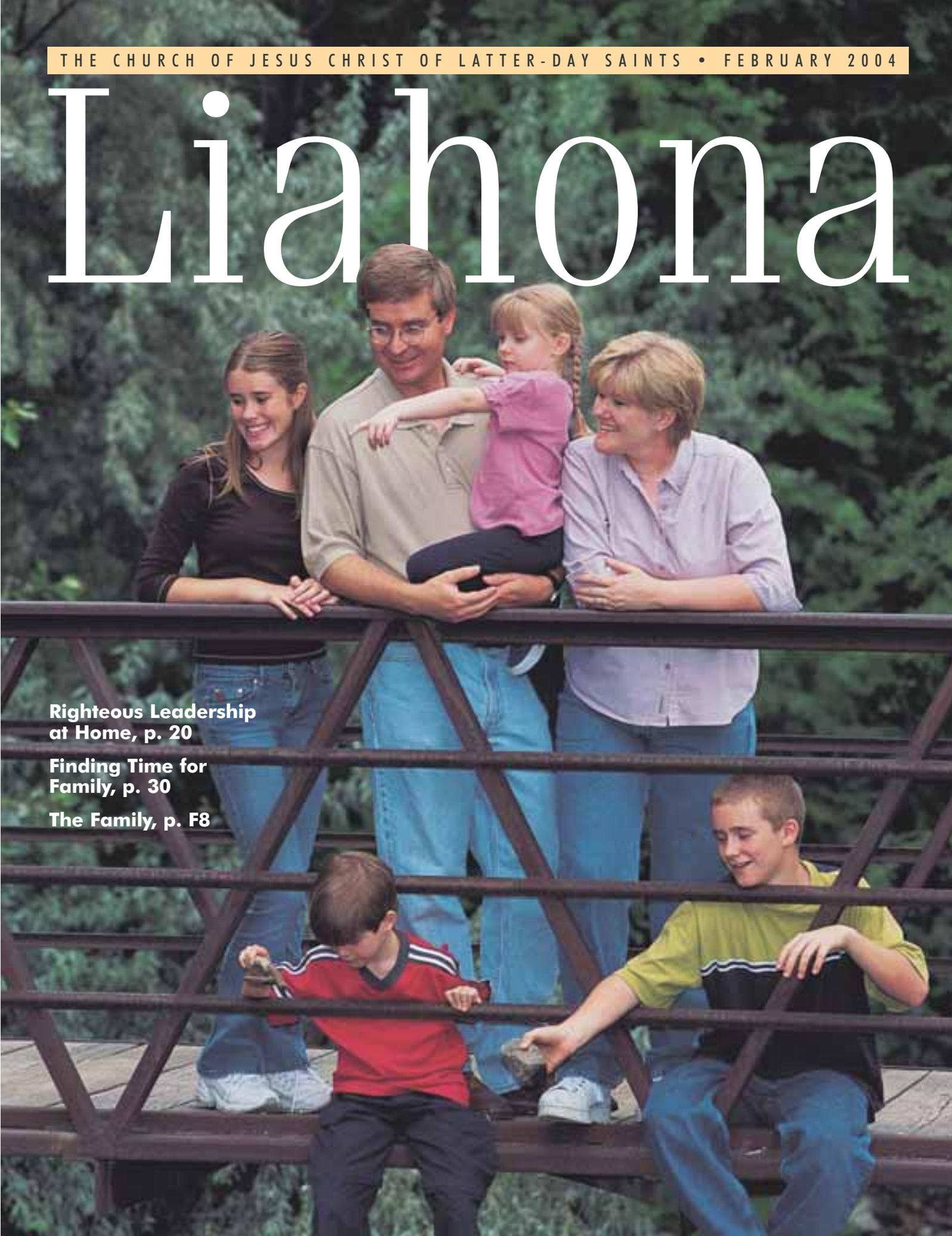


Liahona



**Righteous Leadership
at Home, p. 20**

**Finding Time for
Family, p. 30**

The Family, p. F8

Liahona



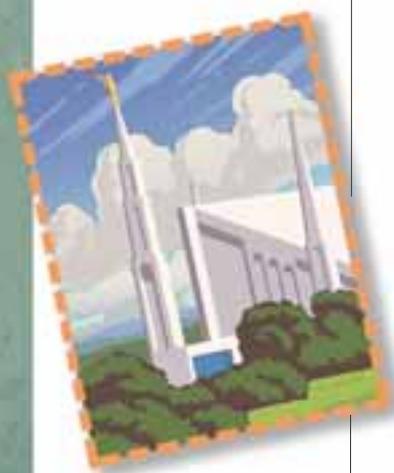
ON THE COVER

Photography by Welden C. Andersen, posed by models. See "Presiding Righteously in the Home," p. 20.



THE FRIEND COVER

Photograph courtesy of the Ståhle family. See "Susanna Ståhle of Turku, Finland," p. F10.



SEE "HAPPY FAMILY GAME," P. F13

FOR ADULTS

- 2 First Presidency Message: Four Cornerstones of Faith
President Gordon B. Hinckley
- 8 Deep in the Mountains *Hugo Miza*
- 12 The Book of Mormon Will Change Your Life *Elder Henry B. Eyring*
- 20 Presiding Righteously in the Home *Elder Yasuo Niiyama*
- 25 Visiting Teaching Message: Feeling the Love of the Lord through Exercising Faith
- 33 Book of Mormon Principles: Our Eternal Choices
Elder Emmanuel A. Kissi
- 42 Latter-day Saint Voices
 - On Alert *Joel Fairfield*
 - The Lord's Mathematics *Richard J. Anderson*
 - Help from Heaven *Ceferina Dora Flores*
 - No Trespassing *Linda Marx Terry*
- 48 Comment

FOR YOUTH

- 19 Book of Mormon Hero: Who Am I?
- 26 Not Just Me *Reneé Harding*
- 29 Idea List: Prime Time
- 30 Questions and Answers: What Can I Do to Stay Close to My Dad When We're Both So Busy?
- 36 Standing the Test of Time *Adam C. Olson*
- 47 Did You Know?

THE FRIEND: FOR CHILDREN

- F2 Come Listen to a Prophet's Voice: Happiness
President James E. Faust
- F4 Sharing Time: My Family *Sheila E. Wilson*
- F6 For Little Friends: Daddy's Blessing
Jane McBride Choate
- F8 The Family
- F10 Making Friends: Susanna Ståhle of Turku, Finland
Eeva Ståhle and Tiffany E. Lewis
- F13 For Little Friends: Happy Family Game
Julie Wardell
- F14 From the Life of President Heber J. Grant: Reading the Book of Mormon
- F16 Special Witness: "Follow Me"
Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin

SEE "DID YOU KNOW?" P. 47



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Family Home Evening Ideas



"Deep in the Mountains,"

p. 8: Talk about this story as an

example of how the Book

of Mormon can change lives. Ask

family members about sacrifices they

are making because they are Church

members. Point out that Hugo Miza

came to see the forsaking of a worldly

way of life not as a sacrifice but as a

path to greater blessings.

"The Book of Mormon Will Change

Your Life," p. 12: Ask family members

how the Book of Mormon has

changed their lives. One of the four

things Elder Henry B. Eyring tries to

do when he teaches the scriptures is

to "prove." Choose a principle from

the Book of Mormon, and ask your

family to think of ways they might

prove this principle to show it is true.

In what ways might proving this prin-

ciple influence their lives?

"Not Just Me," p. 26: Is a family

member experiencing a difficult chal-

lenge? Read this story, and ask family

members to name someone in the

scriptures whose experience they can

liken to their own. Talk about how

these role models dealt with their

adversities. What can we learn from

their lives?

"Prime Time," p. 29: Talk about

this Idea List, and have each family

member choose three of these

activities—or perhaps others

that are not listed—as activities

he or she will do instead of

watching television.

"Happiness," p. F2: Read together

President James E. Faust's account of

Ali Hafed. Ask children what they can

do to experience happiness here and

now, rather than waiting for some

future time and place.

"Daddy's Blessing," p. F6: This

story is especially for young children.

Read it together; then talk about the

difference between being set apart for

a calling and receiving other kinds of

priesthood blessings. Discuss times

when children might need or want

a priesthood blessing.

TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE

F= <i>The Friend</i>	Home teaching, 7
Adversity, 26	Jesus Christ, 2, 25, 33,
Agency, 33	47, F16
Book of Mormon, 2, 8, 12,	Leadership, 20, 47
19, 33, 36, F14	Love, 25, F4
Callings, F6	Media, 29
Church history, 47	Missionary work, 42
Conversion, 8, 42	Obedience, F16
Courage, F10	Priesthood, 2, 20, F6
Example, 26	Primary, F4
Faith, 25	Sacrifice, 8, F16
Family history, 42	Scripture study, 12, 19,
Family home evening, 1	26, F14
Family relations, 20, 26,	Teaching, 1, 12
30, F4, F8, F13	Television, 29
Fatherhood, 20, 30, F6	Temples, 36, 42
First Vision, 2	Testimony, 36, 48
Happiness, F2, F13	Visiting teaching, 25, 42
Holy Ghost, 42	Worldwide Church, 36, F10



Four Cornerstones of Faith

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY

During the past two decades, it has been my privilege to officiate at the dedication or rededication of more than 80 temples. The buildings have been opened to the general public prior to dedication. Tens and tens of thousands have gone through them. As they have felt of the spirit of these sacred structures and learned something of the purposes for which the temples have been built, those who have been our guests have recognized why, following dedication, we regard these buildings as sanctified and holy, reserved for sacred purposes and closed to the public.

Participating in these dedicatory services, one senses the true strength of the Church. That strength is in the hearts of the people, who are united by a bond of recognition of God as our Eternal Father and Jesus Christ as our Savior. Their individual testimonies are firmly established on a foundation of faith concerning things divine.

Ancient Cornerstone Ceremony

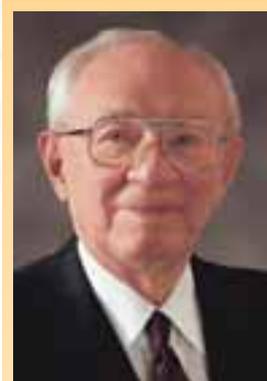
In each new temple we have had a cornerstone ceremony in harmony with a tradition that goes back to ancient times. Before the

general use of concrete, the foundation walls of the building were laid with large stones. A trench would be dug, and stones would be placed as footings. Starting at a point of beginning, the foundation wall would be run in one direction to a cornerstone; then the corner would be turned and the wall run to the next corner, where another stone was placed, from which the wall would be run to the next corner, and from there to the point of beginning. In many instances, including the construction of early temples in the Church, cornerstones were used at each junction point of the walls and put in place with ceremony. The final stone was spoken of as the chief cornerstone, and its placement became the reason for much celebration. With this cornerstone in position, the foundation was ready for the superstructure. Hence the analogy that Paul used in describing the true Church:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

“In whom all the building fitly framed



Thanks be to God for the gift of His Beloved Son, who gave His life that we might live and who is the chief, immovable cornerstone of our faith and His Church.

together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:19–21).

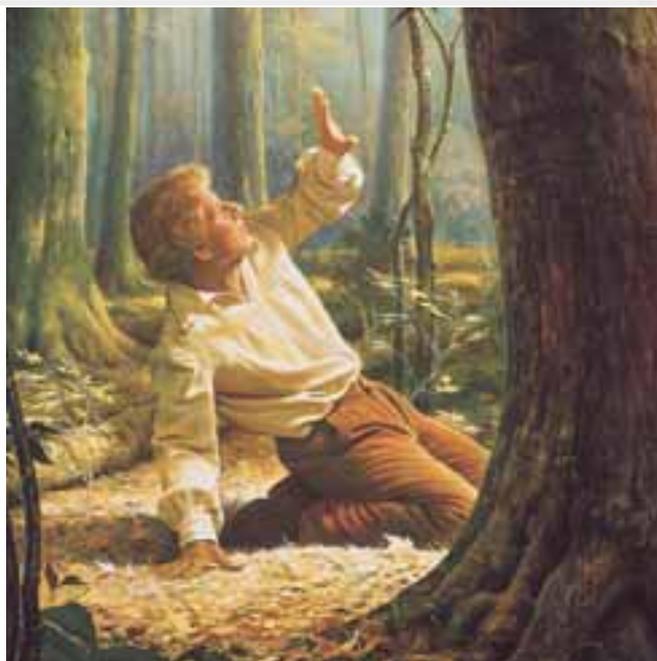
Cornerstones of Our Faith

We have basic cornerstones on which this great latter-day Church has been established by the Lord and built, “fitly framed together.”

They are absolutely fundamental to this work—the very foundation, anchors on which it stands. I should like to speak briefly of these four essential cornerstones which anchor The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I mention first the chief cornerstone, whom we recognize and honor as the Lord Jesus Christ. The second is the vision given the Prophet Joseph Smith when the Father and the Son appeared to him. The third is the Book of Mormon, which speaks as a voice from the dust with the words of ancient prophets declaring the divinity and reality of the Savior of mankind. The fourth is the priesthood with all of its powers and authority, whereby men act in the name of God in administering the affairs of His kingdom. May I comment on each of these.

The Chief Cornerstone

Absolutely basic to our faith is our testimony of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, who under a divine plan was born in Bethlehem of Judea. He grew in Nazareth as the carpenter’s son, within Him the elements of both mortality and immortality received, respectively, from His earthly mother and His Heavenly Father. In the course of His brief earthly ministry, He walked the dusty roads of the Holy Land, healing the sick, causing the blind to see, raising the dead, teaching doctrines both transcendent and beautiful. He was, as Isaiah had prophesied, “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). He reached out to those whose burdens were heavy and invited them to cast their burdens upon Him, declaring, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:30). He “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38) and was hated for it. His enemies came against Him. He was seized, tried on spurious charges, convicted



The First Vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith opened the marvelous work of restoration. It lifted the curtain on the long-promised dispensation of the fulness of times.

to satisfy the cries of the mob, and condemned to die on Calvary’s cross.

The nails pierced His hands and feet, and He hung in agony and pain, giving Himself a ransom for the sins of all men. He died crying, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

He was buried in a borrowed tomb and on the third day rose from the grave. He came forth triumphant, in a victory over death, the firstfruits of all that slept. With His Resurrection came the promise to all men that life is everlasting, that even as in Adam all die, in Christ all are made alive (see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22). Nothing in all of human history equals the wonder, the splendor, the magnitude, or the fruits of the matchless life of the Son of God, who died for each of us. He is our Savior. He is our Redeemer. As Isaiah foretold, “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

He is the chief cornerstone of the church which bears His name, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There is no other name given among men whereby we can be saved (see Acts 4:12). He is the author of our salvation, the giver of eternal life (see Hebrews 5:9). There is none to equal Him. There never has been. There never will be.

Thanks be to God for the gift of His Beloved Son, who gave His life that we might live and who is the chief, immovable cornerstone of our faith and His Church.

Joseph Smith's First Vision

The second cornerstone is the First Vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The year was 1820; the season, spring. The boy with questions walked into the grove of his father's farm. There, finding himself alone, he pleaded in prayer for that wisdom which James promised would be given liberally to those who ask of God in faith (see James 1:5). There, in circumstances which he has described in much detail, he beheld the Father and the Son, the great God of the universe and the risen Lord, both of whom spoke to him.

This transcendent experience opened the marvelous work of restoration. It lifted the curtain on the long-promised dispensation of the fulness of times.

For more than a century and a half, enemies, critics, and some would-be scholars have worn out their lives trying to disprove the validity of that vision. Of course they cannot understand it. The things of God are understood by the Spirit of God. There had been nothing of comparable magnitude since the Son of God walked the earth in mortality. Without it as a foundation stone for our faith and organization, we have nothing. With it, we have everything.

Much has been written, much will be written, in an effort to explain it away. The finite mind cannot comprehend it. But the testimony of the Holy Spirit, experienced by countless numbers of people all through the years since it

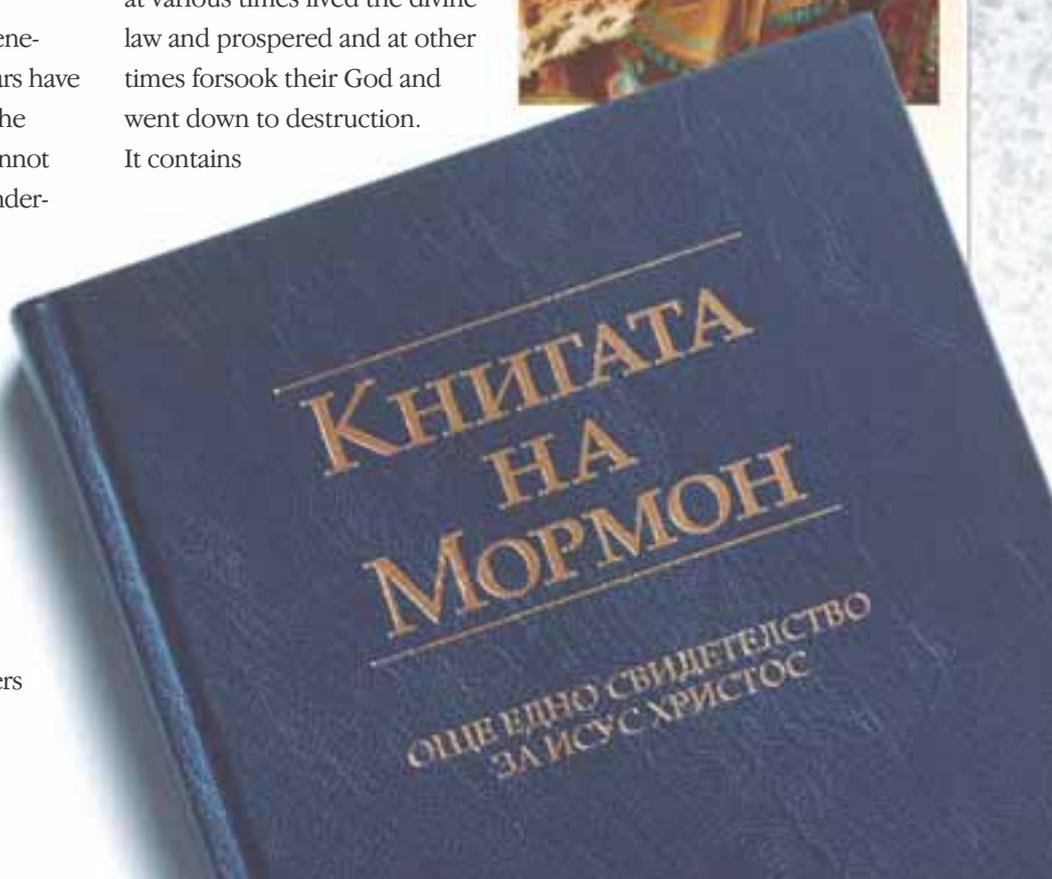
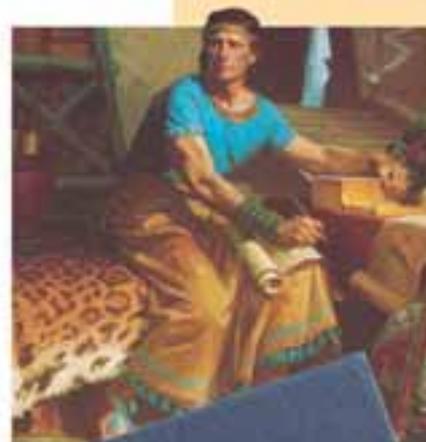
happened, bears witness that it is true, that it happened as Joseph Smith said it happened, that it was as real as the sunrise over Palmyra, that it is an essential foundation stone, a cornerstone, without which the Church could not be "fitly framed together."

The Book of Mormon

The third cornerstone is the Book of Mormon. It is real. It has weight and substance which can be physically measured. I open its pages and read, and it has language both beautiful and uplifting. The ancient record from which it was translated came out of the earth as a voice speaking from the dust. It came as the testimony of generations of men and women who lived their lives upon the earth, who struggled with adversity, who quarreled and fought, who at various times lived the divine law and prospered and at other times forsook their God and went down to destruction.

It contains

The ancient record from which the Book of Mormon was translated came out of the earth as a voice speaking from the dust. It came as the testimony of generations of men and women.



The full restoration of the priesthood involved the coming of John the Baptist—the forerunner of Christ—and of Peter, James, and John—they who faithfully walked with the Master.

what has been described as the fifth Gospel, a moving testament of the New World concerning the visit of the resurrected Redeemer on the soil of this hemisphere.

The evidence for its truth, for its validity in a world that is prone to demand evidence, lies not in archaeology or anthropology, though these may be helpful to some. It lies not in word research or historical analysis, though these may be confirmatory. The evidence for its truth and validity lies within the covers of the book itself. The test of its truth lies in

It is here. It must be explained. It can be explained only as the translator himself explained its origin. Hand in hand with the Bible, whose companion volume it is, it stands as another witness to a doubting generation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is an unassailable cornerstone of our faith.

Restoration of the Priesthood

Cornerstone number four is the restoration to earth of priesthood power and authority. That authority was given to men anciently. The lesser authority was given to the sons of Aaron to administer in things temporal as well as in some sacred ecclesiastical ordinances. The higher priesthood was given by the Lord Himself to His Apostles, in accordance with His declaration to Peter: “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:19).

The full restoration of the priesthood involved the coming of John the Baptist—the forerunner of Christ, whose head was taken to satisfy the whims of a wicked woman—and of Peter, James, and John—they who faithfully walked with the Master before His death and proclaimed His Resurrection and divinity following His death. It involved Moses, Elias, and Elijah, each bringing priesthood keys to complete the work of restoring all of the acts and ordinances of previous dispensations in this, the great, final dispensation of the fullness of times.

The priesthood is here. It has been conferred upon us. We act in that authority. We speak as sons of God in the name of Jesus



THE RESTORATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD. BY DEL PARSON

reading it. It is a book of God. Reasonable people may sincerely question its origin; but those who have read it prayerfully have come to know by a power beyond their natural senses that it is true, that it contains the word of God, that it outlines saving truths of the everlasting gospel, that it “came forth by the gift and power of God . . . to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ” (Book of Mormon title page).

Christ and as holders of this divinely given endowment. We know, for we have seen, the power of this priesthood. We have seen the sick healed, the lame made to walk, and the coming of light and knowledge and understanding to those who have been in darkness.

Paul wrote concerning the priesthood: “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron” (Hebrews 5:4). We have not acquired it through purchase or bargain. The Lord has given it to men who are considered worthy to receive it, regardless of station in life, the color of their skin, or the nation in which they live. It is the power and the authority to govern in the affairs of the kingdom of God. It is given only by ordination by the laying on of hands by those in authority to do so. The qualification for eligibility is obedience to the commandments of God.

There is no power on the earth like it. Its authority extends beyond life, through the veil of death, to the eternities ahead. It is everlasting in its consequences.

Shelter from the Storms

These four great God-given gifts are the unshakable cornerstones which anchor The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as the individual testimonies and convictions of its members: (1) the reality and the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God; (2) the sublime vision given the Prophet Joseph Smith of the Father and the Son, ushering in the dispensation of the fulness of times; (3) the Book of Mormon as the word of God speaking in declaration of the divinity of the Savior; and (4) the priesthood of God divinely conferred to be exercised in righteousness for the blessing of our Father’s children.

Each of these cornerstones is related to the others, each connected by a foundation of apostles and prophets, all tied to the chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ. On this has been established His Church, “fitly framed together” for the blessing of all who will partake of its offering (see Ephesians 2:20–21).

So undergirded beneath and fitly framed above, this Church stands as the creation of the Almighty. It is a shelter from the storms of life. It is a refuge of peace for those in

distress. It is a house of succor for those in need. It is the conservator of eternal truth and the teacher of the divine will. It is the true and living Church of the Master.

Of these things I give solemn testimony, bearing witness that God has spoken again to open this final glorious dispensation; that His Church is here, the church which carries the name of His Beloved Son; that there has come from the earth the record of an ancient people, bearing witness to this generation of the work of the Almighty; that the everlasting priesthood is among men for their blessing and the governance of His work; that we are members of the true and living Church of Jesus Christ, brought forth for the blessing of all who will receive its message; that it is immovably established on a foundation of apostles and prophets, with cornerstones of unshakable firmness put in place by Him for the accomplishment of His eternal purposes, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. ■

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After you prayerfully prepare, share this message using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. A few examples follow:

1. Give a family member a small board and a child’s building block; then ask the individual to balance the board on top of the block. Have the individual repeat this with two blocks, then three, then four so that family members can see the stability offered by having four cornerstones under the board. Label the blocks with the four cornerstones in President Hinckley’s message.
2. Ask family members to think of their personal testimonies as a temple and then to think about how strong the cornerstones of their testimonies are. What could they do to strengthen their cornerstones?
3. Ask family members to think about the cornerstones of their faith. Are their cornerstones the same as President Hinckley’s? How will their cornerstones affect their daily lives?

Deep in the Mountains

BY HUGO MIZA

My family belongs to a Mayan tribe, the Cakchiquel. Deep in the mountains near San Juan Comalapa in southern Guatemala, life is not easy. Men go to the fields and work all day in their plantations, growing corn and beans. Women prepare lunch and dinner; then they take the meals to their husbands in the fields. After a day of heavy work and a long walk back home, most of the men and some of the women drink alcohol and soon fall asleep. The next day, the routine takes place again.

In my tribe, life expectancy for a man is 48 years. The everyday hard work—in combination with poor nutrition and alcohol—wears out their physical energies. The women bear many children, but half or more of those children die in infancy. Childbearing, hard work, poor nutrition, and sometimes alcohol consumption diminish the life expectancy of the women in my tribe.

Because of the difficulties we faced, my mom wanted a better life for her children and often prayed for help.

Right: Missionaries teach the gospel in Guatemala in the 1970s.

My mother believed that the visit of two missionaries to our remote village in Guatemala was an answer to her prayers.



Missionaries and Tortillas

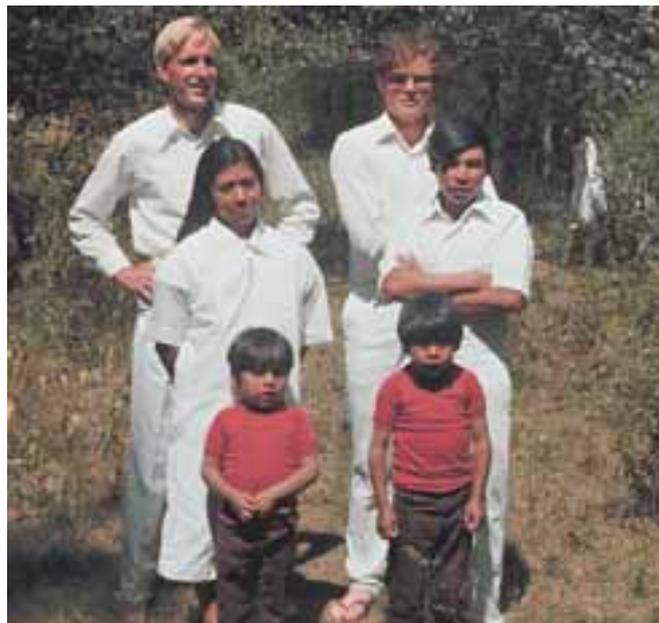
Our circumstances didn't change until a miracle took place in our lives. I was only a young boy when the missionaries came to our village, but I remember everything. My mom, dad, brother, and I were eating lunch in our field. I can still remember the smell of the tortillas on the fire as two white men with light hair made their way through the field. My eyes opened wide in surprise, and I held onto my mom, ready to kick the men if it became necessary to defend ourselves. However, when the men asked, "Would it be OK if we warmed up our tortillas in your fire?" peace came over me. Curiosity filled my head. Why was their accent so funny? Why did they wear white shirts and neckties? Why were they so big?

"Sure, you can warm up your tortillas in our fire," my dad replied. I don't know how it happened, but the next thing I knew, the missionaries were showing us illustrations of the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Sacred Grove. My mom was shocked! She had always believed that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were beings we could talk to and ask questions of, but she had never heard anyone teach that. While listening to the story of the First Vision, my mom received confirmation from the Holy Ghost that it was true. The visit of these two missionaries was the answer to her prayers. My mom invited them to drop by our house any day.

Later when the missionaries visited us and taught us about the Word of Wisdom, my mom was the happiest I have ever seen her. My dad is a slightly different story. I remember that he was trying to smile, but his eyes were watery, his forehead was white, and the rest of his face was red.

In our tribe, you stick with the traditions—no matter what. Changing religions is viewed as an act of desertion. Friends leave you and relatives look down on you, especially if you are the first one to change.

My mom was surprised that the missionaries took so long to ask, "Will you be baptized into the Church?" She was ready. My dad felt in his heart that the message brought by the missionaries was true, but he was concerned about the consequences that would come to our



Above: The Miza family with the missionaries on Brother and Sister Miza's baptism day. Lower right: Brother and Sister Miza with a young son a few years after joining the Church. Top right: Hugo Miza as a university student.

family if we went against the traditions of our tribe. He needed more time to make up his mind.

In the end, my dad went against everything he had known and chose the gospel. His friends left him. Our relatives told him he was crazy and asked how much money the missionaries paid him to get baptized. No one invited us to parties anymore. My family's social life was gone for a while. These changes were some of the hardest my family ever had to make.

Life as Latter-day Saints

The gospel of Jesus Christ brought a mighty change into my family, for which I am grateful. My dad dedicated more time to our family. My mom cooked better meals. My parents now spent our income wisely. We even had the chance to attend elementary school. My dad said something to us that I will never forget: "From this point on, you will never quit until you get a degree from school."

We were a different family. Family home evening became a time when we set personal and family goals. My dad prepared gospel lessons and shared his life experiences with us, something he had never done before. We children knew our parents loved us. Alcohol was no longer in our home. The fights between my mom and dad turned

into discussions in which they tried to understand each other. Somehow we seemed to be materially rich, although we were actually poor. We were a happy family, and eventually my dad was respected for his new way of life. People trusted him because he did not drink anymore. His friends began to come to him for advice, and somehow whoever associated with my dad started to prosper. Gospel living was contagious. My dad even organized a group of farmers to learn new and better methods of farming.

Loving the Book of Mormon

As a child, I started my religious reading with the Bible, but the Old Testament was too hard for me to read and understand at that young age. My next attempt was the Book of Mormon. After reading a couple of pages, I could not put the book away. Nephi became my new hero. Each day, after some hours of school and many hours of work on the farm, I went back to reading the Book of Mormon. As I read, I felt a special connection between the people of the Book of Mormon and my tribe. I felt the Book of Mormon explained where our Cakchiquel tribe came from and who our ancestors were.

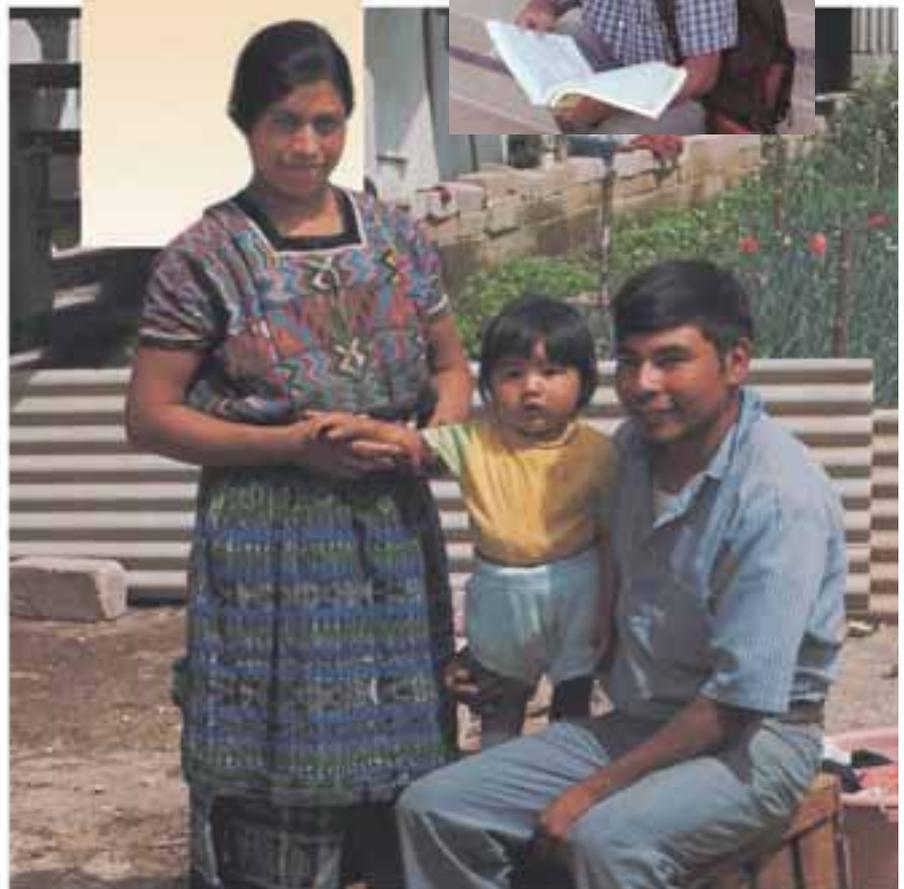
In my reading of the Book of Mormon and learning about the true gospel of Jesus Christ, I felt that I was part of the fulfillment of the promises God made to Lehi, Nephi, and other Book of Mormon prophets about their children being preserved. I'm eternally grateful to those faithful people in the Book of Mormon and to the missionaries who introduced us to the book that changed the course of our lives.

My family eventually moved to Guatemala City. My parents have served in our ward there for many years. My two brothers and two sisters and I are all faithful Latter-day Saints. My brothers and I served full-time missions. My brother, sister, and I are studying at a university.

My family's conversion story reflects God's love and mercy for His children. I am thankful for the love He has for His children wherever they are—even deep in the mountains of Guatemala. ■

Hugo Miza is a member of the Provo 33rd (Spanish) Ward, Provo Utah East Stake.

In our tribe, changing religions is viewed as an act of desertion, but my dad went against everything and chose the gospel. Through the Church's teachings, we became a happy family.





The Book of Mormon Will Change Your Life

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

Some years ago, my son Matthew came home from a seminary council meeting and said, “Dad, I want you to carve something.” He gave me the text. The plaque I carved says, “The Book of Mormon will change your life.”¹

My message to you is simple: What was written on that plaque is true. Did you notice the words of the quotation? It does not say the teaching or the study of the book will change your life. It says, “The *Book of Mormon* will change your life.” I would like to explain why I know that is true: The book itself is the most wonderful curriculum we have—not only from the point of view of the student, but from the point of view of the teacher.

There are four things I try to do when I teach the scriptures: read, prove, prepare, and testify. Let me address each of those one at a time.

Read

Before writing this, I set aside a short period of time to read the Book of Mormon. It changed my life. Suddenly, I saw it as a movie,

in full color and on a wide screen. People became more real to me. I pictured the Savior and His visit almost as if I had been there. And I had a feeling for Nephi, who somehow knew about the change you and I want so much to make in our lives and in the lives of our students. If I was going to teach what the change is, I would use Mosiah 27:25–26:

“And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters;

“And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.”

Now, that is the change. It is not to be a little better. It is not to know a little more. It is to be born again, to be changed by the power of the Atonement.

You and I know that if a person will read the Book of Mormon, it will describe that change and how to have it. I beg of you to have faith that your students will want to read the Book of Mormon, that it will draw them as it will draw you.



There are four things I try to do when I teach the scriptures: read, prove, prepare, and testify.



As you read Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, try to believe that Nephi knew Isaiah and he knew imagery. Nephi said to liken Isaiah directly unto you.

I have worried about the barrier of Isaiah. In fact, I have pondered this thought: “Why did Nephi put the barrier there?”

There is a scripture that I used for years in the seminary and institute of religion program in writing curriculum and in designing courses. The verse says:

“And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23).

I have thought perhaps what Nephi is trying to tell us is that he recognized the barrier of Isaiah. He knew that the book of Isaiah is full of imagery. Of all the scriptures, few have as many images; therefore, Isaiah can be very difficult. I believe what Nephi meant by “liken all scriptures unto us” was that they could be directly applied.

Many are more skilled than I am at putting scriptures in their historic context. There are wonderful techniques of understanding metaphor, simile, and allegory in the scriptures, and I hope you will learn as much about that as you can. But I hope you will learn one more thing. As you read

Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, try to believe that Nephi knew Isaiah and he knew imagery. Nephi said to liken Isaiah directly unto you. So I tried it. I read Isaiah’s words again, assuming Nephi picked the parts of Isaiah that I, without worrying about the imagery, could take directly to my heart as if the Lord were speaking to me.

Now I will share with you my own experiment. It is not one you would teach, because for each person the Lord will speak directly to the heart with a different message. This is personal; it lets you look into my heart.

I began to read in 2 Nephi 12 and thought: “The Lord is speaking to me. What is it He wants to tell me directly?” Then I came to a verse in the Isaiah passages that jumped out as if it were already underlined: “And it shall come to pass that the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day” (v. 11).

This is describing a day when the Savior will come, a day we all look for and want our students to prepare for. This scripture says that in that day, all of us who thought we were special and wonderful will seem smaller, and the Lord will be exalted. We will see better who He is, how much we love Him, and how humble we should be.

I kept reading in the Book of Mormon. I went past Isaiah, and I came to Ether 3:2. I saw something I had never seen before because I believed that Isaiah was talking to me directly, not in imagery.

The brother of Jared was dealing with the problem of getting light into a boat. As you will recall, when he sought the Lord’s help, the Lord asked what the brother of Jared was going to do about it. He had done the best he could. It was going to take something beyond his own ability. And so the brother of Jared said, “O Lord, thou hast said that we must be encompassed about by the floods. Now behold, O Lord, and do not be angry . . .”

As I was reading this, I could see it in color. His experience almost seemed to be happening as I read about it.

“And do not be angry with thy servant because of his weakness before thee; for we know that thou art holy and dwellest in the heavens, and that we are unworthy before

thee . . .” Suddenly the aforementioned words of Isaiah came back to me.

Then I continued reading: “Because of the fall our natures have become evil continually; nevertheless, O Lord, thou hast given us a commandment that we must call upon thee, that from thee we may receive according to our desires” (Ether 3:2).

I was not thinking so much about light in a ship; I was thinking about the great change and how much I want it in my life and how much you want it in yours. I understood why Isaiah told me it would be helpful to foresee the day when the Lord would be exalted and to know how much I depend upon Him. We need Him, and the faith we have in Him makes us see Him as great and exalted and ourselves as small and dependent. As great as the brother of Jared was, he saw himself as we need to see ourselves if we are to have the Atonement work in our lives.

I will make you this promise about reading the Book of Mormon: You will be drawn to it as you understand that the Lord has embedded in it His message to you. Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni knew that, and those who put it together put in messages for you. I hope you have confidence that the book was written for your students. There are simple, direct messages for them that will tell them how to change. That is what the book is about. It is a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Atonement and how it may work in their lives. You will have an experience this year feeling the change that comes by the power of the Atonement because of studying this book.

Prove

The second thing all of us teachers think about, pray about, and work at is “to prove.” You want to prove the gospel of Jesus Christ. You want your students to know it is true.

Some time ago my wife and I were talking about a lesson she had to give. We spoke about the fact that although

the lesson had one subject and several different aims, the only way you could get at it was to teach the Atonement. Then we realized that if you are teaching anything that matters, you are teaching about the Atonement.

John, our then-18-year-old son, was sitting there. I was waxing eloquent by saying that really great teachers would always know they were teaching basically about the Atonement. John then taught me something about proving. He told us about a seminary teacher. He said: “You know, Dad, he knew something. He knew that you could bear testimony to young people. You could teach that the Atonement is something they need. You could teach them that they need to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to repent, and to be baptized. They need to feel the Holy Ghost. You can do all that, and they will hear you. But they may not believe you. They need to experience it before they will believe they need it.”

Then John described a teacher who had persuaded some students to prove something. The teacher’s challenge was to not go to inappropriate movies and to see whether the students could feel the effect in their lives. According to John’s report, they did. They could feel the companionship of the

Holy Ghost returning.

John felt that all the sermons in the world trying to prove there was a Fall would not be nearly so effective as the person trying to do the right thing and then feeling the power of the Holy Ghost in his or her life. There is a difference we can feel between our fallen natures and our being lifted above them by the power of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the effects of the Atonement.

You want your students to see that their challenge is not to prove that the Book of Mormon is true but to prove to God that *they*—the students—are true. When they do this, they will know the book is true. And when they prove that they will do what the book says, God will tell them more:



I will make you this promise about reading the Book of Mormon: You will be drawn to it as you understand that the Lord has embedded in it His message to you.

“And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.

“And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation” (3 Nephi 26:9–10).

As you prove the Book of Mormon to your students, you will realize you do not prove it through arguments. You do not even prove it through great examples or stories. Those will help, but your students will prove the Book of Mormon by saying, “I believe it is true; I will try it.” Once they have proved themselves to God, then the proof will come to them because they will see the spiritual fruit.

The Book of Mormon is about people proving their belief to God little by little. And then He confirms their belief and gives them more.

One of the most wonderful confirmations I know is found in the book of Ether. The Lord asked the brother



Y*ou can prepare the hearts of your students.*

Find little things to do for them. Pay the price of service, and God will honor it.

of Jared if he saw more than the Lord’s finger.

“And he answered: Nay; Lord, show thyself unto me.

“And the Lord said unto him: Believest thou the words which I shall speak?

“And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie.

“And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him” (Ether 3:10–13).

The brother of Jared did not come to that moment in a sudden jump but over a lifetime. He was given a little light, he had faith, and he exercised it. When the Lord saw that he believed, He gave him a little more light, until finally the Lord said essentially, “Will you believe anything I say?” And the Lord knew that the brother of Jared told the truth when he answered, “Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie” (v. 12).

The Book of Mormon is written in such a way that students will feel it contains principles they should try. You need to be cautious that you do not set up applications or challenges that are not suited to that student, because God will be speaking to that individual. As you read the Book of Mormon, you and your students will know some things you should do. As you do them, you will have greater light given to you because you will have proved that you believe. I bear testimony that however much you have learned from the Book of Mormon before, you should read it again and prove it. Prove it by proving yourself. Do the things you feel impressed to do, and you will find things in it that you have never seen before.

Prepare

The next step a teacher takes is to prepare. You remember how the sons of Mosiah prepared. In fact, we

The brother of Jared was given a little light, he had faith, and he exercised it. When the Lord saw that he believed, He gave him a little more light.



**Ammon chose to serve the people he intended to teach:
“Therefore Ammon became a servant to king Lamoni.”
Remember that all your life if you want to know something
about preparation.**

use the scriptures that describe their preparation, especially how they fasted and prayed, as examples of preparation (see Alma 17:3, 9). But in my rereading of the Book of Mormon, two verses from the book of Alma stood out:

“Therefore, this was the cause for which the sons of Mosiah had undertaken the work, that perhaps they might bring them unto repentance; that perhaps they might bring them to know of the plan of redemption.

“Therefore they separated themselves one from another, and went forth among them, *every man alone*, according to the word and power of God which was given unto him” (Alma 17:16–17; emphasis added).

The word *alone* makes me think of you going into your classroom. You go alone. They went alone, among a ferocious people, with the intent to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ. (There will be days when your students may seem nearly as ferocious.) The sons of Mosiah went not simply to get a few converts. They were to help people change their lives by the power of the Atonement.

Ammon had prepared by fasting, praying, and studying the scriptures and gaining the spiritual endowment that we all need to teach. But I am struck by the way he taught. Remember, King Lamoni invited him to receive things, to have things done for him, but instead he chose to serve the people he intended to teach: “But Ammon said unto him: Nay, but I will be thy servant. Therefore Ammon became a servant to king Lamoni” (Alma 17:25).

Underline that and remember it all your life if you want to know something about preparation. Ammon prepared himself, but he did more. He prepared his student to be taught the doctrines of salvation. How did he do it?

“And it came to pass that he was set among other servants to watch the flocks of Lamoni, according to the custom of the Lamanites” (v. 25).



Now, remember that he not only protected the servants and the animals at the waters of Sebus, but he drove off the enemy. When the other servants brought the evidence of what Ammon had done, King Lamoni said, “Where is he?” They said, “Oh, he is in the stables. He is doing every little thing to serve you” (see Alma 18:8–9).

Isn’t that odd? He was called to teach the doctrines of salvation, but he was in the stables. Don’t you think he should have been praying and fasting and polishing his teaching plan? No, he was in the stables.

King Lamoni had been brought up with a belief that there was a God but that whatever the king did was right. He had been specifically taught false doctrine that might have made him impervious to feelings of guilt. Do you remember that when he heard where Ammon was, a feeling of guilt, of fear that he had done wrong in the killing of the servants, came over him (see Alma 18:5)? Remember the effect in Alma chapter 18:

“And they answered the king, and said: Whether he be the Great Spirit or a man, we know not; but this much we do know, that he cannot be slain by the enemies of the king; neither can they scatter the king’s flocks when he is with us, because of his expertness and great strength; therefore, we know that he is a friend to the king. And now, O king, we do not believe that a man has such great power, for we know he cannot be slain.

“And now, when the king heard these words, he said unto them: Now I know that it is the Great Spirit; and he



You need to testify. I can promise you a wonderful year because the Book of Mormon is full of testimony. Consider the last testimony in the Book of Mormon (see Moroni 10:32–33). I think it was put at the end for a purpose.

has come down at this time to preserve your lives, that I might not slay you as I did your brethren” (Alma 18:3–4).

I have always focused before on how mixed up Lamoni was in his doctrine, without seeing the miracle. The miracle was that a spiritual need was created in a man, that he might be taught the gospel of Jesus Christ. His heart was broken. He felt guilt. And it came from the temporal things that Ammon had done.

I bear you my testimony that you can prepare the hearts of your students. Serve them; find little things to do for them. Pay the price of service, and God will honor it. I will make you that promise. Do not worry if your students are not lovable at times. Just do something for them, and they will seem a little more lovable to you. It will be a gift from God.

I bear my testimony that the Holy Ghost will prepare your students, as He prepared King Lamoni for Ammon. Never, never underestimate the spiritual value of doing temporal things well for those whom you serve.

I pray that all of you might prepare through fasting and prayer and testimony. I hope you will prepare the hearts of your students. Be their servants, and you will love them. And they will feel your love. And more important, they will feel God’s love. The Book of Mormon will help you in that.

Testify

You need to testify. I can promise you a wonderful year because the Book of Mormon is full of testimony. You cannot teach the Book of Mormon without having as your companions the great testifiers, including the Savior Himself.

Nephi wrote: “And now, my beloved brethren, and also Jew, and all ye ends of the earth, hearken unto these words and believe in Christ; and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ. And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should do good” (2 Nephi 33:10).

God loves you and wants you to have power as you teach the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ. I bear testimony that you will be given that power.

Here is the last testimony in the Book of Mormon. I think it was put at the end for a purpose: “Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

“And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot” (Moroni 10:32–33).

I pray that you may know you are invited by God’s servants to invite His children to come unto Christ. If you forget yourself, remember Him, and serve your students, God will bless you and them, that many, if not all, will come unto Christ and feel that mighty change in their lives. ■

Adapted from an address given at a Church Educational System religious educators conference at Brigham Young University on 17 August 1990.

NOTE

1. Ezra Taft Benson, “To the ‘Youth of the Noble Birthright,’” *Ensign*, May 1986, 43.

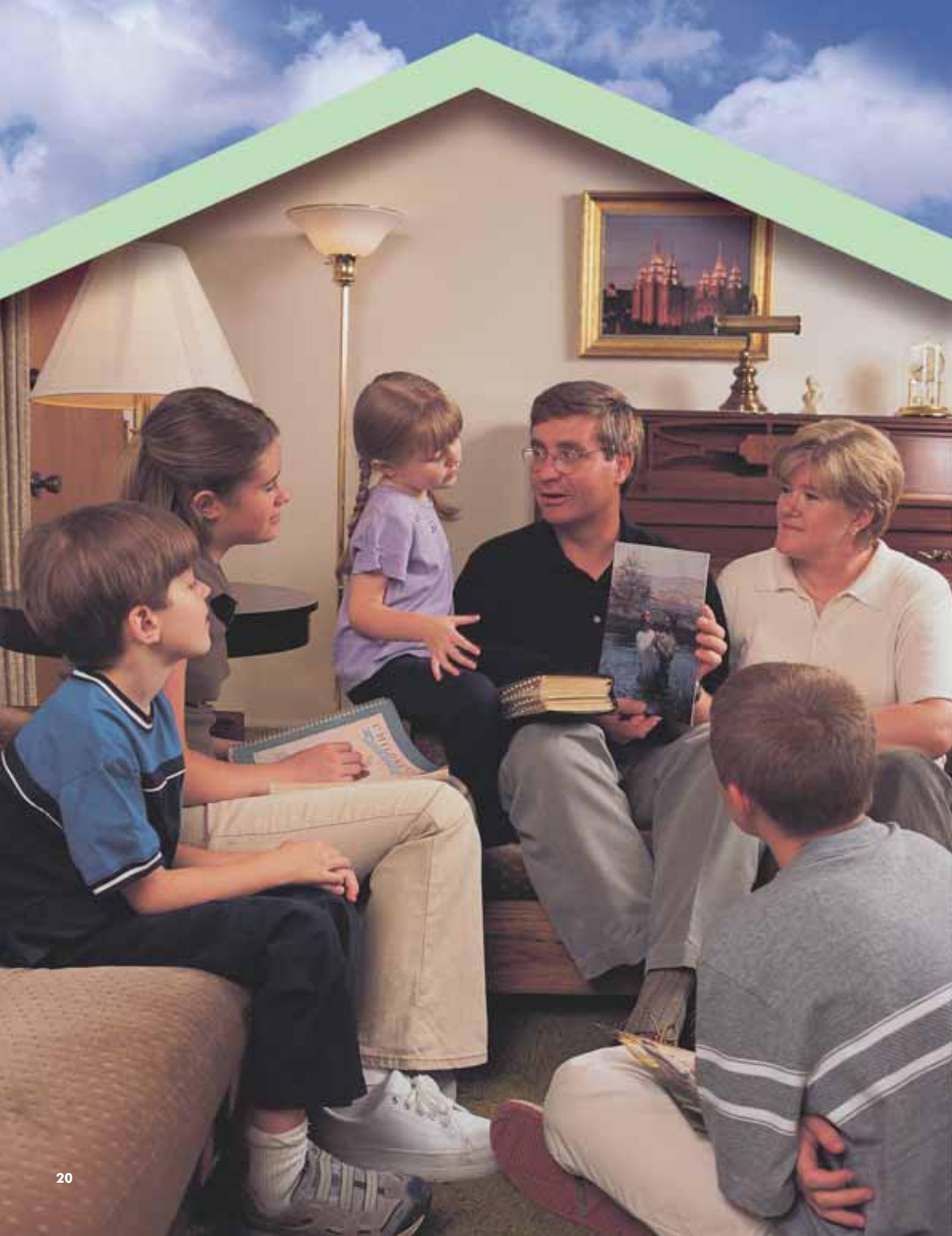
Who Am I?

Read the following clues about my life and try to figure out who I am. Then discover more about me from the scripture references below.

1. My father was a prophet of God.
2. I came from a large family.
3. I was born in the wilderness.
4. Growing up, I knew the family of a man named Zoram.
5. When I was very young, my mother and father almost died.
6. Some of my older brothers often picked on me.
7. In a father's blessing, I was taught "that there is an opposition in all things."
8. My father died when I was still young.
9. I became a priest and teacher when I was a young man.
10. A book in the Book of Mormon is named after me.
11. I wrote the longest chapter in the Book of Mormon.
12. During a sermon, I took off my coat and dramatically shook it before my people.
13. Near the end of my life, a wicked man challenged me to show him a sign from God. The power of God struck him down, and he died a few days later.
14. During my life, I saw my Redeemer. I also saw angels, and they ministered unto me.
15. The last word I wrote in my book was translated as *adieu*, a French word that means "farewell" or "God be with you." ■

For the answer, see 1 Nephi 1:5–20; 2:5; 16:7; 18:7, 17–18; 2 Nephi 2:1, 4, 11; 4:12; 5:6, 26; 6–10; 11:3; Jacob 1–7.





Presiding Righteously in the Home

The scriptures teach how a man should exercise his priesthood in dealing with family members.

BY ELDER YASUO NIIYAMA

Area Authority Seventy
Asia North Area

Some years ago I had a dream that changed my life. It also changed the way I treat my wife and children. In the dream, I was driving a car on a dark night. It was a two-lane road in a rather quiet countryside. I saw a car coming from the opposite direction at high speed; suddenly it swerved into my lane. I did my best to avoid the car, but the other driver increased his speed. I knew we were going to crash and found myself praying hard: “Heavenly Father, please help me. I cannot die yet. I have a sweet wife and [at that time] four lovely children. Please, please . . .” I felt the impact and was thrown out of the car.

When I hit the ground, I immediately woke up and found it was just a dream. “Oh, what a relief!” I thought. Then I asked myself,

“Have I been a good husband and father? Can I say I have been the best husband I could be? What would I leave my children if I died?”

I could not go back to sleep that night. I recommitted myself to the Lord and decided to love my wife and children more. So that my family would have my testimony recorded, I wrote down 42 statements expressing my belief in doctrines and principles of the gospel, the things I would most want to leave my children if I were to die.

A New Perspective

I gained a new perspective on what it means to preside righteously in the home after I joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and found that this Church helped me have a happy family. I came to understand that there are some basic doctrines of the restored gospel that guide husbands and fathers in fulfilling their roles.

One of the great experiences I had before I got married was to live with several member families in the United States while I attended a university there. These parents held family home evening every week, studied the



It is the father's responsibility to gather the family together for family home evening and for family councils. When we join together, we develop greater love.



Fathers should teach that personal and family prayers are the most powerful communication tools for receiving revelation and for increasing spirituality.

scriptures together, and had family prayer on a daily basis. Of course, they at times had challenges. But the way they solved the problems was consistent with gospel teachings.

In watching their examples and actually participating as a member of their families, I decided that someday I, too, would like to have a family similar to theirs. I observed that their families were blessed as these fathers followed the counsel now given in “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”: “By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families.”¹

Presiding Righteously

The family is the basic unit of the Church, so righteous behavior within the home is

vital. Indeed it is central to our personal progress and the spiritual progress of our families. There are several things a husband and father can do to teach and support this righteous behavior, as well as to exemplify it.

Know the doctrines and principles. In order to preside righteously in the home, a husband and father must first come to know the doctrines and principles of the restored gospel. Without the gospel, some men refuse to accept the responsibility of being a husband or of becoming a father. They are more interested in other pursuits, selfishly focusing only on themselves, or they just do not have the courage and commitment necessary to fulfill these divine roles.

Studying hard and gaining a good education are necessary and worthy pursuits, but we should remember that these are means and not ends. President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) said, “The most important knowledge in the world is gospel knowledge.”² Along with having individual study time, a husband and father can have a profoundly rewarding experience reading the scriptures with his family—for the benefit of all.

Work on improving himself first. The Lord taught, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:39). A husband and father must first learn to love and govern himself before he can do so with others. Once he learns to love Heavenly Father and himself, he tends to become more confident in loving others, especially his spouse and children.

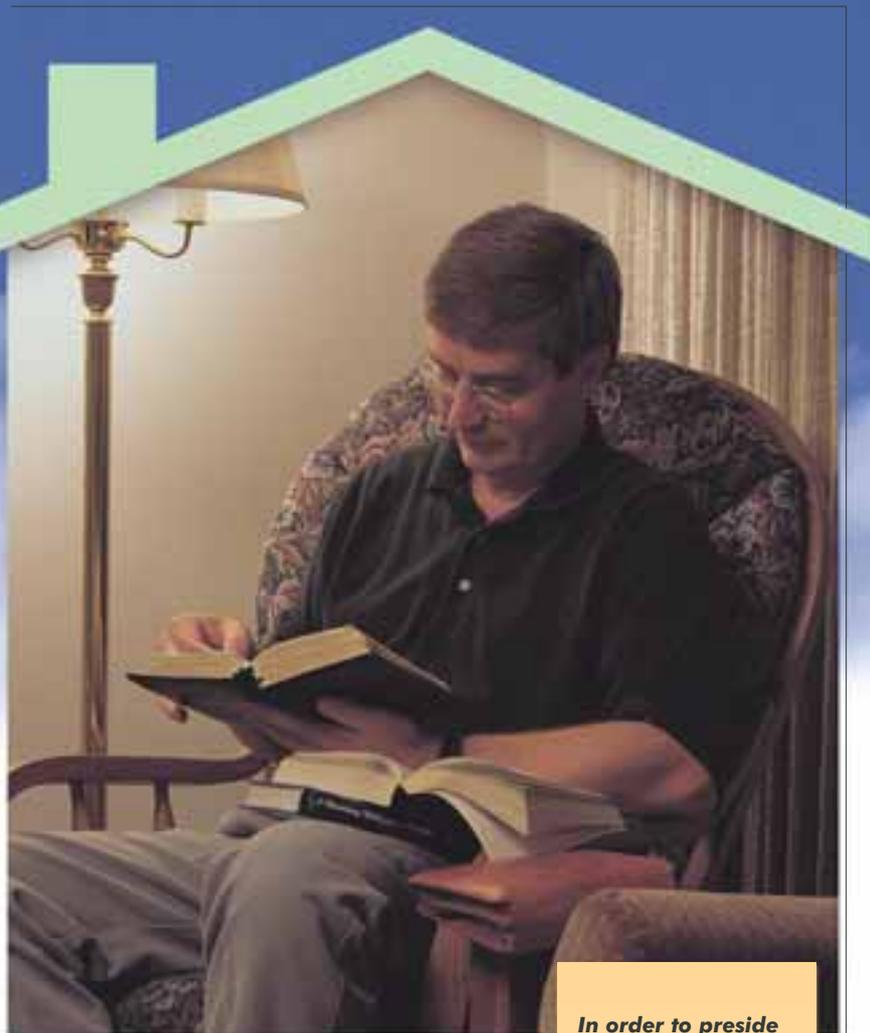
He must learn why it is important to govern wisely. He must learn to control his emotions and appetites and *never abuse anyone*. Violence, cruel behavior, and sharp words wound others. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25).

Acknowledge each other’s roles and work together. Men and women are equal in the sight of God. “In marriage neither the man nor the woman is more important than the other. They are equal partners and should work together to provide for the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of the family. . . . The father is the patriarch of the family and has important responsibilities that are his alone. He is the priesthood holder and has the duties of priesthood leadership.”³

A worthy man is given the priesthood so he can preside in the home and bless his family. It is the father’s responsibility to gather the family together for family home evening and for family councils. When we join together, we develop greater love for each other as we share our testimonies and experiences. Fathers should also have prayerful, periodic interviews with each of their children. As the father listens with love, both father and child will be richly rewarded.

Exercise the priesthood righteously. The Lord explained how fathers should exercise the priesthood:

“No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only



by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

“By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

“Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy” (D&C 121:41–43).

If a husband and father truly learns how to love according to the example of the Savior, he becomes confident, has stronger faith, and is inspired. The influence of the Holy Ghost can help him make righteous decisions on how to treat others.

Teach children the important things. A father should teach his children from the scriptures and from his own example. He

In order to preside righteously in the home, a husband and father must first come to know the doctrines and principles of the restored gospel.



As equal partners, “husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children.”

should teach that personal and family prayers are the most powerful communication tools for receiving revelation and for increasing spirituality. Through prayer, we can resolve many concerns and personal problems (see Philippians 4:6–7).

I remember some years ago, our family seemed to be limited to three children as my wife was not able to become pregnant again. She questioned why and started to blame herself. She prayed day after day. Our children noticed her sadness, and they felt sad too.

Finally I called our children together. In council, we decided to have a special prayer. I prayed; then each child prayed in turn. We had a wonderful feeling, and the Spirit of the Lord was there. Our children believed that their mother would have another baby. Approximately 10 months later, our fourth child was born. What joy we felt and what a

testimony that was to my wife and me and our children.

Feeling the Savior’s Peace

We learn in the proclamation on the family that “husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children.”⁴ Fathers are not in this alone. As husbands and wives strive to rear their families in righteousness, those around them will notice. Once when my wife went to a parent and teacher meeting, someone asked how members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints raise their children so well. I am sure many members have had similar experiences. President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: “We can maintain the integrity of our families if we will follow the counsel of our leaders. As we do so, those about us will observe with respect and be led to inquire how it is done.”⁵

May we stop and think, pondering and reflecting on how we are doing in our own families. May peace come to each family member as husbands and fathers preside over their families in love—that same peace promised by the Savior: “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). ■

NOTES

1. *Liabona*, Oct. 1998, 24; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. “The Most Important Knowledge,” *Ensign*, May 1971, 2.
3. *Gospel Principles* (manual, 1997), 236–37.
4. *Liabona*, Oct. 1998, 24; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
5. “A City Set upon a Hill,” *Tambuli*, Nov. 1990, 8; “A City upon a Hill,” *Ensign*, July 1990, 5.

Feeling the Love of the Lord through Exercising Faith

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

How Can We Access the Power of Faith?

Alma 32:28: “If ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold, . . . ye will begin to say within yourselves—It must needs be that this is a good seed . . . for it beginneth to enlarge my soul; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, yea, it beginneth to be delicious to me.”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Faith exists when absolute confidence in that which we cannot see combines with action that is in absolute conformity to the will of our Heavenly Father. . . . Only when our faith is aligned with the will of our Heavenly Father will we be empowered to receive the blessings we seek” (“Shall He Find Faith on the Earth?” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 83–84).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “The exercise of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is always subject to the order of heaven, to the goodness and will and wisdom and timing of the Lord. That is why we

cannot have true faith in the Lord without also having complete trust in the Lord’s will and in the Lord’s timing” (“Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 100).

Eliza R. Snow (1804–87), former Relief Society general president: “Faith [is] energy. . . . We must be energetic” (as reported in Morgan Utah Stake Relief Society Minutes and Record, 29 July 1882).

In What Ways Can We Experience the Lord’s Love through Faith?

Helaman 5:47: “Peace, peace be unto you, because of your faith.”

Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president: “As we exercise faith in the Lord, we learn to trust that His promises to us will be fulfilled. We have confidence that we will not be left alone, for the Lord will be our source of strength. His peace that passeth understanding will fill our souls. Sisters, seek faith in the Savior first.”

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Don’t look for a life virtually free from discomfort, pain, pressure, challenge, or grief, for those are the tools a loving Father uses to stimulate our personal



growth and understanding. As the scriptures repeatedly

affirm, you will be helped as you exercise *faith in Jesus Christ*. . . . Faith in Christ means we trust Him; we trust His teachings. That leads to hope, and hope brings charity, the pure love of Christ—that peaceful feeling that comes when we sense His concern, His love, and His capacity to cure us or to ease our burdens with His healing power” (“To Be Healed,” *Ensign*, May 1994, 8).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “We can say: ‘I know that [God] loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things’ (1 Nephi 11:17). There have been and will be times in each of our lives when such faith must be the bottom line: We don’t know what is happening to us or around us, but we know that God loves us, and knowing that, for the moment, is enough” (“*Not My Will, But Thine*” [1988], 119). ■

NOT JUST ME

While sailing to the Americas, Nephi was tied up and beaten by his brothers. His problems made mine seem small.

Nephi's experiences taught me that it wasn't just me—everyone has troubles. And we can handle them.

BY RENEÉ HARDING

When my dad left and my parents divorced, I was devastated. I felt abandoned. Everything changed, including my attitude and my outlook on life.

Money, or the lack of it, became a major issue. My mom worked two jobs. When my best friend wanted me to go shopping, I was too ashamed to tell her we barely had enough money for food—let alone clothes.

Seeing how bad I felt, my mom taught herself to sew and made me a few outfits. As good as her intentions were, none of the outfits turned out very well. She made me a pair of pants that were not only too short, but they were such a bright color that I felt self-conscious.

As much as I didn't want to wear them or any of my homemade clothes,

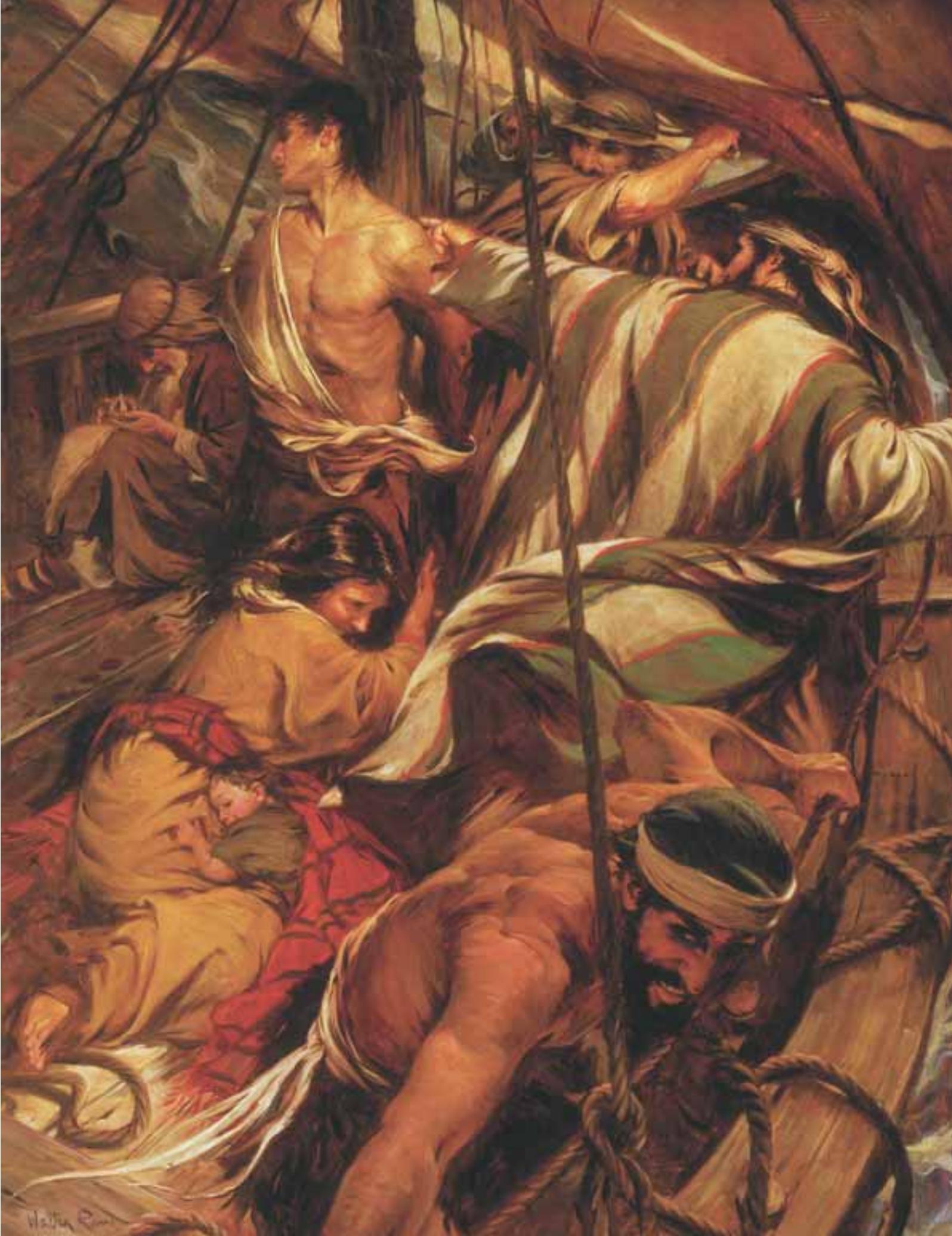
I also didn't want to hurt Mom's feelings.

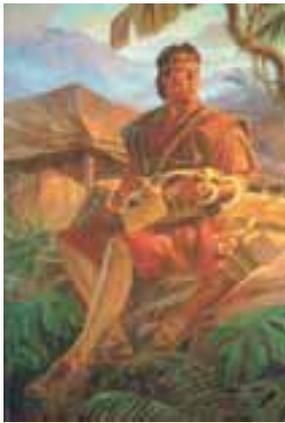
The day I wore those pants to school still stands out in my mind as one of the most humiliating experiences of my life. Mike, one of the most popular guys at school, always took time out of his busy schedule to make fun of my homemade outfits. The day I wore those pants I gave not only Mike but everyone else something to laugh about.

As bad as things were at school, they were worse at home. With Dad gone and Mom working so many hours, my brothers and I were left in charge of the house, inside and out. To my horror, even though we were doing our best, we got anonymous notes about what a mess our yard was and what a disgrace we were to the neighborhood. I had to agree. Our home and yard did not look as good as the others. I was ashamed to invite friends over.

When I started early-morning seminary, things changed. They got better. I was introduced to someone I could relate to—someone who had problems worse than mine. The difference was that while I felt sorry for myself, he stayed close to the Lord and refused to complain. The person I'm talking about is Nephi.







FOR OUR PROFIT

Nephi explained, “I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23).

Sister Mortensen, my seminary teacher, pointed out that no one escapes heartbreak or pain in life—not even Nephi. What made Nephi great was that he never lost hope or his testimony while he battled one problem after another. Nephi helped me realize that my biggest problem in life was not my parents’ divorce or my bright pants or things and people beyond my control. My biggest problem was my attitude, something I have complete control over.

Nephi’s family had their world turned upside down. Unhappy that their dad led them away from their home and possessions, Nephi’s brothers began to murmur and complain. Nephi, on the other hand, prayed for understanding.

Nephi’s brothers took a lot of their frustrations out on him. They hit him with a rod, bound him with cords, and even plotted to kill him. Hearing how

violent they were toward Nephi made me realize how insignificant Mike and the bullies in my life were. What’s amazing is that while I felt nothing but contempt for those who were unkind to me, Nephi was patient and loving and “did frankly forgive them all that they had done” (1 Nephi 7:21).

While most of my friends didn’t say much about my family situation, one friend called to say her mother no longer wanted her to be friends with me. Her mom said people like me who came from families with problems were a bad influence. I burst into tears and after that spent many nights crying myself to sleep.

Nephi also admits to crying himself to sleep. He said, “Mine eyes water my pillow by night” (2 Nephi 33:3). The difference was that Nephi, during the day, continually prayed for his fam-

ily, something that hadn’t occurred to me because I was too busy wallowing in my tears.

While Nephi came from a family with many problems, he remained true. His way of dealing with pain and anguish was to lean upon Heavenly Father.

Nephi never fell into Satan’s trap of thinking Heavenly Father’s love could be measured by how well things were going for him. Nephi proved that while we don’t always have a choice about the bad things

that happen to us, we always have a choice about how we respond to these problems. ■

Reneé Harding is a member of the Sugar Land First Ward, Houston Texas South Stake.

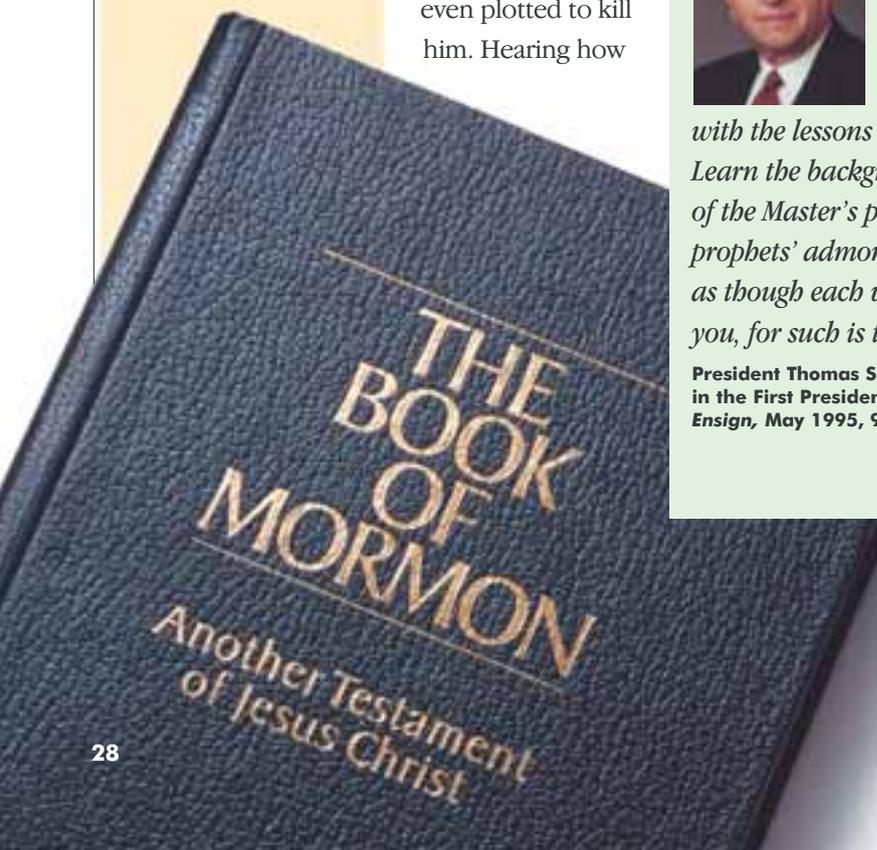


AN UNFAILING GUIDE

“The holy scriptures [are] an unailing guide in our lives. Become acquainted

with the lessons the scriptures teach. Learn the background and setting of the Master’s parables and the prophets’ admonitions. Study them as though each were speaking to you, for such is the truth.”

President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “A Time to Choose,” Ensign, May 1995, 97.



Prime Time



Television was one of the great inventions of the 20th century, but today it presents some danger. Not only must we be careful to avoid watching harmful shows, we must also be aware of how much time we spend watching television.

Much of the time we spend watching television could be spent in other ways. The students in Juan Chácon's seminary class in the Itzaes Ward, Mérida México Stake, suggest the following good things to do instead of sitting down in front of the television set.

- ◆ Spend time talking with family members or friends.
- ◆ Study scriptures.
- ◆ Play basketball, other sports, or board games.
- ◆ Do homework.
- ◆ Visit less-active ward or branch members your age.
- ◆ Plan an activity with friends.
- ◆ Do something nice for someone else.
- ◆ Read a Church magazine or a good book.
- ◆ Listen to uplifting music.
- ◆ Take a nap.
- ◆ Write letters to friends or missionaries.
- ◆ Write in your journal.
- ◆ Take your little brothers or sisters to a playground or for a walk.
- ◆ Ask your parents or grandparents about their childhood.
- ◆ Learn a new hobby.
- ◆ Memorize scripture mastery verses.
- ◆ Take a walk or do some other type of exercise.
- ◆ Help prepare dinner or clean up around your home or yard.
- ◆ Volunteer at a library, school, or hospital. ■

Questions & Answers

What can I do to stay close to my dad when we're both so busy?

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

L I A H O N A

Building or strengthening a relationship takes time and effort. With all of the demands on your time, it's unlikely that your schedule and your parents' schedules will work out just right to provide quality time together—unless you and your parents are willing to plan for it.

You can start building a better relationship by talking about it. If your dad knows you want to spend more time with him, he will probably do everything he can to make time for you. But that means you have to be flexible too. The only schedule you can control is your own. So if your schedules don't match up, you might have to sacrifice something that is important to you in order to spend time with your dad.

The good news is that you want to stay close—or become closer—to your parents. Many youth don't realize how important that

Family relationships are meant to be eternal. These relationships should take priority over others.

Building relationships takes time. Be flexible enough to make time for your family.

Talk to your dad. If he doesn't know you want to spend more time with him, he can't help fix it.

Support family prayer, family home evening, family scripture study, and other family activities.

Make the effort to schedule time together. Plan activities in advance to use that time well.

relationship is and that they're responsible for doing their part in strengthening it. Some Latter-day Saint youth think, "My family is going to be around forever, so I'll hang out with my friends now." But if you don't put your family first, you may not have them forever.

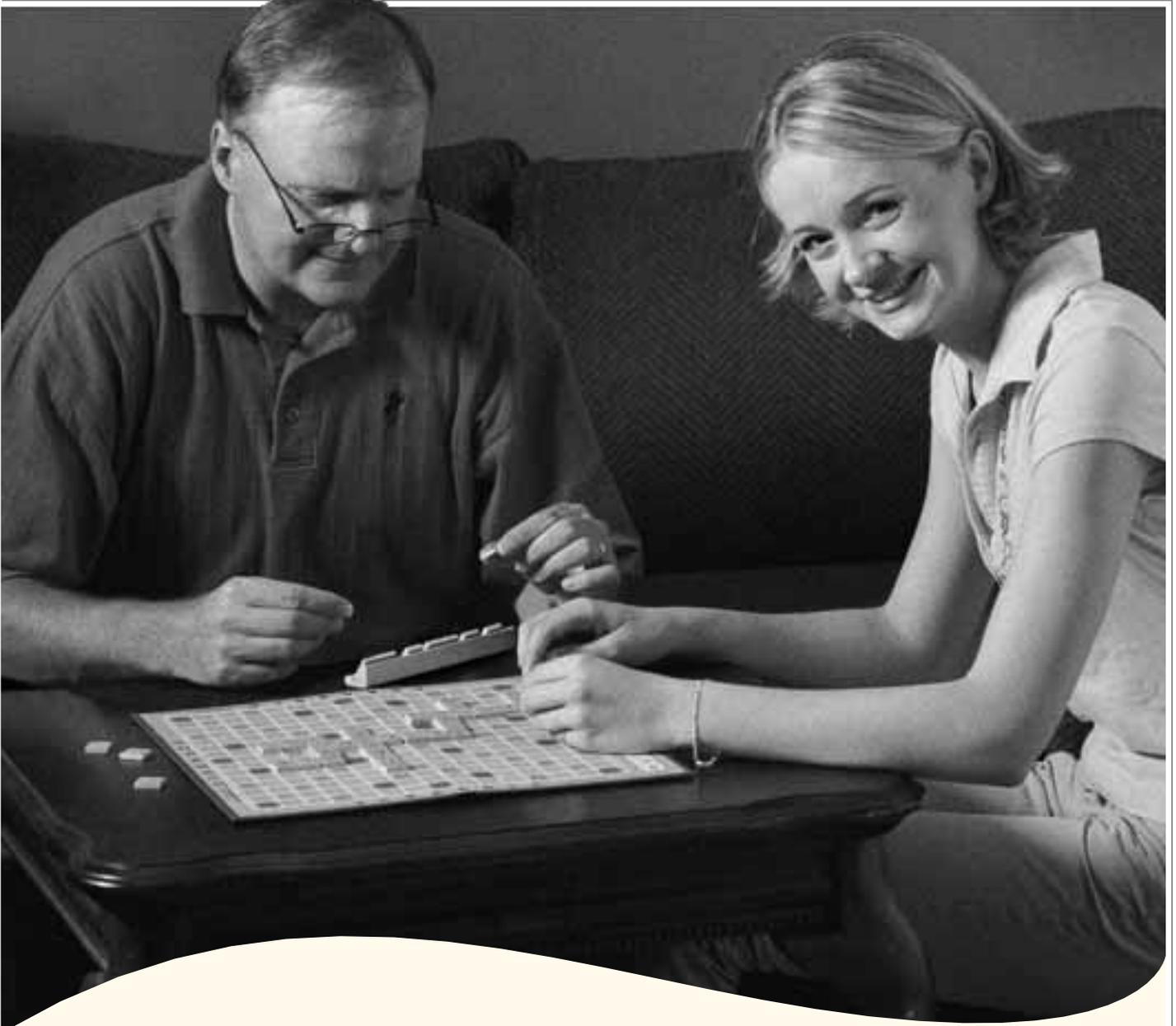
Friends, sports, and other activities aren't necessarily bad. But family is eternal; popularity isn't.

When you're trying to decide how to spend more time with your dad or any other family member, don't be distracted by other activities that might seem good but aren't as essential as family relationships.

Here are some ideas from readers that can help you strengthen your relationship with your dad:

Find Time Together

Regular time together is important, even if it's only five minutes each day. Don't miss family prayer, family scripture study, or family



home evening. Don't miss other family activities, including meals together. Go with your dad on his errands. Plan a weekly get-together. When you plan time together, mark it on the calendar so neither of you will forget.

When You Find Time

Talk to each other, tell jokes, play games, share favorite scriptures, pray together, share feelings about articles in the Church magazines or what you have learned in seminary

or at church, ask his opinion or advice on problems you're facing, and so on.

When There's No Time

Find out when would be an appropriate time to call him at work for a few minutes to tell him a little about your day. Leave short notes for your father to find—on his pillow, in the bathroom, on the couch. Pray for help in strengthening your relationship.

READERS



It all comes down to time. I will never forget the time I had with my father. No matter how short or how long we're with our fathers,

time is essential to that relationship.

*Elder Frank Maea, 21,
Philippines Baguio Mission*



Love requires sacrifice. If you want to have a better relationship with your father, you may have to sacrifice some of the time you spend with your friends or give

up a few activities.

Lindsay Powell, 14, Evergreen Ward,
Golden Colorado Stake

I love my father, and I can try to make sacrifices for him like watching for his return so I can talk to him. During family home evening or other family activities, I can tell him about my feelings. I can leave him notes on his desk at home or call him during his lunch hour at work.

Marie Fania Sophia François, 14,
Frères Ward, Port-au-Prince Haiti Stake

We must practice open communication in order to obtain a close relationship with each other. We must also have family prayers every day. Talk openly with your father. Participate in family activities and family home evening.

Elder Su' Tulimanu Jr., 21,
Samoa Apia Mission

My father is also busy, but we share our daily experiences at breakfast. At least once a week we have our family council. We pray as a family. We also share articles from the Church magazines. Although we are often apart, I have learned a lot from him, and I pray that the Lord will bless us to be a spiritual family.

Jenirée M. Rodríguez Hernández, 15,
Las Colinas Branch, El Tigre Venezuela District



When things of the world crowd in, all too often the wrong things take highest priority. Then it is easy to forget the fundamental purpose of life. Satan has a powerful tool to use against good people. It is distraction. He would have good people fill life with 'good things' so there is no room for the essential ones. Have you unconsciously been caught in that trap?"

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "First Things First," *Liahona*, July 2001, 7; *Ensign*, May 2001, 7.

Since I was a little girl I have accompanied my father on various errands. He sometimes takes my sister and me to school, and we chat about many topics. We plan time for "dates" together, we go shopping as a family, and we often call each other at home or at work.

Patricia María del Carmen Fuentes Rodríguez, 12,
Panorama Ward, Guatemala City Guatemala Mariscal Stake



Set aside at least one night every week for you and your dad. Spend time together playing games.

Sunday would be a good day to share some quiet activity. Try to

learn more about your dad. Find out what he likes. Do something nice for him like making him breakfast.

Jessica Lee Jensen, 12, Alpine 10th Ward,
Alpine Utah Stake

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Youth readers: Send us your answer to the question below, along with your name, age, and ward and stake (or branch and district). Please include a photograph of yourself that is 1 1/2 by 2 inches (4 cm by 5 cm) or larger.

Questions and Answers 03/04

Room 2420, 50 East North Temple Street

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA

cur-liahona-imag@ldschurch.org

Please respond by 15 March 2004.

QUESTION

"I love the gospel, but talking about it with others terrifies me. How can I overcome my fear?" ■



Our Eternal Choices

As we learn in 2 Nephi 26:27–28, 33, each of Heavenly Father’s children must have the opportunity to choose freely the path of obedience and happiness.

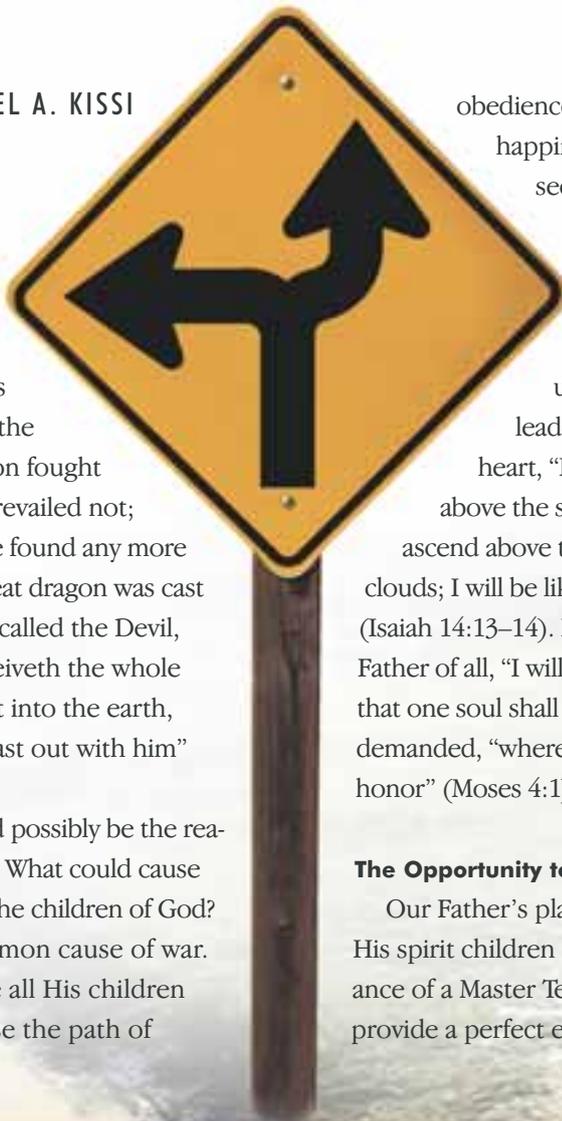
BY ELDER EMMANUEL A. KISSI

Area Authority Seventy
Africa West Area

There was war in heaven, according to the revelation of John. “Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (Revelation 12:7–9).

What, we ask, could possibly be the reason for war in heaven? What could cause such hostility among the children of God?

Rebellion is a common cause of war. Heavenly Father gave all His children opportunity to choose the path of



obedience that leads to eternal happiness. But some, it seems, chose the path of self-interest, with no regard for the agency of others. Isaiah teaches us that Lucifer, their leader, had said in his heart, “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: . . . I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:13–14). Lucifer said to the Father of all, “I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost,” and then demanded, “wherefore give me thine honor” (Moses 4:1).

The Opportunity to Choose

Our Father’s plan called for sending His spirit children to earth with the guidance of a Master Teacher who would provide a perfect example they could



The doctrine that all must have the opportunity to know and choose the path of eternal life is repeated throughout the Book of Mormon. This message has been repeated in our day as well.

choose to follow (see Abraham 3:24–28). In agreement with this plan, the Firstborn Son of God said, “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). Jesus Christ was chosen to be the teacher, the exemplar, and ultimately the Savior for all humankind as they came to live on earth.

In the war that followed, one-third of our Heavenly Father’s spirit children were cast out with Lucifer. The other two-thirds kept their first estate and thus received the opportunity to progress by following the plan of salvation. These are they to whom the Lord said, through Adam and Eve, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28).

Unfortunately, some of Heavenly Father’s children who come to earth lose the ongoing war with Satan in mortality. Others continue to follow Jesus Christ and prevail over the evil one. But it is our Father’s will that all have the opportunity to make this choice, and all are rewarded according to the way they use their agency. “Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God,” Nephi wrote. But he added that when people have rejected every word of God and they are ripe in iniquity, they are ready to feel “the fulness of the wrath of God . . . upon them” (1 Nephi 17:35).

Reaching All His Children

What of those who have not heard the word of God in this life? Is there hope for them?

Yes. In His infinite love and mercy, Heavenly Father provided a way that all His children may know His doctrine and choose to follow Him. The psalmist wrote prophetically that everyone would have the opportunity to believe and be saved: “The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God” (Psalm 98:2–3).

The resurrected Lord Jesus Christ told His Apostles: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:15–16). Through an instructive vision given to His Apostle Peter, the Lord made it clear that the good news of the gospel was not to be withheld from any of Heavenly Father’s children (see Acts 10:9–16). “Of a truth

I perceive that God is no respecter of persons,” Peter said. “But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34–35).

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) saw in vision that those who die without having the opportunity to hear the gospel in this life will have the gospel preached to them in the spirit world. There they will be taught all “principles of the gospel that [are] necessary for them to know in order to qualify themselves that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (D&C 138:34).

Other Witnesses

This doctrine that all must have the opportunity to know and choose the path of salvation and eternal life is repeated throughout the Book of Mormon. For example: “He hath given [salvation] free for all men. . . . All men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden. . . . And he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile” (2 Nephi 26:27–28, 33).

Those who “shouted for joy” in the premortal council when they learned of our Father’s plan will once more have the opportunity to rejoice when they receive the gospel through the power of God and His Son, Jesus Christ.



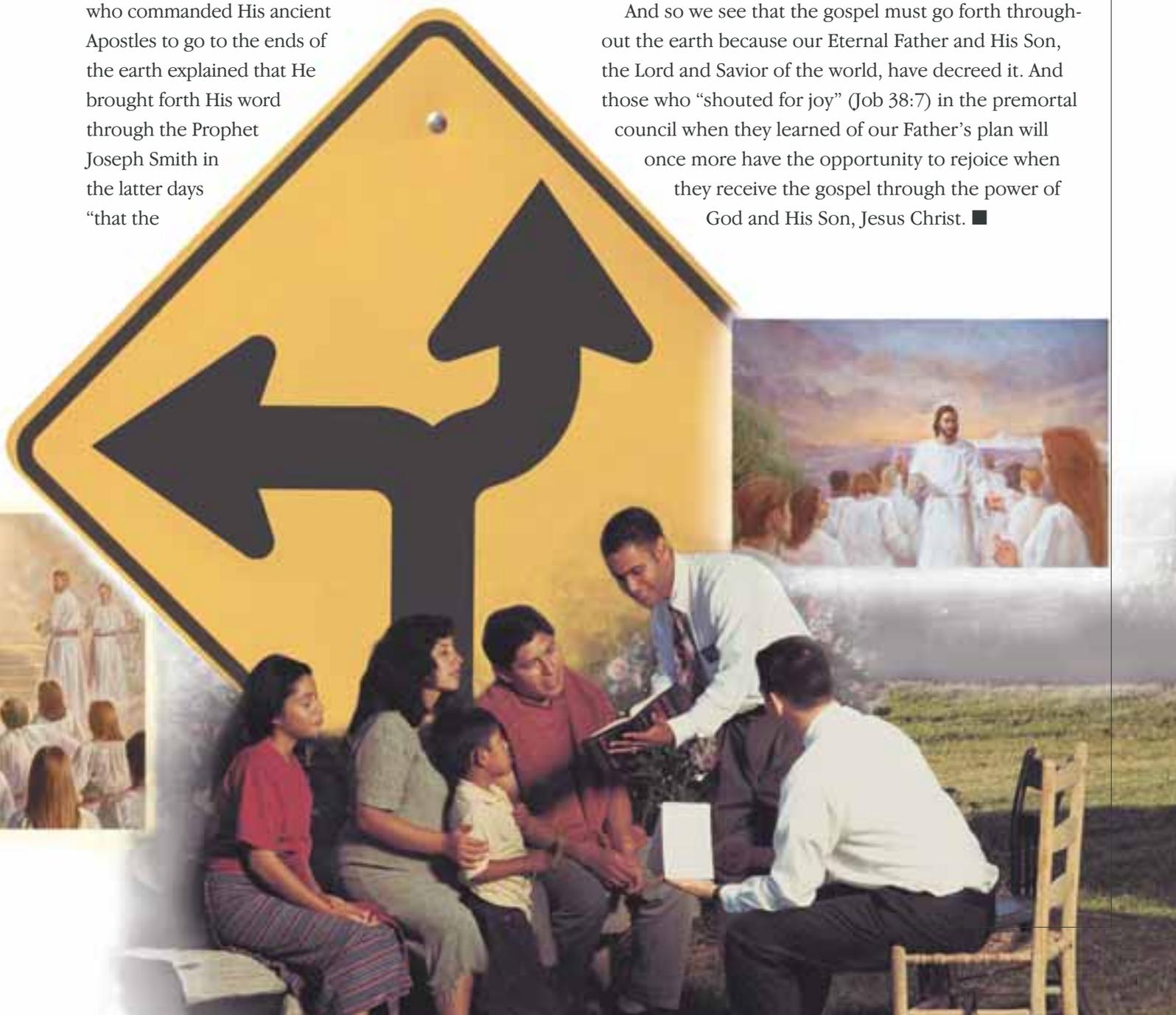
And again: “We see that his arm is extended to all people who will repent and believe on his name” (Alma 19:36), Mormon taught. “Now my brethren, we see that God is mindful of every people, whatsoever land they may be in; yea, he numbereth his people, and his bowels of mercy are over all the earth. Now this is my joy” (Alma 26:37), Ammon explained.

This message has been repeated in our day as well: “The voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear” (D&C 1:11). That same Lord who commanded His ancient Apostles to go to the ends of the earth explained that He brought forth His word through the Prophet Joseph Smith in the latter days “that the

fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers” (v. 23).

Those who might hear His word are warned not to take it lightly but to forsake sin and serve Him: “He that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven; . . . And again, verily I say unto you, O inhabitants of the earth: I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh; For I am no respecter of persons” (vv. 32, 34–35).

And so we see that the gospel must go forth throughout the earth because our Eternal Father and His Son, the Lord and Savior of the world, have decreed it. And those who “shouted for joy” (Job 38:7) in the premortal council when they learned of our Father’s plan will once more have the opportunity to rejoice when they receive the gospel through the power of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. ■



STANDING THE TEST OF TIME

Preserved through the centuries for our day, the Book of Mormon is helping Mexican youth build the testimonies they'll need to weather the storms of life.

Ruins of ancient civilizations can be found throughout Mexico and Central America. The Pyramid of the Sun (right) at Teotihuacán, near Mexico City, is well known for its majesty. LDS youth, such as Carmen Hernández (top inset) and her brother Samuel (middle inset) of Mérida, Mexico, enjoy visiting Dzibilchaltún, Chichen Itza (bottom inset), and other ruins near their homes.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ADAM C. OLSON,
EXCEPT AS NOTED

BY ADAM C. OLSON

Church Magazines

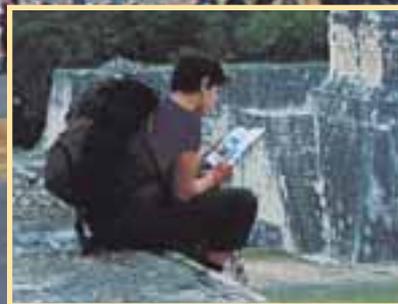
Resting on the stone steps of the ancient ruins of Dzibilchaltún in Mexico, Sandra Hernández and Meily Tolosa quietly consider the scattered ruins of a city nearly 1,500 years old. The silence around them is almost as heavy as the humid tropical air. But the peaceful moment doesn't last long.

The silence shatters as Samuel Hernández comes hooting and hollering out of the thick jungle, which grows right up to the edge of the small pyramid. His friends Jorge Tolosa and Wilbert Agosta follow right behind him.

"Oh, I thought I was going to die," he laughs as he throws himself down onto the steps and tries to catch his breath. Picking their way through the jungle, Samuel and his friends had been making their way toward a partially overgrown structure when they startled a flock of hidden birds. The birds weren't the only ones startled. "Oh, my heart," Samuel says, laughing.

Testimonies Preserved

Samuel, Meily, and other youth from the Canek Ward, Mérida México Centro Stake, are spending the day exploring some of Mexico's ancient ruins. Dzibilchaltún is just one of the thousands of crumbling settlements left throughout the Americas by ancient inhabitants.



Meily Tolosa (below) and Erika Poot, Wilbert Agosta, and Carmen Hernández (far right) explore the ruins and ancient water holes, or cenotes (middle inset), at Dzibilchaltún. Ruins at Teotihuacán include the Court of the Priests (top inset) and the symbol of the feathered serpent (bottom inset).

The land from central Mexico to Honduras (also called Mesoamerica) has been home to many thriving civilizations. On this trip to Dzibilchaltún, the youth are grateful that ruins of some of their ancestors' cities have been preserved so they can explore where their ancestors lived. "It's interesting to learn what my ancestors did and what happened to them," says Jorge, a deacon.

In the same way, these youth are thankful

that the record of the family of Lehi has been preserved so they can learn from its teachings and experiences. "I'm grateful the Lord preserved the Book of Mormon for us to learn from," Jorge says.

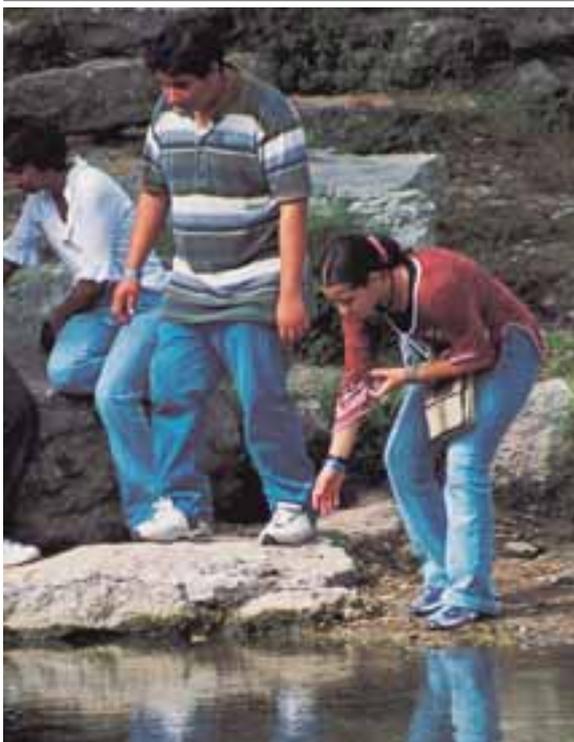
Many Nephite prophets, such as Nephi, Enos, and Mormon, prayed that the Lord would preserve their testimonies of Jesus Christ to help their descendants (see 2 Nephi 25:21; Enos 1:16–18; Words of Mormon 1:8).

As He promised, the Lord preserved their



records and brought them to light again through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Now the Book of Mormon is bringing the descendants of Book of Mormon peoples—and other people from all around the world—to Jesus Christ.

“I’m so grateful for the Book of Mormon,” says Carmen Hernández, a Mia Maid who hopes to thank the Book of Mormon prophets someday. “When I meet them,” she says, “I will say, ‘Thank you for



THE BOOK OF MORMON ADDS UP

239 chapters in the Book of Mormon

77 verses in the longest chapter, Jacob 5

2 verses in the shortest chapters, 3 Nephi 30 and Moroni 5

3,925 references to the Savior in the Book of Mormon, or one reference every 1.7 verses

5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon made in the first printing (March 1830)

108,936,922 copies printed from 1830 to 2002

103 languages in which all or part of the Book of Mormon is available

1,346 times the phrase “it came to pass” appears in the Book of Mormon

helping so many people find answers and come to Christ.’” (See 2 Nephi 33:11; Jacob 6:13; Ether 12:38.)

Strengthening Testimonies

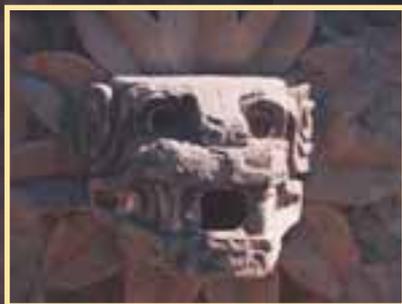
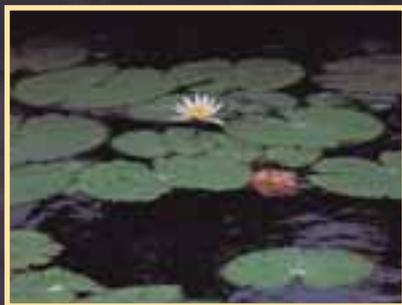
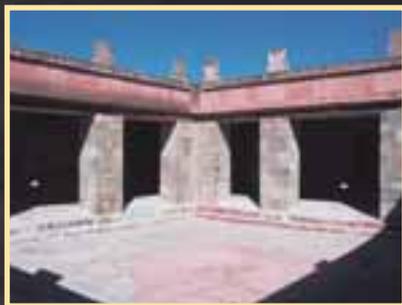
While the testimonies of Christ recorded in the Book of Mormon were preserved by the hand of the Lord against the ravages of time, the ancient cities of Mesoamerica haven’t fared as well. Time, the elements, and other factors have reduced some of the once-great civilizations to rubble.

Still, the youth—such as the group from the Canek Ward—enjoy visiting the ruins and imagining them bustling with people and wondering what it was like back then.

“It’s awesome to see structures like those the people of the Book of Mormon may have built and lived in,” Carmen says.

Through their studies in seminary and Sunday School, the youth of the Canek Ward are trying to build testimonies of Christ that won’t crumble and decay like the ruins around them.

“As we’ve studied the Book of Mormon, my love for the book and my testimony

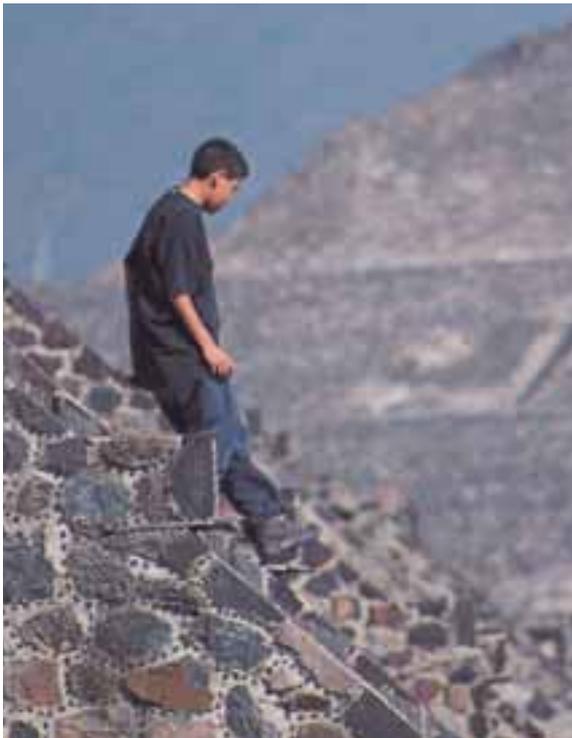




BOOK OF MORMON PROMISES

As members of the Church all over the world study the Book of Mormon this year in Sunday School, each of us can gain, or renew, our testimony of the book's truthfulness through prayer (see Moroni 10:3–4).

President Gordon B. Hinckley has said: "Without reservation I promise you that if you will prayerfully read the Book of Mormon, regardless of how many times you previously have read it, there will come into your homes an added measure of the Spirit of the Lord. There will come a strengthened resolution to walk in obedience to his commandments, and there will come a stronger testimony of the living reality of the Son of God" ("The Book of Mormon," *Tambuli*, Oct. 1988, 7; "The Power of the Book of Mormon," *Ensign*, June 1988, 6).



of the Savior have grown," says Carmen.

According to these youth, another major factor in strengthening their testimonies of Christ is going to the temple.

Temples Ancient and Modern

Many tourists come to southern Mexico—dubbed "the land of temples"—to explore the ancient ruins called "temples" because of their apparent religious uses. But for all the ancient temples surrounding them, the youth of Mexico are most excited about having their own Latter-day Saint temples—where they will make covenants with God and be married for all eternity.

One of these is the Mérida México Temple, completed in July 2000. It is only a 10- or 15-minute drive from where the youth in the Canek Ward live.

"Everyone was so excited to find out we were going to get a temple," says Ismael Herrera, a priest. "Before, we had to travel to Mexico City."

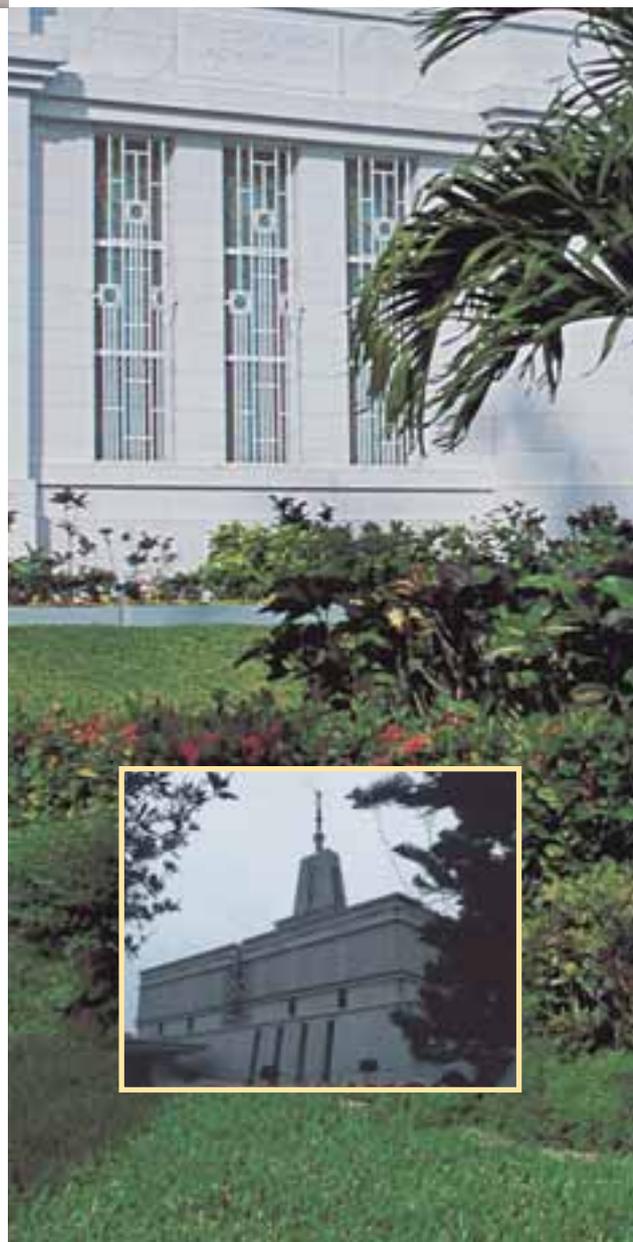
The youth had made the trip to the Mexico City temple to perform baptisms

for the dead, but that temple is located more than 16 hours away.

"Our temple is so close," says Jorge. "There are so many more opportunities to go."

"In all the times we've been able to go to the Mérida temple, we could have gone to the Mexico City temple only once or twice," agrees Carmen. "Having a temple here allows us to help a lot more people."

Whenever the Lord has had a people, He has commanded them to build



PHOTOGRAPH OF BOOK OF MORMON BY JOHN LUKE

temples (see D&C 124:39). In the Book of Mormon, Nephi and his followers built a temple soon after leaving the families of Laman and Lemuel (see 2 Nephi 5:16). King Benjamin taught his people at a temple (see Mosiah 1:18). Alma and Amulek taught in temples (see Alma 16:13). And Christ appeared to the people gathered at the temple in Bountiful (see 3 Nephi 11:1).

These Mexican youth have read about the temples of the Nephites. They've visited the

ruins of ancient temples. Now they have a dedicated temple in their own area. They love going to their modern temple. It's peaceful. It's quiet.

Like the ruins of ancient temples, it seems untouched by the outside world. But in this temple, they can feel something they don't feel anywhere else.

"This is the house of the Lord," says Jorge. ■

Adam C. Olson is a member of the Bountiful 20th Ward, Bountiful Utah South Stake.

In a land of ruins, such as Teotihuacán's Temple of the Moon—behind Luis Chávez Jr. of Mexico City (far left)—Mexican youth are grateful for 12 modern temples in their country. Youth of the Canek Ward now visit the Mérida México Temple (below). They had earlier attended the temple in Mexico City (inset).



On Alert

By Joel Fairfield

While sitting in my police car watching for speeders one afternoon in June 1996, I heard on my radio a report of an argument between a convenience store clerk and some customers. Two junior officers were being sent to the store. I wasn't seeing many speeders,

so I decided to drive to the store to offer help. I felt impressed to drive along a seldom-used road.

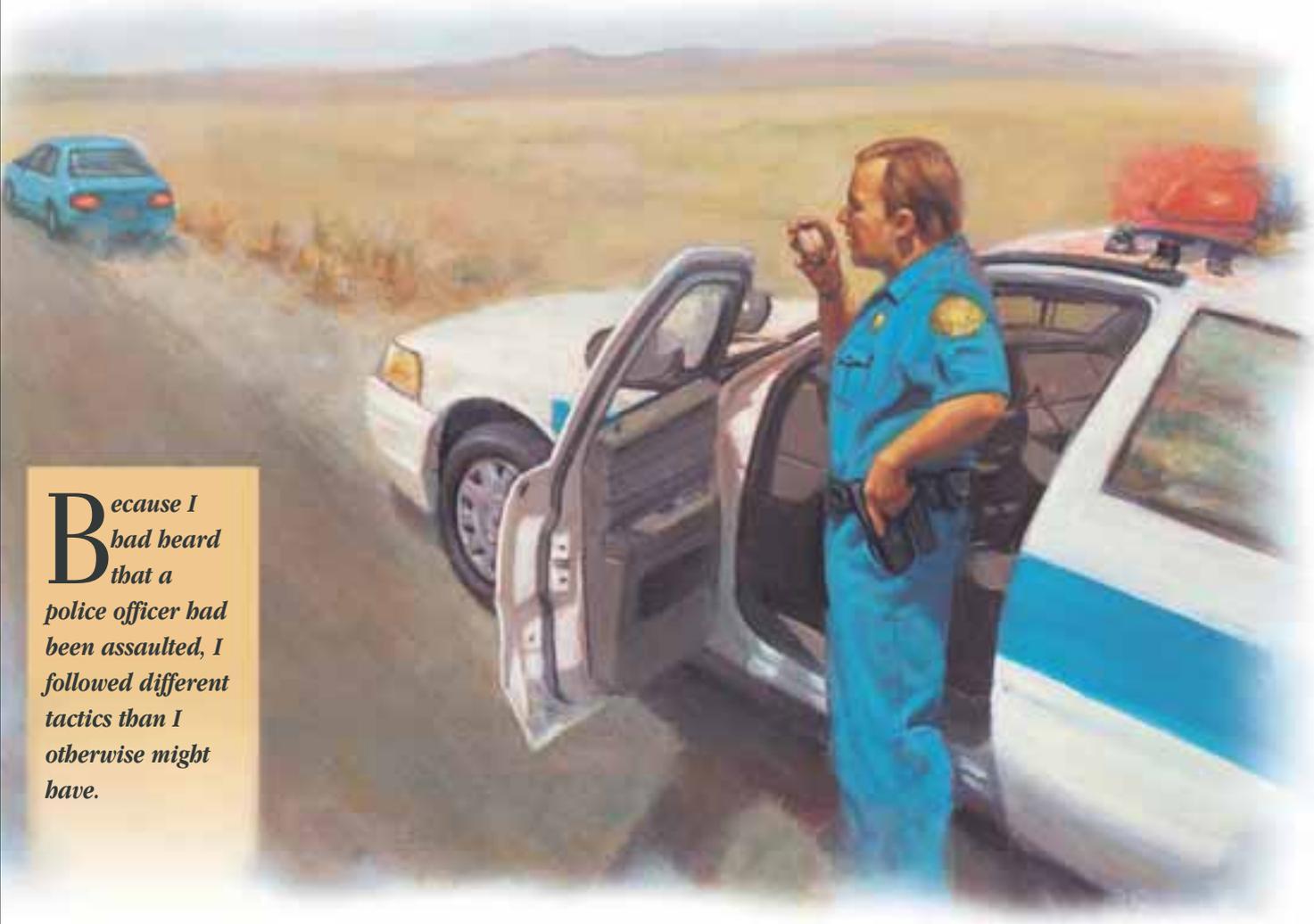
Before long I heard on the radio that the first officer to arrive on the scene was Ben. I was concerned because he was a newly hired officer with little experience.

As I continued on the back road, I heard the dispatcher report that the customers at the store were drunk and becoming combative. I was somewhat relieved when I heard

that the second officer, Rocky, who was a little more experienced, had arrived at the scene.

Then came a report that the customers, four of them, had just left in a blue compact car. Still driving toward the scene, I heard another police jurisdiction broadcast a description of the car and its occupants and request officers to look for it. Rocky's voice came on the radio, giving the direction the car was last seen traveling.

Because I had heard that a police officer had been assaulted, I followed different tactics than I otherwise might have.



Moments later, I saw the car speeding toward me. My heart sank when I heard someone advise that an officer had been assaulted. I guessed that Ben, the rookie officer who was first on the scene, had been attacked.

I quickly turned around and began to follow the car, which then pulled over and stopped as if waiting for me to pass. Believing that the people in the car had just assaulted a police officer, I followed different tactics than I might have otherwise, and all my senses were on alert. I turned on my emergency lights and stopped my car some distance behind the vehicle. After informing the dispatcher that I had the car stopped, I drew my gun and waited for backup. About a minute later Rocky arrived to assist me.

We began to call each person out of the car at gunpoint, one at a time. Rocky interviewed each person. In the meantime our sergeant arrived with an off-duty officer who, it turned out, had been assaulted only verbally by two of the men in the blue car. Ben was uninjured and was still at the store interviewing witnesses.

The four men were arrested. Inside their car was a semiautomatic assault rifle and several boxes of ammunition. Later we discovered that the rifle had been modified to function like a machine gun. We also learned that one of the men arrested was a gang member with a long history of violence, especially against the police.

After our police reports were finished, we conducted a debriefing,

during which I recounted the events as I remembered them. I told the others I had heard that the people in the blue car had assaulted a police officer. The room grew quiet for a moment, and then the sergeant said that no one on any of the radio frequencies had said anything about a police officer being assaulted. I looked around the room, and all agreed that no one had said anything about an officer being assaulted. I told them I had definitely heard someone report it.

Ultimately I concluded that the Holy Ghost had spoken to me in such a way that I would listen at a critical time. Had I not heard that an officer had been assaulted, I might have been less cautious—and I might even have lost my life.

I am deeply grateful for the voice of inspiration that put me on alert that day. ■

Joel Fairfield is a member of the Stevensville First Ward, Stevensville Montana Stake.

The Lord's Mathematics

By Richard J. Anderson

My wife and I tearfully opened the letter containing our mission call. We had been planning for many years to serve a mission together. Now we were delighted to find we were called to the New Zealand Auckland Mission, where I had served 45 years earlier as a young

missionary. Memories of those wonderful years flooded my mind.

One day during my first mission, my companion, Elder Gordon Gallup, and I walked along a rural road late in the day when there was little traffic. It seemed no one wanted to give a ride to two tired elders. We knelt and asked the Lord to help us get a ride.

Almost immediately a pickup truck stopped. The driver, Sam Potaka, lived close to Taihape, our destination. When we reached his village, Utiku, he invited us to stay for dinner at his house. We held a wonderful missionary discussion with his family, and in due time Sam's wife, mother-in-law, two married daughters, one married son, and their families gained testimonies and joined the Church. Later two other sons were also converted. The conversion of this wonderful family was a highlight of my mission.

Forty-five years later, my wife and I wondered if any of those I had taught would still be alive. Would we be able to find them? Would they be active in the Church?

Soon after we arrived in New Zealand, we found more than 100 descendants of Sam Potaka, including children, grandchildren, and their families. Most had remained active in the Church. Many had become leaders in their stakes and wards and had sent their children and grandchildren on missions.

One of Sam Potaka's daughters, Una Tsaclis, had become a family

history expert. She had researched hundreds of ancestors, including her husband's Greek progenitors. Because there are few members of the Church in Greece, her family history work was unique.

My wife and I were invited to go to the New Zealand temple with Una and other family members to perform sealings for their ancestors. It was an unforgettable temple experience. We realized that not only had many family

members joined the Church because a good man listened to the Spirit and gave a ride to two missionaries, but now those family members and their children were performing temple ordinances for hundreds of Greek and Maori ancestors who had passed away without the opportunity of hearing the gospel. The Lord's mathematics multiplies the opportunities to share and accept the gospel both in this life and after death.

Never before had Doctrine and Covenants 64:33 meant so much: "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." ■

Richard J. Anderson is a member of the Florence Ward, Coos Bay Oregon Stake.

Help from Heaven

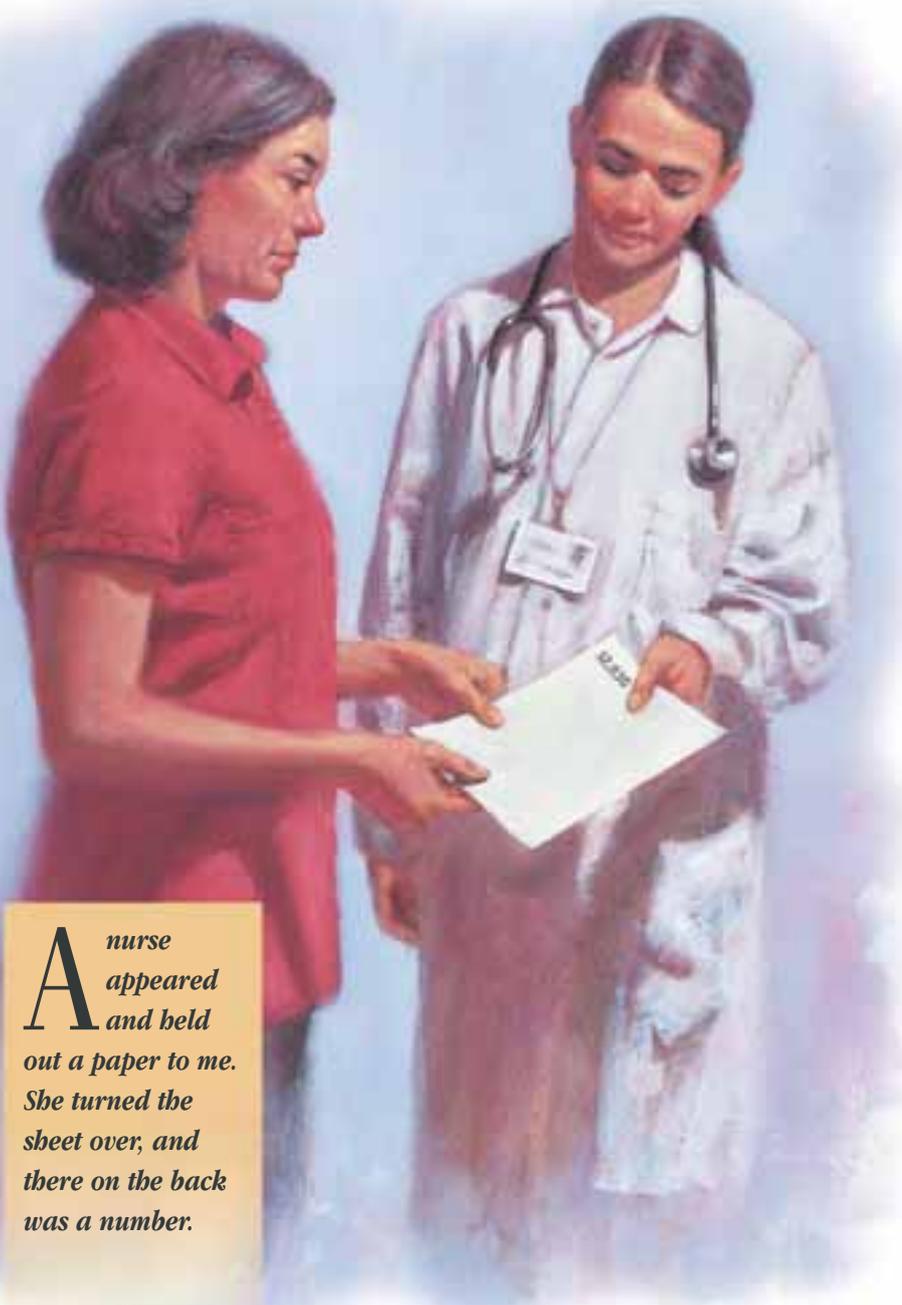
By Ceferina Dora Flores

The patient was tall, good-looking, and dressed in white, and he looked into my eyes without uttering a word. I had come to pick up his prescription so I could go buy his medication.

Just then a nurse, also dressed in white, appeared and held out a piece of paper to me. It seemed to be a medical history.

"Is this his file number?" I asked.

She did not reply but merely



A nurse appeared and held out a paper to me. She turned the sheet over, and there on the back was a number.

turned the sheet over. There on the back was a number: 12.830.

This incident would not be remarkable in any way if it were not for the fact that this particular patient had died more than a year before, on 7 April 1990. He was my younger brother, Carlos Hugo, and I was only dreaming.

I awoke at 4:00 A.M. and immediately wrote down the number. That same day I got up early and told my daughter Ana about the dream. I showed her the number, and she said it looked like a date, not a number on a medical file. A light went on in my mind. This dream had to have something to do with the family history information I was looking for on my paternal grandmother. For 10 years I had tried to find my father's birth certificate. With no success, I had turned my efforts toward locating information on his mother.

When I had the dream, I had intended to return to the historical archives in the province of Mendoza, Argentina, to see if researchers had found any information that might be useful to me. I had asked them to search the years between 1925 and 1932. But before going to the archives, I felt a strong prompting to visit the Godoy Cruz cemetery.

By 8:00 A.M. that same morning, I was asking Mr. Paz, an employee at the cemetery, if he would do me the favor of using that date to look through his records for any information on the death of my grandmother,

Margarita Flores. As he leafed through the old worn books, I prayed silently and fervently.

Suddenly I heard him say, "Well, are you ever lucky! This is where your grandmother is buried." He wrote out a document so stating, signed it, affixed a seal to it, and then kindly went with me to sector H, where I saw a small brass plate that read, "Margarita Flores. Died 12/8/1930"—the same date I had seen in my dream.

I was not yet born when my grandmother died. But more than 60 years after her death, I was able to find the place where she was buried.

I next went to the archives to see if they had found anything relating to my grandmother. "Negative," said the man who waited on me. I handed him the certificate Mr. Paz had given me at the cemetery, and five minutes later I was holding a photocopy of my grandmother's death certificate in my hands. Using this information, I was eventually able to locate my father's birth certificate and the names of my great-grandparents.

In His infinite mercy, our loving Heavenly Father had made it possible for necessary information to be communicated to me. I immediately sent all the data I had obtained to the Buenos Aires Argentina Temple so that vicarious ordinances could be performed.

I know I have much more to do. But I also know that when our minds and hearts are willing and when we

make the effort, we receive help from heaven. One day there will be a glorious resurrection, and with all my being I desire to find myself united with my loved ones. ■

Ceferina Dora Flores is a member of the Godoy Cruz Centro Ward, Godoy Cruz Argentina Stake.

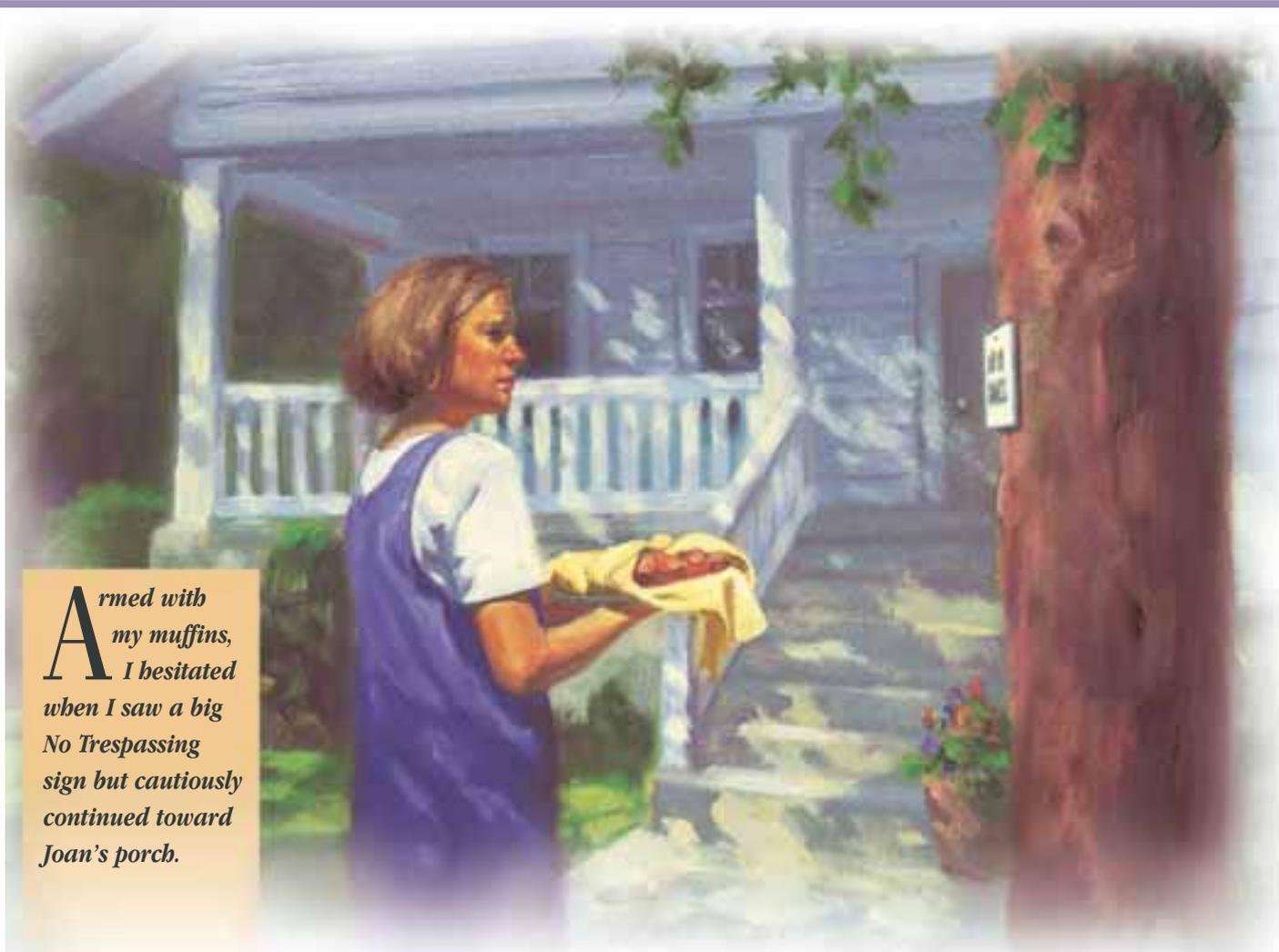
No Trespassing

By Linda Marx Terry

It was almost the end of the month, and I had visited every sister on my new visiting teaching list except one. I'd never met Joan (name has been changed). She did not attend church, and in the recent past, she had not wanted to have contact with the Church.

I had made many phone calls to her home throughout the month, but they were always greeted by her answering machine, no matter what time I called. I left several voice messages, introducing myself as her new visiting teacher, telling her I was looking forward to meeting her, and asking her to return my call. But Joan never called back.

With only a few days left in the month, I decided to drop by Joan's home unannounced with a plate of muffins. But as I drove up and down the busy highway near her street, I realized that none of the numbers on the houses matched the address I had been given for her. I became increasingly frustrated, thinking,



A *Armed with my muffins, I hesitated when I saw a big No Trespassing sign but cautiously continued toward Joan's porch.*

“Why am I doing this? She probably won’t even be home, and if I leave the muffins on her porch, some dog will most likely eat them.” Finally I checked my ward directory and discovered that Joan’s address on my visiting teaching list was incorrect. With the correct address, I found the home within minutes.

Armed with my muffins, I walked toward Joan’s house. I hesitated when I saw a big No Trespassing sign but cautiously continued toward her porch. I rang the doorbell two times. No answer. Thinking, “Well, at least I tried,” I left the muffins and my note near Joan’s front door.

That evening at dinner, I mentioned to my family my apparently

wasted hour attempting to reach this faceless, voiceless, impossible-to-contact sister. During the meal the phone rang. Contrary to our mealtime practice, I answered it. The woman on the phone identified herself as Joan. Suddenly feeling as though I had been reunited with a friend, rather than the stranger she was, I whooped, “Joan! I’ve wanted to hear your voice for so long! I’m so excited you’ve called!”

Joan explained that she hadn’t returned my calls because of recent turmoil in her life. She continued, “Today I was at the courthouse, feeling defeated and humiliated as I stood in front of the judge and my estranged husband. When I drove home, I prayed, ‘God, I feel so worthless and

unloved.’ Sobbing, I asked, ‘If You love me, please show me.’

“When I reached home, there before my eyes, as though a miracle from God, was a plate of muffins and a note saying, ‘I’m thinking of you. Love, your visiting teacher.’ It was as if God were saying to me that He loved me. I just wanted you to know that I know God used you to answer my prayer today.”

Since that day Joan has become my friend. We have read the scriptures and prayed together, and she has joined me at church. She has been a gift to me, teaching me never to give up when serving the Lord. ■

Linda Marx Terry is a member of the Sinclair View Ward, Bremerton Washington Stake.

Did You Know?



It Happened in February

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

2 February 1833: The Prophet Joseph Smith finished translating the New Testament.

14 February 1853: President Brigham Young broke ground for the Salt Lake Temple, and President Heber C. Kimball, First Counselor in the First Presidency, dedicated the site. Excavation began that day.

18 February 1979: In Nauvoo, Illinois, President Ezra Taft Benson organized the Church's 1,000th stake.



February 2000: The Church printed the 100 millionth copy of the Book of Mormon.

26 February 2000: President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the Ciudad Juárez México Temple.

27 February 2000: President Gordon B. Hinckley dedicated the Hermosillo Sonora México Temple.

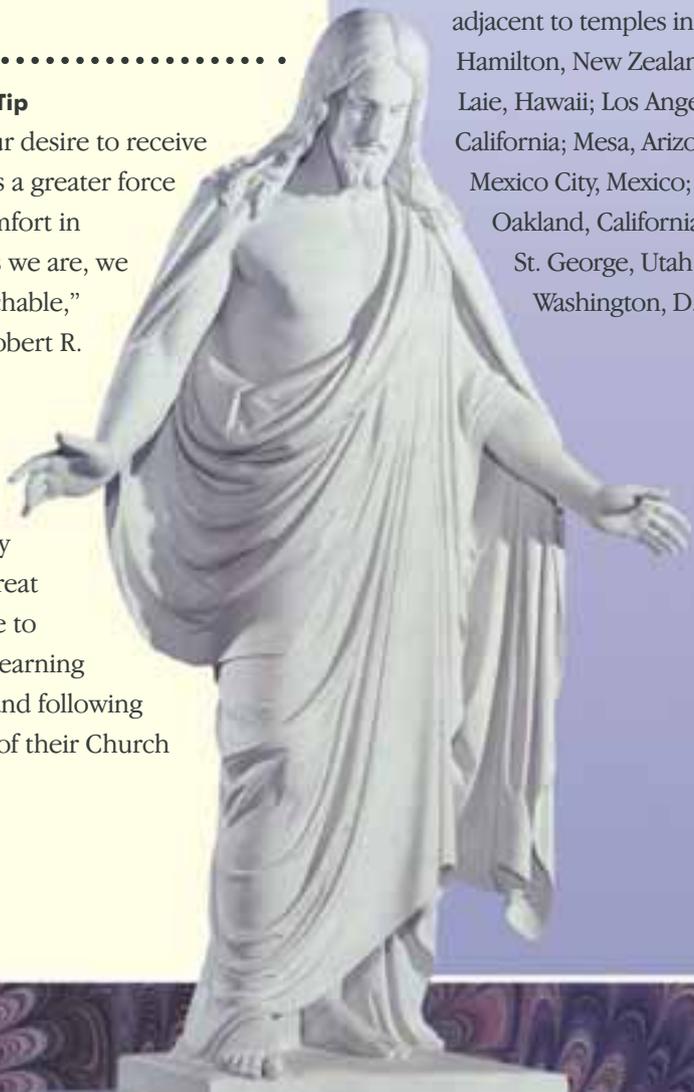
Leadership Tip

“When our desire to receive instruction is a greater force than our comfort in remaining as we are, we become teachable,” says Elder Robert R. Steuer of the Seventy (“Being Teachable,” *Liabona*, July 2002, 34). Great leaders strive to improve by learning continually and following the counsel of their Church leaders.

Christus Statues

Did you know that replicas of the *Christus* by Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1768–1844) are located in several Latter-day Saint visitors' centers? These white marble statues of the Savior represent an invitation offered by the Redeemer of the world: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).

A large (11 feet, 1 inch; 3.37 m) *Christus* statue was placed in Temple Square's North Visitors' Center in 1966. Additional *Christus* statues are located at the visitors' center at the Hill Cumorah and in visitors' centers adjacent to temples in Hamilton, New Zealand; Laie, Hawaii; Los Angeles, California; Mesa, Arizona; Mexico City, Mexico; Oakland, California; St. George, Utah; and Washington, D.C.



Keep Yourself Worthy

“Young men and women, keep yourselves worthy. Stay away from those environments, the music, the films, the videos, the clubs, and the associations that draw you into immoral conduct.”

President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Ye Are the Temple of God,” *Liabona*, Jan. 2001, 86.

FROM TOP LEFT: JOSEPH TRANSLATING THE BIBLE, BY ROBERT T. BARRETT; PHOTOGRAPH OF SHOVEL BY CRAIG DIMOND; PHOTOGRAPHY OF CIUDAD JUAREZ MEXICO TEMPLE AND HERMOSILLO SONORA MEXICO TEMPLE COURTESY OF CHURCH NEWS; PHOTOGRAPH OF BOOK OF MORMON BY MATTHEW REIER; PHOTOGRAPH OF CHRISTUS BY STEVE TREGAEGLE



“Cast Not Away Therefore Your Confidence”

By reading the *Liabona* regularly, I have come to realize the importance the messages and counsel in each issue have for us as Latter-day Saints. The beautiful stories and testimonies from members all across the world strengthen and encourage me.

Some time ago I learned I was about to lose my job. At this time the June 2000 *Liabona* arrived; it included a message from Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles titled “Cast Not Away Therefore Your Confidence.” I immediately thought, “This is for me.” Indeed it was. I read the message several times until I had gained what I needed in peace, confidence, and security. My faith increased, and I knew I was not alone.

By applying the principles Elder Holland taught, I was able to find a new job. My heart was filled with happiness and gratitude to my Heavenly Father because once again I had been a recipient of His goodness. I realized that adversity is necessary for our spiritual growth and that we should not cast away our confidence.

*Freddy Baeza Sandi,
Nuevo Loarque Ward,
Tegucigalpa Honduras Toncontin Stake*

Share the Gospel without Shame or Fear

The work of the Lord is not easy. It requires our abilities and our personal efforts, and it consumes our energy. Today many criticize The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. People have turned away from the truth and rely on their own wisdom. To counteract the world’s influence, the Lord needs men who honor the priesthood. Men in whom God can trust and who possess Christlike virtues are men who can help bring

the restored gospel to the world.

Let us share the gospel without shame or fear. It has been restored in our dispensation, and I know it is true. Let us work diligently to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of others.

*Elder Jean Paul Kabasubabo,
Democratic Republic of Congo Kinshasa
Mission*

Peace from Following the Prophet

I am extremely grateful to God for the guidance He gives us through the prophet. President Gordon B. Hinckley’s counsel has given my life focus, and I have come to realize that living gospel principles means more than just obeying them, robotlike. It means feeling in my heart what I know in my mind. In other words, I have felt a deep change inside, including the peace that comes from following the prophet’s counsel.

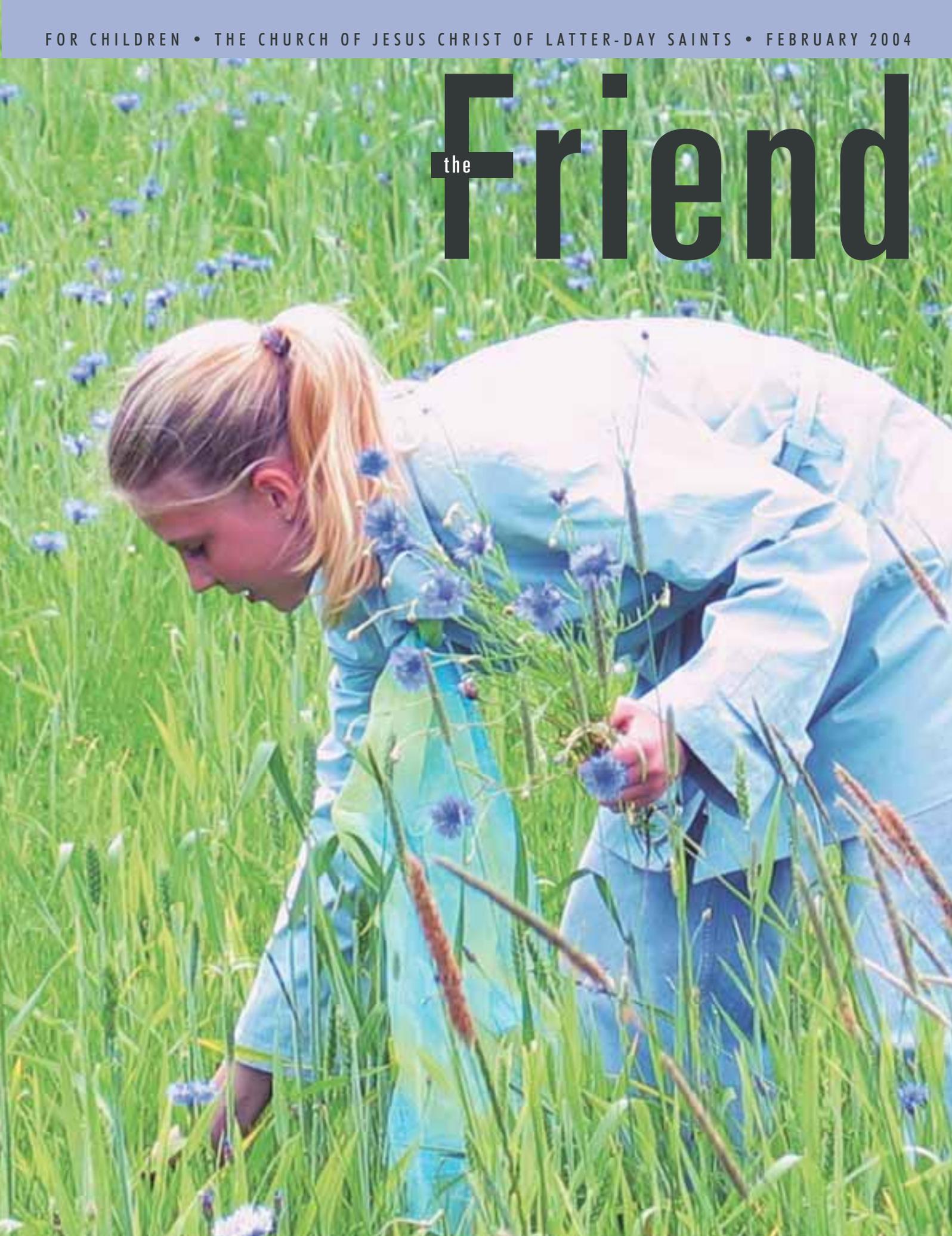
*Carlos Alberto Correa,
Dolores Branch,
Dolores Argentina District*

From the Distribution Center

Did you know that *Teaching, No Greater Call* (item no. 36123), a resource to help members improve the spiritual and technical aspects of their gospel teaching, is available in many languages? This publication can be used as a personal study guide, as a resource for helping parents teach their children, and as a text for teacher improvement meetings. Contact your local distribution center or your ward or branch leaders for ordering and price information.



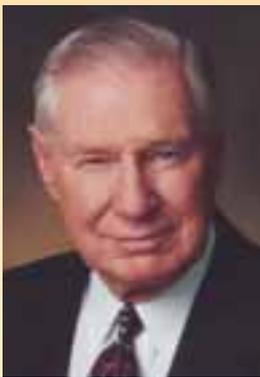
the Friend



Happiness

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

Second Counselor in the First Presidency



President Faust teaches us how to be happy.

Since we don't always desire that which is good, having all our desires granted to us would not bring us happiness.

The story is told of Ali Hafed, a wealthy ancient Persian who owned much land.

An old priest told him that if he had a diamond the size of his thumb, he could purchase a dozen farms. "If you will find a river that runs through white sands, between high mountains, in those white sands you will always find diamonds."

Said Ali Hafed, "I will go."

So he sold his farm and away he went in search of diamonds. After years of searching, he had spent all his money, and he passed away in rags and wretchedness.

Meanwhile, the man who purchased Ali Hafed's farm one day led his camel out into the garden to drink, and as the animal put his nose into the shallow waters, the farmer noticed a curious flash of light in the white sands of the stream. Reaching in, he pulled out a black stone containing a strange eye

of light. In the black stone was a diamond. According to the story, this marked the discovery of the most valuable diamond mines in the history of the ancient world.

Had Ali Hafed remained at home and dug in his own cellar or anywhere in his own fields, rather than traveling in strange lands where he eventually faced starvation and ruin, he would have had "acres of diamonds."¹

How many times do we look for our happiness at a distance in space or time rather than right now, in our own homes, with our own families and friends?

Live happily every hour, every day, every month, and every year. The golden pathway to happiness is the selfless giving of love. ●

Adapted from "Our Search for Happiness," Liahona, Oct. 2000, 2–8; Ensign, Oct. 2000, 2–6.

NOTE

1. Story paraphrased from Russell H. Conwell, *Acres of Diamonds* (1960), 10–14.



MY FAMILY

BY SHEILA E. WILSON

“The family is ordained of God” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, Oct. 1998, 24).



Banay, aiga, perhe, famiglia, rodina, fjölskylda, familia, család—these words look different, but they all mean the same thing—FAMILY! All families are different. Some have many children, and some have a few children or one child or no children. Some families have children, parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles all living together. Some children have two parents, and some have one. Some children live with grandparents or other adults.

An important part of living the gospel is showing love for your family. You can show your love for your parents by being helpful and obedient (see Ephesians 6:1). The scriptures teach us to be “kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving” (Ephesians 4:32).

Prophets teach us the importance of families. President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said, “The family is the basic unit of the kingdom of God on earth” (“Strengthening the Family—the Basic Unit of the Church,” *Ensign*, May 1978, 45). President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said, “Your most important friendships should be with your own brothers and sisters and with your father and mother” (“To the ‘Youth of the Noble Birthright,’” *Ensign*, May 1986, 43). President Gordon B. Hinckley tells us, “The greatest joys of life are experienced in happy family relationships” (“I Believe,” *Tambuli*, Mar. 1993, 6).

Heavenly Father has established families to bring us happiness and to prepare us for eternal life.

Instructions

Trace the oval on page F5 onto heavy paper or felt; then cut out two ovals. Thread a large needle with yarn

or embroidery floss, and tie a knot at the end. Whip-stitch (bring the needle from underneath, up through the ovals, around the edge, and up through again and again) the ovals together except at the top (see p. F5). Insert one of the messages (or a message of your own) into the ovals. Do something kind for a family member, and leave the ovals on his or her bed afterward.

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Explain that Heavenly Father blessed us with families to help us return to Him. Give the children a copy of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World” (see *Liahona*, Oct. 1998, 24). Tell them that it contains the Lord’s teachings regarding the family and that you will be referring to it throughout the year. As you read the first paragraph of the proclamation, have the children listen for what is at the center of His plan for His children. Read together the first two lines of paragraph 7 of the proclamation. Help the children understand that “ordained of God” means Heavenly Father designed marriage and family to last forever. Write these sentences on pieces of paper, and cut out each word. On one side of the board, rearrange the words from paragraph 1. On the other side, rearrange the words from paragraph 7. Divide the children into two groups. Choose children to arrange the words in the correct order as their group repeats the sentences. Scramble the words again, and see if they can do it without the groups repeating it. Encourage the children to keep their copies of the proclamation to use throughout the year.

2. Divide the children into groups. Assign each group a song or hymn about home and family. Give them a few minutes to read the words to find ideas that help us to show love. Have each group sing their song or hymn and then share their ideas. Have the children draw pictures of ways they can show love for family members. Have as many children as possible explain their picture. Encourage the children to show love for family members during the week. ●



I love you!

You're the greatest!

Daddy's Blessing

BY JANE McBRIDE CHOATE

Based on a true story

"We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority" (Articles of Faith 1:5).

Katie sat with her parents in the bishop's office. The bishop, his counselors, and President Barlow talked with Daddy and Mommy. President Barlow was a member of the stake presidency. Grandma and Grandpa Chadwick, Daddy's parents, were also there.

Daddy was being set apart as the ward elders quorum president. Five-year-old Katie didn't understand what being set apart meant.

Mommy had told her that when someone is called to a position in the Church, Heavenly Father wants that person to receive a special blessing from those with priesthood authority.

Daddy sat in a chair in the middle of the room. "Dad, will you participate in the setting apart?" he asked Grandpa.

Tears gathered in Grandpa's eyes. "I'd be honored," he said.

Grandpa joined the other men in a circle around the chair where Daddy sat. They placed their hands on Daddy's head.

Katie saw Mommy and Grandma Chadwick close their eyes and fold their arms. Katie closed her



eyes and folded her arms too.

President Barlow said a prayer, but it was a different kind of prayer than Katie was used to hearing. He asked Heavenly Father to bless her daddy in performing his duties.

When the blessing was over, everyone said, "Amen." Katie said, "Amen," too.

Her daddy stood and wiped tears from his eyes. "Thank you," he said to the men. "I'll do my best to help the elders in our ward."

The men in the circle all shook his hand.

Katie sat on the chair and folded her arms. "I'm ready, Daddy."

"What are you ready for, Sweetheart?" Daddy asked.

"I want a blessing too," Katie said.

Her parents exchanged glances. The other people in the room smiled.

"I think that's a good idea," Daddy said. "You aren't being set apart, but you can have a father's blessing." Then he placed his hands on Katie's head. He blessed her that she would be able to choose the right and obey her parents. At the end of the blessing, everyone said, "Amen."

Katie got down from the chair and held out her hand. Daddy shook her hand. Katie felt warm and happy inside. ●

Jane McBride Choate is a member of the Big Thompson Ward, Loveland Colorado Stake.



The F



"The family is ordained of God."

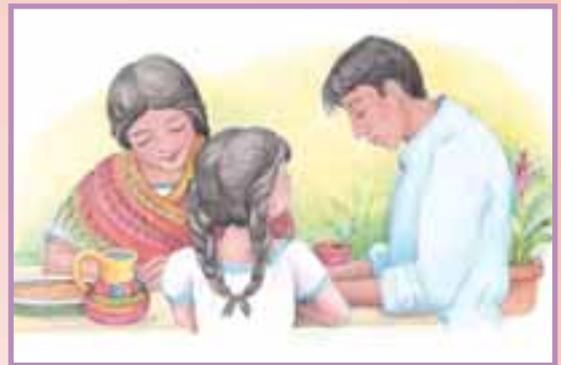


"Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ."

See the First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles, "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," Liahona, Oct. 1998, 24; Ensign, Nov. 1995, 102. This proclamation (item nos. 35602, 35538, and 35571) is also available at Church distribution centers.



family



"Successful . . . families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, [and] forgiveness."



"Successful . . . families are established and maintained on principles of . . . respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities."

Susanna Ståhle

of Turku, Finland

BY EEVA STÅHLE AND TIFFANY E. LEWIS

Susanna Ståhle, age 11, of Turku, Finland, has a lot of courage. She has been riding horses since she was five years old and likes to jump them over obstacles. She says good balance and the ability to estimate the horse's steps are important. But most important is having the courage to urge the horse over the jump. When a rider feels afraid, the horse senses

fear and may refuse to jump.

Susanna has courage in other areas of her life too. A good friend taught her to jump horses. The friend wanted Susanna to compete in jumping competitions that were held on Sunday, but Susanna told her friend she wouldn't.

As the oldest daughter in the Ståhle family, Susanna knows she needs to set a good example for her younger brother, Daniel, age 2, and younger sisters Sofia, age 8, and Emilia, age 6. One of the ways she sets an example is by helping her mother prepare dinner. But to Susanna it's not a chore. She likes cooking!

"I learn more and more every week," Susanna says.





“Lasagna is one of my favorites.” Susanna says she feels good when she is helping her family. “When you are serving, you see how good it makes others feel. It makes you happy and eager to do more.”

Susanna also helps out by taking care of her brother Daniel. She says he can make a big mess very quickly. One day Daniel decided to “wash” all the mirrors in the house and even his own head with foot cream! Susanna helped clean up, and it took almost an hour.

But Daniel isn’t always making messes. “Daniel also likes listening to stories, and sometimes he falls asleep in my arms when I’m reading,” Susanna says.

Next to jumping horses, Susanna’s favorite thing to do is curl up on the couch and read a good book. She especially likes adventure books. And when she was only two years old, she would sit for long periods of time and listen to Book of Mormon stories. Now Susanna writes her own stories. Some of her stories are so touching they make her mom cry. She likes to write about ponies and horses.

Susanna’s sister Sofia likes to paint and hopes to become an artist someday. She wants to have her work exhibited in the local library. She also enjoys swimming and biking. Although her activities keep her busy, she still finds time to play with Daniel and Emilia.

Singing and playing the piano are Emilia’s favorite things to do. She wanders around the garden and up the hill behind her

The Stähles spend time as a family gardening (above), skiing, cooking, and swimming. They are helping Sophia prepare for baptism by reading the Book of Mormon (below).



From left: Susanna, Sofia, Eeva, Daniel, Mikael, Emilia, and Sven.





Susanna and Daniel (above) enjoy reading stories together. Susanna visits the Stockholm Sweden Temple (right).

house, singing the whole way. She makes up many of the songs she sings—songs about Heavenly Father and Jesus.

The Ståhle family attends the Turku Second Ward in the Tampere Finland Stake. The closest temple to their house is in Sweden, a 12-hour trip by car and boat. But in 2000, the First Presidency announced that a temple would be built in Helsinki, Finland. The Ståhles are excited to see it completed! It will be only three hours from their home, and they know it will be beautiful. “We have pictures of our eternal family at the Sweden temple,” Susanna says. “I want to get married in the temple. Our Primary teacher told us about temples and how we can serve there.”

When Susanna’s parents go to the temple in Sweden, they often bring back Church videos that the family watches together for family home evening. The Ståhle family also likes to spend time together snow skiing, ice skating, or swimming in the lake by their house. They enjoy cooking meals as a family, and Susanna’s older brother, Mikael, age 17, makes a special dessert—chocolate cake with whipped cream.

Susanna’s favorite hymn is “Called to Serve” (*Hymns*, no. 249), which she learned in Primary. She looks up to Mikael, who will be serving a mission when he finishes his service in the army.

Susanna’s mother, Eeva, joined the Church in 1989, before Susanna was born. Sister Ståhle had a good friend who was a member of the Church, but they never talked about religion until Sister Ståhle’s sister was in a bad car accident. Soon after that, Sister Ståhle went with her friend to church. Immediately she felt that she had

come home. She was baptized a month later, and Susanna’s father, Sven, was baptized a few years later.

Now Susanna and her family are helping Sofia prepare for baptism. One of the ways the family is helping Sofia is by inviting the missionaries to their home. Sofia is also preparing by reading the Book of Mormon, a goal she set for herself.

Susanna can still remember the good feelings she had when she was baptized. A week before her baptism she had a dream she



remembers very clearly. In the dream she saw a huge mountain in front of her and a path that went straight to the top of the mountain. She saw another path that went sideways up the mountain, but it seemed well lit. She chose the sideways path and soon found herself in deep darkness. She had a sad feeling and turned around.

“Sometimes we choose the wrong path,” she says, “but we can always turn around and find the way to Heavenly Father.” Susanna is courageous enough to always find her way! ●

Eeva Ståhle is a member of the Turku Second Ward, Tampere Finland Stake. **Tiffany E. Lewis** is a member of the Miami Shores Ward, Fort Lauderdale Florida Stake.



Happy Family Game

BY JULIE WARDELL
Church Magazines



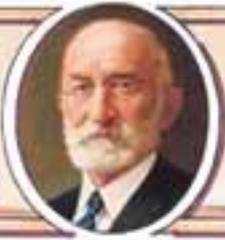
Families are very important to Heavenly Father. He has provided many blessings to help families be happy. You and your family can play a game to help you remember some of these blessings.

Instructions

1. Remove this page from the magazine, glue it to heavy paper, and cut out the cards. Put the cards in a sack.
2. Take turns choosing a card from the sack, looking at the picture, and telling what blessing the pictured item brings to your family. Keep taking turns until all the cards have been chosen. ●



ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID MEIKLE



FROM THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Reading the Book of Mormon



One day, Heber J. Grant's uncle asked Heber and his cousin a question.

Have you boys ever read the Book of Mormon from cover to cover?

Not yet.

Me neither.

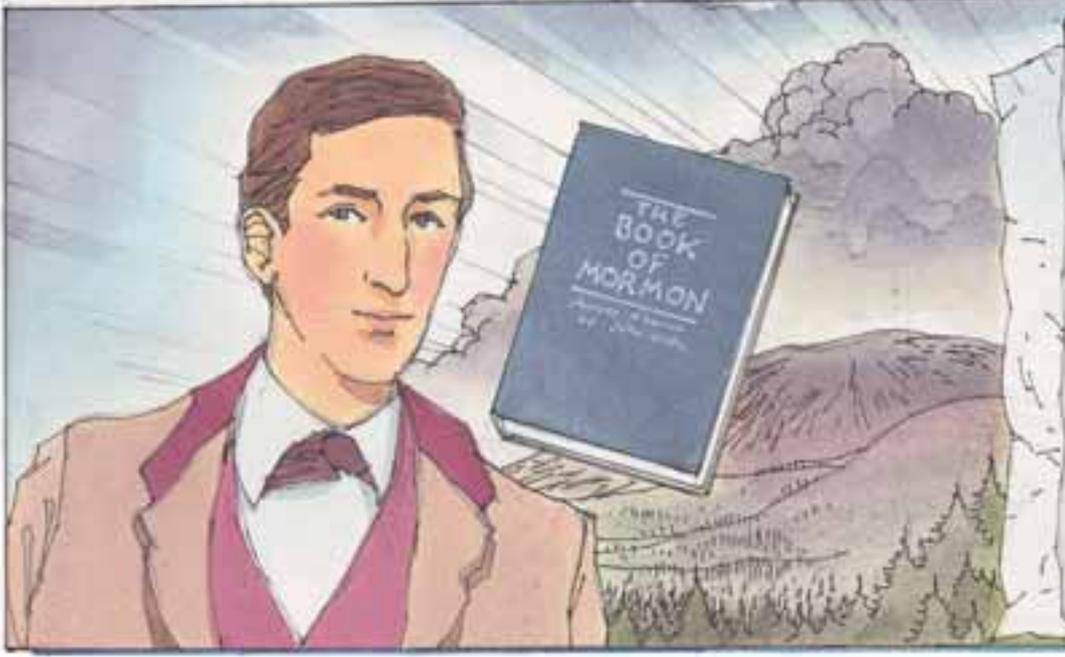
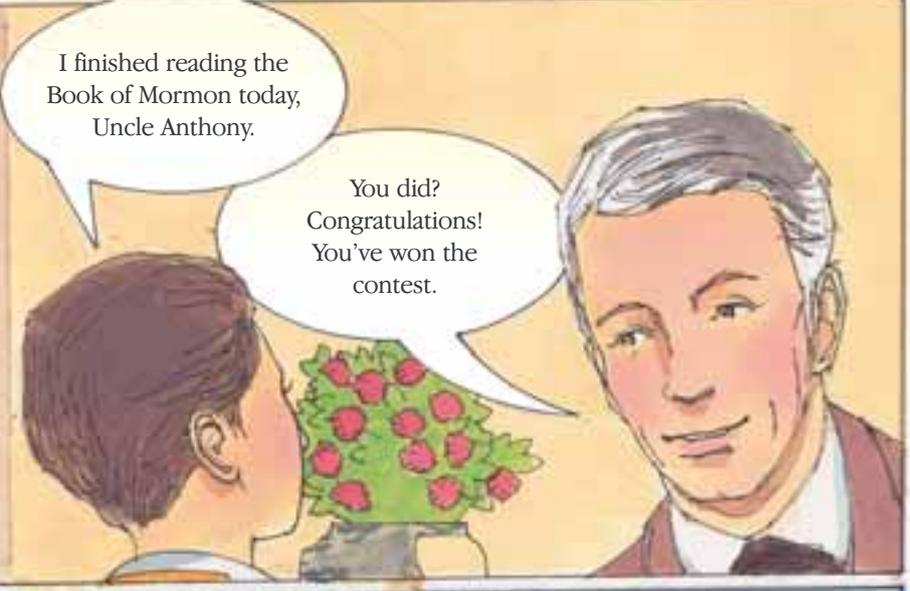
How about a little contest then? I'll give the first boy to finish the book a nice pair of buckskin gloves.



Heber really wanted the gloves. He started reading that same night.



Heber was disappointed that he would probably lose the contest, but he kept reading the Book of Mormon anyway. He read slowly so he could understand it better.



Even though Heber's cousin had gotten a fast start, he hadn't read a page since. Heber was grateful he had won the gloves. But even more important, he was grateful he had gained a testimony of the Book of Mormon.
Adapted from The Presidents of the Church, ed. Leonard J. Arrington (1986), 223-24.



Did you know that when Elder Wirthlin was young he liked to go fishing with his father? Here he encourages us to leave behind our sins and follow Jesus Christ.

BY ELDER JOSEPH B. WIRTHLIN
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Casting their nets into the Sea of Galilee, Peter and Andrew stopped as Jesus of Nazareth approached, looked into their eyes, and spoke the simple words, “Follow me.” The two fishermen “straightway

left their nets, and followed him.” (See Matthew 4:18–22.)

Have you ever wondered what it must have been like to have lived in the days of the Savior? If you had been there, would you have heeded His call “Follow me”?

Perhaps a more realistic question might be, “If the Savior were to call you today, would you be just as willing to leave your nets and follow Him?” I am confident that many would.

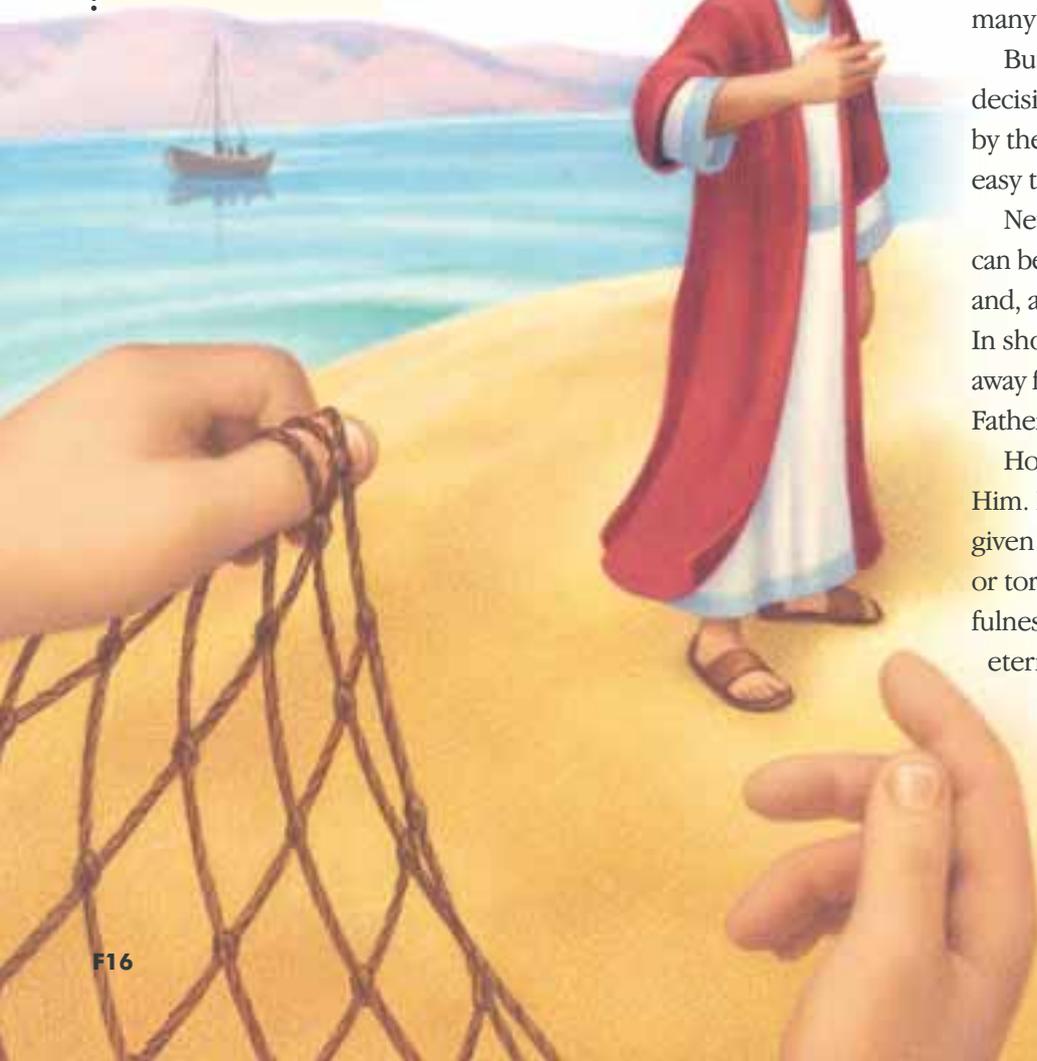
But for some, it may not be such an easy decision. Some have discovered that nets, by their very nature, are sometimes not so easy to leave.

Nets come in many sizes and shapes. Nets can be our work, our hobbies, our pleasures, and, above all else, our temptations and sins. In short, a net can be anything that pulls us away from our relationship with our Heavenly Father or from His restored Church.

How do we follow the Savior? By obeying Him. He and our Heavenly Father have given us commandments—not to punish or torment us, but to help us come to a fulness of joy, both in this life and for the eternities to come.

When the Master of ocean, earth, and sky calls to us, “Follow me,” we should leave the entangling, worldly nets behind and follow His footsteps. ●

From an April 2002 general conference address.





COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF CHURCH HISTORY AND ART, SIXTH INTERNATIONAL ART COMPETITION

A Test of Faith and Ice, by Larry Winborg

In Nauvoo in February 1846, a storm left snow on the ground; then temperatures fell. In a rare occurrence, the Mississippi River froze over. Though Latter-day Saints had been crossing by ferry, hundreds now hastened to cross the wide river while it was frozen.



The family is the basic unit of the Church, so righteous behavior within the home is vital. Indeed it is central to our personal progress and the spiritual progress of our families.” See Elder Yasuo Niiyama, “Presiding Righteously in the Home,” p. 20.