

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • JANUARY 2010

Liahona



Find in Your
New *Liahona*
a Compass for
Our Day

Welcome to Your New *Liahona*



ON THE COVER

Front: Painting by Joseph Brickey. Back: Photo illustration by John Luke.

Welcome! Please join us in celebrating this newly designed and written *Liahona*. We know you loved the old *Liahona*, but it was time to make some improvements.

For starters, you'll notice that the middle of the magazine no longer has inserts inside inserts. The news and the children's pages have been moved to the back of the magazine.

Whatever it is you want in a magazine from the Church, we think you'll find it here. If you like longer, substantive articles, you'll find some thought-provoking ones to choose from. But if you don't have much time and just want to browse, you can do that too.

Throughout the issue you'll find some new sections, clearly marked for children, youth, and young adults. If you're new to the Church, perhaps you'll appreciate reading insights into foundational Church doctrine and practices (see What We Believe, page 14). If you're a teacher or a leader or a parent, you'll find helpful hints for serving those you love (see pages 13, 22, 26, and 36).

One of the most innovative aspects of this new *Liahona* is a mixing of articles for adults with supplementary materials for youth and children—and vice versa. You'll see that happening especially with the First Presidency Message.

There are other, more subtle changes. We encourage you to find them on your own as you explore this issue. All are designed to help you feel the Spirit and come to know better our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ. They are the ultimate source of inspiration for the *Liahona*.

—The editors

P.S. Can you do us a favor? Let us know what you think of your new *Liahona*. E-mail us at liahona@ldschurch.org (please put "New Liahona" in the subject line), or send a letter to:

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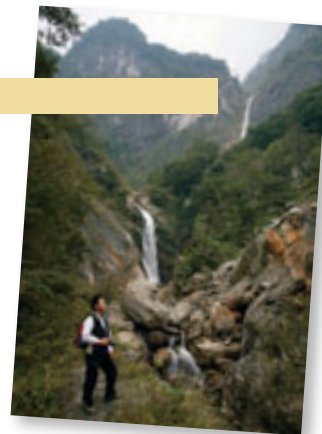
More Online

Liahona.lds.org

FOR ADULTS

The mountains of Yushan National Park in Taiwan inspired the article "Making Mountains," page 32. To view more photos of the park, visit www.liahona.lds.org.

If you enjoy reading "Serving in the Church" on page 13 of this issue, you can find more training and resources (in English) for your calling at www.lds.org. Click on "Serving in the Church."

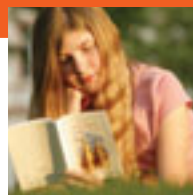


FOR YOUNG ADULTS



"The Best Is Yet to Be" (see page 16) is based on a devotional address given by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland last January. To read the full text of the address in English, visit <http://speeches.byu.edu>.

FOR YOUTH



This issue announces the new Mutual theme. To view the New Year's celebration of that theme, visit www.abrandnewyear.lds.org.

Take a look at the Poster on page 52, and then visit www.newera.lds.org to view past Posters (in English).

In **"Timely Even Today"** (see page 46), the author teaches a few lessons we can learn from the Old Testament. To read the Old Testament and other scriptures online, visit www.languages.lds.org.

FOR CHILDREN



Kate visited the Salt Lake Temple on Temple Square (see "The Salt Lake Temple," page 60). To see a video of her visit, go to www.friend.lds.org.

Also go to www.friend.lds.org to hear stories, play games, and do other fun activities (in English).

IN YOUR LANGUAGE

To find your country's Church Web site, visit www.languages.lds.org.





By President
Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Second Counselor in
the First Presidency



Hold on

A LITTLE LONGER

One of the enduring lessons of the Kirtland period is that our spirits need constant nourishment. We need to stay close to the Lord every day if we are to survive the adversity that we all must face.

Last summer my wife and I took our twin grandsons to Kirtland, Ohio. It was a special and precious opportunity for us to spend time with them before they left on their missions.

During our visit there, we learned to better understand the circumstances of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Saints who lived in Kirtland. That era of Church history is known as a time of severe trials but also supreme blessings.

In Kirtland the Lord bestowed some of the most remarkable heavenly manifestations and spiritual gifts this world has ever experienced. Sixty-five sections of the Doctrine and Covenants were received in Kirtland and surrounding areas—revelations that brought new light and knowledge about topics such as the Second Coming, caring for the needy,



the plan of salvation, priesthood authority, the Word of Wisdom, tithing, the temple, and the law of consecration.¹

It was a period of unparalleled spiritual growth. Indeed, the Spirit of God like a fire was burning. Moses, Elijah, and many other

heavenly beings appeared during this time, including our Heavenly Father and His Son, the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ.²

One of the many revelations Joseph received in Kirtland was a revelation he called the “olive leaf . . . plucked from the Tree of Paradise, and the Lord’s message of peace to us” (introduction to D&C 88). This remarkable revelation includes the sublime invitation, “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me” (D&C 88:63). As the Saints of Kirtland

drew near unto the Lord, He truly did draw near unto them, pouring out the blessings of heaven upon the heads of the faithful.

A Spiritual Outpouring

Perhaps the culmination of these spiritual manifestations occurred during the dedication of the Kirtland Temple on March 27, 1836. One of those present was 28-year-old William Draper, who described the day as a “day of Pentecost.” He wrote: “There was such a time of the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord, that my pen is inadequate to write it in full or my tongue to express it. But I will here say that the Spirit was poured out and came like a mighty rushing wind and filled the house, that many that were present spoke in tongues and had visions and saw angels and prophesied, and had a general time of rejoicing such as had not been known in this generation.”³

These spiritual manifestations were not limited only to those inside the temple, for “the people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place.”⁴



Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901), later to be President of the Church, was living in Kirtland during this blessed period. He observed, “One would have imagined that after receiving these wonderful manifestations no temptation could have overthrown the Saints.”⁵

But, of course, great spiritual experiences do not make us exempt from opposition and trials. Just a few months after the temple dedication, a widespread economic crisis shook the United States, and Kirtland felt the effects deeply. Banks failed, leaving many in difficult financial straits. To make matters worse, many of the Saints who were immigrating to Kirtland came with very few material possessions, not knowing what they would do once they arrived or how they would survive.

Before long, persecutions arose and mobs formed against the Saints. Members of the Church—even some of those closest to the Prophet, many of whom were present at the dedication of the temple—apostatized and condemned Joseph as a fallen prophet.

As I walked near the Kirtland Temple with my wife and grandsons, I pondered how tragic it was that some could not remain faithful even after the spiritual manifestations they had witnessed. How sorrowful it was that they could not endure the ridicule and criticism of disbelievers. How sad that, when faced with financial trial or other struggles, they could not have reached inside themselves and found the strength to remain faithful. How unfortunate it was that they somehow lost sight of the miraculous spiritual harvest at the dedication of the temple.

The Lessons

What can we learn from this remarkable era in the history of the Church?

One of the great, enduring lessons of the Kirtland period is that our spirits need constant nourishment. As President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) taught: “Testimony isn’t something that you have today and you keep always. Testimony is either going to grow and grow to the brightness of certainty, or it is going to diminish to nothingness, depending upon what we do about it. I say, the testimony

that we recapture day by day is the thing that saves us from the pitfalls of the adversary.”⁶ We need to stay close to the Lord every day if we are to survive the adversity that we all must face.

In some ways our world today is similar to Kirtland of the 1830s. We too live in times of financial distress. There are those who persecute and rail against the Church and its members. Individual and collective trials may sometimes seem overwhelming.

That is when we need, more than ever, to draw near unto the Lord. As we do, we will come to know what it means to have the Lord draw near unto us. As we seek Him ever more diligently, we will surely find Him. We will see clearly that the Lord does not abandon His Church or His faithful Saints. Our eyes will be opened, and we will see Him open the windows of heaven and shower us with more of His light. We will find the spiritual strength to survive even during the darkest night.

Although some of the Saints in Kirtland lost sight of the spiritual experiences they had, most did not. The majority, including William Draper, held fast to the spiritual knowledge God had given them and continued to follow the Prophet. Along the way they experienced more bitter trials but also more sweet spiritual growth until, ultimately, those who endured to the end were “received into . . . a state of never-ending happiness” (Mosiah 2:41).

You Can Hold On

If ever you are tempted to become discouraged or to lose faith, remember those faithful Saints who remained true in Kirtland. Hold on a little longer. You can do this! You are part of a special generation. You were prepared and preserved to live at this important time in the



As we seek the Lord ever more diligently, we will surely find Him. Our eyes will be opened, and we will see Him open the windows of heaven and shower us with more of His light.

existence of our beautiful planet earth. You have a celestial pedigree and therefore have all the necessary talents to make your life an eternal success story.

The Lord has blessed you with a testimony of the truth. You have felt His influence and witnessed His power. And if you continue to seek Him, He will continue to grant you sacred experiences. With these and other spiritual gifts, you will be able not only to change your own life for the better but also to bless your homes, wards or branches, communities, cities, states, and nations with your goodness.

It may be hard to see that at times, but hold on a little longer, for “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath

prepared for them that love him” and wait for Him (1 Corinthians 2:9; see also D&C 76:10; 133:45).

I bear witness of the truth of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and the truth of this, His Church. I testify with all my heart and soul that God lives, that Jesus Christ is His Son and stands at the head of this great Church. We have a prophet on the earth again, even President Thomas S. Monson.

May we ever remember the lesson of Kirtland and hold on a little longer—even when things look bleak. Know and remember this: the Lord loves you. He remembers you. And He will ever sustain those who “endure in faith to the end” (D&C 20:25). ■

NOTES

1. See, for example, sections 45; 56; 76; 84; 89; 97; and 104.
2. See D&C 76:23; 110:2–4, 11–13.
3. William Draper, “A Biographical Sketch of the Life and Travels and Birth and Parentage of William Draper” (1881), typescript, Church History Library, 2; spelling and capitalization standardized.
4. *History of the Church*, 2:428.
5. Lorenzo Snow, “Discourse,” *Deseret Weekly News*, June 8, 1889, 26.
6. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee* (2000), 43.

IDEAS FOR TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

After prayerfully studying this message, consider the needs of those you teach, and choose points or passages from the message that you feel will be most useful to them. The Holy Ghost can help you prepare and teach the message (see D&C 42:14; 43:15–16). In addition to sharing your own testimony, you may feel impressed to ask the people you teach to share experiences or testimonies if they wish. (For other teaching ideas, see *Teaching, No Greater Call*.)

YOUTH

Strengthening Your Testimony

Take this self-evaluation quiz to help you think about how you are doing in strengthening your testimony:



- Do I desire to believe?
- Do I fast and pray for a stronger testimony?
- Do I read and ponder the scriptures each day?
- Do I try to keep the commandments each day?
- Do I try to follow promptings from the Holy Ghost?
- Do I bear my testimony when prompted to do so?

CHILDREN

Drawing Near to the Lord

In Kirtland, Ohio, the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation. The Lord told him, “Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me” (D&C 88:63). One way we can draw near to the Lord is by following His prophet.

Match each picture below with the things President Thomas S. Monson has asked us to do.



Pray

Be kind

Work hard
to learn

Help others

Share your
testimony

Read the
scriptures



Becoming Self-Reliant



Teach these scriptures and quotations or, if needed, another principle that will bless the sisters you visit. Bear testimony of the doctrine. Invite those you visit to share what they have felt and learned.

What Is Self-Reliance?

“Self-reliance means using all of our blessings from Heavenly Father to care for ourselves and our families and to find solutions for our own problems.’ Each of us has a responsibility to try to avoid problems before they happen and to learn to overcome challenges when they occur. . . .

“How do we become self-reliant? We become self-reliant through obtaining sufficient knowledge, education, and literacy; by managing money and resources wisely, being spiritually strong, preparing for emergencies and eventualities; and by having physical health and social and emotional well-being.”¹

Julie B. Beck, Relief Society general president.

A Gospel Responsibility

“As we live providently and increase our gifts and talents, we become more self-reliant. Self-reliance is taking responsibility for our own spiritual and temporal welfare and for those whom Heavenly Father has entrusted to our care. Only when we are self-reliant

can we truly emulate the Savior in serving and blessing others.

“It is important to understand that self-reliance is a means to an end. Our ultimate goal is to become like the Savior, and that goal is enhanced by our unselfish service to others. Our ability to serve is increased or diminished by the level of our self-reliance.”²

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

“Self-reliance is a product of our work and undergirds all other welfare practices. It is an essential element in our spiritual as well as our temporal well-being. Regarding this principle, President Marion G. Romney [1897–1988] has said: ‘Let



HELPS FOR VISITING TEACHING

As a visiting teacher, you can seek personal inspiration to know how to best respond to the needs of those you are assigned to watch over. Then focus your efforts on strengthening each sister’s faith and family.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

Genesis 3:19

Matthew 6:33

D&C 82:18–19; 109:8

For more information, see www.providentliving.org; *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Finances* (item no. 04007); and *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Home Storage* (item no. 04008).

us work for what we need. Let us be self-reliant and independent. Salvation can be obtained on no other principle. Salvation is an individual matter, and we must work out our own salvation in temporal as well as in spiritual things.’ . . .

“President Spencer W. Kimball [1895–1985] further taught concerning self-reliance: ‘The responsibility for each person’s social, emotional, spiritual, physical, or economic well-being rests first upon himself, second upon his family, and third upon the Church if he is a faithful member thereof.’”³ ■

President Thomas S. Monson.

NOTES

1. “The Welfare Responsibilities of the Relief Society President,” *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (2009), 4–5.
2. “A Gospel Vision of Welfare: Faith in Action,” *Basic Principles of Welfare and Self-Reliance* (2009), 1–2.
3. “Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare,” *Liahona*, Feb. 1987, 3; *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 3.

Small & Simple Things

“By small and simple things are great things brought to pass” (Alma 37:6).

CHURCH HISTORY AROUND THE WORLD



Hong Kong

China was dedicated for the preaching of the gospel on January 9, 1921, in Beijing by then Elder David O. McKay (1873–1970) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. However, missionary work was limited to the city of Hong Kong. In 1949 Elder Matthew Cowley (1897–1953) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles opened the mission with a prayer from Victoria Peak—the highest point overlooking the city.

The Chinese translation of the Book of Mormon was finished in

1965, followed by the Doctrine and Covenants in 1974. The Hong Kong China Temple was the first temple in the world built as a multi-use structure. The building also contains a chapel, mission offices, and the temple president’s home.

When Hong Kong returned to Chinese control from British control in 1997, the Hong Kong Mission became the China Hong Kong Mission.



Elder Matthew Cowley, an Apostle, opened the Hong Kong Mission in 1949.



By the Numbers

Members in Hong Kong	22,939
Missions	1
Stakes	4
Districts	1
Wards and Branches	32
Temples	1



The Hong Kong China Temple.



SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTER TEACHING

- Try to arrange the seating so you can see each class member and so everyone can see the chalkboard and other visual aids.
- When trying to promote discussion, avoid yes-and-no questions. Instead of asking, “Did Nephi have faith?” ask, “How did Nephi show his faith?”
- Be attentive when class members are answering questions or commenting so they know their thoughts and opinions are appreciated.
- If your meetinghouse has a library, ask the librarian to show you what’s available to use with your lesson. Possibilities might include gospel art pictures, videos or DVDs, or resource books.



LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF HONG KONG © CORBIS; PHOTOGRAPH OF MATTHEW COWLEY COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY; LIBRARY: PHOTOGRAPH OF HONG KONG CHINA TEMPLE BY CRAIG DIMOND; PHOTOGRAPH OF WOOD SHAVINGS BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION OF TEACHER BY HYUNGYU LEE; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH OF CARDSTON ALBERTA TEMPLE BY ANITA SATTERFIELD; PHOTOGRAPH OF TROWEL BY JED CLARK; PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT MCKAY BY BOYART STUDIO; PHOTOGRAPH OF TEMPLE PANEL BY EDON K. UNSCHOTEN

One Act of Kindness

By Arinzechukwu Okere

One never knows what a little kindness can generate. One January, while serving in Akure in the Nigeria Lagos Mission, I had a small gift that I wanted to give to someone. I wondered, “Whom can I give it to that will benefit from it?” I took the gift to church two Sundays, yet I was undecided.

On the third Sunday, I went to church thinking I would give it to a good friend. He did not come to church that day, but I had a feeling that someone else needed it. Looking around the chapel, I saw a boy whose parents were not members of the Church. He seemed so lonely. I felt impressed to give him the gift. I presented it to him, feeling very happy within.

Something wonderful happened. His mother came to church the following Sunday. She thanked me for the gift. She said, “I have been promising my son that I would one day come to church. Today I came to express my gratitude for the gift.” That was how my companion and I met her; since then she has joined the Church. How happy the boy was to see his mom finally baptized.

I know that by small means great things are brought to pass.

TEMPLE SPOTLIGHT

Cardston Alberta Temple



As an Apostle, Elder David O. McKay laid the cornerstone of the Cardston Alberta Temple in 1915.

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) dedicated the site for the temple at Cardston, Alberta, Canada, on July 27, 1913. It was the old tabernacle square, originally given to the Church by Charles Ora Card, who founded the settlement in 1887, when the immigrant Saints first arrived. Then Elder David O. McKay (1873–1970) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles laid the cornerstone on September 19, 1915.

President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) dedicated the building on August 26, 1923.

The temple is built of off-white granite from quarries near Nelson, British Columbia. A veritable fortress of God in spiritual strength as well as physical appearance, the Cardston Alberta Temple has a commanding view of the Canadian prairie in all directions from Cardston.



One of the temple's striking features is a 33-foot-wide (10-m) sculpted panel on the east side. The sculpture depicts the Savior offering living water to the Samaritan woman at the well.

HOW WE LEARNED ABOUT HAPPINESS

By Lidia Evgenevna Shmakova

During perestroika, life was terribly hard, and our family was falling apart. Then we met the missionaries, and slowly we began to rebuild.

I always thought we had a strong family. Our three boys and two girls were normal children, and we had normal problems with them. Sometimes when they would act up, I would get angry. Later I would think to myself, “Why did you get so mad at them?”

I didn’t know then that *perestroika*—a period of political and economic change—was beginning in Russia. I didn’t know that goods would disappear from the shelves of all the stores, that for months and later for years, we would not receive paychecks. Life became very difficult. We had struggles, and my husband and I were on the brink of divorce.

There came an epidemic of drug use, and one of our sons got involved. It

seemed that the sun didn’t shine in our windows anymore. I didn’t know whom to pray to, but still I asked God for help. We fought with all our strength, and little by little we pulled out of this bog.

In the summer of 1998, missionaries found us. Our lives changed 180 degrees as we headed in a new direction. Within five years we had attended the temple and had been sealed as a family for eternity.

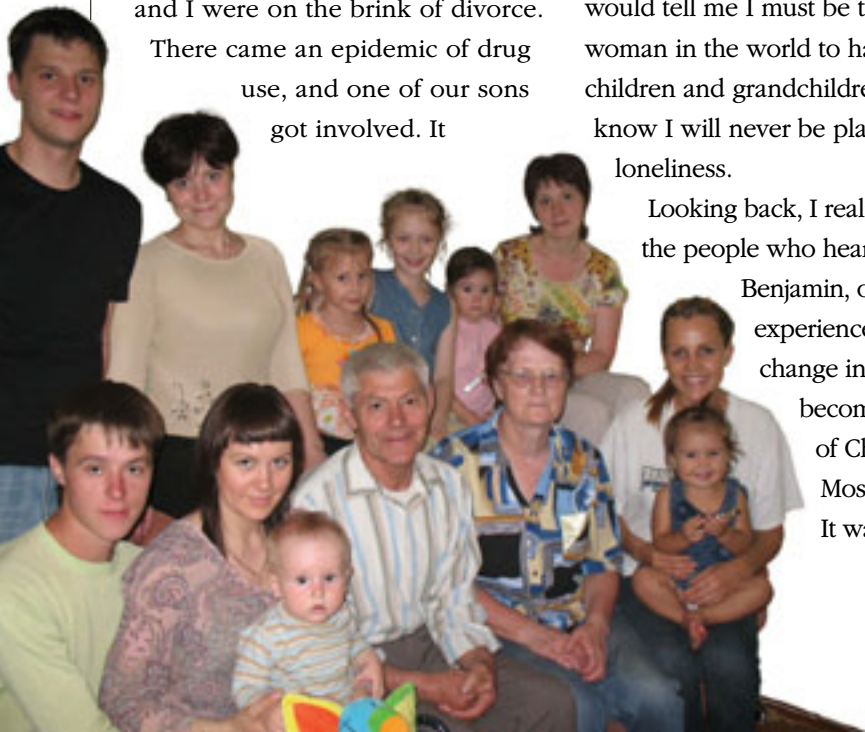
When our middle son served a full-time mission in the Czech Republic, he wrote to us in every letter, “Stay firm and faithful. Together we are the happiest family.” Even my friends would tell me I must be the happiest woman in the world to have so many children and grandchildren and to know I will never be plagued with loneliness.

Looking back, I realize that like the people who heard King Benjamin, our family experienced a mighty change in our hearts, becoming children of Christ (see Mosiah 5:7). It was a huge

transformation for me. Before becoming a Latter-day Saint, when I thought about death, an unbearable grief gripped my heart and soul. It took every bit of strength I had to repel those thoughts from me. Now I have peace in my soul.

I’ve learned that happiness comes in different forms. It can be found in the blackest thunderclouds or when the earth is withering from heat. It is also in the warm rays of the sun in the midst of pouring rain. It is in the first green leaf of spring peeping out of the cracked bud of a poplar tree. It is in the little white petal working itself out on a branch of an apple tree. It is in the darkness of the night sky with thousands of twinkling stars. It is in the tender look of a loved one. It looks out through shining eyes in family photographs.

Happiness also comes to me when I do something good for someone else. It warms my soul with a gentle flame when I pray to our Heavenly Father. Sometimes, when I think I want something more, I remember that I need to learn to value what I have—the Lord Himself gave it all to me. ■



WHO, ME? TEACH?



And now we'll turn the time over to [fill in your name] for our lesson." If you were to hear these words in church next Sunday, would you feel fearful or confident?

Sooner or later every member of the Church becomes a teacher. It might happen in Primary, in Relief Society or a priesthood quorum, in visiting or home teaching, or in family home evening. For many people who are new in the Church, the role of teacher may not be familiar. Even those who have taught many times may wonder how they can be more confident and effective in touching lives for good.

Here are some simple ideas that can help each of us fulfill our teaching assignments:

1. Prayer is an important teaching tool. Begin each phase of your lesson preparation by praying humbly for the guidance of the Spirit. Rely on the Lord's promise to all teachers: "The Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith" (D&C 42:14).
2. Almost every lesson has more material in the manual than you will be able to cover in class. Read the lesson, and prayerfully choose one or two main principles that you feel are best for your class.
3. Prayerfully study the scriptures related to your lesson, and draw examples and principles from them. The word of God can have a "more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than . . . anything else" (Alma 31:5).

4. Take comfort in the fact that you do not need to know everything about the lesson to be an effective teacher. Plan some simple questions that will allow your class members to share their experiences and insights. These can be the most moving and memorable parts of your lesson.
5. As a teacher, you are called to learn as well. Gospel teaching "calls for your diligent efforts to increase your understanding and improve your skills, knowing that the Lord will magnify you as you teach in the way He has commanded."¹

For more teaching ideas, see *Teaching, No Greater Call*. ■

NOTE

1. *Teaching, No Greater Call* (1999), 4.

LEADERSHIP IDEAS

When you are serving in a presidency, be sure to attend when teachers and others called to serve in your organization are set apart. Then set a time when you can meet to:

1. Explain the responsibilities of the new calling.
2. Pass on lesson manuals or leadership materials.
3. Offer support and further training.
4. Express your appreciation for and faith in the newly called member.



IF I WERE GOING TO TEACH

I would read through and begin praying about that lesson the Sunday before. That gives me a full week to pray, to seek inspiration, to think, to read and watch for real-life applications that will give vitality to my message. You won't finalize the lesson that early, but you will be surprised to find how many things come to you during the week, how much God gives you—things that you will feel to use when you do finalize your preparation."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Teaching and Learning in the Church" (worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 10, 2007), *Liahona*, June 2007, 58; *Ensign*, June 2007, 90.

GOD IS TRULY OUR FATHER

God is our Father in Heaven, the Father of our spirits. In the Godhead with Him are Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. They are distinct beings with distinct roles but are one in purpose. This truth, along with many others, was lost after the deaths of Jesus Christ and His Apostles, during a period known as the Apostasy.

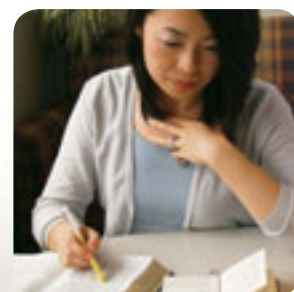
The Lord began to restore these lost truths in the spring of 1820, when 14-year-old Joseph Smith prayed in a grove of trees near his home in Manchester Township, New York, to know which church to join. In answer to his prayer, he saw God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Prophet Joseph Smith later wrote of this vision: “One of them spake unto me, calling

me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17).

On February 16, 1832, the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon received a revelation. To introduce the revelation, they testified of Jesus Christ and God the Father: “And now after the many testimonies which have been given of [Jesus Christ], this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives! For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father” (D&C 76:22–23).

Doctrines that testify of God the Father:

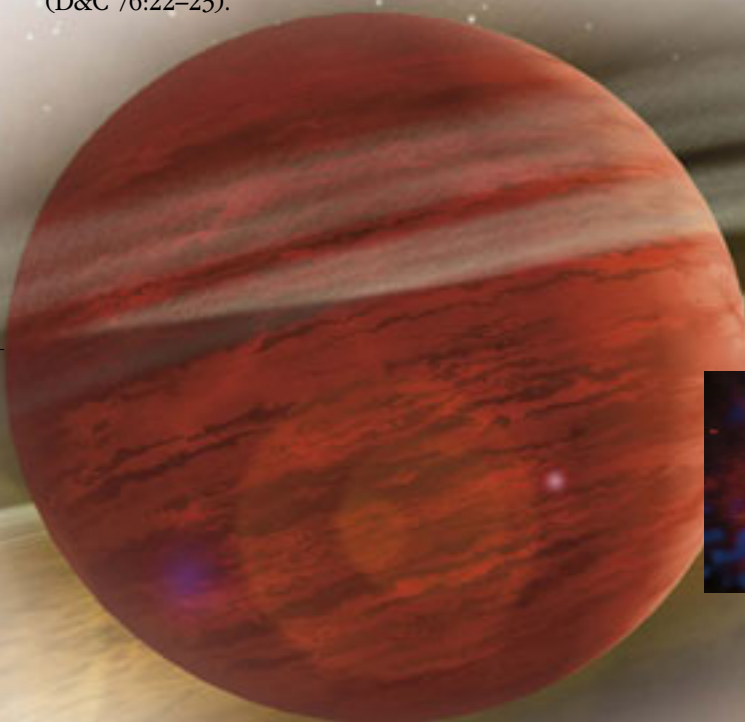
1. We are created in God’s image (see Moses 2:26).



Ways we can come to know our Heavenly Father:

1. Feast on the scriptures (see 2 Nephi 32:3).

Take time to gaze into the heavens, where the courses of the stars and planets are evidence of “God moving in his majesty and power” (see D&C 88:41–47).



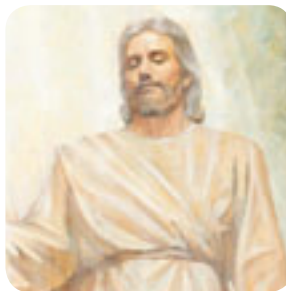
2. God is the Supreme Creator, and “all things denote there is a God” (Alma 30:44).



3. God is our Heavenly Father, a literal spiritual parent (see Hebrews 12:9).¹



4. God the Father has a tangible body of flesh and bones (see D&C 130:22).



5. Our Heavenly Father gave us the plan of salvation (see Alma 34:9).



2. Come to know Jesus Christ (see John 14:9).



3. Obey God’s commandments and follow the prophets (see John 14:21; D&C 1:38).



4. With faith, pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ (see James 1:5; 3 Nephi 18:20).

NOTE

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 39.

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth” (Mosiah 4:9).

To learn more about our basic beliefs, visit Mormon.org (available in many languages, listed at the bottom of the Web page). ■



Faith builds on the past but never longs to stay there. Faith trusts that God has great things in store for each of us.

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



The Best

IS YET TO BE

*Look ahead and remember that faith
is always pointed toward the future.*

The start of a new year is the traditional time to take stock of our lives and see where we are going, measured against the backdrop of where we have been. I don't want to talk about New Year's resolutions, but I do want to talk about the past and the future, with an eye toward *any* time of transition and change in our lives—and those moments come virtually every day.

As a scriptural theme for this discussion, I have chosen Luke 17:32, where the Savior cautions, “Remember Lot’s wife.” What did He mean by such an enigmatic little phrase? To find out, we need to do as He suggested. Let’s recall who Lot’s wife was.

The story, of course, comes to us out of the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, when the Lord, having had as much as He could stand of the worst that men and women could do, told Lot and his family to flee because those cities were about to be destroyed. “Escape for thy life,” the Lord said. “*Look not behind thee . . .*; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed” (Genesis 19:17; emphasis added).

With less than immediate obedience and more than a little negotiation, Lot and his family ultimately did leave town but just in the nick of time. The scriptures tell us what happened at daybreak the morning following their escape:

“The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah

brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;

“And he overthrew those cities” (Genesis 19:24–25).

My theme comes in the next verse. Surely, with the Lord’s counsel—“look not behind thee”—ringing clearly in her ears, Lot’s wife, the record says, “looked back,” and she was turned into a pillar of salt (see verse 26).

Just what did Lot’s wife do that was so wrong? As a student of history, I have thought about that and offer a partial answer. Apparently, what was wrong with Lot’s wife was that she wasn’t just *looking* back; in her heart she wanted to *go* back. It would appear that even before she was past the city limits, she was already missing what Sodom and Gomorrah had offered her. As Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once said, such people know they should have their primary residence in Zion, but they still hope to keep a summer cottage in Babylon.¹

It is possible that Lot’s wife looked back with resentment toward the Lord for what He was asking her to leave behind. We certainly know that Laman and Lemuel were resentful when Lehi and his family were commanded to leave Jerusalem. So it isn’t just that she looked back; she looked back *longingly*. In short, her attachment to the past outweighed her confidence in the future. That, apparently, was at least part of her sin.

Paul taught, “This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Faith Points to the Future

As a new year begins and we try to benefit from a proper view of what has gone before, I plead with you not to dwell on days now gone nor to yearn vainly for yesterdays, however good those yesterdays may have been. The past is to be learned from but not lived in. We look back to claim the embers from glowing experiences but not the ashes. And when we have learned what we need to learn and have brought with us the best that we have experienced, then we look ahead and remember that *faith is always pointed toward the future*. Faith always has to do with blessings and truths and events that will yet be efficacious in our lives.

So a more theological way to talk about Lot's wife is to say that she did not have faith. She doubted the Lord's ability to give her something

better than she already had. Apparently, she thought that nothing that lay ahead could possibly be as good as what she was leaving behind.

To yearn to go back to a world that cannot be lived in now, to be perennially dissatisfied with present circumstances and have only dismal views of the future, and to miss the here and now and tomorrow because we are so trapped in the there and then and yesterday are some of the sins of Lot's wife.

After the Apostle Paul reviewed the privileged and rewarding life of his early years—his birthright, education, and standing in the Jewish community—he says to the Philippians that all of that was “dung” compared to his conversion to Christianity. He says, and I paraphrase, “I have stopped rhapsodizing about ‘the good old days’ and now eagerly look toward the future ‘that I may apprehend that for which Christ appre-

hended me’” (see Philippians 3:7–12). Then come these verses:

“This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13–14).

No Lot's wife here. No looking back at Sodom and Gomorrah here. Paul knows it is out there in the future, up ahead wherever heaven is taking us, that we will win “the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Forgive and Forget

There is something in many of us that particularly fails to forgive



ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL MANN

Leaving the Past in the Past

Name withheld

When I was 16, I didn't get along with my twin brother at all. We fought about everything. One day he humiliated me at school with an intensely critical and personal attack in front of a group of friends. His actions and hurtful words left me devastated in a way my teenage self could not bear. Even when our parents confronted him about the incident, he never said he was sorry. For years I held onto the pain.

He was still on his mission when I

received my own mission call. I was preparing to enter the temple and began to reflect on my life to find where I needed to change to feel prepared to go to the temple. I realized that even though I didn't often think about what my brother did, I still needed to forgive him.

My brother had hurt me more than anyone else, and I knew it wasn't going to be easy to forgive him. So I prayed for help from Heavenly Father.

With His help, I decided to start

writing my brother regularly on his mission. Before that, I'm sorry to admit, I hardly wrote him at all. Then I sent him a package. When I left on my mission, he came with my parents to the missionary training center and gave me a hug. He even wrote me a few times.

I know that even though it may take time, with Heavenly Father's help, we can let the past remain in the past.

and forget earlier mistakes in life—either our mistakes or the mistakes of others. It is not good. It is not Christian. It stands in terrible opposition to the grandeur and majesty of the Atonement of Christ. To be tied to earlier mistakes is the worst kind of wallowing in the past from which we are called to cease and desist.

I was told once of a young man who for many years was more or less the brunt of every joke in his school. He had some disadvantages, and it was easy for his peers to tease him. Later in his life he moved away. He eventually joined the army and had some successful experiences there in getting an education and generally stepping away from his past. Above all, as many in the military do, he discovered the beauty and majesty of the Church and became active and happy in it.

Then, after several years, he returned to the town of his youth. Most of his generation had moved on but not all. Apparently, when he returned quite successful and quite reborn, the same old mind-set that had existed before

was still there, waiting for his return. To the people in his hometown, he was still just old “so-and-so”—you remember the guy who had the problem, the idiosyncrasy, the quirky nature, and did such and such. And wasn't it all just hilarious?

Little by little this man's Pauline effort to leave that which was behind and grasp the prize that God had laid before him was gradually diminished until he died about the way he had lived in his youth. He came full circle: again inactive and unhappy and the brunt of a new generation of jokes. Yet he had had that one bright, beautiful midlife moment when he had been able to rise above his past and truly see who he was and what he could become. Too bad, too sad that he was again to be surrounded by a whole batch of Lot's wives, those who thought his past was more interesting than his future. They managed to rip out of his grasp that for which Christ had grasped him. And he died sad, though through little fault of his own.

That also happens in marriages and other relationships. I can't tell you the number of couples I have counseled who, when they are deeply hurt or even just deeply stressed, reach farther and farther into the past to find yet a bigger brick to throw through the window "pain" of their marriage. When something is over and done with, when it has been repented of as fully as it can be repented of, when life has moved on as it should and a lot of other wonderfully good things have happened since then, it is *not* right to go back and open some ancient wound that the Son of God Himself died to heal.

Let people repent. Let people grow. Believe that people can change and improve. Is that faith? Yes! Is that hope? Yes! Is that charity? Yes! Above all, it is charity, the pure love of Christ. If something is buried in the past,

leave it buried. Don't keep going back with your little sand pail and beach shovel to dig it up, wave it around, and then throw it at someone, saying, "Hey! Do you remember *this*?" Splat!

Well, guess what? That is probably going to result in some ugly morsel being dug up out of *your* landfill with the reply, "Yeah, I remember it. Do *you* remember *this*?" Splat.

And soon enough everyone comes out of that exchange dirty and muddy and unhappy and hurt, when what our Father in Heaven pleads for is cleanliness and kindness and happiness and healing.

Such dwelling on past lives, including past mistakes, is just not right! It is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. In some ways it is worse than Lot's wife because at least she destroyed only herself. In cases of marriage and family,



Live to see the miracles of repentance and forgiveness, of trust and divine love that will transform your life today, tomorrow, and forever.

LEARNING FROM THIS ARTICLE

What lessons from the past can guide you in the future?

What blessings do you want to exercise faith to receive?

wards and branches, apartments and neighborhoods, we can end up destroying so many others.

Perhaps at this beginning of a new year there is no greater requirement for us than to do as the Lord Himself said He does: “He who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more” (D&C 58:42).

The proviso, of course, is that repentance has to be sincere, but when it is and when honest effort is being made to progress, we are guilty of the greater sin if we keep remembering and recalling and rebashing someone with his or her earlier mistakes—and that *someone* might be ourselves. We can be so hard on ourselves—often much more so than on others!

Now, like the Anti-Nephi-Lehies of the Book of Mormon, bury your weapons of war and leave them buried (see Alma 24). Forgive and do that which is sometimes harder than to forgive: forget. And when it comes to mind again, forget it again.

The Best Is Yet to Be

You can remember just enough to avoid repeating the mistake, but then put the rest of it all on the dung heap Paul spoke of to the Philippians. Dismiss the destructive, and keep dismissing it until the beauty of the Atonement of Christ has revealed to you your bright future and the bright future of your family, your friends, and your neighbors. God doesn’t care nearly as much about where you have been as He does about where you are and, with His help, where you are willing to go. That is the thing Lot’s wife didn’t get—and neither did Laman and Lemuel and a host of others in the scriptures.

This is an important matter to consider at the start of a new year—and every day ought to be the start of a new year and a new life. Such is the wonder of faith, repentance, and the miracle of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The poet Robert Browning wrote:

Grow old along with me!

The best is yet to be,

*The last of life, for which the
first was made:*

Our times are in his hand

Who saith, “A whole I planned,

*Youth shows but half; trust God:
see all, nor be afraid!”²*

Some of you may wonder: Is there any future for me? What does a new year or a new semester, a new major or a new romance, a new job or a new home hold for me? Will I be safe? Will life be sound? Can I trust in the Lord and in the future? Or would it be better to look back, to go back, to stay in the past?

To all such of every generation, I call out, “Remember Lot’s wife.” Faith is for the future. Faith builds on the past but never longs to stay there. Faith trusts that God has great things in store for each of us and that Christ truly is the “high priest of good things to come” (Hebrews 9:11).

Keep your eyes on your dreams, however distant and far away. Live to see the miracles of repentance and forgiveness, of trust and divine love that will transform your life today, tomorrow, and forever. That is a New Year’s resolution I ask you to keep. ■

From a Brigham Young University devotional address given on January 13, 2009. For the full text of the address in English, visit <http://speeches.byu.edu>.

NOTES

1. See Neal A. Maxwell, *A Wonderful Flood of Light* (1990), 47.
2. Robert Browning, “Rabbi Ben Ezra” (1864), stanza 1.



Gospel Principles

They shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer
and the very fruits of his doctrine, that they
may know how to come unto him and be saved.
— Joseph Smith



By Elder
Russell M. Nelson

Of the Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles



THE NEW *Gospel* *Principles* MANUAL

Since 1998 the lesson manuals for Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes have been volumes of *Teachings of Presidents of the Church* (hereafter *Teachings*). Each manual focused on the life and teachings of one of our beloved prophets. These wonderful books create an invaluable resource for members across the world to come to know and love these great men and the marvelous doctrines they taught. Their counsel is as inspiring and pertinent today as it was when those Brethren first delivered the addresses included in those books. We hope that you continue to use the inspired literature of these faithful servants of the Lord. Their teachings are timeless.

Beginning in 2010 we will take a two-year leave from the study of manuals

in this series. In their place, during the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes on the second and third Sunday of each month, we will study the newly revised *Gospel Principles* manual. Naturally, members may wonder why the change was made and how it will affect them. The following are some questions that may come to mind and the answers.

Why the Change in Curriculum?

Since we first began using *Teachings*, millions of people have joined the Church. Many of them have tender testimonies and, with relatively limited experience in the Church, will benefit greatly by a focus on the fundamentals of the gospel. In addition, all Church members will benefit by a return to the basics. A careful study of core

This beautiful volume will be a great addition to any home library as well as the Church classroom.

doctrines as presented in the new and improved *Gospel Principles* manual will help members strengthen their understanding of the fundamental teachings of the gospel.

The *Teachings* manuals have been a wonderful curriculum for our

The new Gospel Principles manual features color photographs and illustrations.

classes and precious additions to our personal libraries. In 2012 we will resume the study of the teachings of our great Presidents.

How Will This Affect Me?

The *Gospel Principles* manual will be used as the course of study for second- and third-Sunday Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes. It will also be used as the manual for the Gospel Principles Sunday School class for new members, investigators, and members returning to activity. Because of this, some of you may wonder if there won't be some redundancy. Of course there will! Isn't it wonderful that we can gain the added benefit of repetition. Even the Savior taught the same doctrines multiple times to reinforce concepts. Consider how often He teaches us through the scriptures to believe and be baptized (see, for example, 3 Nephi 11:23–38)!

Knowing that we need to learn principles line upon line, precept upon precept, the Lord repeats many concepts so that we do not miss them (see Isaiah 28:10, 13; 2 Nephi 28:30; D&C 98:12; 128:21). Such instruction, handled by caring teachers who take an interest in the welfare of their class members, will help increase faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.



Teaching suggestions in each chapter help teachers invite learning and teach by the Spirit.

In practice, however, there will be less overlap than one might think. The Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes typically will use the manual two weeks a month, on the second and third Sundays, just as the *Teachings*

Each section begins with thought-provoking questions or statements that will aid individual study and foster classroom discussion.

manuals have been used. Lessons will follow a sequential order in which we will finish the *Gospel Principles* manual in two years. Meanwhile, teachers preparing for the Gospel Principles Sunday School class will tailor their lessons each week to the needs of their class participants. Generally speaking, new members, investigators, and

members returning to activity will participate in the Gospel Principles class for a period of time determined by them and their bishop or branch president, after which time they will attend the Gospel Doctrine Sunday School class.

As with the *Teachings* manuals, there will be no cost to individuals receiving these new manuals. Each ward or branch will provide the necessary manuals for its members.

In some parts of the world, the Melchizedek Priesthood and Relief Society classes have been using the books *Duties and Blessings of the Priesthood* and *The Latter-day Saint Woman* instead of *Teachings*. Published in 45 languages, the new edition of *Gospel Principles* will be available in some of these units during the years 2010 and 2011. Where the new manual is not available, however, the older edition of the *Gospel Principles* manual will still be used.

How Has the *Gospel Principles* Manual Changed?

Our excellent *Gospel Principles* manual was first published more than 30 years ago. It has enjoyed wide use in the Church as a manual for Sunday School lessons, for teaching new members about basic gospel principles, and as an important resource in the home. However, the Brethren felt we could improve upon the existing manual and breathe new life into it. The result is a beautiful volume that will be a great addition to any home library as well as the Church classroom.

The new edition has several significant features in the design and text:

1. Design

The new edition will be increased in size and have a new cover similar to the *Teachings* volumes. We also have updated the design of the text to make it easier to read. The visuals will be in color. All of this provides a more pleasing visual experience that will enhance personal study.

2. Text

The text has been revised to make the manual more effective for personal study, teacher preparation, and class discussions. To aid personal study, many of the quotations and source citations have been updated to link this book with the *Teachings* volumes that have been published previously. This will allow individuals to learn more from the prophets who are quoted in the *Gospel Principles* manual. The integration of these manuals will enrich study both in the classroom and at home.

3. Teaching and Learning Suggestions

In each chapter are ideas that will help teachers improve their teaching. The ideas are based on sound teaching principles from



The new *Gospel Principles* manual is designed to enhance teaching in the home and classroom, as well as to aid personal study.

Find the new *Gospel Principles* manual online at GospelPrinciples.lds.org.

Teaching, No Greater Call, the Church's resource for teacher improvement. The ideas are intended to help teachers love those they teach, invite diligent learning, and teach the doctrine by the Spirit.

Additionally, questions that begin each section in a chapter will help foster discussion and direct class members to the content within the section. Questions that follow each section will help class members ponder, discuss, and apply what they have read.

A Timeless Book

It is our hope that the new *Gospel Principles* manual will take a prominent place in the homes and lives of all Latter-day Saints. The new edition will inspire teaching and enhance personal study. Brothers and sisters, by reinforcing your study of the core doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ, your testimony will grow, your happiness will increase, and you will find a greater abundance of the blessings of the Lord in your life. ■

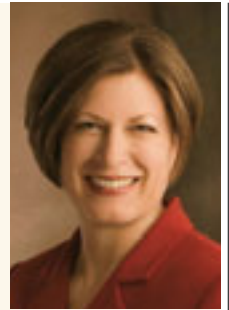


1 Increase Faith and Personal Righteousness.

The first-Sunday lesson gives us an opportunity to turn to the scriptures for the doctrines that will help us meet the challenges of the latter days.

By Julie B. Beck

Relief Society
General President



Studying the Work of Relief Society

When our presidency was first called, we were given some resources about the history of the Relief Society, which had been collected over the years. We studied them prayerfully, wanting to know the purpose of Relief Society and what the Lord would have us do during our administration.

As we studied that history carefully, we learned that the purpose of Relief Society as established by the Lord is to organize, teach, and inspire His daughters to prepare them for the blessings of eternal life. Relief Society applies to all aspects of a Latter-day Saint woman's life. Sisters are taught and inspired through visiting teaching, service, and Relief Society meetings. Each Sunday our goal in Relief Society is to study the doctrine and principles that will help us achieve our purposes. As a result of our Sunday lessons, sisters should be able to live the gospel with greater conviction in their families and homes.

The First Sunday Is Different

On the second, third, and fourth Sundays of the month, we study *Gospel Principles* and teachings from general conference as a way to lead us to the blessings of eternal life. However, on the first Sunday of the month, a member of the Relief Society presidency instructs us and leads us in discussions as to how we can fulfill our sacred responsibilities as members of the Relief Society.

As Latter-day Saint women we have the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and testimonies of the plan of salvation. We are responsible for the female half of that plan. It cannot be delegated to others. We are accountable before the Lord for the discharge of our duties. And the first Sunday of the month is the Lord's gift of time to us as Relief Society sisters to learn how to fulfill our responsibilities.

I hope that we will use that gift of time to fulfill our three lifelong responsibilities as members of the Relief Society: (1) increase faith and personal righteousness, (2) strengthen families and homes, and (3) seek out and help those in need.

On the first Sunday of the month, the Relief Society presidency leads us in discussions on how we can fulfill our sacred responsibilities as Relief Society sisters.

2 Strengthen Families and Homes.

On the first Sunday of the month, we can learn how to uphold, nourish, and protect families.



STEP UP AND BE STRONG



Some women have said that it is frightening to teach a class or speak in front of a group. I can assure you I know from experience that it can be rather intimidating. Let's remember what Eliza R. Snow once said to her niece who was called upon to speak in front of a group. When her niece arose, she was unable to say anything because fear overcame her. She finally just sat down. Eliza kindly and gently advised her, 'Never mind, but when you are asked to speak again, try and have something to say.' . . .

"At a wonderful Relief Society meeting, Eliza R. Snow recorded in the minutes that 'nearly all present arose and spoke, and the spirit of the Lord like a purifying stream, refreshed every heart.' We hope our sisters today feel nourished, edified, and uplifted every time they attend a Sunday lesson.

"Sisters, now more than ever, we need

women to step up and be strong. We need women who declare the truth with strength, faith, and boldness. We need women to set an example of righteousness. We need women to be 'anxiously engaged in a good cause' (D&C 58:27). We need to live so that our lives bear witness that we love our Heavenly Father and the Savior Jesus Christ and that we will do what They have asked us to do. We need to rescue 'all that is finest down deep inside of [us]' so that as daughters of God we can do our part to build the kingdom of God. We will have help to do this. As Joseph declared, 'If you live up to your privileges, the angels cannot be restrained from being your associates.'"

Barbara Thompson, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, "Now Let Us Rejoice," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 115, 116.

I hope we will turn to the scriptures and approved Church resources for the examples, principles, and doctrines that will help us accomplish these responsibilities and learn how to meet the challenges of the latter days. Emma Hale Smith, our first Relief Society president, was told to “expound scriptures, and to exhort the church, according as it shall be given thee by my Spirit” (D&C 25:7). We can follow her example.

If I were to do this in a first-Sunday Relief Society meeting, I would begin by prayerfully deciding what we should be learning. I would then search the scriptures to discover what they have to teach us on that topic. I would learn what prophets and Church leaders have taught. Then I would pray for the Spirit’s guidance as I wrote down some discussion questions we could use as we study together in our first-Sunday meeting. I would hope that sisters would go home stronger and use this same pattern to study in their homes and teach their families.

Increasing Faith and Personal Righteousness

My grandmother, Isabelle Bawden Bangerter, was known to be a woman of great faith. She acquired her faith as a child and worked to increase it all her life. She taught Relief Society for many years, and among Relief Society sisters she was known as a theologian, a woman who knew the gospel well and could teach it from the scriptures. She was still studying the scriptures when she died at the age of 97. Grandma Bangerter was a woman who was confident in her eternal roles and responsibilities. When I was a young mother, I asked her if it was possible to rear a righteous posterity in a world filled with wickedness. She raised herself up, and pointing at me, she emphatically said, “Yes! You

must! That is why you are here!” Her teaching inspired me to become more intentional about my responsibilities and to approach life with greater faith. It is possible to have that kind of direct and inspired teaching every week in Relief Society.

Sisters frequently have questions about how to live through the experiences of this mortal life in a faith-filled way. The first Sunday of the month gives us the opportunity to bring together the combined faith that exists in each Relief Society. The wisdom of all present can help answer real questions and provide inspired answers.

Following are other examples of what we can study on the first Sunday to help us increase our faith and personal righteousness:

- Making and keeping covenants.
- Qualifying for a temple recommend and worshipping in temples.
- Qualifying for, recognizing, and following the influence of the Holy Ghost.
- Teaching and defending Jesus Christ’s gospel.
- Participating in sincere personal and family prayer.
- Having family home evening.
- Implementing principles of self-reliance and provident living.

Strengthening Families and Homes

When I was a young Relief Society sister, we had a mother-education class once a month. Though I had a wonderful and skilled mother, I still learned from my teachers in Relief Society how to be a better mother and how to improve my home. We learned home-making principles and skills, we learned how to be better parents, and we learned how to strengthen our marriages.



BLESSINGS OF THE TEMPLE

“Do whatever may be necessary to qualify to receive [the blessings of the temple]. . . .

“ . . . Go to the temple to seal our families eternally. Let us return to the temple as often as our circumstances will permit. Let us give our kindred dead the opportunity to receive the ordinances of exaltation. Let us enjoy the spiritual strength and the revelation we receive as we attend the temple regularly. Let us be faithful and make and keep temple covenants to receive the full blessings of the Atonement.”

Silvia H. Allred, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, “Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 114.

3 Seek Out and Help Those in Need. We have the responsibility to provide relief—relief of poverty, illness, doubt, ignorance, and all that hinders the joy and progress of women.

Young mothers often ask me if we can ever have mother education again in Relief Society. My answer is yes. We can learn how to uphold, nourish, and protect families on the first Sunday of the month.

Following are some examples of what we can study on the first Sunday to help us strengthen families and homes:

- Understanding and defending the divine roles of women.
- Embracing the blessings of the priesthood.
- Forming eternal families.
- Maintaining strong marriages.
- Bearing and rearing children.
- Expressing love for family members and nurturing them.
- Accepting responsibility to prepare a

righteous rising generation of Latter-day Saints.

- Knowing, living, and defending the doctrine of the family.
- Searching out deceased family members and performing temple ordinances for them.

Seeking Out and Helping Those in Need

First-Sunday lessons are our opportunity to strengthen one another and find answers to life's difficulties. At any given time many of the sisters in each Relief Society are experiencing trials and disappointments. President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has called each ward Relief Society a "circle of sisters." He said:

"Each sister, no matter where in that circle she stands, can look to either side and feel the spirit of inspiration coming back as she extends the



gentle hand of charity to those on either side. . . .

“ . . . You will serve your organization, your cause—the Relief Society—this great circle of sisters. Your every need shall be fulfilled, now, and in the eternities; every neglect will be erased; every abuse will be corrected. All of this can come to you, and come quickly, when you devote yourself to Relief Society.”¹

It has been my experience that each ward Relief Society has the capacity to give to one another the support that is needed. If we seek and receive the help of the Holy Ghost, all answers can be found in each circle of sisters.

We have the responsibility to provide relief—relief of poverty, illness, doubt, ignorance, and all that hinders the joy and progress of woman. Relief Society has always been engaged in providing relief to others.

We know that because we are living in the latter days, we as individuals and families are facing many difficult challenges. These challenges include abuse, addictions, apathy, debt, depression, disobedience, unemployment, family disintegration, illness, persecution, poverty, and violence. This sounds very much like what the Apostle Paul prophesied in 2 Timothy 3:1–7, 13. However, we need not be afraid. We have the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul also gave us the solution:

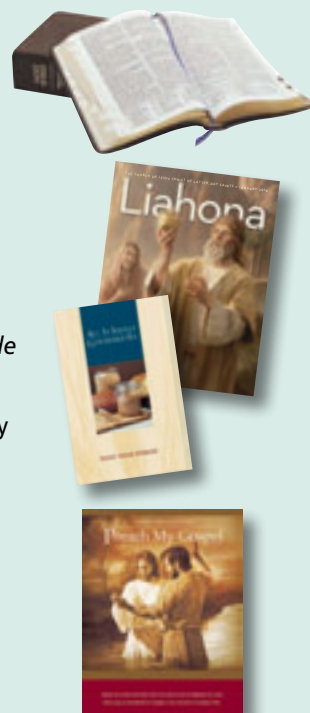
“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:14–16).

RESOURCES FOR FIRST-SUNDAY LESSONS

- Scriptures
- Teachings of latter-day prophets
- The *Liahona* magazine
- *All Is Safely Gathered In: Family Finances and Family Home Storage* (pamphlets, item nos. 04007, 04008)
- *For the Strength of Youth* (pamphlet, item no. 36550)
- *Family Guidebook* and *A Parent's Guide* (booklets, item nos. 31180, 31125)
- *Marriage and Family Relations* (Sunday School manual, item no. 35865)
- *Preach My Gospel* (missionary guide, item no. 36617)



On the first Sunday, a member of the Relief Society presidency can personalize the work of Relief Society. She can focus on charitable works as solutions to specific ward or branch needs. She can train the sisters to be visiting teachers who address the needs of others as they find them. And when appropriate, she can make assignments to help specific people in need.

Using the First Sunday

I believe that as Relief Society leaders seek the help of the Holy Ghost, they will be inspired as to what to study and teach during the first-Sunday meeting of Relief Society. I know that the Lord's work will continue to go forth across the earth and that it will prosper in large part because the good women of the Church will do all they can to further that work in their own homes and families first and then in their other circles of friendship and acquaintance. ■

NOTE

1. Boyd K. Packer, “The Circle of Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, 109, 110.



MAKING MOUNTAINS

The Parables of the Mountain Guide
and the Mountain

By Adam C. Olson

Church Magazines

As an interpretive tour guide in Yushan National Park in Taiwan, Chén Yù Chuàn (Richard) is often assigned to escort important visitors around the park. Typically when he asks his guests what they would like to see, they want to go to the top of Yushan (Jade Mountain), the highest peak in northeast Asia at 12,966 feet (3,952 m).

Richard has a passion for nature and loves the beauty and majesty of Yushan. But through experience he has learned something important that he tries to share with his visitors: the spectacular view from above gains its real value only after one has experienced what's below.

Visiting the peak, with its manmade trails and wonderful view, is a great experience, but Richard tries to explain that there is much to learn and much hidden beauty to find in the more difficult-to-access river gorges and canyons below.

"To appreciate the height, you must experience the bottom," he says. "You can't appreciate the end without understanding the process."

Some of his visitors are persuaded; however, most just want to make it to the top—and they want the easiest way there.

Richard sees some spiritual symbolism in their attitudes. As he describes it, the peak of life's experiences is to be able to return to God's presence (see Alma 12:24). Yet while many recognize the value of that goal, some don't realize that to be *with* Him, we must become *like* Him (see 1 John 3:2; 3 Nephi 27:27; Moroni 7:48). And there is no quick and easy path to that peak.

The True Guide

Richard doesn't want to take visitors for just a walk; he wants to give them an experience. But he is limited in how much he can teach them by their level of desire.

"I can take those who *want* to experience nature to places that others rarely see," he says. "Their experience may be more difficult, but it is much richer."

Richard feels that life is no different, and his personal experiences reflect this principle. While a university student, Richard began a search for real purpose in life. He visited a number of churches without finding what he was searching for—until he met the missionaries.

His parents, however, strongly opposed his joining the Church. They worried about their



To appreciate the summit, one must experience the valleys, says Richard Chén (left, at Baiyang Waterfall in Taroko National Park). Brother Chén is a guide in Yushan National Park, home to Jade Mountain (above).





Those who follow Brother Chén through the valleys learn about the intense geological forces that make mountains—a process parallel to the refining one must endure to return to God’s presence. Above: Richard overlooks a tributary of the Liwu River. Right: The contorted marble walls of the Mysterious Valley are evidence of tremendous geological forces.



only son leaving their faith. They also worried about what would become of them. Many in their culture believe that their standing in the afterlife depends heavily upon the veneration offered them by their living descendants.

Although he struggled with his parents’ opposition, Richard had gained a testimony of the Savior and the need to follow Him.

“Jesus Christ is the way,” Richard says. “He is the True Guide back to the Father” (see John 14:6).

He chose to follow the Savior and be baptized, trusting that the Lord would lead him down the right path even if it looked harder.

A week after his baptism, he was blessed with a good job as a radio news reporter

for the largest broadcasting corporation in Taiwan. Getting the job pleased his parents, and along with the change for good they saw in him, it helped smooth ruffled feathers. It also strengthened his faith and taught him an important lesson.

“If we don’t follow Jesus Christ,” he says, “we will miss a lot of important experiences that we need.” These experiences may be more difficult, but they are necessary for our good (see 2 Nephi 2:2; D&C 122:7).

How Mountains Are Made

Anyone who follows Richard through his beloved gorges and valleys will undoubtedly learn that the mountains of Taiwan and its precipitous east coast were created by the collision of two plates in the earth’s crust. The intense heat and pressure created by that powerful force turned layers of sediment first to limestone, then to the marble for which the east coast is famous. That same unseen power shakes and grinds and buckles the earth, eventually sending mountain ranges soaring into the heavens.

Whether in Yushan or Taroko National

Park, where he worked earlier, Richard loves to point out evidence of how the forces of nature formed Taiwan from the bottom up.

“There are ripple marks on the highest rock, and there are sea fossils and other evidence of what’s on top having once been at the bottom,” Richard says. “If you want to understand the summit, you must understand the depths, because that’s where the summit began.”

Richard believes this is important because it parallels the purpose of life. In difficult times it can seem like we aren’t just visitors to the mountain but more like the mountain itself, buffeted by forces and stresses that shape us and push us toward heaven if we can bear them with patience and faith (see Mosiah 23:21–22; D&C 121:7–8).

Making Mountains of Us

From his own experiences Richard has learned that we cannot rise up out of the world to reach our highest potential without undergoing uncomfortable, sometimes painful, experiences.

As a radio reporter Richard worked under considerable pressure covering a wide variety of topics on short deadlines. He soon learned that social drinking was an important way many reporters obtained information. Work became increasingly difficult because he refused to participate in the drinking.

The thought of finding a new job eased his conscience but not his challenges. His radio job had helped pacify his parents after he joined the Church. So when he left the high-paying, prestigious, full-time job for part-time contract work as a guide, his parents were disappointed for a time.

It was another difficult path to choose, but he doesn’t regret taking it because he knows



THE GROWTH REQUIRED TO RETURN HOME

“One’s life . . . cannot be both faith-filled and stress-free. . . .

“Therefore, how can you and I really expect to glide naively through life, as if to say, ‘Lord, give me experience, but not grief, not sorrow, not pain, not opposition, not betrayal, and certainly not to be forsaken. Keep from me, Lord, all those experiences which made Thee what Thou art! Then let me come and dwell with Thee and fully share Thy joy!’ . . .

“Real faith . . . is required to endure this necessary but painful developmental process.”

Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Lest Ye Be Wearied and Faint in Your Minds,” *Ensign*, May 1991, 88, 90.

that to be “exalted on high” (see D&C 121:7–8), we must first experience the lows (see D&C 122:5–7).

“We sometimes limit what God can make of us because we don’t want to experience the bad with the good,” he says.

Following the Lord led him to a job he enjoyed. It led him to serve a mission. It introduced him to his future wife, with whom he now has four beautiful children. Despite the trials, there has been no end to the blessings.

When discipleship leads through “the path of the low valley” (2 Nephi 4:32) and even “the valley of the shadow of death” (Psalm 23:4) on its way to “him who dwells on high” (D&C 1:1), Richard takes comfort in the promise that “the words of Christ, if we follow their course, [shall] carry us beyond this vale of sorrow into a far better land of promise” (Alma 37:45)—further confirmation to him that it is only after experiencing the challenges of life that we will be prepared to enjoy the summit. ■



For more on this story, including a gallery of photos from Taroko National Park, visit liahona.lds.org.



**By President
Boyd K. Packer**

President of the
Quorum of the
Twelve Apostles

SOLVING EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS IN THE Lord's Own Way

Our bishops face increasing calls to counsel members with problems that have more to do with emotional needs than with the need for food or clothing or shelter.

My message, therefore, is to the subject: solving emotional problems in the Lord's own way.

Fortunately, the principles of temporal welfare apply to emotional problems as well. . . .

Principles of Self-Reliance

The welfare handbook instructs: "[We must] earnestly teach and urge Church members to be self-sustaining to the full extent of their powers. No true Latter-day Saint will . . . voluntarily shift from himself the burden of his own support. So long as he can, under the inspiration of the Almighty and with his own labors, he will supply himself with the necessities of life" ([1952], 2). . . .

We have succeeded fairly well in teaching Latter-day Saints that they should take care of their own material needs and then contribute to the welfare of those who cannot provide for themselves.

If a member is unable to sustain himself, then he is to call upon his own family, and then upon the Church, in that order. . . .

When people are *able* but *unwilling* to take care of themselves, we are responsible to employ the dictum of the Lord that the idler shall not eat the bread of the laborer. (See D&C 42:42.)

The simple rule has been to take care of one's self. This couplet of truth has been something of a model: "Eat it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without."

When the Church welfare program was first announced in 1936, the First Presidency said:

" . . . The aim of the Church is to help people help

themselves" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 3; italics added). . . .

It is a self-help system, not a quick handout system. It requires a careful inventory of all personal and family resources, all of which must be committed before anything is added from the outside.

It is not an unkind or an unfeeling bishop who requires a member to work to the fullest extent he can for what he receives from Church welfare.

There should not be the slightest embarrassment for any member to be assisted by the Church. *Provided*, that is, that he has contributed all that he can. . . .

The substance of what I want to say is this: The same principle—self-reliance—has application to the spiritual and to the emotional. . . .

Unless we use care, we are on the verge of doing to ourselves emotionally (and, therefore, spiritually) what we have been working so hard for generations to avoid materially.

Counseling

We seem to be developing an epidemic of "counselitis" which drains spiritual strength from the Church much like the common cold drains more strength out of humanity than any other disease. . . .

Speaking figuratively, many a bishop keeps on the corner of his desk a large stack of order forms for emotional relief.

When someone comes with a problem, the bishop, unfortunately, without a question, passes them out, without stopping to think what he is doing to his people. . . .

Spiritual independence and self-reliance is a sustaining power in the Church. If we rob the members of that, how can they get revelation for themselves? How will they know

The principle of self-reliance or personal independence is fundamental to the happy life.

there is a prophet of God? How can they get answers to prayers? How can they know for *sure* for themselves? . . .

Application to Families

. . . Fathers are responsible to preside over their families.

Sometimes, with all good intentions, we require so much of both the children and the father that he is not able to do so.

If my boy needs counseling, bishop, it should be my responsibility first, and yours second.

If my boy needs recreation, bishop, I should provide it first, and you second.

If my boy needs correction, that should be my responsibility first, and yours second.

If I am failing as a father, help me first, and my children second.

Do not be too quick to take over from me the job of raising my children.

Do not be too quick to counsel them and solve all of the problems. Get me involved. It is my ministry.

We live in a day when the adversary stresses on every hand the philosophy of instant gratification. We seem to demand *instant* everything, including instant solutions to our problems. . . .

It was meant to be that life would be a challenge. To suffer some anxiety, some depression, some disappointment, even some failure is normal.

Teach our members that if they have a good, miserable day once in a while, or several in a row, to stand steady and face them. Things will straighten out.

There is great purpose in our struggle in life. ■

This excerpt comes from a general conference address originally given in April 1978. Punctuation standardized; subheads added. The full text can be found at liahona.lds.org.

HEALING MY HOMESICKNESS

I began college at age 18. After a short time, however, I transferred to another university and changed my major. My new university was only a couple of hours from my home, but I found myself terribly homesick and discouraged, wanting to give up and return to my family. Yet I knew if I did, I would be abandoning my chance to earn a degree.

One weekend not long after the school year began, all of my roommates went home for a visit. I knew that if I went home too, I would not return. I couldn't even call and speak to my family for fear I would break down and not be able to focus on my studies. I had been praying for the strength to overcome my homesickness, but now I was praying to know whether I should even remain at school and complete a degree.

Early that Sunday morning as I walked slowly across the quiet campus on my way to church, I wondered how I could stay at school when I missed my home and family so deeply and couldn't overcome my loneliness. But what would I do if I left school?

When I arrived at church, the previous ward had just left the chapel. I entered, hoping for a moment to pray for direction. As I found a place to sit and slowly moved onto the wooden pew, I noticed a printed program from the previous



At that moment I knew what I needed to do. The Lord had answered my prayers in such a simple way, but I could not deny that it was an answer just the same.

sacrament meeting. There on the front of the folded paper were the following words: "Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not."¹

At that moment I knew what I needed to do. The Lord had answered my prayers in such a simple way, but I could not deny that it was an answer just the same.

It wasn't long after that Sunday that my loneliness and discouragement left. As a result, I enjoyed my remaining years in school. I gained a degree, lifelong friends, and a stronger testimony by following the promptings of the Spirit.

Now, more than 25 years later, I still recall that answer to my prayer, and I use those same words from that sacrament meeting program to commit myself to difficult tasks. I have shared my experience with close friends and family in hopes that they too might gain strength in difficult times.

I know the Lord cares about our feelings and everyday choices, and I know He answers our sincere prayers. ■

Sue Hirase, Utah, USA

NOTE

1. Thomas Henry Huxley, in John Bartlett, comp., *Familiar Quotations* (1968), 725.

COULD I CLOSE MY BUSINESS ON SUNDAY?

Three weeks after I opened my heart, received the gospel, and made the important decision to be baptized in 2001, I attended a Sunday School class in which we discussed the importance of observing the Sabbath day.

As a successful business owner with a large number of employees, I had been working on Sundays for more than 20 years. But as the importance of this day became clear to me, I decided to tell my three store managers that we were not going to open anymore on Sunday.

A few weeks after I announced my decision, my three managers told me that several insistent customers, mainly schoolteachers, asked whether we might open our stores the following Sunday. I work in the candy business in Papantla, and people needed to buy candy and piñatas to prepare for El Día del Niño (Children's Day), which would be observed the following Monday. On Children's Day, held on April 30 in Mexico, schools have parties and games, and children receive candy.

"Tomorrow, on Saturday, I'll let you know," I told my managers.

When I got home, I told my wife what had happened. I expected her to say, "Stay open. After all, it's just one Sunday." But that was not her answer.

With a firm voice, she told me that I was the head of the family and that it was my decision. But then she asked me, "If someone told you that this Sunday you could receive either a huge fortune or you could receive your Father in Heaven, which would you choose?"

Her question helped me realize the importance of receiving the Lord every Sunday, and I knew I had to stand by my decision. Honoring the Lord is

the most important thing we can do on Sunday, and since then I have not missed an opportunity to do so.

If we put the things of the Lord before the things of man, we will be given a testimony of the Sabbath day. For our observance of the Sabbath day, my family and I have been greatly blessed, as has my business. May we all receive the blessings of honoring the Lord's day. ■

Gerardo Adrián García
Romero, Veracruz,
Mexico

I told my wife that several insistent customers asked whether we might open our stores the following Sunday.





We didn't have a penny. So one morning we prayed that we might somehow obtain the money we needed.

HOW COULD WE PAY OUR RENT?

A year and a half after my wife, Rebeca, and I married, the company I worked for closed. Suddenly I found myself unemployed.

Rather than look to be hired by someone else, I felt prompted to start my own company. I knew that this challenge could be a complicated one, so I turned to Heavenly Father to confirm what I had felt. Prayer played a vital role in that initial decision and has continued to be crucial since.

In August 2003 I started my own company doing painting, gardening, landscaping, and maintenance work. Things aren't always easy when you have your own company, especially when starting out. At the beginning of one month, Rebeca and I needed to pay rent for our home. We didn't have a penny. So one morning we prayed that we might somehow obtain the money we needed. Later

that day I was hired for a job that paid enough to cover our rent.

A month after I started my company, the stake president asked me to meet with him. Soon I was called to be the bishop of our ward. I realized that Heavenly Father had opened a way for me to accept and fulfill this calling. With my other job, I would not have had the necessary time for members of the ward and for my own family. But because I have my own company, I have a flexible schedule. I have been home for important events in my family's life, such as when my children were born and started walking and talking. In addition, my wife and I have been able to serve in the San José Costa Rica Temple. These opportunities, which came because we had responded to promptings and sought direction in prayer, have tied us together.

I recently resumed my university studies. When the impression came to return to school, I worried about how I could provide for my family. Two days a week I would be in the classroom, not at work. How was my family going to make it?

Again, my wife and I made this challenge a matter of prayer, and the Lord responded. I began receiving permanent contracts, which have made it easier for me to make up workdays I miss while at school.

In all of these experiences, we have seen the Lord keep His promise: "Ask, and ye shall receive" (3 Nephi 27:29). Prayer has been important to our family's development and improvement. We have seen and felt that when we turn to the Lord, He blesses us. We know that He knows us by name, and we can ask Him for whatever we need. ■

Douglas Arévalo, Costa Rica

I DIDN'T HAVE A TEMPLE RECOMMEND

When I was 17 years old, I had a strong desire to see a Latter-day Saint temple. I lived in Denmark with my family, where at that time there was no temple. For Saints living in Denmark, the closest temples were in Switzerland and England. I didn't know anyone in those nations, so traveling to either country by myself was out of the question.

But because I had family in Utah, I decided to save money so I could visit and do baptisms for the dead in the Salt Lake Temple. I wrote my aunt and cousins in Utah to see if it was all right if I came for a visit. They were excited to hear of my plans.

A year later I had finally saved enough money for my long-awaited trip. A few days after I arrived in Utah, my aunt drove me to the Salt Lake Temple. I was thrilled to see it in person and excited to do baptisms for the dead. When I got to the entrance, however, a temple worker asked to see my temple recommend. No one had ever told me about a temple recommend! The worker kindly explained what a temple recommend is and told me that I could get one from my bishop.

My heart sank. I would have to be content with visiting relatives and seeing the temple from the outside.

During fast and testimony meeting the following Sunday, I felt the need to share my testimony, telling the

congregation how blessed they were to live so close to a temple. I also said I would have loved to have gone inside but couldn't because I didn't have a recommend, though I had always been taught to live worthily. I closed my testimony by encouraging the members to attend the temple as often as they could.

After church, my relatives' bishop approached me and said he would try to help me get a temple recommend, and we set up an interview. During the interview, he asked me if my bishop spoke English. I said no. He replied, "And I don't speak Danish." My heart sank again.

But the bishop said, "You have come this far; let's not give up just yet. I know the Lord will help us. We just have to have faith."

He then asked for my bishop's phone number in Denmark, which

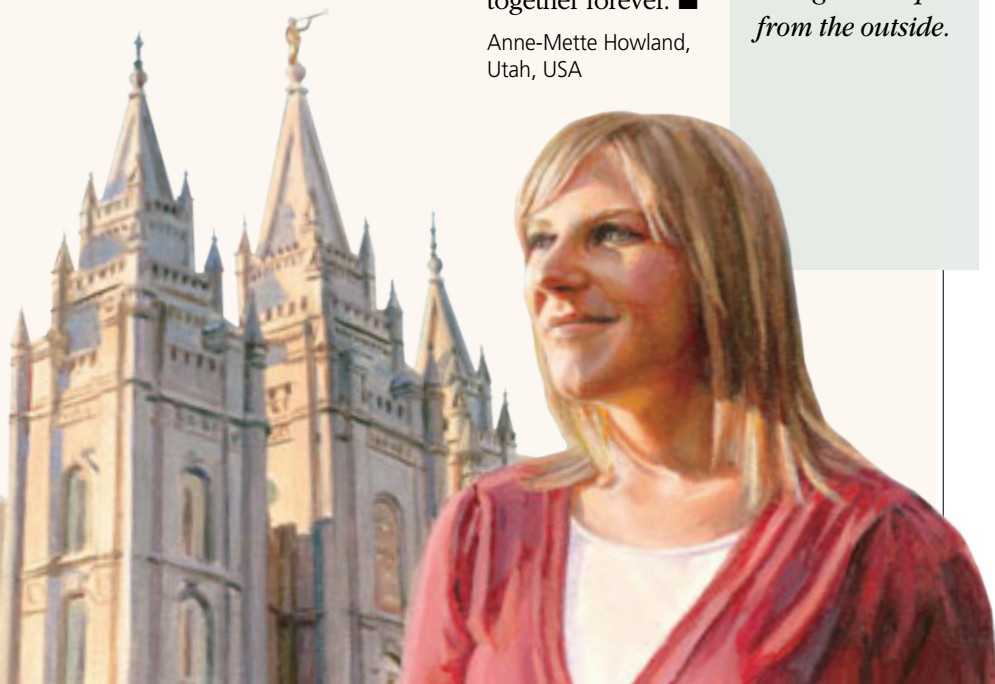
I happened to have with me. I was surprised to hear my bishop's son answer the phone. He told me he had just returned from his mission to England. When I told the American bishop, he said, "Perfect. He can translate for us."

Soon all four of us were on the phone—my bishop giving me a recommend interview, his son translating for the American bishop. Before long I had my recommend and was finally able to enter the temple! I cannot put into words the joy I felt knowing that the Lord had opened the way for me.

I was later married in the temple and have been blessed with four beautiful children. I am so thankful Heavenly Father has given us temples, and I'm grateful to know that I am sealed to my family and that, if we live righteously, we can be together forever. ■

Anne-Mette Howland,
Utah, USA

No one had ever told me about a temple recommend. My heart sank. I would have to be content with seeing the temple from the outside.



What Should We Do When We Don't Know What to Do?



By Elder Stanley G. Ellis

Of the Seventy

After Nephi and his brothers had repeatedly failed to get the brass plates from Laban, Nephi set out to make a final attempt, “not knowing beforehand the things which [he] should do” (1 Nephi 4:6).

Many prophets throughout the ages have faced a similar challenge of having to act in faith. Adam was commanded to offer sacrifices without knowing why (see Moses 5:5–6).

Abraham left his homeland to travel to a new land of inheritance without knowing where it was (see Hebrews 11:8; Abraham 2:3, 6). Paul journeyed to Jerusalem without knowing what would happen to him once he arrived (see Acts 20:22). Joseph Smith knelt in a grove of trees without knowing which church he should join (see Joseph Smith—History 1:19).

We also may find ourselves in situations that require us to take action without knowing what to do. Thankfully, the experiences above teach us ways to move forward despite uncertainty.

Nephi encouraged his brethren to be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord (see 1 Nephi 4:1). Then he acted on that faith. He “crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban,” being “led by the Spirit” (1 Nephi 4:5–17). The Spirit told him not only what to do but also why it was so important that he do it (see 1 Nephi 4:12–14).

Adam responded by being “obedient unto the commandments of the Lord” (Moses 5:5). Abraham acted in faith and, as a result, “sojourned in the land of promise” (Hebrews 11:9). Paul chose not to fear “bonds and afflictions” but to finish the ministry he had “received of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 20:23–24). Joseph Smith pondered the scriptures and determined to follow the invitation to “ask of God” (Joseph Smith—History 1:13).

Our Responsibility to Act

The scriptures warn us that not knowing is not an excuse for not doing. Nephi “desired to

The Lord expects us to inquire, study, and act even when we lack perfect knowledge.

know the things that [his] father had seen,” pondered them in his heart, and “was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord” (1 Nephi 11:1). Laman and Lemuel, meanwhile, spent their time “disputing one with another concerning the things which [Lehi] had spoken unto them” (1 Nephi 15:2).

The Lord expects us to inquire, study, and act—even though there are some things we may never know in this life. One of those things is the hour of His Second Coming. He said, “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Matthew 24:42). Because of this uncertainty,



President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98) counseled members of the Church to prepare, but he affirmed that he would continue to plant cherry trees.¹

“When you are living worthily and your choice is consistent with the Savior’s teachings and you need to act, proceed with trust,” said Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. If we are sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit, Elder Scott added, “either the stupor of thought will come, indicating an improper choice, or the peace or the burning in the bosom will be felt, confirming that your choice was correct [see D&C 9:8–9]. When you are living righteously and are acting with trust, God will not let you proceed too far without a warning impression if you have made the wrong decision.”²

Prove the Lord

Two experiences from my life—when I wasn’t sure what to do—illustrate the importance of obeying the commandments and following the living prophets. In college I ran out of money, so I found a part-time job. When I received my first check, I did not know whether it would be enough to get me through to the next paycheck. But I remembered the Lord’s promise regarding tithing: “Prove me now herewith . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing” (Malachi 3:10).

I decided to prove the Lord. I paid my tithing first, and He blessed me to survive. In the process I learned to trust in His promises.

We need look no further than the prophets, the scriptures, and the Savior for an answer.

Years later, when Sister Ellis and I had young children and I was starting a new career, my employer changed medical insurance plans. The old plan would end on June 1 and the new one would start on July 1, leaving us without insurance for one month. We did not know what to do, but at that point we remembered a talk by President N. Eldon Tanner (1898–1982) in which he counseled Church members to always have health insurance.³

I talked with the company, and we negotiated a contract to ensure continuous insurance coverage throughout June. On June 28 our oldest son, Matt, fell off the high diving board at the neighborhood pool and hit the concrete deck. He suffered a fractured skull and a brain concussion. He was rushed by helicopter to the hospital, where he was treated by specialists. The costs were astronomical and would have ruined us financially. Fortunately, health insurance paid for most of his treatment.



What Should We Do?

So what should we do when we don't know what to do? We need look no further than the prophets, the scriptures, and the Savior for an answer. These valuable sources teach us to:

1. Seek answers through study and prayer.
2. Obey the commandments.
3. Trust in the Lord and in His promises.
4. Follow the prophet.
5. Go forward in faith, not fear.
6. Complete our mission.

And in each of these steps, may we follow the counsel of President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "Always, always follow the promptings of the Spirit."⁴ ■

Abraham left his homeland to travel to a new land of inheritance without knowing where it was. He acted in faith and, as a result, "sojourned in the land of promise."

NOTES

1. See *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* (2004), 250.
2. Richard G. Scott, "Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 10.
3. See N. Eldon Tanner, "Constancy amid Change," *Liahona*, Feb. 1982, 46; *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 82.
4. Boyd K. Packer, "Restoration," *Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 11, 2003, 2.

Aided by the Spirit

By Samantha M. Wills

The construction worker lay where he had fallen, precariously balanced on a plank nine inches (23 cm) wide and 100 feet (30 m) in the air. He had been struck by a falling steel beam that had partially severed his left arm and leg.

As a paramedic attached to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance, covering most of the north of England, I never know what the next emergency call will bring or what kind of situation we will face when we get to the scene.

In this case, the victim could not be moved safely until his injuries were assessed. I was hoisted up by crane on a metal cargo platform. Once I reached the victim, a construction worker held onto the back of my reflective jacket, serving as a human "crane" to allow me freedom of movement to examine the victim.

In situations like this, years of training take over, so I began to assess the man's injuries. On his knee was an emergency field dressing placed there by the construction crew's own first aid responder. Normally I would examine the injury to assess the damage since that is the protocol we are trained to follow.

But as I reached out, the Spirit prompted me: "Do not move the dressing." So I did not touch it. Three more times during the incident, I was encouraged by others involved—the first responder, my colleague on the ground, and a doctor—to examine the knee wound, and three more times, the Spirit prompted me not to touch the dressing. Once we had stabilized the patient, we lifted the man onto the cargo platform, we



were both lowered to the ground, and we transported him to the hospital.

In the emergency resuscitation area, the trauma team waited for us. One doctor quickly removed the field dressing from the knee. Immediately an artery ruptured, and the patient began bleeding profusely. In the controlled environment of the hospital, this life-threatening situation was quickly resolved. If it had happened on the plank 100 feet up, the victim may well not have survived.

Every morning I pray and ask Heavenly Father to help me, to bless me with the inspiration to know how to best help my brothers and sisters who will be in need today. Over the years, experience has taught me that whatever the Spirit prompts me to do, be obedient. That obedience has protected me as well.

For example, one of my responsibilities is to act as navigator, guiding the helicopter pilot to the incident scene. Emergency helicopters can and do fly most anywhere, which makes them invaluable for reaching accident scenes quickly but it also makes them vulnerable. When we are flying at more than

140 miles (225 km) per hour, power cables and telephone wires can be practically invisible. And they can slice through a helicopter in an instant.

On one trip we were coming in to land in a most awkward place. Suddenly the Spirit told me, “Put the clipboard down!” Again almost immediately, I felt, “Put it down!” So I leaned forward to place my clipboard on the case by my knees. As I did so, my point of view altered, and I saw the power cable right below us. “Wires! Wires! Wires below!” was all I could say. And even though we actually touched the cable and caused it to bow, the pilot responded instantly, and we lifted away and were saved. That was the closest to disaster I have come. Without the Spirit’s prompting, that emergency call would have had a very different ending.

I am so grateful for the loving way Heavenly Father is aware of all our needs. The Lord is always watching over us. He wants us all to remain spiritually safe and to return home to Him, so He often speaks to us by the still, small voice of the Spirit. All we have to do is listen and obey. ■

Without the Spirit's prompting, that emergency call would have had a very different ending.

TIMELY

EVEN TODAY

By Andrew Horton
Church Educational System

Think the Old Testament is too ancient to teach you anything? Better think again.

Although the words, time, and culture of the Old Testament are very different from today, you may be surprised at how much you can learn from the Old Testament. With some prayerful study, you can find principles in the stories of the Old Testament that can apply to your life today. Here are just nine of many examples:



2



1. Joseph of Egypt fled from temptation (see Genesis 39:12). Fleeing temptation is always easier than sinning and repenting.
2. Joseph forgave others, even his brothers who had sold him into slavery (see Genesis 45). Do you forgive others, especially those in your own family?
3. The Lord provided manna each day to feed the Israelites (see Exodus 16:15). The Lord has also provided many things to nourish our spirits: prayer, scriptures, the sacrament, temples.
4. Exodus 28 specifies how Aaron and other priesthood holders should dress. The Lord asked them to dress in a certain way to remind them of important parts of their worship. When you go to church or to the temple, how does the way you dress affect your reverence and worship?



6



8

Listening to the Spirit (above left), praying even when it's difficult (above), and following the prophet's counsel (below) are just a few of the lessons we can learn from the Old Testament.

5. Much of the book of Leviticus is about sacrifice and its blessings. Your sacrifices—of time, talents, or money—will bring you the blessings of heaven.

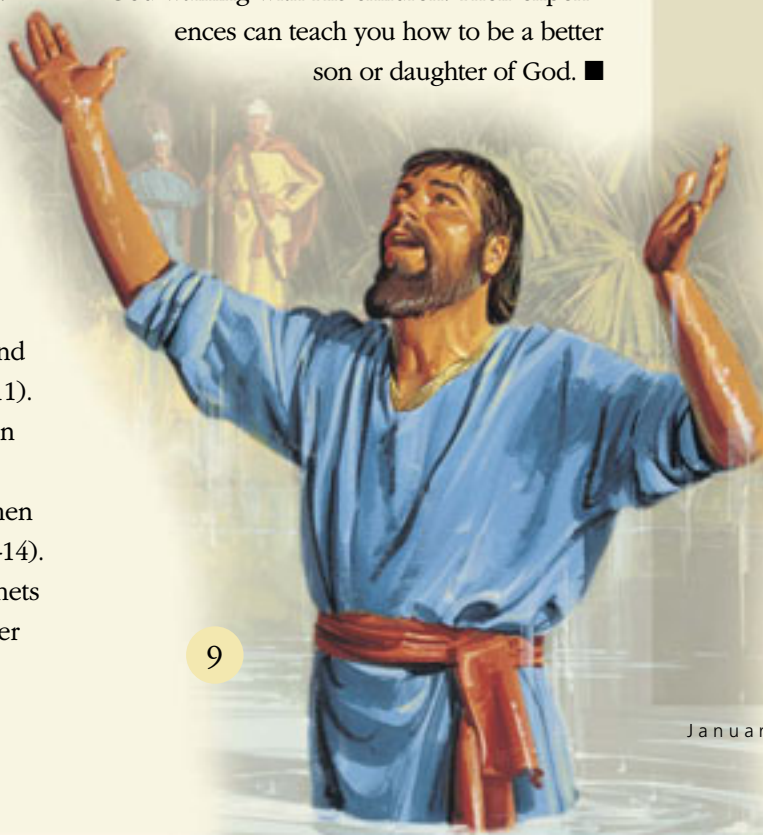
6. From Samuel's example, we learn the importance of listening for and recognizing the Lord's voice (see 1 Samuel 3:4–10). As you learn to recognize and follow promptings from the Holy Ghost, your life will improve.

7. Young David's choices showed that he believed that "there is a God in Israel" (1 Samuel 17:32–51). Your choices testify whether or not you believe in God.

8. Daniel went against the king's command and was found praying (see Daniel 6:11). How often are you found praying, even when it seems hard?

9. Naaman learned that power comes when we obey the prophet (see 2 Kings 5:1–14). Following the counsel of today's prophets and apostles will bring the Lord's power into your life too.

King Nebuchadnezzar cast three Israelites into a fire. But when the king looked into the fire, he saw "four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire . . . and the form of the fourth [was] like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:24–25). As you look into the Old Testament, you can see God walking with His children. Their experiences can teach you how to be a better son or daughter of God. ■



9

Our Space



MY FAVORITE SCRIPTURE

If ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me" (3 Nephi 9:14).

This is one of my favorites because this is the scripture that gave me a testimony that Christ lives and wants us to follow Him. ■

Olivia K., 15, Heves, Hungary

WE ARE MISSIONARIES NOW

The article in the March 2007 *Liahona* "How to Prepare to Be a Good Missionary" sent us an important message. We don't have to wait to be 19 to be

missionaries. No! We are missionaries right now.

It told us that we should search and ponder the scriptures and pray always so that

we can conquer Satan.

We should always have faith in the Savior Jesus Christ. ■

Melissa N., 18, Samoa

ALL IS WELL

I clearly remember the night when I found myself in a great spiritual conflict. I was on my way to institute when I started feeling tormented. My mind felt confused. I could not say that I knew the truthfulness of my faith. I no longer felt certain of anything. I felt discouraged and ashamed of myself and prayed for strength.

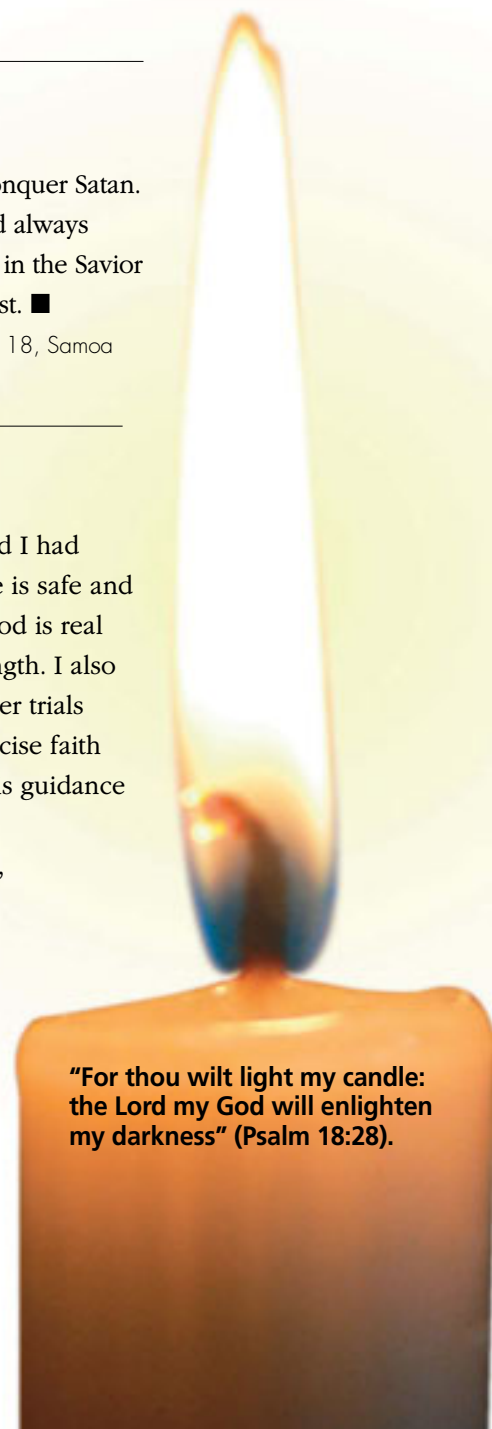
When I arrived at the meetinghouse, I was overwhelmed with sadness. I took a deep breath and entered the building. As soon as I approached the chapel, I heard the hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints" (*Hymns*, no. 30) being sung by fellow brothers and sisters. I immediately felt the relief that comes from God by way of the Holy Ghost.

The feeling of peace was so great that I couldn't contain my tears. The Lord had let me know that all would be well and that I was safe. I perceived that the powers of darkness had

tried to destroy all the good I had learned but that God's love is safe and warm. I understood that God is real and is our refuge and strength. I also learned that we can conquer trials and temptations if we exercise faith in God and always seek His guidance through prayer.

This world is full of trials, and we never know what is coming. We need to fully trust in God, increase our faith through studying the scriptures, and live our lives in accordance with His will. ■

Ivonele S., 19, Bahia, Brazil



"For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness" (Psalm 18:28).

RIGHT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CRAIG DIMOND

THIS IS YOUR SPACE

These are your pages—your place to share with other youth what the gospel means to you. Here's what you can look forward to reading on these pages *and* what you can contribute:

- Experiences or insights that helped you understand and live the gospel better.
- A high-resolution photograph that you took and a scripture as a caption.
- A good experience you had while working on Duty to God or Personal Progress.
- Your comments about a scripture that inspires you. Include your photo if you'd like.
- Feedback about the *Liahona*: what articles did you like reading?

E-mail your story, photo, or comments to liahona@ldschurch.org. Please write "Our Space" in the subject line, and include your parent's permission (expressed in the e-mail) to share what you are sending us. Submissions may be edited for length or clarity.

ON THE WEB: Help choose the best posters to use in upcoming months. Go to liahona.lds.org to vote. And while you're there, you can even suggest captions or ideas for future posters.



HAVE COURAGE: LEAD OUT IN THE CAUSE OF VIRTUE!

By the Young Women General Presidency

Have you ever wanted to make a difference in the world but didn't know how to start? Have you wanted to stand up for something right but lacked courage because doing so might draw ridicule from your peers? This is the year to become the leader you were sent here to earth to be. Now, more than ever before, the world needs your light and your leadership. You can make a difference.

The 2010 theme invites us to “be strong and of a good courage” (Joshua 1:9). Strength and courage are attributes of leaders. As a member of the Church, you are a leader in the cause of virtue and righteousness.

Our prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, has called for us to have courage:

“Great courage will be required as you remain chaste and virtuous amid the accepted thinking of the times.

“In the world's view today there is little thought that young men and young women will remain morally clean and pure before marriage. Does this make immoral behavior acceptable? Absolutely not!”¹

Your courage to lead will come as you live the standards, make correct choices, and follow the prophet. Your strength will come as you strive daily to increase your testimony of the Savior by praying and reading in the Book of Mormon. Your strength to lead others will come as you live the standards found in the booklet *For*

the Strength of Youth. As you do these things, you will feel good about yourself. You will have confidence, and you will grow in spiritual strength.

And don't forget to smile! Have a positive attitude. “Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God” (D&C 123:17). Knowing what is right and wrong is always possible (see Moroni 7:16), and you are promised that the Holy Ghost will tell you “all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:5). As you study, listen for the guidance of the still, small voice. You have the promised assurance that “by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5).

Whatever your circumstances, you were born to lead in your family, in your school, and in your community. So this year, be strong, have courage, and make a difference in the world! You are not alone. Heavenly Father will hear and answer your prayers and guide your actions as you remain pure and worthy of the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost.

You are daughters of our Heavenly Father, who loves you. These are your days. We love you and pray that you will be strong and courageous in living the standards and leading out in the cause of virtue. Your righteous example will make a difference! ■

NOTE

1. Thomas S. Monson, “May You Have Courage,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2009, 125.

2010 Mutual Theme

“Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest” (**Joshua 1:9**).



Top: Elaine S. Dalton (center), president; Mary N. Cook (left), first counselor; and Ann M. Dibb (right), second counselor.
Above: David L. Beck (center), president; Larry M. Gibson (left), first counselor; and Adrián Ochoa (right), second counselor.

PHOTOGRAPH OF YOUNG WOMEN PRESIDENCY BY BUSATH PHOTOGRAPHY; PHOTOGRAPH OF YOUNG MEN PRESIDENCY BY CRAIG DIMOND; ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL T. MALM

FACING CHALLENGES WITH COURAGE

By the Young Men General Presidency

Have you ever been worried about measuring up to a task? Imagine how Joshua might have felt as successor to the great prophet Moses. The heavy responsibility to lead the people of Israel into the promised land fell to Joshua. Remember that the promised land was occupied by numerous Canaanite nations, many of which were fearsome and war-like. Can you imagine that Joshua may have felt unsure of his abilities to accomplish such a daunting task, maybe even afraid?

In the space of four verses in the first chapter of Joshua, the Lord commands Joshua to be strong and courageous—three times! (see verses 6–9). Then the Lord promises Joshua that he will succeed in bringing the Israelites to their land of inheritance, that strength and courage will come to him because of his obedience to all the law, and—most significantly—that the Lord will be with him wherever he goes.

The 2010 Mutual theme is the third instance of the Lord's call to Joshua to "be strong and of a good courage" (Joshua 1:9). That same call to courage is yours. And the same promises are yours as well. With the Savior's help, you too will succeed in your callings and in your life. You will have strength to withstand any temptation as you obey the commandments and keep the standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*. As you honor the priesthood and each week renew the covenants you made at baptism, you can have the Savior's Spirit with you—always.

There were many unknowns facing Joshua. He didn't know how he would be able to bring the children of Israel into the promised land, but he trusted in the Lord. You face challenges in your life. You might be one of the

few members of the Church in your school or even in your family. You might feel isolated or discouraged or afraid. You might feel uncertain about your future in these troubled times. But be of good courage. The Lord is with you. You can trust in Him. He will help you succeed.

This wonderful reminder is found in Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." As we serve in our calling, we are committed to trust in the Lord. We encourage you to do the same. We love you. We trust you. You are part of a select generation of strong and courageous young men. ■



STRONG ENOUGH

**WITH THE LORD'S HELP,
YOU ARE.**

(See Joshua 1:9.)

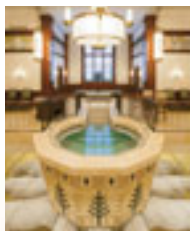


To the Point

My nonmember friends ask why we do baptisms for the dead. They think it's strange. How do I answer them?

The Savior taught, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). This means that in order to receive eternal life—the purpose of our existence—a person must be baptized and receive the Holy Ghost.

Although baptism is essential, there are



Baptismal font in the Helsinki Finland Temple.

several reasons why many people have not been baptized. Some lived without a knowledge of the gospel, and others were baptized without the correct authority.

Because our Heavenly Father is merciful and just, He does not condemn those who did not have the opportunity to be baptized during their lifetime. In order for these deceased persons to have the opportunity to receive eternal life, baptisms for the dead are performed

in their behalf by worthy Church members in temples (see 1 Corinthians 15:29; D&C 124:29–36; 128:18).

The deceased persons, who are in the spirit world, choose to accept or reject the gospel and the ordinances done on their behalf (see D&C 138:58–59).

By performing baptisms for the dead, you are giving more of Heavenly Father's children the opportunity to receive all of His blessings. ■

How do I tell a friend her music is inappropriate without losing her friendship? She always tells me that if I'm her friend, then I won't complain about it. What should I do?

The music and the friends you surround yourself with are strong influences in your life. President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said: "Choose your friends carefully. It is they who will lead you in one direction or the other."¹

Discussing the music you and your friend listen to can be a good experience for both of you. Respectfully explain your feelings

about the value of good media and the destructive nature of bad media. Share with her how her choice of music prevents you from enjoying your time together more fully.

If she continues to listen to music that offends the Spirit, consider changing friends. Friends are important, but not at the expense of your spiritual well-being. ■

NOTE

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, "A Prophet's Counsel and Prayer for Youth," *Liahona*, Apr. 2001, 36; *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 4.

What do you want to know? E-mail your questions to liahona@ldschurch.org. Please put "To the Point" in the subject line.

That Book Made Me Curious

I stared at the Book of Mormon and pondered the message the missionaries had taught.

By Wilfredo Valenzuela

One day my friends and I got together to celebrate. At my friend's house, we were talking, drinking, and smoking. But one of my friends, Patrick, didn't join in. I then realized that Patrick never tried any of the stuff the rest of us did; I remembered that he was a Mormon.

As it got late, everybody separated except Patrick and me. We left together in a jeepney. Still wondering why Patrick didn't join in, I thought back to a day four years before, when we were 16. I remembered we were walking in the street near our school when I told him I wanted to be a priest someday.

"In our church you could already be a priest," Patrick replied. "You just need to be ordained. Then when you turn 19, you can preach the gospel as a missionary."

"That's ridiculous," I said, thinking he didn't know much about the gospel. "How can a 19-year-old preach to people? Priests take a lot of time to study so they can preach."

Patrick insisted that 19-year-olds in his church could preach. He told me that his



We met up with the missionaries, and they wanted to set up an appointment to answer my questions.

church also has another book of scripture, and he gave me a copy. I browsed through it at home, and I felt something mysterious in that book. But I didn't really care about it; I just stuck it in a box, where it lay for the next four years.

Now, as we rode in the jeepney after the party, I asked Patrick where he was going. "I'm meeting some friends. They're elders—missionaries." I remembered having seen them around. I asked Patrick if he would take me to the elders so I could ask them some questions about their church.

We met up with the missionaries at a store near their subdivision, and they greeted us by shaking our hands. It was very

formal. But after they introduced themselves to me, I realized they seemed like any other guys. They wanted to set up an appointment to answer my questions.

"OK, I'll just get your number so if I'm available, I will text you," I replied. I wasn't really planning to text them.

When I got home, I got the book Patrick had given me four years before—something about it made me curious. The next morning I texted the missionaries to teach me. They started with the Restoration of the gospel. It sounded so different, and I told myself, "Why

do people want to restore things when they know that older generations are different than our generation now?"

After two discussions I decided not to pursue them anymore. When asked why, I replied, "I'm just not interested anymore." One week passed. I sat staring at the Book of Mormon, pondering the message I had been taught. I started to read what the missionaries told me to in 3 Nephi 11. I read that Jesus went to another nation to show that He was the Savior and Messiah. In 3 Nephi 15, I recognized one passage that I had read before in the Bible, in John 10:16. It was something the missionaries hadn't even taught me yet.

Tears fell down my face, and I found myself weeping in my room. I realized the love Jesus Christ has for us. He loves us so much that He gave His own life to save us from our sins. I didn't hesitate to pray, asking to know if the Book of Mormon I was holding is true. Praying in my room, all alone, I suddenly felt that somebody was there listening to me.

My heart was softened by the impressions I had received. I stood up and said, "This is the true Church. I know that this is the Church that Jesus Christ restored."

The day before my baptism, I repeated the process of praying. Again what I had heard and felt sank into my heart, and I knew the Holy Ghost had revealed the truth to me. I knew the truth that Jesus is the Christ. I felt in my heart and mind that I desired to be baptized, believing that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ I could be cleansed.

Jesus Christ atoned for our sins, and this is the very reason I was converted. I know that He was the only one who has the power and the authority to rebuild His Church in our dispensation. Now as a missionary serving in the Philippines Cagayan de Oro Mission, I am doing the best I can to help people feel the great happiness I have now. ■

Would you like to share how you gained or strengthened your testimony? We welcome articles about faith-promoting experiences. You can e-mail your story to liahona@ldschurch.org. Please put "How I Know" in the subject line.

PRAYING FOR AN ANSWER

By Sylvia Waterböhr

One day while taking a math test, I couldn't remember how to solve one of the problems. I had prepared for this test, but I could not remember what I had reviewed at home. I did, however, have faith that I could ask my Father in Heaven for help.

I decided I would accept the first prompting I felt. After the prayer, I had the feeling that I could solve the problem in a specific way. But I began to doubt because it seemed like an odd way to work the problem. So I went ahead and did it on my own as well as I could.

Once all the tests had been handed in, our teacher went over the test with us. I found that the feeling I had had after the prayer would have led to the right answer, but I had not listened.

Later, during final exams, I found once again that I could not solve one of the problems, even though I had practiced this problem at home.

I wanted to ask Heavenly Father for help, but I remembered when I had bluntly rejected His help. Now I felt ashamed to ask. But because I couldn't think of any other solution, I prayed for help anyway.

Once again I doubted when the prompting came; I was even more confused than I had been before. But I had promised the Lord that I would listen. So I suppressed the doubts and did exactly what the prompting said I should do.

After correcting the tests, our teacher announced our grades. She made it exciting by starting with the worst grades and working up to the best ones.

When she did not call my name among the 3s—a low grade—I was pleased that I would have a 2, the best grade I had ever gotten in math. But when she didn't call my name among the 2s, I felt quite differently. I was absolutely certain that I could not have gotten a 1, so I began to fear that I had done the very worst in the whole class.

But then my name was called among the 1s. A lump

appeared in my throat when I recognized the hand of the Lord in this and knew of His love for and patience with me. When some of my classmates said, "You did great!" I could only shake my head. I succeeded only when I followed the prompting. ■

*Sometimes you
pray for help, but
the answers come
only after your
faith is tested.*

THE POWER of a QUESTION

By Virginia Schildböck

I became friends with Kerstin when I was 14 years old. We went to the same school. I had known who she was for a long time, but I had not known her personally before because she was 12.

We got to know each other better when we both tried out for the school play. We soon became good friends, even though there was a two-year age difference. It wasn't long before we met together in the afternoons to go on walks and talk. One spring afternoon, on one of our walks, she asked something that would change her life forever.

Kerstin wondered why my brother and I didn't participate in the school's religion class like most of the students in Austria. I told her about the gospel of Jesus Christ and about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Then I bore my testimony and invited her to come to a youth activity. Later I gave her a copy of the Book of Mormon and the *Liahona*.

Since then Kerstin has participated in every Church activity and attends Church meetings every Sunday. She has even attended youth conference. Whenever we can, we walk to a little river that is close by to read our scriptures and work on Young Women Personal Progress.

Unfortunately, Kerstin cannot be baptized until she is 18. Her parents don't want to cause any arguments with her extended family members. Despite this obstacle, Kerstin has already managed to get her mother to attend church.

Kerstin also works with the missionaries. She speaks about the Church with everyone she meets and has helped get her father excited about the family history program, even though he has no interest in religion.

Kerstin is an example to me of how easy it is to speak with others about the gospel and how our Father in Heaven prepares people to hear His word. We need only open our mouths and have faith. The rest will take care of itself. ■



My friend asked why my brother and I didn't participate in the religion classes. That question gave me a chance to tell her about the gospel.



PREPARING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

By Richard M. Romney
Church Magazines

Eleven-year-old Hansen Prabhudas of the Bangalore Second Branch, Bangalore India District, was excited. After church the older boys in the branch would be teaching him how to prepare, bless, and pass the sacrament.

First, the boys who are teachers in the Aaronic Priesthood showed Hansen how they prepare the trays of bread and fill the cups with water.

Next, the priests read through the sacrament prayers and explained how they fold the tablecloths.

Finally, the deacons

showed where they stand, how they pass the sacrament to the congregation, and how they help everyone be reverent.

“The Aaronic Priesthood is important,” Hansen says.

“There is much I must do to prepare to receive it.”

Besides learning about the sacrament, Hansen is reading the scriptures and trying to

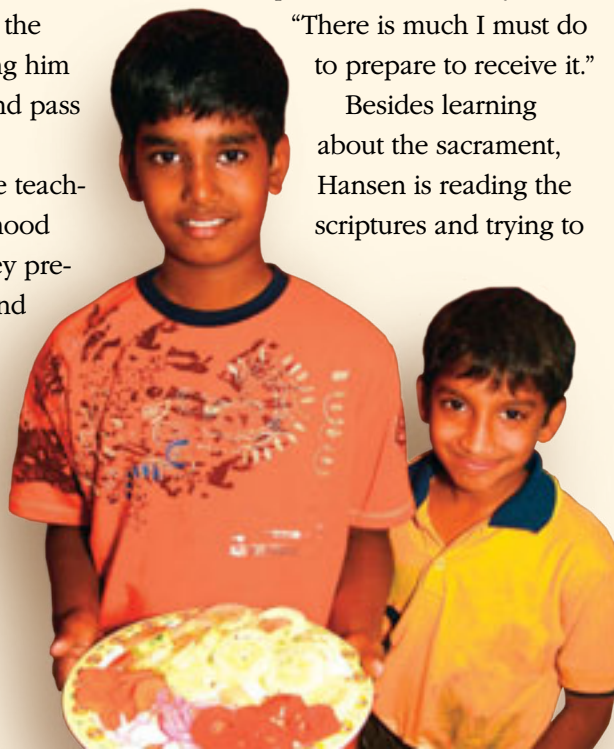
keep the commandments and obey his parents. He’s also learning about the Church in Primary and setting a good example for his nine-year-old brother, Gideon.

Priesthood Blessings

Hansen is learning a lot about the priesthood from his father, who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood and serves in the elders quorum presidency. “Daddy baptized me and, later, Gideon,” Hansen says. “When Mommy is sick, he helps give her priesthood blessings so she can become well.”

Lightening the Load

His father also helps Hansen’s mother with shopping and cooking. “He does everything he can to help





Hansen is learning about setting a good example in various settings: with Aaronic Priesthood holders in his branch, during family home evening, playing soccer, and preparing food with his younger brother, Gideon.

us,” Hansen says. And both his parents help many people, especially in the Church.

Hansen’s mother is often busy with her calling as branch Primary president. Hansen lightens her load by going to buy vegetables or by washing the dishes.

“I love my parents,” Hansen says. “We have family home evening each

week, we read scriptures as a family, and we have family prayers together.”

A Lifetime of Service

When you’re 11 years old, there is much to prepare for. “I must learn to listen even more closely to the Holy Ghost,” Hansen says. “He will guide me as I study the gospel in my priesthood quorum, in Young Men, then later on in seminary. All those things will help me prepare to be a full-time missionary. And I

must learn to help the poor and to give better service,” Hansen says. “I must prepare for a lifetime of service, because the priesthood means serving others the way Jesus Christ would if He were here.”

Hansen’s favorite scripture story is about Noah. “I love how the animals obeyed him when it was time to get on the ark.” He knows Noah had to do a lot to prepare for the future, just as Hansen has a lot to do to prepare for the priesthood.

“Whether you play badminton, cricket, or soccer, it’s important that you play as a team. It’s like the priesthood because in a priesthood quorum you should also work as a team.”



Hansen’s Hobbies

Sports: Hansen’s favorite sport is badminton, but he also enjoys cricket, soccer, or just a footrace with his brother and their friend who lives down the street. “Whether you play badminton, cricket, or soccer, it’s important that you play as a team,” Hansen says. “It’s like the priesthood, because in a priesthood quorum you should also work as a team.”

Raising fish: Hansen hatches guppies in a rainwater bucket he keeps behind the family’s apartment.

Then he transfers them to a small aquarium. “I like the many beautiful colors and how the fish play with each other,” he says.

Singing: “Love Is Spoken Here” (*Children’s Songbook*, 190–91) is Hansen’s favorite Primary song. He and Gideon love to sing songs about Jesus, especially hymns. “Hymns help us keep love in our family,” Hansen says. ■



Come with us this year for a look at important places on Temple Square.



THE Salt Lake Temple

By Jan Pinborough

Church Magazines

It's an icy cold day in January. The towers of the Salt Lake Temple have a dusting of new snow. But Kate is more excited than cold. She has traveled to Temple Square from

her home in Logan, Utah, for a tour of the Salt Lake Temple grounds.

It's a sacred place, with many fascinating things to see and learn about.



MEET KATE

- She is in sixth grade.
- She loves to draw, play the piano, sing, tumble, and play soccer.
- She wants to be a mother, a pharmacist, and a zookeeper.
- She has a testimony that President Thomas S. Monson is a prophet of God and that families can be together forever.

GETTING READY TO GO INSIDE

Kate says, "The temple is a very special place. I can't wait to be old enough to go inside." She turns 12 soon, so she doesn't have long to wait to do baptisms for the dead. Kate knows it's important to prepare for that day by respecting her body and keeping her thoughts and body clean.

ONLINE VIDEO

Go to www.friend.lds.org to watch a video about what it's like to go inside the temple to be baptized for the dead.

Some of the temple's walls are six feet (2 m) thick!



The **golden angel Moroni** stands on top of the tallest tower. Underneath, carved in the granite, are the words "Holiness to the Lord."



How long did it take the pioneers to build the temple? Kate found the answer on the brass doorknobs on the temple's big wooden doors.



The Big Dipper is carved so that it points to the real North Star.



The temple's granite walls are chiseled with the shapes of the sun, the moon, the earth, clouds, and **stars**.

HOW DID THEY BUILD IT?

Four days after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, President Brigham Young (1801–77) walked to the spot where the temple now stands. He stuck his cane in the ground and said, "Here is where we will build a temple to our God."

Stonecutters cut huge blocks of granite from a mountain. Oxen hauled them 25 miles (40 km) to Temple Square. Hundreds of workers, including teenagers, helped build the temple. Children earned money to donate to the work, and



sometimes they played hide-and-seek among the big granite blocks!

It took 40 years to finish the temple. When President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98) dedicated the temple in 1893, about 15,000 children went to the dedication sessions.



"I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost" (D&C 8:2).

THE CANDY BALL

By J. Harvey Hapi

Based on a true story

Rachel woke up hungry. She hopped out of bed and ran to the pantry cupboard. She opened the door and scanned the top shelf. There it was—the candy jar! Inside the jar, gleaming like shiny marbles, were her favorite candies. They were irresistible red-orange balls with yummy chocolate centers.

Rachel looked around quickly to see if Mummy or Daddy was watching. She could hear their voices, but they were nowhere in sight. Quietly, she pushed a stool to the pantry and stepped up onto it. Then she reached up and unscrewed the candy-jar lid. She grabbed a handful of candy, screwed the lid back on, and raced down the hallway toward her bedroom. But when her parents' voices came closer, she ducked into the bathroom and shut the door.

As Rachel looked hungrily at her candy, she wondered, "Could I throw one in the air and catch it in my mouth?" And without a second thought she tossed a candy high in the air. It floated above her head, then fell down straight into her wide-open mouth and stuck in her throat. She couldn't breathe!

She threw the candy into the air and caught it in her mouth. But the candy went right into her throat—she couldn't breathe!

She tried to scream but couldn't make a sound. "Daddy, help me!" she cried in her heart. "Heavenly Father, please help me!" she prayed. Tears ran down her cheeks as she struggled for a breath that wouldn't come. She felt sick and dizzy.

Suddenly, her father burst into the room. He picked up Rachel from behind and squeezed his arms tightly around her. *Plop!* Out shot the candy into the washbasin. Rachel sucked in deep gulps of air. Daddy set her down and held her close. "It's all right, Rachel," he said softly. "You'll be fine now."

"Thank you, Daddy," she said. "I'm sorry I took the candies without asking. I love you."



Mummy came into the bathroom. “What happened?” she asked.

“I heard a voice,” Daddy said. “It said, ‘Your daughter is in trouble! Go to her!’ I found Rachel in the bathroom, but I didn’t know what was wrong. Then the voice said, ‘Pick her up!’ I did, and a piece of candy flew out of her mouth.”

Mummy gave Rachel a big hug.

Rachel did a lot of thinking that day. She thought about candy and about being honest. She thought about how good every breath of air tasted. She thought about how much she loved Heavenly Father and Mummy and Daddy. But

most of all, she thought about the Holy Ghost. Daddy had stopped her from choking because he had listened. She wanted to be like Daddy and always listen to the Holy Ghost. ■



We have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost to direct us in all things.”

Elder W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy,
“Taking the Higher Road,” *Ensign*,
Aug. 2002, 43.



Jehovah and the Wonderful Plan of Our Heavenly Father

By Diane Mangum

Before there was a sun, a moon, or even ground to sit on, we all lived in heaven with our heavenly parents. We were their spirit children, and we didn't have physical bodies yet.

We loved Heavenly Father. And He loved us so much that He wanted us to grow up to be like Him and live with Him forever. He wanted us to

know everything He knew. But how could we learn all that?

Heavenly Father had a wonderful plan. He gathered us all together and told us about His plan. He would create a beautiful world with rivers, mountains, flowers, and animals. Then He would give each of us a chance to come to earth and have a physical body. We would be able to hold warm sand in our hands and feel soft grass under our feet.

On earth we would have families. They could feed, protect, and love us.

On earth we wouldn't be able to remember Heavenly Father, so we would need to learn about Him. The scriptures, the prophets, and our

parents could teach us about Him. We would be tempted to disobey, and sometimes we would make mistakes. Sometimes we would get sick, and eventually we would all have to die.

Jehovah was the firstborn of Heavenly Father's children. He always obeyed His Father. He was like Heavenly Father. He accepted Heavenly Father's plan. One of the other spirit children of our Heavenly Father, Lucifer, rebelled against the plan. He said we shouldn't be able to choose between right and wrong.

Heavenly Father said that for His plan to work, someone needed to go to earth to help us learn how to get back to heaven.

Someone needed to show us how to follow



THE NAME JEHOVAH

Jehovah is the name Jesus had in heaven, before He was born in Bethlehem. *Jehovah* means "eternal" or "unchangeable." Jesus never changes. He always obeys Heavenly Father, and He always loves us.



LEFT: DETAIL FROM CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER BY HEINRICH HOFMANN, COURTESY OF C. HARRISON CONROY CO., INC.; BACKGROUND © NOVA DEVELOPMENT; STORYTIME IN GALILEE BY DEL PARSON; CENTER: ILLUSTRATION BY SAW LAWICOR; RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH © GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATION BY BETH M. WHITAKER



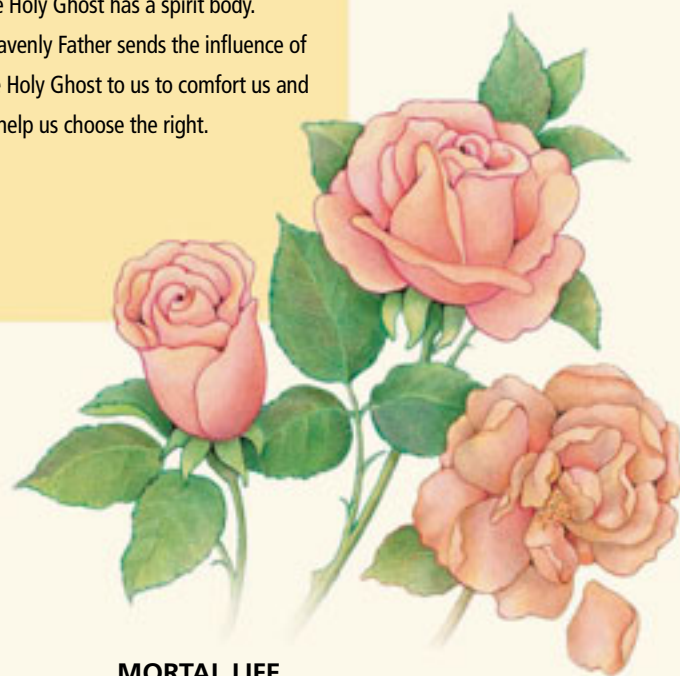
PHYSICAL BODIES AND SPIRIT BODIES

Our physical bodies look like our spirit bodies. After we die and are resurrected, our bodies will be made perfect. They will be healthy and strong. Anything that was wrong with our bodies while we were alive on earth will be corrected. We will each look like our own best self.

THE GODHEAD

The Godhead has three separate people:

1. God, our Heavenly Father, is the Father of our spirits. We pray to Him. He has a perfected body of flesh and bone.
2. Jesus Christ is our Savior. He showed us how Heavenly Father wants us to live. He died and was resurrected. Because of this, we can repent, and we will all be resurrected. Jesus has a perfected body of flesh and bone. We pray to Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ.
3. The Holy Ghost has a spirit body. Heavenly Father sends the influence of the Holy Ghost to us to comfort us and to help us choose the right.



Heavenly Father. Who was obedient enough to do it?

Someone needed to atone for our sins so we could repent when we made mistakes. Who was good enough to do it?

Someone needed to die and be resurrected so we could all be resurrected and return to heaven. Who was brave enough and loving enough to do it?

Was anyone willing to do all this for us?

One person was. Our oldest brother, Jehovah, said, “Here am I, send me” (Abraham 3:27).

How we loved Him for that.

When Jehovah came to earth, He was our Savior. He was called Jesus Christ. ■

MORTAL LIFE

Plants, animals, and people on earth are mortal.

That means they will live, grow, and eventually die.

Death is part of our mortal life on earth, and it is part of Heavenly Father’s plan. If we did not die, we could not return to our home in heaven.

SCRIPTURE JOURNAL

By Sandra Tanner and Cristina Franco

*Scripture power keeps me safe from sin.
Scripture power is the power to win.
Scripture power! Ev'ry day I need
The power that I get each time I read.¹*

The scriptures are a record of God's teachings and dealings with His children. A scripture journal is your own book where you can write how you are learning to understand and live the teachings of the gospel. Every month this year you can learn a scripture and practice doing what it teaches. Heavenly Father will help you as you choose to learn and live by the scriptures. You will feel the power of the scriptures, and your testimony will grow.

How to Use Your Scripture Journal

Make or buy a notebook that has at least 12 pages in it. Issues of the *Liahona* this year will contain a scripture and activities for you to do in your scripture journal. If you need help reading, writing, or understanding

the scripture or activity, you can ask parents, older brothers or sisters, friends, or Primary teachers for help.

January 2010 Scripture Journal

Read the first article of faith. You can find it in the Pearl of Great Price.

Pray to know that this article of faith is true. Ask to feel

the love of Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. This love is called charity.

Memorize the article of faith.

Choose one of these activities, or create your own:

- Help someone else learn this scripture.
- Pray for someone else to feel God's love.
- When we feel the love of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, we believe in Them. We believe that we are children of God. We show that we believe He is our Heavenly Father by thanking Him for our blessings. When you see your door-knob tag (see page 67), think of the blessings you have received that day.

How does what you have done help you understand this scripture?

Write in your journal about what you have done, or draw a picture of how you feel knowing Heavenly Father and Jesus love you. ■

NOTE

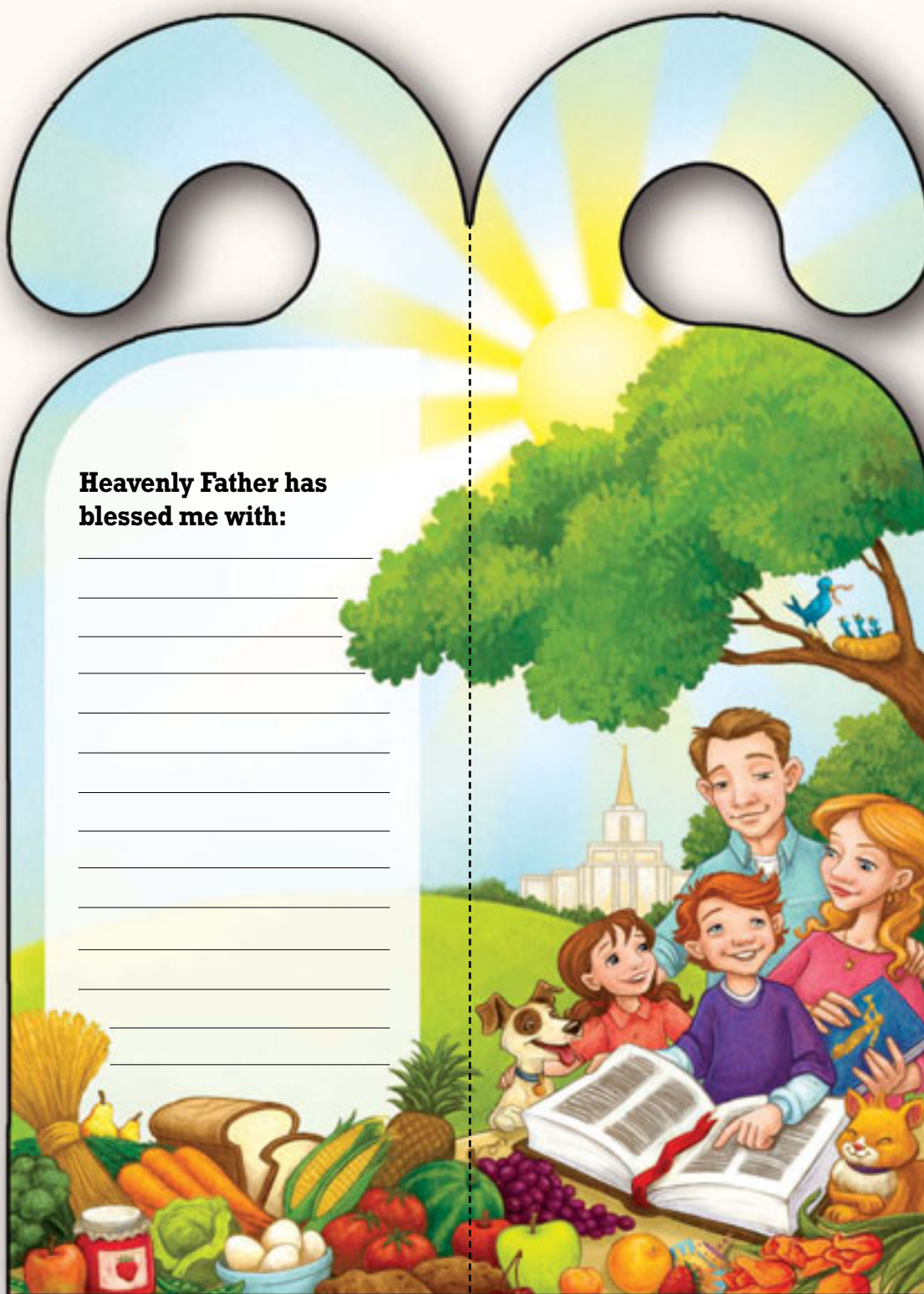
1. "Scripture Power," 2006 Outline for Sharing Time and the Children's Sacrament Meeting Presentation, 10–11.



MAKE A DOORKNOB TAG

Cut out the doorknob tag below. Fold the doorknob tag on the dotted line. Think about the blessings Heavenly Father

has given you, and write some of them on the list. Hang the doorknob tag where you will see it often.



Our Page



Primary children in the Tlaxcallan Ward, Chiautempan Mexico Stake, set apart two days to visit and serve widowed sisters and other families in the ward. They sang hymns, helped feed the chickens, and did housework in some of the homes.



In November 2008 in Brazil, there was a flood with rain and landslides. At school we got a flyer asking for donations. I donated a sack of items along with a toy fire truck and two toy police cars.

Inacio F., age 4, Brazil



I like to help one of my classmates at school. His name is Alessandro, and he needs a lot of help. Our teachers are very close to him because of his needs, and I help him do the things the teachers ask us to do.

Martina Z., age 7, Italy



Andrés O., age 9, Costa Rica



We feel happy when we can sing Primary songs in church with our mother. Singing songs helps people feel the Spirit, and sacrament meeting goes much better when the Spirit is with us.

Sephora B., age 8, and Sariah B., age 10, Guadeloupe

CARING COUSIN

My cousin was taken to the hospital because he had severe stomach pain. He had to get lots of tests done. I wrote him a letter and told him to be brave and that I would pray for him. I also packed a good book

and a treat, which we took to the hospital. When we left, I had a very good feeling inside. I know if we do kind things for others it makes us feel good and it makes Heavenly Father happy.

Jake S., age 7, Alberta, Canada

A TIMELY RETURN

We were swimming in the pool at a hotel and found a pocket watch at the bottom of the pool. We asked a lot of people if the watch belonged to them. They all said no. At the end of the day, we felt like we should go to the pool one more time with the watch. There was a family in

the pool. We asked if the watch was theirs. They said it was, and they had been looking for it all week. It belonged to their dad, and it cost a lot of money. I'm glad we listened to the Holy Ghost so the watch could be returned.

Huntley, Sarabeth, and Caelin C., ages 10, 9, and 7, California, USA



If you would like to submit a drawing, photo, experience, testimony, or letter for Our Page, e-mail it to liahona@ldschurch.org, with "Our Page" in the subject line. Or mail it to:

Liahona, Our Page
50 E. North Temple St., Rm. 2420
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA

Each submission **must** include the child's full name and age plus the parent's name, ward or branch, and stake or district, and the parent's written permission (e-mail is acceptable) to use the child's photo and submission. Submissions may be edited for length or clarity.

Teaching TANNER'S Teacher

By Ronda Vincent

Based on a true story

"I want to be a missionary now. I don't want to wait until I'm grown" ("I Want to Be a Missionary Now," Children's Songbook, 168).



1. One day Tanner got a picture of Jesus. He loved the picture. He wanted to share it with somebody. He knew that not everybody knows about Jesus.



3. When Tanner got to preschool, he gave the picture to Mrs. Young. She was happy to get a picture of Jesus. Tanner was happy she liked it.



2. "Mom, can I give my picture of Jesus to somebody?" Tanner asked.

"Sure," Mom said. "Who will you give it to?"

"I'm going to give it to my teacher, Mrs. Young. I like her because she reads me lots of stories."

"That's a wonderful idea," Mom said. "I'm proud of you."



4. A few days later, Tanner and his family made a book that looked like the Book of Mormon golden plates. Then they wrote their testimonies in the book.

"Mom, can I take our book to school to show Mrs. Young?" Tanner asked.

"Yes, you can," Mom said.



5. The next day at school, Tanner carried a backpack with his family's golden plates inside. He told Mrs. Young about the book his family had made. Tanner's teacher was very interested.



6. When Mom picked up Tanner from school that day, his teacher went to talk to Tanner's mother.

"Tanner brought something very interesting today," Mrs. Young said. "Can you tell me more?"

"How would you and your husband like to come to dinner at our house?" Mom asked. "We can talk more then."

"That sounds great," Mrs. Young said.



7. A few months later, Tanner and his mother went to Mr. and Mrs. Youngs' baptism.

"I'm very happy I shared my picture of Jesus with my teacher," Tanner said.

"I know that she is too," Mom said. "You are a big reason why Mrs. Young and her husband are being baptized today."



8. Tanner had a happy feeling as he watched Mrs. Young be baptized. He smiled as Mom leaned over and whispered, "Four-year-olds are great missionaries!" ■

BEING LIKE A MISSIONARY

The message missionaries share with people about Heavenly Father's plan for us has always been the same. Enoch was a prophet before Jesus was born on earth. The Lord asked

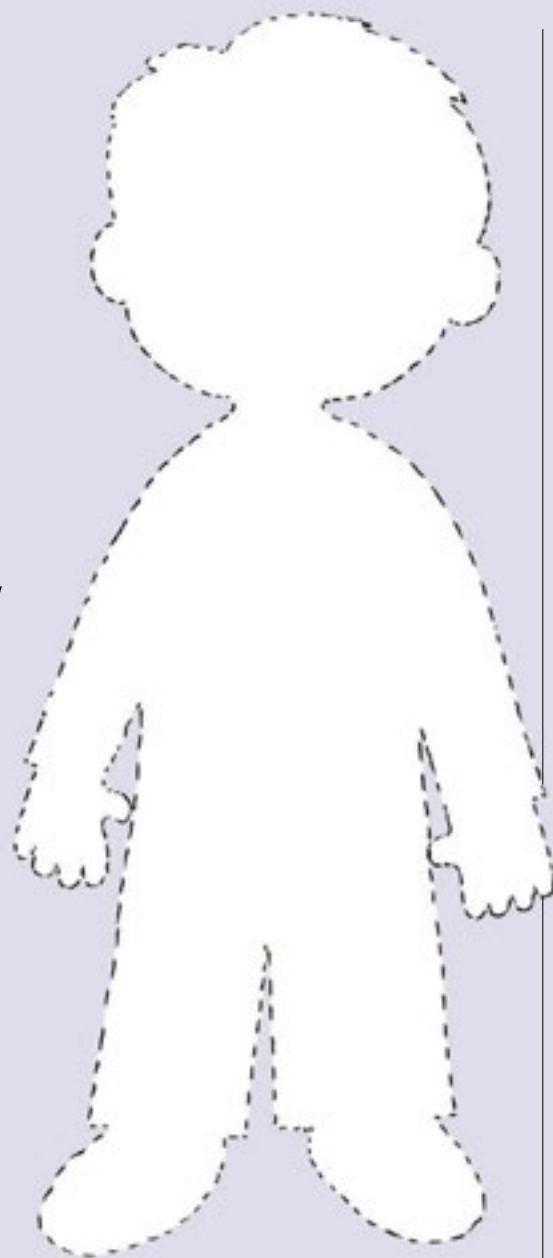
him to share the gospel, as missionaries do today. Color the picture of Enoch. Then draw missionary clothing on Tanner to show what missionaries look like today.



Helps for Parents: Explain that Enoch was asked to share the gospel. He didn't think he could because he thought he didn't know enough. The Lord told Enoch that he could do anything with the Lord's help. Because Enoch was obedient, the Lord blessed him to be able to teach the people. (See Moses 6:31–38.) Ask your children what they can do now to be good missionaries like Enoch.

Helps for

Parents: Explain that even though Tanner has not yet been called to serve a full-time mission, he can still do missionary work while he is young. Help your children draw modern-day missionary clothing on Tanner. Ask them what they can do now to prepare to become a full-time missionary. Talk about doing things such as praying, reading scriptures, and helping others.



Help the Missionaries



By Arie Van De Graaff

Help the missionaries get to their teaching appointment. Pay attention to the arrows to make sure the missionaries do not turn the wrong way on one-way streets. ■

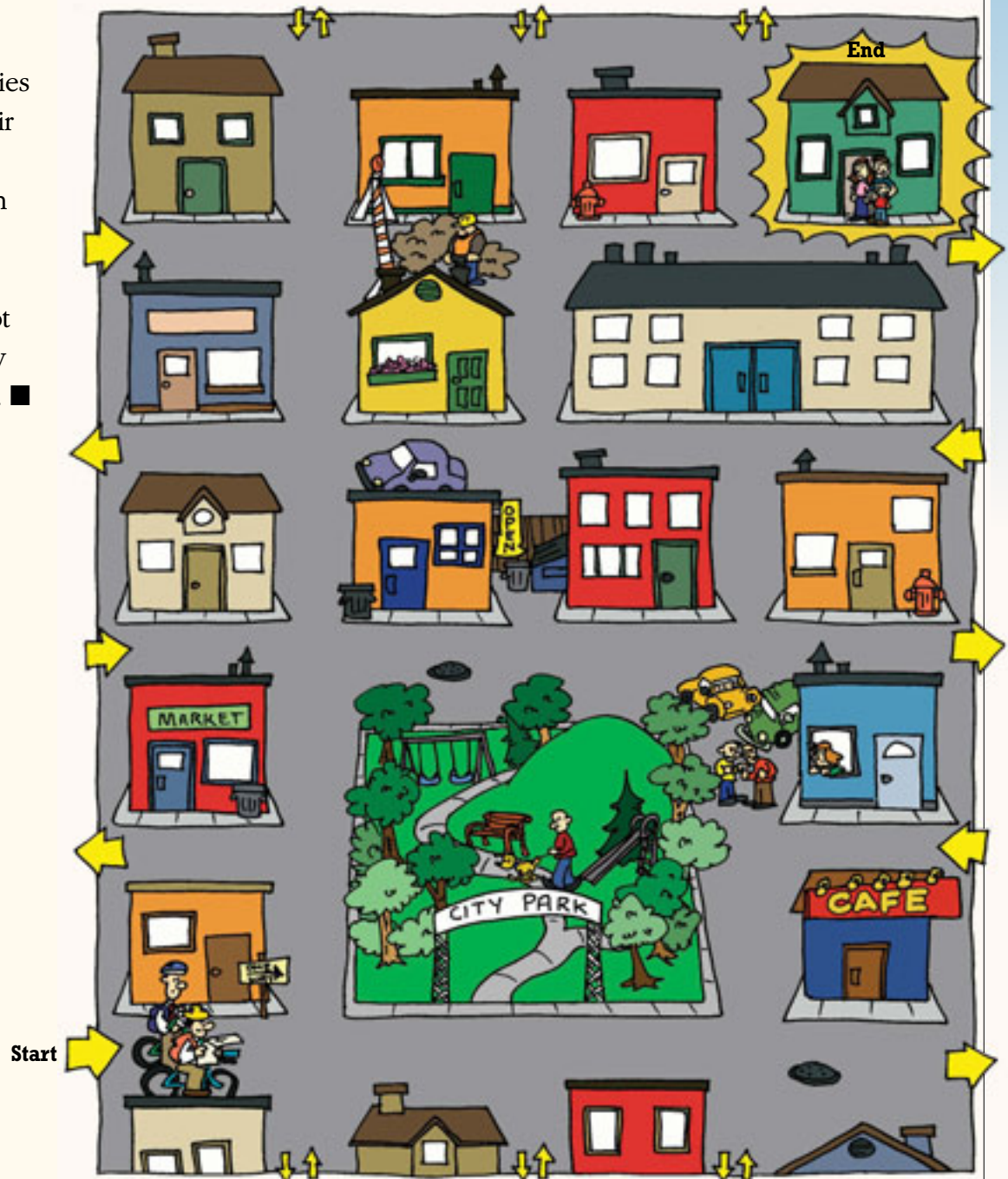


ILLUSTRATION BY ARIE VAN DE GRAAFF

Changing the World One Virtuous Woman at a Time

By Heather Whittle

Church Magazines

In April 2008, the newly called Young Women general presidency—Elaine S. Dalton, Mary N. Cook, and Ann M. Dibb—stood atop Ensign Peak on the northern edge of Salt Lake City and looked out over the valley.

From their vantage point the figure of the angel Moroni sparkled on the Salt Lake Temple, and they knew then what the Lord had in mind for the young women of the Church.

The three women held aloft a walking stick from which waved a gold Peruvian shawl—their banner and ensign to the nations, a call for a return to virtue.

“We cannot get caught up with this new value of virtue without saying the reason for the value is the temple,” Sister Dalton said. “And the temple is the reason for everything we are doing in Young Women, because it will help these young women to come unto Christ.”

Virtue was officially added to the Young Women values in November 2008. It is defined in the Personal Progress book as “a pattern of thought and behavior based on high moral standards. It includes chastity and purity” (*Young Women Personal Progress* [booklet, 2009], 70).

This value is unique in that all the experiences and the value project are required, where the other values allow young women to choose from several options. In addition, for the first time, mothers have been invited to complete the



Personal Progress program with their daughters and earn their own medallions.

In the last year, young women and others around the world have responded overwhelmingly to the call to return to virtue, flooding the Young Women office with letters and photographs from those who have answered the call. Many have climbed mountains and unfurled their own banners.

One group of young women in Hannibal, Missouri, USA, desiring to make a pledge to be virtuous from a high place and not able to find a mountain nearby, climbed a 36-story cement tower, unfurled their banner, and committed to live a virtuous life.

In Mexico, the name of the Young Womanhood Recognition translates to “The Award of the Young Woman of Virtue.” Young women in Mexico were excited about the addition of virtue as a value, Sister Dalton said—it is a value with which they were already familiar.

“The call to virtue has been received with overwhelming praise, from every aspect, within the Church and without,” Sister Cook said. “Leaders love it; priesthood leaders have emphasized it; mothers and grandmothers have been grateful for it.”

The project for the value of virtue is to follow the Savior’s admonition to learn of Him (see D&C 19:23) by reading the entire Book of Mormon and recording thoughts regularly in a journal.

An e-mail to the Young Women presidency

from a sister in England reads: “Sadly, we have to apologize. We are not going to complete this as quickly as we had anticipated. The reason is my daughter and I are studying the Book of Mormon in a way we never have before. It is such a sweet experience—we want to take our time.”

The Book of Mormon teaches about societies that prospered and were happy when they were virtuous and pure but that fell when they were no longer virtuous, Sister Dibb said.

Men and women have been equally enthusiastic about the new value, the Young Women presidency said, citing examples of entire groups of young men and singles wards that have worked on the value together.

Sister Dibb emphasized that both men and women must focus on virtue to obtain the greatest blessings. “Men have no power or strength to exercise the priesthood that they receive if they are not morally pure,” she said. “And women receive that power and strength to fulfill their divine callings as wives, mothers, and as women as they practice virtue.”

Sister Dalton said she believes that the value of virtue has been saved for this time, a time when the world does everything but promote virtue.

“It’s interesting to us that in this world so many

Young women and their leaders in the Santo Domingo Dominican Republic Independencia Stake ascended Cambita Garabito, a mountain in the Dominican Republic, where they raised their own banner to virtue in August 2009.

young women can lose sight of their identity as daughters of God,” Sister Cook said. “We’re just reminding them of that and also of the fact that if you have made a mistake, you can repent.”

The commitment to remain virtuous and pure is possible because of the enabling and redeeming power of the Savior’s Atonement, Sister Dibb said. The fourth value experience focuses on repentance.

In the last year, many women—both old and young—have communicated a desire to return to being virtuous women. “[The addition of virtue] has created an excitement for women who have made wrong choices. Many have said, ‘I can be a virtuous woman again. . . . It is possible for me,’” Sister Cook said.

Many of those who desire to be virtuous again wonder where they can start. The Young Women presidency shares with them this formula: Pray night and morning. Read in the Book of Mormon five minutes or more each day. And smile.

“If all women in the Church and the world did this, think what the world would be like in five years,” Sister Dalton said. “We really do believe that virtuous young women led by the Spirit can change the world.” ■



Youth to Celebrate A Brand New Year

By Ryan Kunz
Church Magazines

Church units worldwide received a DVD entitled *A Brand New Year: 2010 Youth Celebration*. The DVD introduces the 2010 Mutual theme and can be used to supplement youth classes, quorum meetings, Mutual, bishop's youth discussions, and other activities throughout the year.

The 2010 Mutual theme is "*Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest*" (Joshua 1:9; emphasis added). The first segment of *A Brand New Year: 2010 Youth Celebration* features a special message from Elder M. Russell Ballard, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and a musical montage of youth throughout the world.

The DVD also contains nine additional segments, which include inspiring messages in the form of stories, testimonies, music, and special presentations from the Young Men and Young Women general presidencies. These segments focus on gospel standards from *For the Strength of Youth*, including education, family and friends, music and dancing, dating and virtue, health, service, and repentance.

Young people from all over the world share their thoughts and testimonies throughout the DVD.

"We are excited for the youth of the Church to be able to see each other on this DVD and be strengthened by each others' testimonies," said Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president. "Those who watch will see



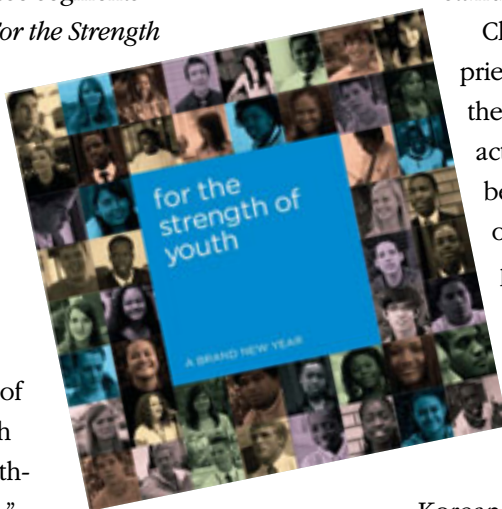
PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER HARRIS

**Manuel Sarábia
of Mexico
shares his
experiences on
the DVD.**

courageous youth everywhere choosing to live the standards [of the Church] and making a difference in the world. We hope priesthood and auxiliary leaders and teachers will use the DVD in their classes to teach standards and in activities to help youth commit to live and apply these standards in their lives."

Church leaders have encouraged local priesthood and auxiliary leaders to review the DVD and use it in their meetings and activities. The first segment of the DVD can be used in New Year's Eve activities or other special events where the theme is presented. The remaining segments are designed to be used throughout the year to expand upon the theme.

The segments are published with subtitles in Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Material from the DVD is also available for download on the Internet. ■



African Saints Mobilize in Day of Service

Bearing shovels and wheelbarrows and wearing yellow vests, Church members in more than 30 countries in Africa took part in the third All-Africa Service Project on August 22, 2009.

In one city in Ivory Coast, they repaired roads. In a town in Liberia, they fixed up old homes. In Sierra Leone, they cleared drainage. In Nigeria, they removed the extensive overgrowth from a local government building. In Ghana, they swept through a market and removed loads of trash. In Kenya, South Africa, Cameroon, and beyond, members scrubbed jail cells and restrooms, planted trees, fixed roads, and worked in orphanages. They cleaned

hospitals and homes; they pulled weeds and painted signs.

Elder Eric Jackson, public affairs director for the Africa Southeast Area, said, "What the members have proven to themselves is that if enough people come, there's no project too big for us."

Where the members labored,



PHOTOGRAPH BY KAYE JACKSON

reporters gathered to observe and take note.

Many others aside from Church members participated in the project. The Church partnered with local service groups, other religious denominations, and government agencies that donated freely of their tools and

Members in South Africa plant a garden for orphans where there is no running water.



PHOTOGRAPH BY SOLA IDOWU

Members in Nigeria worked with state officials to clear roadside debris.

materials and even joined in the effort.

"Many, upon hearing that we were doing [the service] because we emulate Christ's good deeds, praised the Lord and said they would like to join us," said Elder Adesina Olukanni, Area Seventy and area director of public affairs in West Africa. ■

Conference a First for Ethiopian Youth

During July 2009 more than 160 youth and young adults gathered for a day of friendship, workshops, dancing, and testimonies at the first youth conference ever held in Ethiopia.

Because the four branches are not organized into a district, many members were not aware that there were other branches and Church members in Ethiopia. Part of the conference's purpose was to allow them to interact with their peers while being spiritually uplifted.

Wondwossen Amanuel, 23, who was submitting his missionary papers to become the first missionary from the Awasa Branch, said, "It gives you encouragement when you gather together and do such activities. Our branch is small, but there we felt like we were in the herd—and it's like family."

Participants proudly wore CTR rings and T-shirts emblazoned with the words "Steady and Sure," the conference theme.

Two months of concerted efforts by missionaries, branch presidents, and the charitable organization Hope Arising brought together pioneering Saints from the four widespread branches to the chapel complex in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The participants traveled

by bus up to five hours to attend the conference, and more than half of them were nonmembers and investigators. Two were baptized in the following weeks.

“When [the youth] realize that there are other young people with their hopes, dreams, problems, and concerns, they have more confidence. They know they are not alone, and this gives them strength,” said Elder Brad Wilkes, a full-time missionary who, with his wife, Sister Karen Wilkes, helped organize the conference. ■

Romanian Young Women Hold First Camp

Five young women and their leaders from the Bucharest Romania District, along with a nonmember friend, took part in the Church’s first Young Women camp in Romania from August 24 to 26, 2009. District Young Women president Dina Cojocaru led the camp with the help of senior missionaries Elder Don and Sister Edie Van Noy.

The girls and leaders held morning and evening devotionals, studying the scriptures together every day. Elder and Sister Van Noy taught workshops on topics such as virtue and how to give effective talks in church. In another workshop, the girls learned about modesty

and dressing fashionably while still maintaining integrity.

Alina Mateescu, one of the young women, said she had wondered what it takes to be a virtuous young woman, but through the workshop on

virtue she felt assured she could become the exemplary woman of integrity God wants her to become.

Romania, a country in south-east Europe, has about 2,736 members in 17 branches. ■

WORLD BRIEFS

Canadian Census Collection Expands

FamilySearch has added the 1851, 1861, and 1871 Canadian census indexes to its online collection, which already included the 1881 and 1916 Canadian censuses. There are plans to add the 1891 Canadian census shortly. The searchable online databases, found at FamilySearch.org, contain some 17 million records. Free public access to these indexed censuses will make it easier for people to extend their knowledge of their family history.

Service Helps Detroit Children

Inner-city Detroit, Michigan, USA, has a reputation for crime, gang activity, and drug use. Because of high unemployment and low graduation rates in the area, the Bloomfield Hills Michigan Stake teamed up with the Unity Church to help school-children as part of Detroit’s citywide Neighborhoods Day. The two groups assembled and gave away more than 250 school backpacks complete with



PHOTOGRAPH BY BETSY ANDERSON

Members in Detroit, Michigan, USA, worked with others to give school supplies to children.

notebooks, pencils, crayons, erasers, and other school supplies.

Members Escape Wildfires

More than 70 Church members evacuated their homes, many of them staying with other member families, because of wildfires in Utah and California, USA, in September 2009. Fires burned more than 123,000 acres (50,000 ha) in the Sacramento and Los Angeles, California, areas, killing two firefighters and destroying more than 100 buildings. In the area of New Harmony, Utah, fires consumed more than 10,000 acres (4,000 ha) and several buildings. In both states, local priesthood leaders assisted affected members. ■

A Miracle in Our Family

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin's article, "Come What May, and Love It," in the November 2008 *Liahona* (p. 26), lent spiritual help to our daughter, who recently went through a difficult ordeal. During her pregnancy, the doctors gave her a grim diagnosis—our grandchild would not survive.

Daily family and personal prayer along with that article gave us hope, and a miracle happened in our family: our grandson was born. He had to stay in the hospital for a while, but a month later the doctors did not confirm the previous diagnosis.

We know that our Heavenly Father lives as does our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. The Resurrection and eternal life with Heavenly Father are a reality.

Gennadji and Tatjana Mitchenko, Russia

Not on Sunday

One day I won a ticket for a football game that would fall on a Sunday. I called my wife and asked her if she would go with me to the game. Instead of answering, she said, "When you get home, read the *Liahona*."

When I got home I read about a young woman from Brazil who did not attend the World Cup final in France because it was on Sunday (see Suzana Alves de Melo, "Missing the World Cup," *Liahona*, June 2007, 37). I felt as though Heavenly Father was telling me, "I know you like football, but Sunday is my day. Do not go." So I didn't go to the game. Since then I have continued reading the words of our prophet. This magazine is a compass for our lives. It will strengthen us in this difficult world.

Anderson Carpejane, Brazil

There Is Nothing to Fear

I have shed tears with each issue of the *Liahona* during the last eight years. I have learned that, like me, there are other people who suffer. But because of our testimonies, which have deep spiritual roots, there is nothing we cannot overcome.

This magazine serves as a special guide in my life, and I know that is why it carries the name *Liahona*.

Edwin Urrutia, Illinois, USA

FAMILY HOME EVENING IDEAS

This issue contains articles and activities that could be used for family home evening. The following are a few examples.

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- "Making Mountains,"** p. 32: This article compares overcoming challenges with climbing a mountain. You might be able to create an activity, such as climbing a hill or some stairs, that would help family members remember and apply the principle.
- "Aided by the Spirit,"** p. 44: After you read this article together, family members could share experiences when they have been blessed by following the promptings of the Spirit.
- "Praying for an Answer,"** p. 56: Using the article as an introduction, you could invite your family to share experiences they have had in receiving answers to prayer.
- "The Candy Ball,"** p. 62: One way to help little children be more attentive during family home evening is to vary your voice and use facial expressions when telling stories (see *Teaching, No Greater Call*, 181). You might find this a useful technique in reading or retelling "The Candy Ball" to young children.
- "I Will Be Found of You,"** p. 80: A fun activity could be to play hide-and-seek as a family, and then relate the game to the promise found in Jeremiah 29:13: "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

A Family Home Evening That Lasts

One family home evening years ago began with our singing, "The day dawn is breaking, the world is awaking" ("The Day Dawn is Breaking," *Hymns*, no. 52). When we asked each of our five children to suggest an activity we could do that week, five-year-old Fernando said plaintively, "I want to see what it's like when the day breaks and the world wakes up." We tried and tried to explain to him all of the things that happen: how the sun comes up, the morning breezes blow, and the dew glistens on the landscape. But he would have none of it. "I want to see it," he repeated.

So that Thursday at 4:00 a.m., we got up, piled into our car, and drove to a place with a clear view of the eastern sky. Sunrise that day seemed to come from heaven itself. Circles of yellow color were transformed into a brilliant coral as the great curvature of the sun appeared. It was glorious.

Thirty years later, Fernando's small son Fernandito was visiting us. "You know what, Grandma?" he said. "Papa took us to see the sunrise."

Sergio Trejo Reyes, Jalisco, Mexico

“I Will Be Found of You”

By Aaron L. West
Curriculum Department

At the conclusion of our Sunday School lesson, Sister Hart asked us to turn to Jeremiah 29. She said she would read verses 12–14 aloud, and she asked us to ponder the meaning of the words.

“Then shall ye call upon me,” she read, “and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

“And I will be found of you, saith the Lord . . .”

Sister Hart went on, finishing verse 14, but my thoughts lingered happily behind, savoring the promise “I will be found of you.” I was reminded of the times when my wife, Emma, and I played hide-and-seek with our young children. When it was our turn to hide and their turn to seek, we always made ourselves easy to find. Sometimes we made noises or left a foot in plain view so they would find us quickly. Sometimes we hid in the same place repeatedly. We wanted the children to search for us, but we also wanted them to find us. We looked forward to their hugs and their joyful, unrestrained giggles of triumph.

This memory deepened my understanding of our Heavenly Father’s love for us. He wants us to search for Him, but He also wants us to find Him—He knows how happy we will be when we do. He does not try to trick us. Rather, He does all He can to help us know where and



My thoughts turned to the hide-and-seek games my wife and I played with our young children. We wanted them to search for us, but we also wanted to be found.

how to search: He gives us the scriptures, calls prophets, listens to our prayers, guides us by the power of the Holy Ghost, blesses us with temples and priesthood ordinances and family and friends. And if we have found Him somewhere once, we are sure to find Him there again if we are willing to renew our search.

“I will be found of you, saith the Lord.” What a comforting promise! In a world where trouble and temptations seem to find us so easily, it is reassuring to know that our greatest source of strength is so easy to find. ■



Jesus in the Synagogue at Nazareth, by Greg K. Olsen

"And when [Jesus] had opened the book [of Isaiah], he found the place where it was written,

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised [see Isaiah 61:1]. . . .

"And he [said] unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled. . . .

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power" (Luke 4:17–18, 21, 32).



Welcome to the new Liahona!
*All of its pages were created
with you—members of the
Church of all ages—in mind. Certain
sections, however, have special appeal
for certain readers.*

- *Young adults may want to go to page 42.*
- *Youth may want to turn to page 46.*
- *Children could start with page 58.*
- *Parents of young children may want to help them find page 70.*

*But don't stop there; there's a lot more
to discover as you come to know and
use your new Liahona.*