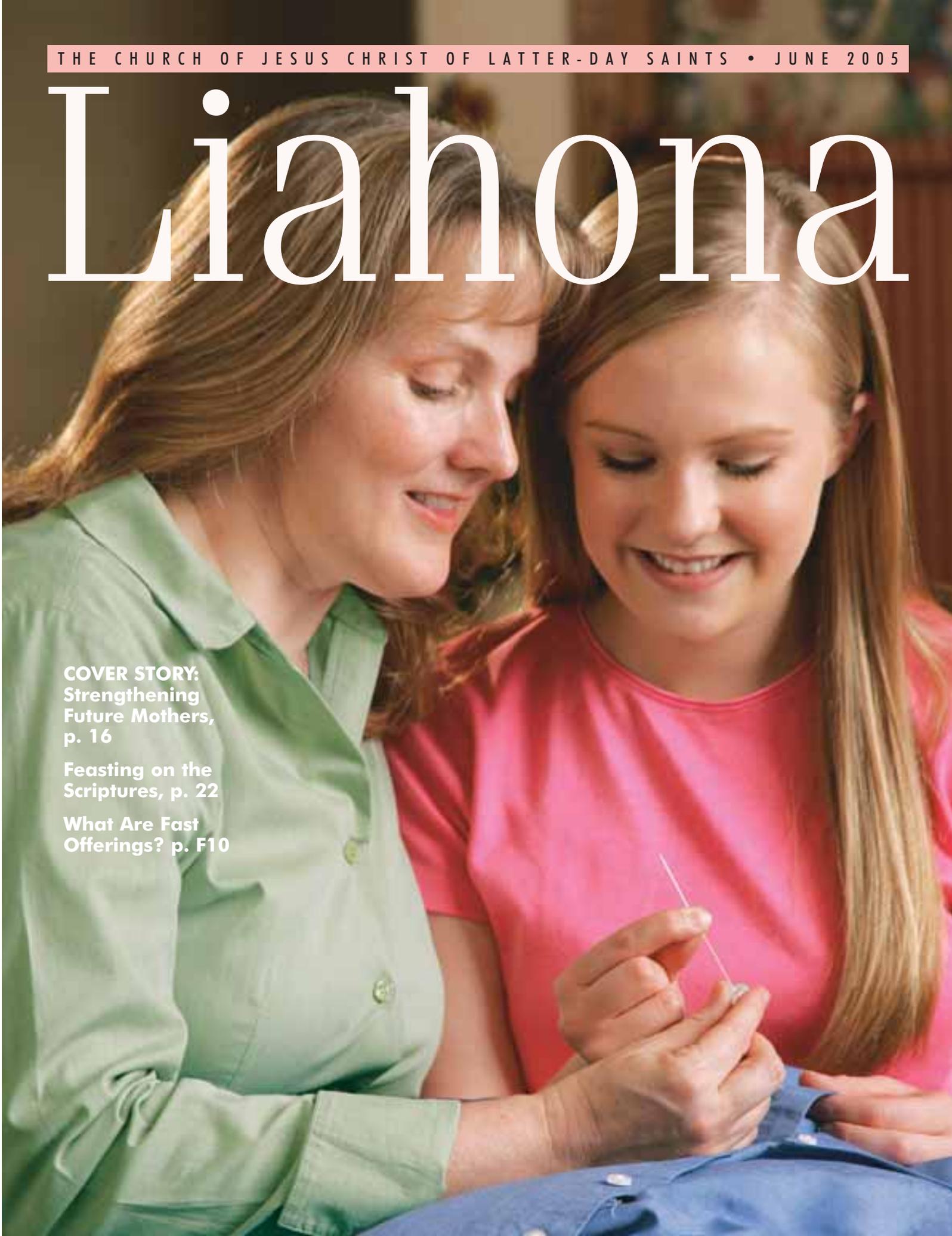


Liahona

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a light green button-down shirt, and a young girl with long blonde hair, wearing a bright pink t-shirt. They are both smiling and looking down at a small, thin object held in the woman's hands. The woman is on the left, and the girl is on the right. The background is softly blurred, suggesting an indoor setting.

COVER STORY:
Strengthening
Future Mothers,
p. 16

Feasting on the
Scriptures, p. 22

What Are Fast
Offerings? p. F10

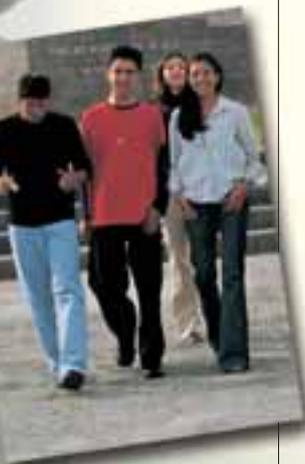
Liahona



ON THE COVER
Photography by Steve Bunderson, posed by models, may not be copied.



THE FRIEND COVER
Under His Wing, by Jay Bryant Ward, from the Visions of Faith Collection by Mill Pond Press, Inc., Venice, Florida, may not be copied.



SEE "AT THE CENTER OF THE EARTH," P. 26

FOR ADULTS

- 2 First Presidency Message: Peace in Our Savior
President Thomas S. Monson
- 16 Strengthening Future Mothers *Susan W. Tanner*
- 25 Visiting Teaching Message: Rejoice in the Restoration of Temple Ordinances and Covenants
- 32 Messages from the Doctrine and Covenants: Blessed by the Word of Wisdom *Elder Masayuki Nakano*
- 34 Family Home Evening as a Missionary Tool
- 38 Strengthening the Family: The Sacred Powers of Procreation
- 40 The High Priests Quorum *Elder David E. Sorensen*
- 43 The Fire of Brotherhood *LaRene Porter Gaunt*
- 44 Latter-day Saint Voices
My Tithing Tire *Sarah Westbrook*
Tuning In to the Spirit *Mark Paredes*
I Felt at Home *Marina Petrova*
- 48 Comment

FOR YOUTH

- 8 Making Hard Decisions *Elder Richard G. Scott*
- 12 President, I'm Ready for My Missionary Interview!
William D. Oswald
- 15 Poster: Free Filter
- 21 Did You Know?
- 22 Questions and Answers: How Can I Get More out of My Personal Scripture Study?
- 26 At the Center of the Earth *Marvin K. Gardner*

THE FRIEND: FOR CHILDREN

- F2 Come Listen to a Prophet's Voice: Your Fascinating History
President James E. Faust
- F4 Sharing Time: I'll Follow Him in Faith *Margaret Liffert*
- F6 From the Life of President David O. McKay: David's Pet Boar
- F8 Friend to Friend: Jumping Fences *Elder Daryl H. Garn*
- F10 For Little Friends: What Are Fast Offerings? *Kimberly Webb*
- F12 Faith in Jesus Christ
- F13 Fun Page: Greeting the Missionaries *Robert Peterson*
- F14 The House in the Hurricane *Melody Warnick*



SEE "REJOICE IN THE RESTORATION OF TEMPLE ORDINANCES AND COVENANTS," P. 25

The First Presidency: Gordon B. Hinckley,
Thomas S. Monson, James E. Faust

Quorum of the Twelve: Boyd K. Packer, L. Tom Perry,
Russell M. Nelson, Dallin H. Oaks, M. Russell Ballard,
Joseph B. Wirthlin, Richard G. Scott, Robert D. Hales,
Jeffrey R. Holland, Henry B. Eyring, Dieter F. Uchtdorf,
David A. Bednar

Editor: Jay E. Jensen

Advisers: Monte J. Brough, W. Rolfe Kerr

Managing Director: David Frischknecht

Planning and Editorial Director: Victor D. Cave

Graphics Director: Allan R. Loyborg

Magazines Editorial Director: Richard M. Romney

Managing Editor: Marvin K. Gardner

Editorial Staff: Collette Nebeker Aune, Susan Barrett,
Shanna Butler, Ryan Carr, Linda Stahle Cooper, LaRene
Porter Gaunt, Jennifer L. Greenwood, R. Val Johnson, Carrie
Kasten, Melvin Leavitt, Sally J. Odekirk, Adam C. Olson,
Judith M. Paller, Vivian Paulsen, Don L. Searle, Rebecca M.
Taylor, Roger Terry, Janet Thomas, Paul VanDenBerghe,
Julie Wardell, Kimberly Webb

Managing Art Director: M. M. Kawasaki

Art Director: Scott Van Kampen

Production Manager: Jane Ann Peters

Design and Production Staff: Howard G. Brown,
Thomas S. Child, Reginald J. Christensen, Kathleen Howard,
Denise Kirby, Tadd R. Peterson, Randall J. Pixton, Kari A.
Todd, Claudia E. Warner

Marketing Manager: Larry Hiller

Printing Director: Craig K. Sedgwick

Distribution Director: Kris T Christensen

For subscriptions and prices outside the United States and
Canada, contact your local Church distribution center or
ward or branch leader.

Send manuscripts and queries to *Liahona*, Room 2420,
50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220,
USA; or e-mail: cur-liahona-imag@ldschurch.org.

The *Liahona* (a Book of Mormon term meaning "compass"
or "director") is published in Albanian, Armenian (East),
Bulgarian, Cambodian, Cebuano, Chinese, Croatian,
Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Fijian, Finnish,
French, German, Greek, Haitian, Hindi, Hungarian,
Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Kiribati, Korean,
Latvian, Lithuanian, Malagasy, Marshallese, Mongolian,
Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian,
Samoan, Sinhala, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog,
Tahitian, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Tongan, Ukrainian, Urdu,
and Vietnamese. (Frequency varies by language.)

© 2005 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America.

Text and visual material in the *Liahona* may be copied for
incidental, noncommercial church or home use. Visual
material may not be copied if restrictions are indicated
in the credit line with the artwork. Copyright questions
should be addressed to Intellectual Property Office, 50 East
North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150, USA;
e-mail: cor-intellectualproperty@ldschurch.org.

The *Liahona* can be found in many languages on the
Internet at www.lds.org. For English, click on "Gospel
Library." For other languages, click on the world map.

For Readers in the United States and Canada:

June 2005 Vol. 29 No. 6. LIAHONA (USPS 311-480)
English (ISSN 1080-9554) is published monthly by The
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 East North
Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150. USA subscription
price is \$10.00 per year; Canada, \$16.00 plus applicable
taxes. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah, and
at additional mailing offices. Sixty days' notice required for
change of address. Include address label from a recent
issue; old and new address must be included. Send USA
and Canadian subscriptions to Salt Lake Distribution Center
at address below. Subscription help line: 1-800-537-5971.
Credit card orders (Visa, MasterCard, American Express)
may be taken by phone. (Canada Poste Information:
Publication Agreement #40017431)

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Salt Lake
Distribution Center, Church Magazines, PO Box 26368,
Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368.

Family Home Evening Ideas



"Making Hard Decisions,"

p. 8: Invite family members to think of the hardest decision they have ever had to make. Read or tell Elder Richard G. Scott's story about his job. What effect did the hymn have on his choice? Invite family members to share experiences they have had when the Lord has helped them make hard decisions.

"President, I'm Ready for My Missionary Interview!" p. 12: What was Vova counseled to do to prepare for his mission? Read Alma 57:19–21, 25–27, and compare Vova and his friends to the example of the stripling warriors. In what ways can family members follow Vova's example?

"Blessed by the Word of Wisdom," p. 32: Identify what Elder Masayuki Nakano did that allowed him to keep the Word of Wisdom and still do his job. What could family members do to help themselves and each other obey the Word of Wisdom?

"Family Home Evening as a Missionary Tool," p. 34: Share a few stories from the article that fit your family's interests and needs. Plan and implement some ideas for making your family home evenings a missionary tool.

"Your Fascinating History,"

p. F2: Read aloud the first three paragraphs of this article; then let family members take turns relating a story about an ancestor or a living relative. Consider recording these stories. Bear testimony using the last two paragraphs of the article.

"Jumping Fences," p. F8: Invite family members to think of times when they were disobedient to the Lord. What were the results? Relate the story of Smokey. Compare the consequences of being obedient with the consequences of being disobedient.

TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE

F= <i>The Friend</i>	Motherhood, 16, 21
Adversity, 2, 44	Obedience, F8
Agency, 8, 38	Peace, 2
Chastity, 38	Prayer, 26
Church history, 21	Preparation, 12, 16
Conversion, 44	Primary, F4
Example, 12	Protection, 44, F14
Faith, F4, F12	Scripture study, 22
Family history, 40, F2	Self-discipline, 15
Family home evening, 1, 34	Service, 43, F14
Family relations, 16, 38	Standards, 8, 15, 26,
Fast offerings, F10	32, 38
Friendship, 26	Teaching, 1
Healing, 44, F12	Temples and temple work,
High priests, 40, 43	25, 40
Home teaching, 7	Tithing, 44
Inspiration, 44	Visiting teaching, 25
Jesus Christ, 2, F4, F12	Word of Wisdom, 32
Leadership, 21	Young Women, 16
McKay, David O., F6	
Missionary work, 8, 12,	
34, F13	



Peace in Our Savior

BY PRESIDENT THOMAS S. MONSON
 First Counselor in the First Presidency

Some years ago, my wife and I visited a popular theme park with members of our family. For one ride, we boarded a boat which would carry us in a vertical dive that evoked screams from passengers as the boat roared down a waterfall and glided to a stop in the water below. Just before taking the plunge, I noticed on one wall a small sign declaring a profound truth: “You can’t run away from trouble. . . . Ain’t no place that far!”

These few words have remained with me. They pertain not only to the theme of that ride, but also to our sojourn in mortality.

Life is a school of experience, a time of probation. We learn as we bear our afflictions and live through our heartaches.

As we ponder the events that can befall all of us—even sickness, accident, death, and a host of other challenges—we can learn with Job of old, “Man is born unto trouble.”¹ Job was a “perfect and upright” man who “feared God, and eschewed evil.”² Pious in his conduct, prosperous in his fortune, Job was to face a test which could have destroyed anyone. Shorn of his possessions, scorned by his

friends, afflicted by his suffering, shattered by the loss of his family, he was urged to “curse God, and die.”³ He resisted this temptation and declared from the depths of his noble soul: “Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.”⁴ “I know that my redeemer liveth.”⁵ Job kept the faith.

It may safely be assumed that no person has ever lived entirely free of suffering and tribulation, nor has there ever been a period in human history that did not have its full share of turmoil, ruin, and misery.

When the pathway of life takes a cruel turn, there is the temptation to ask the question “Why me?” Self-incrimination is a common practice, even when we may have had no control over our difficulty. At times there appears to be no light at the tunnel’s end, no dawn to break the night’s darkness. We feel surrounded by the pain of broken hearts, the disappointment of shattered dreams, and the despair of vanished hopes. We join in uttering the biblical plea: “Is there no balm in Gilead?”⁶ We feel abandoned, heartbroken, alone.



Like Job of old, we are lifted heavenward by that divine assurance and precious promise: “I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”



- Mental and emotional illness
- Accidents
- Divorce
- Abuse
- Excessive debt

The list is endless. In the world of today there is at times a tendency to feel detached—even isolated—from the Giver of every good gift. We worry that we walk alone and ask, “How can we cope?” What brings ultimate comfort to us is the gospel.

From the bed of pain, from the pillow wet with tears, we are lifted heavenward by that divine assurance and precious promise: “I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”⁸

Such comfort is priceless as we journey along the pathway of mortality, with its many forks and turnings. Rarely is the assurance communicated by a flashing sign or a loud voice. Rather, the language of the Spirit is gentle, quiet, uplifting to the heart, and soothing to the soul.

Lest we question the Lord concerning our troubles, let us remember that the wisdom of God may not be easily understandable by mortals, but the greatest single lesson we can learn is that when God speaks and a man obeys, that man will always be right.

The experience of Elijah the Tishbite is illustrative of this truth. In the midst of a terrible famine; drought; and the despair of hunger, suffering, and perhaps even death, “the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, . . . and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.”⁹

Elijah didn’t question the Lord. “He arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he

The experience of Elijah with the widow of Zarephath and her son illustrates the truth that when God speaks and His children obey, those children will always be right.

To all who so despair, may I offer the assurance found in the psalm: “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”⁷

Whenever we are inclined to feel burdened down with the blows of life, let us remember that others have passed the same way, have endured, and then have overcome.

There seems to be an unending supply of trouble for one and all. We often expect instantaneous solutions, forgetting that frequently the heavenly virtue of patience is required.

Do any of the following challenges sound familiar to you?

- Children with disabilities
- The passing of a loved one
- Employment downsizing
- Obsolescence of one’s skills
- A wayward son or daughter

called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

“And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

“And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

“And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

“For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.”¹⁰

She did not question the improbable promise. “She went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

“And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.”¹¹

Let us now fast-forward the pages of history to that special night when shepherds were abiding with their flocks and heard the holy pronouncement: “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”¹²

With the birth of the babe in Bethlehem, there emerged a great endowment—a power stronger than weapons, a wealth more lasting than the coins of Caesar. The long-foretold promise was fulfilled; the Christ child was born.

The sacred record reveals that the boy “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”¹³ At a later time, a quiet entry records that He “went about doing good.”¹⁴

Out of Nazareth and down through the generations of time come His excellent example, His welcome words, His divine deeds. They inspire patience to endure affliction, strength to bear grief, courage to face death, and confidence to meet life. In this world of chaos, of trial, of uncertainty, never has our need

for such divine guidance been more desperate.

Lessons from Nazareth, Capernaum, Jerusalem, and Galilee transcend the barriers of distance, the passage of time, the limits of understanding as they bring to troubled hearts a light and a way.

Ahead lay Gethsemane’s garden and Golgotha’s hill.

The biblical account reveals: “Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

“And he took with him Peter and [James and John], and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

“Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

“And he went a little further, . . . and prayed, saying,”¹⁵

“Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

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

“And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”¹⁶

What suffering, what sacrifice, what anguish did He endure to atone for the sins of the world!

For our benefit, the poet wrote:

*In golden youth when seems the earth
A summer-land of singing mirth,
When souls are glad and hearts are light,
And not a shadow lurks in sight,
We do not know it, but there lies
Somewhere veiled 'neath evening skies
A garden which we all must see—
The garden of Gethsemane. . . .*

*Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams
Bridged over by our broken dreams;
Behind the misty caps of years,
Beyond the great salt fount of tears,
The garden lies. Strive, as you may,
You cannot miss it in your way;
All paths that have been, or shall be
Pass somewhere through Gethsemane.¹⁷*



Elder David O. McKay wrote, *“The little headstones became monuments not only to the little babes sleeping beneath them, but also to a mother’s faith and devotion to the eternal principles of truth and life.”*

The mortal mission of the Savior of the world drew rapidly to its close. Ahead lay Calvary’s cross, the acts of depravity committed by those who thirsted for the blood of the Son of God. His divine response is a simple but profoundly significant prayer: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”¹⁸

The conclusion came: “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus,”¹⁹ the Great Redeemer died. He was buried in a tomb. He rose on the morning of the third day. He was seen by His disciples. Words that linger from that epochal event course through the annals of time and bring to our souls even today the comfort, the assurance, the balm, the certainty: “He is not here: . . . he is risen.”²⁰ Resurrection became a reality for all.

Some time ago, I received a faith-filled letter from Laurence M. Hilton. May I share with you that letter’s account of surviving personal

tragedy with faith, nothing wavering.

In 1892 Thomas and Sarah Hilton, Laurence’s grandparents, went to Samoa, where Thomas was set apart as mission president after their arrival. They brought with them a baby daughter; two sons were born to them while they served there. Tragically, all three died in Samoa, and in 1895 the Hiltons returned from their mission childless.

David O. McKay was a friend of the family and was deeply touched by their loss. In 1921, as part of a world tour of visits to the members of the Church in many nations, Elder McKay, then of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, stopped in Samoa. Before leaving on his tour, he had promised the now-widowed Sister Hilton that he would personally visit the graves of her three children. I share with you the letter Elder McKay wrote to her from Samoa:

“Dear Sister Hilton:

“Just as the descending rays of the late

afternoon sun touched the tops of the tall coconut trees, Wednesday, May 18th, 1921, a party of five stood with bowed heads in front of the little Fagali'i Cemetery. . . . We were there, as you will remember, in response to a promise I made you before I left home.

"The graves and headstones are in a good state of preservation. . . . I reproduce here a copy I made as I stood . . . outside the stone wall surrounding the spot.

"Janette Hilton

Bn: Sept. 10, 1891

Died: June 4, 1892

'Rest, darling Jennie'

"George Emmett Hilton

Bn: Oct. 12, 1894

Died: Oct. 19, 1894

'Peaceful be thy slumber'

"Thomas Harold Hilton

Bn: Sept. 21, 1892

Died: March 17, 1894

'Rest on the hillside, rest'

"As I looked at those three little graves, I tried to imagine the scenes through which you passed during your young motherhood here in old Samoa. As I did so, the little headstones became monuments not only to the little babes sleeping beneath them, but also to a mother's faith and devotion to the eternal principles of truth and life. Your three little ones, Sister Hilton, in silence most eloquent and effective, have continued to carry on your noble missionary work begun nearly 30 years ago, and they will continue as long as there are gentle hands to care for their last earthly resting place.

*"By loving hands their dying eyes were closed;
By loving hands their little limbs composed;
By foreign hands their humble graves adorned;
By strangers honored, and by strangers mourned.*

"Tofa Soifua,

"David O. McKay"

This touching account conveys to the grieving heart "the peace . . . which passeth all understanding."²¹

Our Heavenly Father lives. Jesus Christ the Lord is our Savior and Redeemer. He guided the Prophet Joseph. He guides His prophet today, even President Gordon B. Hinckley. Of a truth I bear this personal witness.

That we may shoulder our sorrows, bear our burdens, and face our fears—as did our Savior—is my prayer. I know that He lives. ■

NOTES

1. Job 5:7.
2. Job 1:1.
3. Job 2:9.
4. Job 16:19.
5. Job 19:25.
6. Jeremiah 8:22.
7. Psalm 30:5.
8. Joshua 1:5.
9. 1 Kings 17:8–9.
10. 1 Kings 17:10–14.
11. 1 Kings 17:15–16.
12. Luke 2:10–11.
13. Luke 2:52.
14. Acts 10:38.
15. Matthew 26:36–39.
16. Luke 22:42–44.
17. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, "Gethsemane," in Al Bryant, comp., *Sourcebook of Poetry*, 3 vols. (1968), 2:435.
18. Luke 23:34.
19. Luke 23:46.
20. Matthew 28:6.
21. Philippians 4:7.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

After prayerfully studying this message, share it using a method that encourages the participation of those you teach. Following are some examples.

1. Review the article's bulleted list of challenges. Invite family members to add to the list. Then read the first three paragraphs of the article aloud, and ask, "How can we cope?" Study together one or more of President Monson's scripture references or accounts to find answers to this question.

2. Ask four people to read aloud the words of the narrator, the Lord, Elijah, and the widow in 1 Kings 17:8–16. What does President Monson say we can learn from this account? Share an experience when obedience to God brought peace to your life.

3. Read together the account about the Hilton family and the letter from Elder David O. McKay. Invite family members to share experiences of how the Savior has helped them endure trials and find peace.

MAKING HARD



Determine now to always do what is right, and let the consequence follow. The consequence will always be for your best good.

BY ELDER RICHARD G. SCOTT
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

To qualify for inspiration and direction from the Lord throughout your life, decide now to do what the Lord wants you to do—even though it may appear to be a sacrifice or very challenging. I have learned from personal experience how making the right decision at a critical time can bless your entire life. With a sincere desire to help you gain confidence in your ability to consistently make right choices, I will share a personal experience that taught me important lessons.

The Lord Began to Bless Me

After I graduated from college, served a mission, and got married, my wife and I moved to the eastern United States, where I found a job. Through a series of what I now see as unusual experiences, I was interviewed to have a job as an engineer in a new and exciting activity: the design and development of nuclear power plants for submarines. As I look back, it should have been virtually impossible for me to get that job. There were more experienced people applying for it. It just worked out that the Lord helped me.

That shows us that the Lord will bless our lives if we follow His promptings and do what the prophets say. We must exercise courage

and faith and choose the right, even though many around us are not.

After 11 exciting years of working at that job, I was in a meeting one night with those developing an essential part of the nuclear power plant. My secretary came in and said, “There’s a man on the phone who says if I tell you his name you’ll come to the phone.”

I said, “What’s his name?”

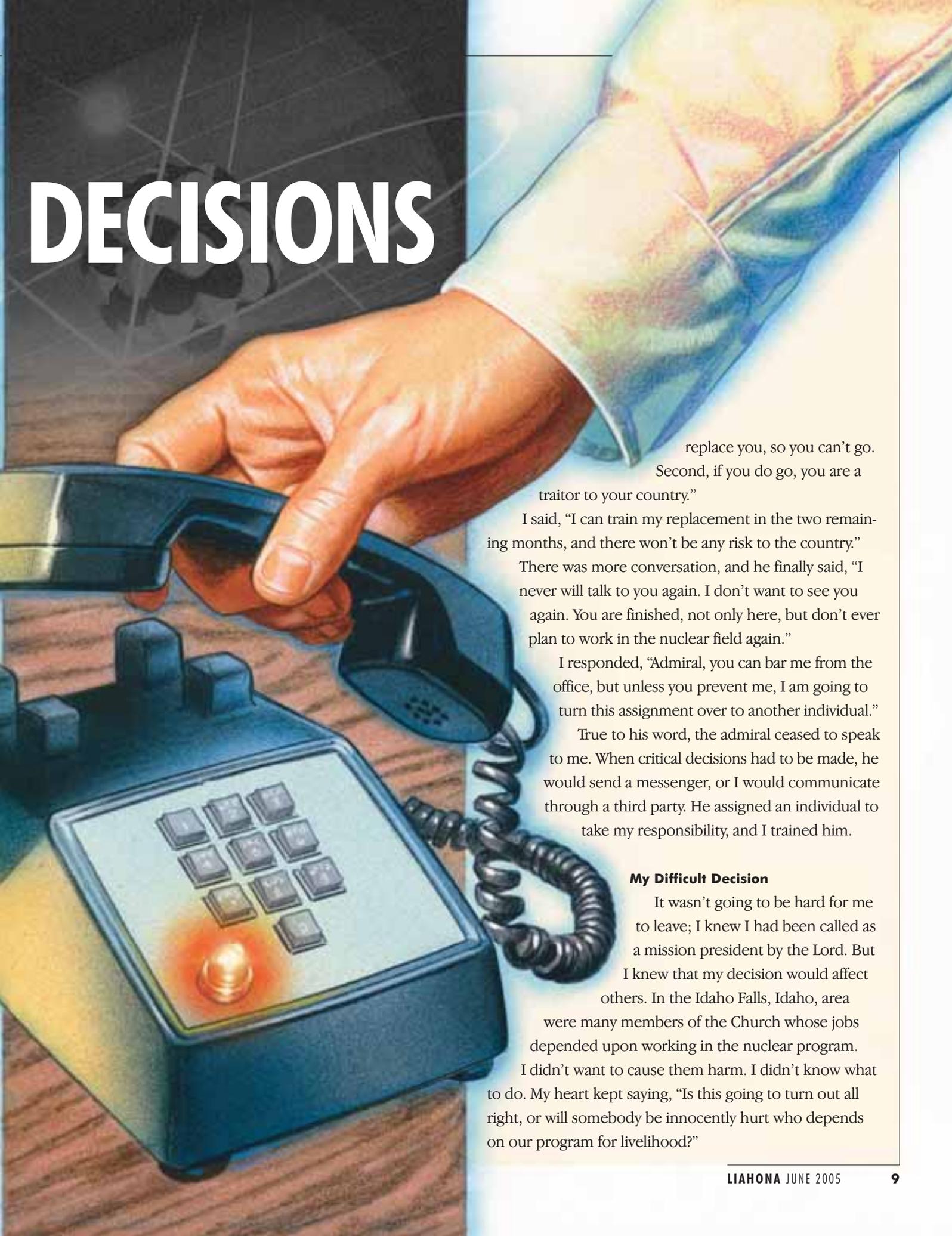
She said, “Harold B. Lee.”

I said, “He’s right.” I took the phone call. Elder Lee, who later became President of the Church, asked if he could see me that very night. He was in New York City, and I was in Washington, D.C. I flew up to meet him, and we had an interview that led to my call to be a mission president.

The head of the program I was working for was Admiral Hyman Rickover, a hard-working, demanding individual. I knew him well enough that I felt I needed to tell him as soon as possible that I was being called. As I explained the mission call to him and that it would mean I would have to quit my job, he became rather upset. He said some unrepeatable things, broke the paper tray on his desk, and in the comments that followed clearly established two points:

“Scott, what you are doing in this defense program is so vital that it will take a year to

DECISIONS

A detailed illustration of a hand holding a black rotary telephone receiver. The hand is positioned over a blue and yellow push-button telephone base. The background is a dark, textured surface with a grid pattern. The overall style is that of a classic magazine or book cover illustration.

replace you, so you can't go. Second, if you do go, you are a traitor to your country."

I said, "I can train my replacement in the two remaining months, and there won't be any risk to the country." There was more conversation, and he finally said, "I never will talk to you again. I don't want to see you again. You are finished, not only here, but don't ever plan to work in the nuclear field again."

I responded, "Admiral, you can bar me from the office, but unless you prevent me, I am going to turn this assignment over to another individual."

True to his word, the admiral ceased to speak to me. When critical decisions had to be made, he would send a messenger, or I would communicate through a third party. He assigned an individual to take my responsibility, and I trained him.

My Difficult Decision

It wasn't going to be hard for me to leave; I knew I had been called as a mission president by the Lord. But I knew that my decision would affect others. In the Idaho Falls, Idaho, area were many members of the Church whose jobs depended upon working in the nuclear program. I didn't want to cause them harm. I didn't know what to do. My heart kept saying, "Is this going to turn out all right, or will somebody be innocently hurt who depends on our program for livelihood?"



As I prayed and pondered about it, I had a feeling about the hymn “Do What Is Right.” A line from the hymn would come to mind: “Do what is right; let the consequence follow.” Other words from the hymn were reinforcing such as “God will protect you; then do what is right!” (*Hymns*, no. 237).

My last day in the office I asked for an appointment with the admiral. His secretary gasped. I went with a copy of the Book of Mormon in my hand. He looked at me and said, “Sit down, Scott, what do you have? I have tried every way I can to force you to change. What is it you have?” There followed a very interesting, quiet conversation. There was more listening this time.

He said he would read the Book of Mormon. Then something happened I never thought would occur. He added, “When you come back from the mission, I want you to call me. There will be a job for you.”

Your Difficult Decisions

As a youth, you will have challenges and hard decisions to make throughout your life. For a young man, your first hard decision may be whether you should be a missionary or not. That is not really a question. The Lord has indicated a mission is a privilege and responsibility. What’s needed is to live worthy to serve as a missionary, to understand the teachings of the Lord, particularly the message of the Restoration, and to realize that you’ll be able to bless many lives if you forget yourself in the service of the Lord.

As a mission president, I saw how young men and women were given opportunities that caused them to grow enormously while they richly blessed the lives of others. The missionaries who found the work easiest had studied the scriptures and internalized the gospel message.

Because of the missionaries’ willingness to make the difficult decision to give up things that would appear attractive to teenagers, the Lord gave them opportunities to serve and, later, wonderful companions in

marriage. They became outstanding servants of God because of their discipline, hard work, and trust in the Lord. A significant number of them have been leaders in the Church, and they are truly outstanding in their professions.

For Your Good

Determine now to always do what is right, and let the consequence follow. The consequence will always be for your best good. You will learn that it is easiest over the long run to stand for what is right and do the difficult thing to begin with. Once you take that position, following through is not too hard.

I have never been sorry when I stood for what was right—even against severe criticism. As you learn that

truth, you will also discover that when you are obedient, you will be inspired to know what to do and have the capacity to do it.

With all of the love in my heart, I ask you to decide to keep the standards of the Lord. Live so that the Holy Ghost can inspire you to consistently do what is right. I testify that, as a result, your worthy dreams or something even better will be yours.

Your Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son love you. They want your happiness more than you can now possibly know. They will help you attain that happiness as you steadfastly do all you can to obey the commandments. ■

Parts of this article were taken from “Do What Is Right,” Liahona, Mar. 2001, 10–17; Ensign, June 1997, 51–55.

DECIDING ON A MISSION

BY ISAÍ LIMÓN TORRES

When I was young, my family and my Primary teachers asked me if I was going to go on a mission when I was older. I always said yes. When I was 12 years old, I was ordained to the office of deacon. My leaders started saying that I would be going on a mission in just seven years. It seemed so far away.

When I was ordained a teacher, the reminders of an upcoming mission became more frequent. When I was ordained a priest, they became even more frequent. I started to get worried because I had only three years left.

I liked the idea of going on a mission, as some of my older brothers had done. But the thought of being away from my family for two years in another part of the world was frightening. I realized that I was afraid to go on a mission because I didn't have a strong desire to go.

I told Francisca, my sister, about my problem, and she sat down next to me and said, “Isaí, I understand what you're saying, and I have just two things to say to you. The first is that a mission is where people can have the Spirit 100 percent of the time when their eye is single to the glory of God. The second thing is to ask the Lord to help your desire to go on a mission grow. The Lord will help you.”

I followed her advice and started to pray that my desire to serve a mission would become strong.

April 6, 2000, was a day of decision for me because that was the day my home teaching companion left to go on his mission. I went to the airport to see him off. When he got on the plane, I felt a nervous excitement about doing the same thing. But instead of feeling afraid, I had a feeling of peace. I concluded that these feelings were the answer to my prayers. I knew the Lord



wanted me to serve a mission. From that day on, I had a firm desire to go on a mission when I was 19.

I was called to serve in the California San Jose Mission, and I have just recently returned.

My years there were the best of my life. I found that even though I was far away from my family, when I had hard times or needed help, the Spirit of the Lord comforted and helped me. I came to know and love my Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. I could say with certainty that the Book of Mormon is true. My testimony of living prophets and of the Restoration grew. I came to love the people I was serving. And I learned that the gift of tongues is real—because I learned to speak and teach in English.

What I thought would be a big sacrifice became the greatest blessing in my life. ■

Isaí Limón Torres is a member of the Matamoros First Ward, Matamoros Mexico Stake.

PRESIDENT, I'M READY FOR MY MISSIONARY INTERVIEW!



While I was serving as mission president, an amazing thing happened. A young deacon knocked on my door and told me he had come to fill out his missionary application.

BY WILLIAM D. OSWALD
Second Counselor in the Sunday School
General Presidency

One Sunday while I was serving as mission president in Vladivostok, Russia, a rather amazing thing happened. I had gone to my office to gather some materials when a 13-year-old young man, Vladimir, whose friends call him Vova, knocked on the door. Vova is a deacon in the Vladivostok First Branch. He asked to visit with me in my office. He was accompanied by Sister Olga Vyachyeslavna Dryagunova. This sister speaks wonderful English, and the boy had asked her if she would act as his interpreter. Vova speaks no English, and I speak only a little Russian.

Vova had been an orphan, abandoned at birth because he was born with a cleft palate. The birth defect has since been partially repaired, leaving a scar. He was adopted by a wonderful woman who has treated him as her son. The boy is always happy. He has a smile on his face and a wonderful countenance when he passes the sacrament. He wears the mantle of a deacon as well as any

boy I have ever known. He regularly bears a sweet and brief testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel. He is everything that a deacon ought to be.

At our meeting Vova spoke Russian and Sister Olga interpreted. She told me that Vova had come to fill out his application to serve as a full-time missionary. I asked, without a hint of a smile, “How old is he?”

She asked and he answered, “Nearly 14.”

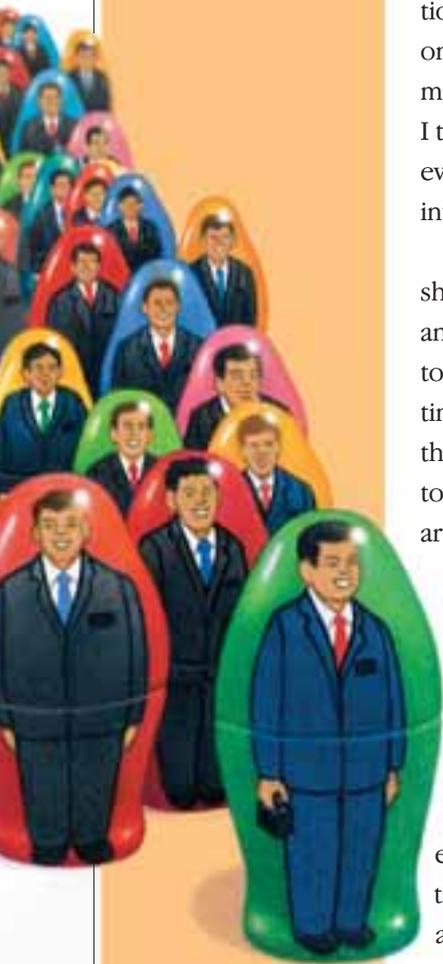
Retaining my composure, I said, “Does he understand that he needs to be 19 before he can serve a mission?”

She responded, “He does, but he does not want to be tardy in getting his application in.”

I assured them that there was still time before we needed to send his missionary application to Moscow and then on to Salt Lake City. Neither the branch president nor I would forget when it was time for him to fill out his forms. I walked to the wall displaying pictures of the 44 missionaries then serving in the Russia Vladivostok Mission. I told Vova I was worried that the missionary papers might be returned if it appeared that I was recommending a 13-year-old boy for a mission.



What would happen if, in five years' time when this young deacon is ready to serve his mission, there were another 2,000 Russian deacons preparing to serve just like he is?



Then I explained that since he was in my office where I conducted interviews with the missionaries, I thought it appropriate to ask him the questions that will be asked of him when he is 19, just to make sure that he was currently worthy to serve a mission. I then went through all the worthiness questions as though Vova were one of my full-time missionaries but tactfully passed over the boy-girl questions, thinking them premature. Besides, I didn't want to embarrass Sister Olga.

Vova answered all my questions with the appropriate responses and with the wisdom of a boy twice his age. Upon further reflection, I guessed that he may have even asked one of the elders what interview questions he might anticipate from the mission president. I then told Vova that he could come back every six months, and we would repeat the interview process.

He then asked with some concern what he should say to let me know he was ready for another interview six months from now. I said to him, through Sister Olga, that it was now time for him to have his first English lesson. I then said slowly, "This is what you should say to me, 'President, I am ready for my missionary interview.'"

He repeated the important words he needed to know three times.

As I was ready to end the interview, Vova asked Sister Olga to ask me one last question. "President," he said, "what advice do you have for me to prepare for my mission?"

I was a bit taken aback. Few of my mature elders would have the wisdom to ask such a timely question. I pondered for a moment and then told him to do three things: First, I told him to read the scriptures each day. Second, I suggested that he pray to his

Heavenly Father each morning and evening. Third, I told him to practice his English.

I confess that the last suggestion was a little selfish on my part, as I was thinking how I would enjoy speaking with him in English and asking him questions about the things of his heart. I suggested he attend the free English classes taught by the missionaries, but he said his mother would not allow him to be out after dark. We agreed that he would work harder each day in his English class at school.

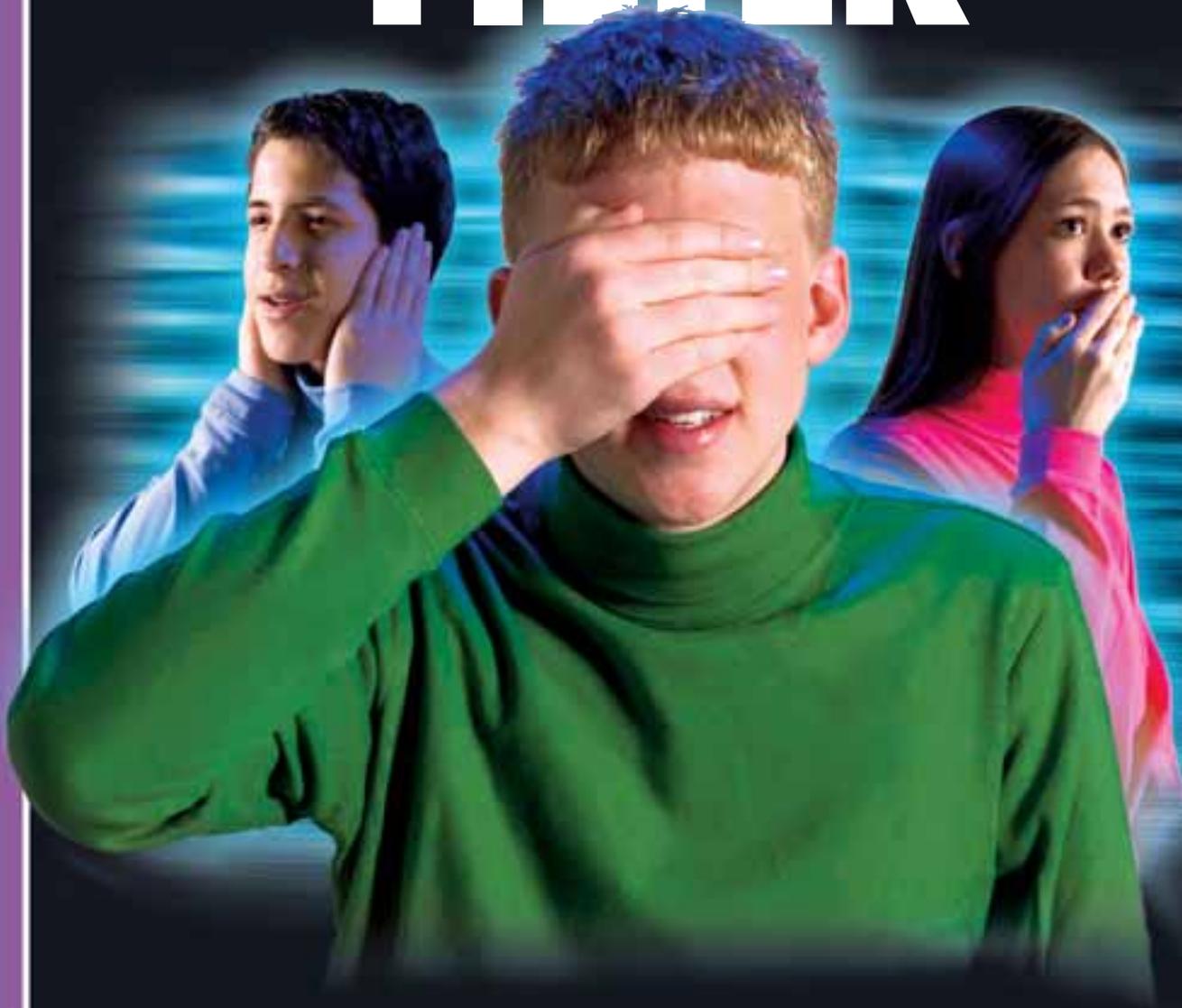
Later, when I saw the deacons in the hall after church, I asked Vova if he would like to repeat the phrase he needed to use to ask for his next interview. This he did in a fine manner. Then to my great surprise, I learned that each of the other deacons in the branch had also learned the magic words. Each one repeated while looking right at me, "President, I am ready for my missionary interview!"

Oh, the power of example! The joy of one willing to open his mouth and share the things he had learned with another was something I was trying to get all of my missionaries to experience! These Russian deacons were on the road to perfection.

As I sat at my desk, I wondered what could be done in advancing the missionary work in this vast land of Russia if, in five years' time when Vova is 19 years old and ready to serve his mission, there were another 2,000 young Russian deacons preparing just like Vova. The answer, of course, is found in Alma 57. There a prophet named Helaman had 2,000 young men, and he was able to perform miracles with boys of great faith and devotion who had been taught by their mothers (see v. 21).

Think how blessed the mission president will be who gets Vova as one of his stripling missionaries. ■

FREE FILTER



SELF-DISCIPLINE—IT'S THE ONLY SURE WAY
TO BLOCK THE EVIL YOU MIGHT SEE, HEAR,
OR THINK OF REPEATING.
(SEE MOSIAH 4:30.)

Strengthening Future Mothers



We must inspire young women to want to be wonderful wives, mothers, and homemakers.

BY SUSAN W. TANNER
Young Women General President

Several years ago my husband and I asked our children what they liked about the recent general conference. Our then-16-year-old daughter was elated. She said, “I loved it! I loved hearing inspired, intelligent prophets and leaders affirm motherhood.” Then she told us that this was one of the disturbing anxieties in her life: “I just don’t hear it from anyone—not at seminary, not in Young Women, and definitely not at school; nowhere except at home.”

I don’t know if her experience is similar to that of other young women, but I suspect it is. I know that for some time it has not been vogue for women to extol the virtues of motherhood or for young women to express the desires of their hearts to be mothers.

I particularly noticed this some time ago when I talked with a group of about 20 Laurels whom I had never met before. I asked them what their goals were. The first few mentioned educational goals such as getting a PhD; some said they would like to go on a mission—all worthy goals. Finally one girl timidly expressed the desire to be a mother. Then a few more girls talked about other goals. After one more girl mentioned motherhood, the rest of them joined in. But it was quite courageous for those first two girls to

admit they wanted to be mothers. And this was in a very safe setting.

Besides the fact that admitting this goal may set a girl up for ridicule, it may also set her up for feeling like a failure. She knows she doesn’t have complete control over achieving this goal, which may make her feel vulnerable in stating it. It is also a goal that requires great unselfishness; it may require setting aside other more glamorous goals. I am sensitive to the many issues facing our young women, but I still feel that I must teach eternal principles.

I would like to affirm motherhood, to talk about the newest phrase in our Young Women theme: “be prepared to strengthen home and family.” I will address five things we as parents and leaders must do for our young women.

1. We must teach young women how to strengthen their current homes and families.

All families, from the best to the most troubled, are in need of strengthening. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “If we think other families don’t have any difficulties or any problems,

We must encourage young women to serve their families and nurture their relationships with family members.

we just don't know them well enough."¹ We need to encourage girls to turn to their mothers and fathers not only to receive help but to give help.

Several of our general board members grew up in homes with parents who were less active in the Church. One of them had a wise Young Women leader who counseled her to be with her family when they did recreational things on Sunday but to maintain her personal standards. So if they went to a swimming club, she would go with them to visit with them, but she herself would not go swimming. She was able to build a tender relationship with her family.

I know a young woman who ruefully saw her brother associating with the wrong group of friends. After praying fervently for him one night, she followed an impression to pick him up from the party he was attending. She drove around with him for some time just talking to him about who he was as a member of their family and who he was as a member of Heavenly Father's family and of his responsibility to honor those identities. He was able to turn things around in his life, partially because of the love of his sister.

Youth often feel lonely or





We can help young women see that homemaking skills benefit them spiritually as well as temporally. Making a home appealing physically will create an atmosphere that is conducive to the Spirit.

isolated either socially or spiritually. Friendships and close ties with their brothers and sisters are the best antidote. One teenager was rejected by a group of girls at her school. Her brothers and sisters eased her sorrow by including her in their activities and giving her extra doses of love.

All these are examples of young women who strengthened their homes and families. Serving families is a way of covenant keeping, and covenant keeping reaps the promised blessing of having the Spirit in our lives. We must help our young women begin where they are, in whatever kind of family they are in, to strengthen their homes and families.

2. We must prepare young women with skills, both temporal and spiritual, that will bless their future homes.

I believe that one way we can arm our girls spiritually is to help them develop temporal skills or talents. We know that to the Lord all things are spiritual (see D&C 29:34).

Homemaking skills are becoming a lost art. I worry about this. When we lose the homemakers in a society, we create an emotional homelessness much like street homelessness, with similar problems of despair, drugs, immorality, and lack of self-worth. In a publication called *The Family in America*, Bryce Christensen writes that the number of homeless people on the street “does not begin to reveal the scope of homelessness in America.

For since when did the word home signify merely physical shelter, or homelessness merely the lack of such shelter? . . . Home [signifies] not only shelter, but also emotional commitment, security, and belonging. Home has connoted not just a necessary roof and warm radiator, but a place sanctified by the abiding ties of wedlock, parenthood, and family obligation; a place demanding sacrifice and devotion, but promising loving care and warm acceptance.”²

So we must teach homemaking skills, including practical ones such as cooking, sewing, budgeting, and beautifying. We must let young women know that homemaking skills are honorable and can help them spiritually as well as temporally. Making a home appealing physically will encourage loved ones to want to be there and will help create the kind of atmosphere that is conducive to the Spirit.

Sunday lessons, Mutual, and Personal Progress are all programs that provide times and ways to teach these necessary lessons. I think of my own experience as a Laurel adviser. The young women in my stewardship had one year until they would be out in the world on their own. I asked them what they needed to know to be ready for that independence. From their list of needs—balancing a checkbook, applying for colleges and jobs, cooking something besides cookies, and so forth—we planned our Mutual activities. I no longer had any problems with attendance, because we were preparing skills the young women needed to fulfill their important future roles. I could see that in the process of learning temporal skills, some spiritual skills were developing simultaneously. There was more genuine friendship and concern for one another. Mothers told me that the spiritual tenor of their homes

improved as the young women shared some of their new-found skills.

This is what we as parents and leaders must do. We must help young women develop practical and spiritual skills that will bless their future homes.

3. We must inspire young women to want to be wonderful wives, mothers, and homemakers.

The two most powerful tools we have to inspire our young women are our examples and our sincere words.

I've seen many inspirational Young Women leaders who exemplify living their roles with nobility and joy. I remember the powerful example of my Laurel adviser, who was faithful in rearing her children in the Church even though her husband was less active. I know a young woman whose parents weren't active in the Church. She was impressionable and teachable and learned well from the examples of her leaders. She learned how to fast and how to hold family home evening by participating with her teachers in these activities.

My best and most consistent example in learning the joys of homemaking and mothering was my own mother. She told me many times every day how much she treasured being a mother and homemaker, and then she lived those words in every action. She sang as she folded laundry; she exulted over the clean smell in a freshly scrubbed bathroom; she taught me how to read and write, sew and cook, love and serve. Because she emanated the Spirit and the fruits of love, joy, peace, meekness, long-suffering, and temperance, I felt it, and I knew I wanted the same things in my life (see Galatians 5:22–23). Her example continues to teach me daily.

I want all of you to know the great joy I feel in being a mother, wife, and homemaker. We should express our joy often through our words, actions, and countenances.

Through our examples and our sincere words, we can help young women see the joy we find in being wives, mothers, and homemakers.

4. We must help young women have the courage to face a world that is desecrating families and family values.

It has been alarming recently to feel the full fury of Satan's attack on families. Alternative lifestyles, abortion, cohabitation, divorce, immorality, and violence are issues that are screaming in our faces at every turn.

Even though I feel alarm, I do not feel fear. Fear is the opposite of faith. Paul told Timothy that "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

I feel faith in Jesus Christ and in His restored gospel upon the earth. I feel empowered by the truths of the gospel succinctly stated in the proclamation on the family. It takes a stand on each of the issues I just mentioned, as well as others. For example:

Alternative lifestyles: "Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose. . . .





With strong testimonies of the gospel and a firm knowledge of eternal doctrines, our young women will have the courage to face a world that is desecrating families.

“ . . . We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.”

Abortion: “We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God’s eternal plan.”

Cohabitation: “Marriage between man and woman is essential to [God’s] eternal plan.”

Divorce: “Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children.”

Immorality: “We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity . . . will one day stand accountable before God.”

Violence: “We warn that individuals who . . . abuse spouse or offspring . . . will one day stand accountable before God.”³

Not only do I feel strengthened by these truths, I feel loved by a wise and all-knowing Father in Heaven, who has blessed us with prophets and apostles to guide this Church. If our young women can know of His love, if they can have the truths of the gospel embedded in their hearts, they will not fear. With strong testimonies of the gospel and a firm knowledge of eternal doctrines, our young women will have the courage to face a world that is desecrating families.

5. We must emphasize to young women the eternal responsibility and privilege of motherhood and help them understand that each of them will make a home and influence children, whether or not they have the opportunity to have children in this life.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) talked about the influence of strong women of God upon the world: “Much of the major growth that is coming to the Church in the last days will come because many of the good women of the world (in whom there is often such an inner sense of spirituality) will be drawn to the Church in large numbers. This will happen to the degree that the women of the Church reflect righteousness and articulateness in their lives and to the degree that the women of the Church are seen as distinct

and different—in happy ways—from the women of the world.”⁴

We are distinct and different in happy ways because we know who we are eternally. We are all divinely appointed to these womanly roles of mothering and nurturing.

My cousin Carrie was a sterling example of a single sister who was a happy, generous, loving woman, blessing all with whom she associated. She was killed in an automobile accident when she was in her late 30s, but her final act of goodness prior to her untimely death was finishing scrapbooks for each of her nieces and nephews. She was fulfilling her mission to the degree that she could within her opportunities.

Now a word to you wonderful Young Women leaders. I hope the Spirit will help you know how to simplify—by that I mean to spend your valuable time on the important things. Teach principles and doctrines. Give love. Be examples. Make your teaching appealing and as simple as possible.

While what we as leaders are doing with young women now is crucial to saving this world, what we are doing with our eternal callings is of even greater importance. We also carry a mantle for our callings as wives, mothers, and homemakers. We need to call upon the Lord for His Spirit to be with us in these eternal roles. Our homes may be our last and only place of refuge, as our prophets are prophesying. I am pleading with you to be exemplary leaders but not to neglect your home responsibilities.

How significant are our roles as parents! How crucial are our roles as leaders! How imperative that we properly train the future righteous women of God! I know this work we are engaged in is His work, and I am grateful for the wonderful privilege we all have to be His instruments. ■

Adapted from a March 2004 Young Women open house address.

NOTES

1. “How Will Our Children Remember Us?” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 10.
2. “HomeLess America: What the Disappearance of the American Homemaker Really Means,” *The Family in America*, Jan. 2003, www.profam.org/pub/fia/xfia_1701.htm.
3. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
4. “The Role of Righteous Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 103–4.

Did You Know?

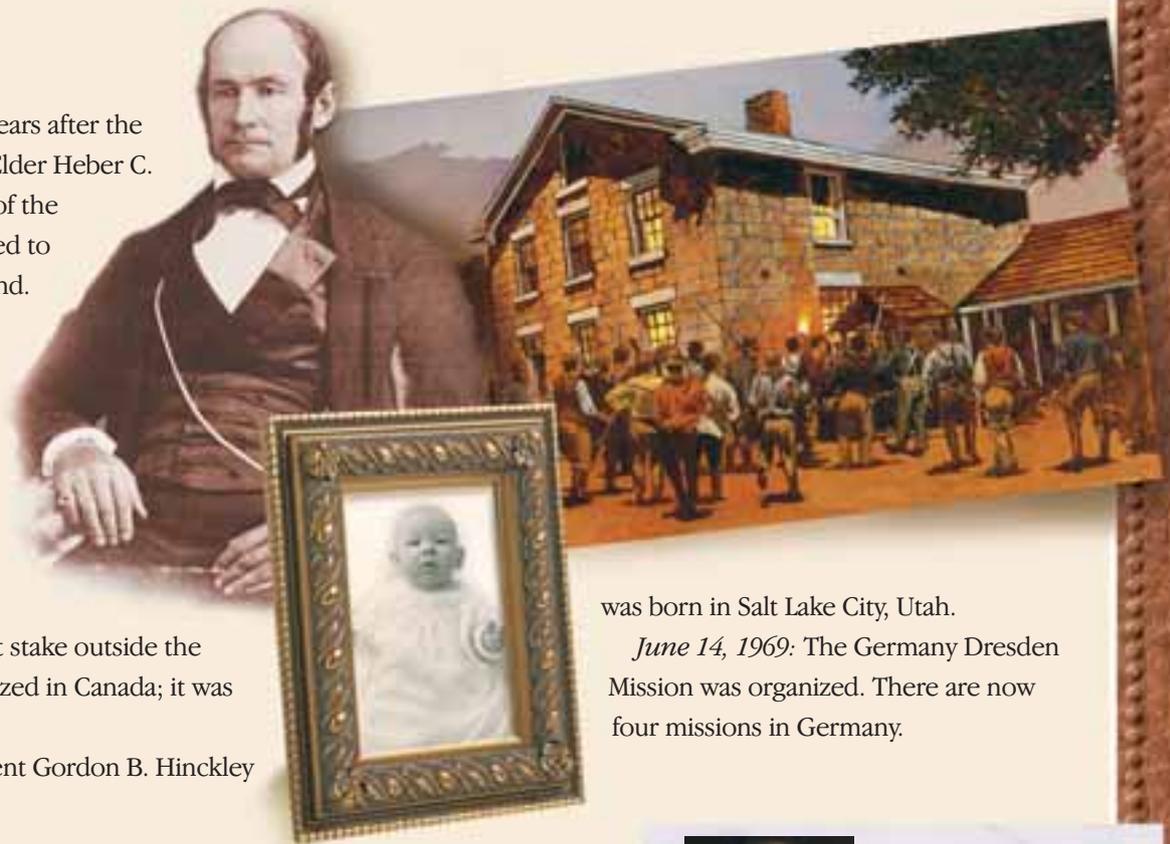
It Happened in June

June 4, 1837: Seven years after the Church was organized, Elder Heber C. Kimball of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was called to serve a mission to England. He was the first person called to an overseas mission.

June 27, 1844: The Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were killed by a mob at Carthage Jail.

June 9, 1895: The first stake outside the United States was organized in Canada; it was called the Alberta Stake.

June 23, 1910: President Gordon B. Hinckley



was born in Salt Lake City, Utah.

June 14, 1969: The Germany Dresden Mission was organized. There are now four missions in Germany.



should be able to do as they pleased. The young women argued that there should be reasonable limits.

There were also mother-daughter duets, followed by presentations on motherhood from both the young women and their mothers.

Heather Maloney, the mayor of Franklin, New Zealand, was one of the judges for the debate. She praised the mothers and daughters for their courage in public speaking and thanked the girls for their high standards and values and for the respect they showed in honoring their mothers.

Mothers and Daughters Trade Roles

How would you like to switch places with your mother for a day? That's what the young women from Manurewa and Pukekohe in New Zealand did for a role-reversal debate.

In the role reversal, the mothers argued that girls 12 years and older



LEADERSHIP TIP

"The most encompassing short course on leadership was given by the Savior himself: 'And he saith unto them, Follow me' (Matt. 4:19). A leader cannot ask of others what he is not willing to do himself. Our safest course is to follow the example of the Savior, and our security is to listen to and follow the direction of his prophet, the President of the Church."

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, "These I Will Make My Leaders," Ensign, Nov. 1980, 35.

FROM TOP: PHOTOGRAPH OF HEBER C. KIMBALL; MOB AT CARTHAGE JAIL, BY WILLIAM MAUGHAN; PHOTOGRAPH OF YOUNG GORDON B. HINCKLEY; PHOTOGRAPH OF FEET BY CHRISTINA SMITH; PHOTOGRAPH OF JAMES E. FAUST BY BUSATH PHOTOGRAPHY



Questions & Answers

“I try to read my scriptures every day, but I don’t really learn much. How can I get more out of my personal scripture study?”

L I A H O N A

That’s great that you are already reading the scriptures. However, if you’ve been “snacking” on the scriptures and want more spiritual nourishment, these ideas can help.

First, “feast upon the words of Christ” (2 Nephi 32:3). Begin your feast with prayer to thank the Lord for the scriptures and to invite the Spirit to teach and testify to you. Then dig in. You don’t have to start in 1 Nephi. You could start in 3 Nephi 11 and read about the Savior’s visit to the Nephites. Or start in D&C 133 and learn how to prepare for the Second Coming. Or go to the Topical Guide or Guide to the Scriptures to study a topic of interest, such as hope or repentance.

Second, when you first study a chapter, it may be helpful to read just to get the story line. See who and where the people are and what they are talking about. Then study again, looking for gospel teachings. Look for lessons you can apply to your problems, questions, and interests. For instance, what can you learn about

Daily scripture study brings the peaceful influence of the Spirit and many other blessings into your life.

Feast on the Lord’s word for a set amount of time each day.

Study one topic of interest, ask questions, ponder insights, and check the footnotes.

Pray before you read.

Apply the teachings to your life, and practice what you learn.

protecting yourself against evil as you read about the Nephites and Lamanites’ battles?

Third, you could study with a notebook and ask questions as you read: Who’s speaking? To whom? Why? Where? When? Jot down your testimony, insights, questions, topics to study, and so on.

Fourth, when you come to verses that are hard to understand, don’t give up. Pray for understanding. Ask your parents, Church leaders, or seminary teacher. Use the tools provided in the scriptures—especially the Topical Guide or the Guide to the Scriptures. Also, footnotes in the scriptures will give you cross-references and alternate and explanatory words. And *True to the Faith*—a book available at Church distribution centers—can help you study by topic.

Finally, set aside some quiet time each day to study the scriptures. Homework and novels can come after your first priority—studying the word of God. Daily scripture study will comfort, inspire, and bless you



with peace. It will invite the Spirit into your life, giving you strength to resist temptations. It will help you make better decisions as you learn where the Lord stands on certain issues. And it can teach you truths, which the Spirit will bring to your mind when you need them most.

Think of your scripture study as an appointment with the prophets. One day you meet with Captain Moroni. The next day you meet with Moses. Don't keep the prophets waiting. They have so much to share with you.

READERS



We should pray first and ask for Heavenly Father's Spirit to be with us during our reading. We will understand and learn more from it.

Litia A. Tuaniu, 18, Mesepa Second Ward, Pago Pago Samoa Mapusaga Stake

Before reading your scriptures, ask the Lord to help you understand. If you are still struggling, you can ask for help from someone such as your bishop or Sunday

School president. There are also seminary and institute books that explain the scriptures chapter by chapter. Most important, don't stop reading.

Guillaume Delattre, 18, Mouscron Ward, Lille France Stake

To make daily scripture study more beneficial, I look up a specific topic that I may be struggling with or having questions about. That way, I can more easily apply what I read to my current situation.

Camron Lee, 17, Meadowlark First Ward, Spanish Fork Utah East Stake

Scripture reading should include understanding what we have read, pondering over it, and finally practicing what we have learned. Practicing what we have learned helps us more than just reading.

Felix Ewusi, 17, Abura Ward, Cape Coast Ghana Stake



I get more out of my personal scripture study by searching diligently, pondering, and praying before I read. I invite the Spirit to help me understand. By the Holy Spirit we

will know the truth of all things (see Moroni 10:5).

Sonny Nelson C. Yap Jr., 16, City Branch,

Ozamiz Philippines District

I use the seminary manuals with my reading. They explain the political situation of the place, note some things we should give attention to, and tell about interesting details. My study is much better with the manual.

Ramon Alexandre de Oliveira, 16, Jardim Taboão Ward,

São Paulo Brazil Taboão Stake



When I started to read the scriptures, I did not understand them. My parents suggested that I read at least one chapter and pray. After thinking about what the chapter is saying, I try

to apply what I have read to a real-life situation.

Ekaterina Tufanova, 12, Shakhty Branch,

Russia Rostov-na-Donu Mission

Read every single day. Pray before you read so that you will already have the Spirit with you to understand the scriptures more fully. To quote my seminary teacher, "If you're not using your footnotes, you're just reading, not studying."

Julie Dunford, 15, Nazareth Ward,

Scranton Pennsylvania Stake



I t is better to have a set amount of time to give scriptural study each day than to have a set amount of chapters to read. Sometimes we find that the study of a single verse will occupy the whole time."

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), "Reading the Scriptures," *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 64.

I don't always understand, but I read and reread. I pray before and after to ask the Lord to help me understand and put it into practice. I try to share what I have learned with other people.

Marília Rodrigues de Oliveira, 18,

Bandeirantes Ward, Belo Horizonte Brazil Stake



Before my mission, I found it hard to find time to study until I set a personal goal of reading at least a half hour to an hour every night, no matter what. Acquiring good study

habits has helped immensely on my mission.

Elder Taylor Housley, 21, Brazil Brasília Mission

I have learned to have a question in mind, search for and then ponder the answer I find, write my feelings down, close with a prayer, and then apply the answer in my life.

Caley Porter, 17, Rose Second Ward, Blackfoot Idaho Stake

Liahona and readers' answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Youth readers: Send your answer, along with your name, birth date, address, ward and stake (or branch and district), and a photograph to:

Questions and Answers 7/05

50 East North Temple Street, Floor 24

Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA

Or e-mail: cur-liahona-imag@ldschurch.org

Please respond by July 15, 2005.

QUESTION

"What is the best way to introduce the Book of Mormon to a friend who is a member of another faith?" ■

Rejoice in the Restoration of Temple Ordinances and Covenants



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

D&C 124:40, 42: “Let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein. . . . I will show unto my servant Joseph all things pertaining to this house.”

Why Do You Rejoice in Temple Worship?

President George Q. Cannon (1827–1901), First Counselor in the First Presidency: “Every Temple . . . lessens the power of Satan on the earth, and increases the power of God and Godliness, moves the heavens in mighty power in our behalf, invokes and calls down upon us the blessings of the Eternal Gods” (*Millennial Star*, Nov. 12, 1877, 743).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “Just as our Redeemer gave His life as a vicarious sacrifice for all men, and in so doing became our Savior, even so we, in a small measure, when we engage in proxy work in the temple, become as saviors to those on the other side who have no means of advancing unless something is done

in their behalf by those on earth. . . . I encourage you to take greater advantage of this blessed privilege. It will refine your natures. It will peel off the selfish shell in which most of us live. It will literally bring a sanctifying element into our lives” (“Closing Remarks,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 104).

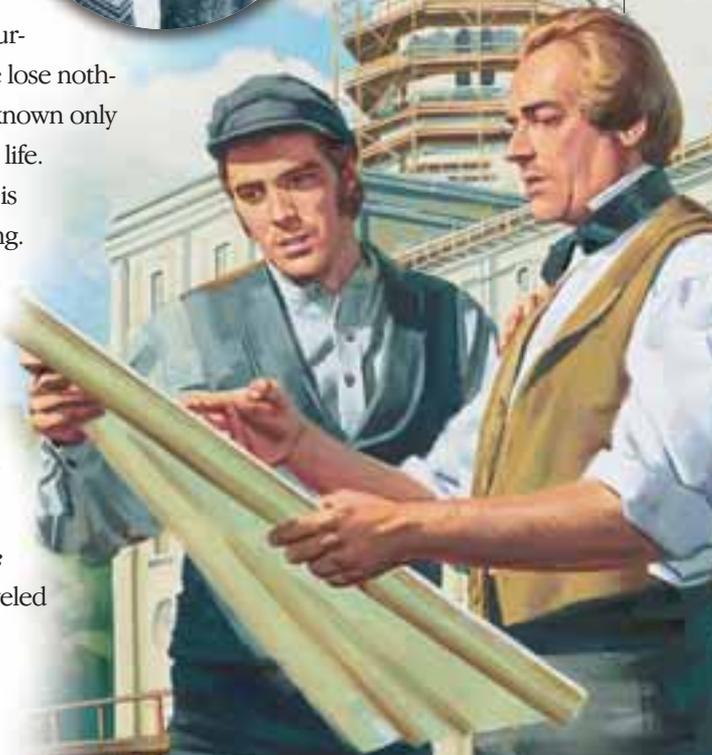
How Can Understanding Ordinances and Covenants Help You Find Joy?

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“We need to remember that a covenant is a promise. A covenant made with God should be regarded not as restrictive but as protective. Covenants with Him protect us from danger. . . . When we choose to deny ourselves of all ungodliness, we lose nothing of value and gain glory known only to those who obtain eternal life. Keeping a temple covenant is not constraining but enabling. It elevates us beyond limits of our own perspective and power” (“Prepare for Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2002, 21).

Anne C. Pingree, second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency: “My husband and I had traveled

to one of the most remote locations in our mission so he could conduct temple recommend interviews. . . . After all the interviews were completed, as my husband and I drove back along that sandy jungle trail, we were stunned when we saw . . . two sisters still walking. We realized they had trekked from their village—a distance of 18 miles [29 km] round trip—just to obtain a temple recommend they knew they would never have the privilege of using. These Nigerian Saints believed the counsel of President Howard W. Hunter: ‘It would please the Lord for every adult member to be worthy of—and to carry—a current temple recommend, even if proximity to a temple does not allow immediate or frequent use of it’” (“Seeing the Promises Afar Off,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 13). ■



AT THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

Youth in Ecuador enjoy living at the center of things—like planet earth. The gospel helps teens put the Savior at the center of their lives.

BY MARVIN K. GARDNER
Church Magazines

Opposite page: Visiting the Mitad del Mundo (Middle of the World) monument in Quito.

From left: Jhon Tobar, Christian Lizano, Diana Flores, Sariah Moya, Luis Miguel Meza, Alejandro Flores, María Alejandra Cabeza de Vaca, and Ivanessa Romero.

What's it like living at the middle of the world, where the distance to the North Pole is the same as to the South Pole, and where you can stand with one foot in the Northern Hemisphere and the other in the Southern? It might be easy to start feeling you're the center of everything.

But Latter-day Saint teenagers who live near the equator in the South American nation of Ecuador know that the real center of everything is Jesus Christ. And they are keeping both feet on the Lord's side of the line.

The Strength of Youth in Quito

The capital city of Quito has a little bit of everything—from traditional colonial architecture to modern high rises. Navigating

busy city streets can be a challenge, as can steering through the temptations of life. For many teens, the booklet *For the Strength of Youth* has become a road map.

"I appreciate the part in *For the Strength of Youth* that says we need to dress appropriately," says María Alejandra Cabeza de Vaca, 12. "One day at school we were allowed to dress any way we wanted. I felt really bad because some of my friends dressed immodestly. I said to one of them, 'Tomorrow I'm going to bring you something that will help you a lot.' I gave her a copy of *For the Strength of Youth*. She read it and said she felt it was true and didn't want to dress immodestly anymore. It's good to share what we have so the world knows the good things we're learning."

Alejandro Flores, 13, discovered the importance of doing as well as knowing. "Last Sunday," he says, "my grandmother asked me to teach a family home evening lesson about dress standards, using *For the Strength of Youth*. Some of my cousins and I had the habit of following worldly styles, and I felt uncomfortable giving the lesson. But now my cousins and I are doing better in the

*Youth in Quito, a busy city on the equator,
find that the gospel helps them
navigate through life.*



ALONE NO MORE

“For a long time,” says Jhon Tobar, 17, of Quito, “I let myself be carried along by my friends, and I didn’t have a good relationship with my parents. But I have learned that if you lose the trust of your parents and brothers and sisters, it’s like being alone. I just had an interview with my bishop this morning—my bishop is my dad. I can say now that I have no better friend than my own father. I love him a lot. He is my best example.”



way we dress.” His lesson and example helped prepare his cousins for an important event. “They’re getting baptized next week!” he says.

For Christian Lizano, 14, one of the most important topics in *For the Strength of Youth* is service. “Giving service should be our standard,” he says, “even something as simple as giving up a seat on a bus. Simple things can say a lot about members of the Church.”

When Ivanessa Romero, 15, found herself starting to follow the example of friends in using bad language, she knew she needed to change. One day she told them, “From now on, whenever anybody says a bad word, I’m going to charge a penny.” After a few days, she had collected four dollars! Her friends said, “Iva is going to be a millionaire!” Using *For the Strength of Youth*, Ivanessa encouraged her friends to clean up their language. “They’re making progress,” she says. In the meantime, she learned something about example. “I realized my friends are looking for the light. Every little thing we say or do is an influence on others.”

Saría Moya, 15, became friends with a young woman who said she and her family were atheists. But she admired Saría’s standards and her willingness to be true to them amid criticism. They talked about the gospel many times, Saría gave her a copy of the Book of Mormon, they prayed together, and Saría’s friend went to church with her. “Yesterday she came to a Young Women activity, and we sang a hymn,” Saría says. “Afterward she told me, ‘I do believe in God.’ I realized that my example had helped someone find Heavenly Father.”

Over the past couple of years, Luis Miguel Meza, 17, has begun feeling distant from the friends he has known since his first year in school. “They began to smoke and drink and

put pressure on me to do so,” he says. “I had to be strong in the face of lots of criticism.” He prayerfully studied the section in *For the Strength of Youth* on choosing friends wisely. “As time passed, I had opportunities to become friends with people who don’t drink or smoke and who respect me for my standards. I still see my old friends, and we say hi to each other. But because I was willing to make a sacrifice, Heavenly Father was there to give me a hand.”

At Church in Otavalo. Front (from left): Laura Córdova, Jéniffer Santacruz, Tamía Moreta. Back: Zasha Maldonado, David Tabi, Jesús Ruiz, Armando Arellano, and Yolanda Santillán. Right: Jéniffer proudly wears her Young Women pin.



“I used to do the right things out of habit,” says Raquel Alonzo, 17. “I was raised in the Church, and because I had been taught to choose the right, I did. But I didn’t really feel it in my heart. One day while talking to my mom, I truly felt the Lord’s Spirit.” Her mother told her about huge sacrifices she had made as a young woman to be faithful to the gospel and to serve a mission, even though she was going against her father’s wishes. “She said the only reason she is so happy now is that she was smart enough to



Even though life in Otavalo is quieter than in the big cities, the struggles are just as real.

cling to the Savior throughout her life. At that moment, my testimony grew more than ever. I am a child of God, and Heavenly Father loves me. Even if the world falls in on me, He is going to help me.”

The Power of Prayer in Otavalo

Life in the mountain valley of Otavalo is not as hectic as in Quito. Many Latter-day Saints in Otavalo weave and embroider beautiful fabric for items sold throughout the world. Many do their work by hand. Most of the people here speak Quichua at home and Spanish elsewhere. Many walk an hour or more each way to church. Although the youth wear uniforms to school, they proudly wear traditional attire to church.

But even though life may be quieter here, the struggles are just as real. Young men and women find that it takes great effort to stay close to the Lord. By making that effort, they have learned the power of prayer.

“When my mom didn’t have any work,” says Jéniffer

Santacruz, 12, “I prayed that she would find a job fast. The Lord heard my prayer, and within a day or two she found a good job.”

Perhaps the most fervent prayer Tamía Moreta, 13, has uttered was when her mother was having problems delivering a new baby. “I prayed,” she says, “and Heavenly Father answered my prayer. My mother had a cesarean section. My little brother is now one year old, and he and my mother are healthy.”

Before she was 10 years old, Laura Córdova, now 15, prayed for a testimony. “I heard others say that the Book of Mormon and the Church were true,” she says. “So I prayed to know for myself. And the Lord gave me my testimony.”

Zasha Maldonado, 15, remembers being frightened by a terrible rainstorm that was flooding her home. As family members were frantically trying to save their possessions, one of the children said they ought to say a prayer. “We all knelt down in the water and pleaded with Heavenly Father to help us. After a few minutes, the rain started to die down. Heavenly Father answered our prayer. With Him, nothing is impossible.”

Prayer also helps in less dramatic ways. Jesús Ruiz, 14, says he often turns to the Lord for help as he weaves fabric. “Sometimes I don’t remember the patterns,” he says, “and I ask the Lord to help me. He always does.”

The same applies to schoolwork. “When I have a test at school,” says Armando Arellano, 16, “I ask Heavenly Father

to help me remember what I have learned. He opens my mind and brings back what I've studied."

Yolanda Santillán, 17, says her most sincere prayers were "that someday I would be able to go to the temple with my family to be sealed. Heavenly Father answered those prayers. We did go to the temple! Now we can be together always."

It can be a challenge to live the standards that allow you to attend the temple. But prayer has helped David Tabi, 17, deal with the pressures. "My classmates smoke, drink, and do all those things," he says. "They always invite me to join them. I don't pay attention to them. I try to find other friends. There's a guy in my class who is also a member. We support each other."

Finding Friends in Guayaquil

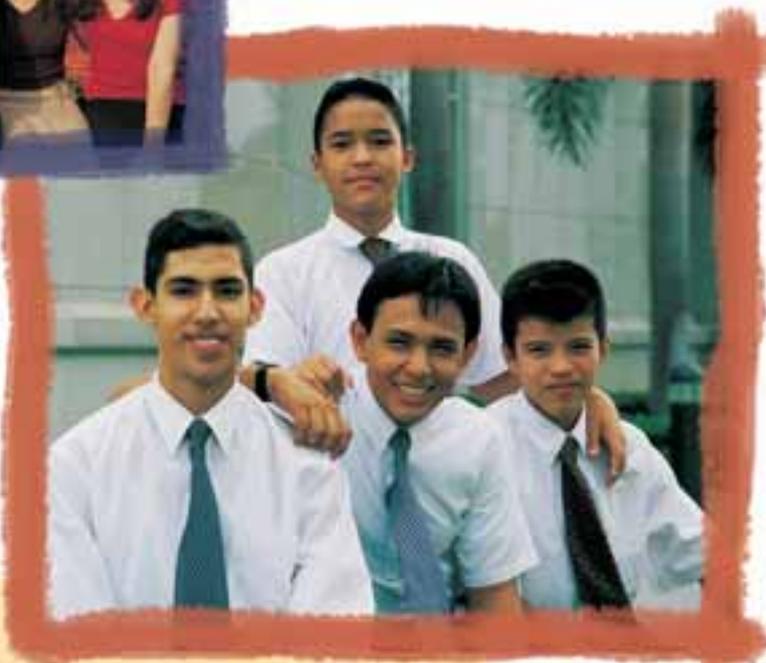
Guayaquil is a bustling seaport city. A beautiful new temple overlooks a part of the city, shining luminously at night. Another radiant light is the warm friendship you receive from teens when you come here—the same genuine friendship they give anyone needing a lift.

When Gabriela Aguirre, 17, first moved to Guayaquil, she felt alone. "I didn't know anybody here, and I felt sad because people at school seemed distant. But I found friends at church! There are 14 young women, and we're

united. We get along well with the young men too. My true friends are my Church friends."

"When the young men and young women in our ward get together," says Tatiana Alarcón, 16, "it's a good experience because we're so united. We're more than friends—we're like brothers and sisters. We take care of each other."

And then they reach out to others needing friendship. They recently visited a home for the elderly. "I could really feel the pure love of Christ,"



On the temple grounds in Guayaquil. Top (from left): Katherine España, Tatiana Alarcón, Estefanía Gómez, Grimaneza Roldán, and Gabriela Aguirre. Above: Olmedo Roldán, Jared Rivera (standing), Alex Arancibia, and José Olivares.

A beautiful temple helps youth stay on course in the busy seaport city of Guayaquil.

says Tatiana. “We showed affection to the people and sang to them, and they were happy. They asked us when we were coming back.”

At a party the youth gave for underprivileged children, “the children were happy with the activity and with the gifts we gave them,” says Katherine España, 14.

“We love to get together for parties, activities, and dances,” says Estefanía Gómez, 17. “And we also get together to do the Lord’s work. The bishop has called many of us as ward missionaries. My companion is my sister, and we encourage new converts and less-active members. When the missionaries teach a family that has a teenager, they ask us to help. We visit them, fellowship them, and invite them to activities. That way the young converts already have friends when they come to church.”

In wards with fewer youth, the young men and young women still reach out. “I’m the only active young man in my ward,” says José Olivares, 14. “So I go with a brother in the elders quorum to visit the young men who aren’t coming.”

“As the deacons quorum president,” says Jared Rivera, 13, “I encourage the deacons to bring others to church because we all need the Lord’s help to fight temptations. We come to church before sacrament meeting starts and have a prayer that the sacrament will go well that day. And we visit quorum members who don’t come to church. We want to find out how they are.”

Helping at the sacrament table is an important way of serving the members of his ward, says Alex Arancibia, 17. “Every time I kneel to say the sacrament prayer, I feel good knowing that I’m helping others renew their covenants. It’s a feeling that the Lord approves of what I’m doing. Thinking about

my Sunday responsibilities helps me make the right choices during the week.”

Olmedo Roldán, 18, sees missionary work as a natural result of friendship. “A few days after I was baptized,” he says, “I read in the *Liabona* about a young man who helped the full-time missionaries even though he had just been baptized. So the next day I helped the missionaries too! And I loved it. Now the bishop has called me to serve as a ward missionary, and I’m preparing to serve a full-time mission. It was through missionary work that we found the Church. A lot of people need the Church and are looking for it. We can help them find it.”

“I don’t have a calling,” says Olmedo’s younger sister, Grimaneza, 14, “but I try to help by fellowshipping. I was new in the Church just 14 months ago, and I know how important it is to have friends support you. When there’s a new girl at church, I sit next to her, get to know her, and encourage her to continue learning about the gospel. And I invite her to come to Young Women with me.”

Prepared to Face Everything That Comes

“As youth, we sometimes want to change the world,” says Diana Flores, 17, of Quito. “But I think we need to look a little closer to home and start with changing ourselves.” Diana and other youth in Ecuador are grateful for the ways the gospel teaches them to put Jesus Christ and His Church at the center of their lives. “Heavenly Father loves us very much,” she says, “and He has given us all the tools we need, such as the scriptures, the gospel, the temple, our families. We know we are His children and that we are here to progress. We can be at peace, knowing that we are being prepared to face everything that comes to us.” ■



JUST A GET-TOGETHER?

“One night I had to make a choice between a party at the Church and another party where no one was a Church member,” says Estefanía Gómez, 17, of Guayaquil. “I decided I didn’t want to go to the Church party. When I got to the other party, there was a lot of cigarette smoke and everybody was drinking. I really felt bad—and I felt lonely. The One who I try to keep with me, the Holy Ghost, stayed outside because He doesn’t go into unclean places. After 10 minutes, I phoned my brother to take me to the other party.”

“We need to take advantage of the parties and friends we have in the Church. A lot of our friends may be at other parties, and they may say it’s just a little get-together. But it’s not just a get-together. It usually turns into something else—and that’s not good for anything!”



Blessed

by the

Word of Wisdom



BY ELDER MASAYUKI NAKANO

Area Authority Seventy
Asia North Area

When I was investigating the gospel before my baptism at age 15, I learned about the Word of Wisdom, as revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1833 (see D&C 89). I took it upon myself to obey this commandment as a sign of my obedience to God, despite any social pressure I might face.

In the Japanese business world, it is customary for sales representatives to entertain prospective customers at nightclubs and bars. Accordingly, alcohol is an integral part of professional life for many people. But I have seen the consumption of alcohol become a stumbling block. In some cases it leads to serious illnesses. Many businesspeople spend so much of their time working and entertaining after hours that they neglect their families. Often excessive alcohol consumption eventually results in a loss of status at work and a ruined career.

When I was 28, I was meeting with the manager of the trade department of a large

corporation and coffee was served. I politely declined, explaining that I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and that I do not partake of alcoholic beverages, coffee, tea, or tobacco. The trade manager quickly accepted this and even praised me for my faith.

Ever since then, whenever I have needed to discuss business with my customers, I have taken them only to restaurants for dinner. I have never been asked to accompany them to bars. During the Christmas season I invite my customers to Christmas dinner shows that celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. I have been able to share the gospel frequently on these occasions.

It is widely known at my company and within our industry that I am a member of the Church, and I believe this knowledge has contributed to my success at work. I believe firmly in the promise the Lord gives to those who will obey His law:

“And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones;

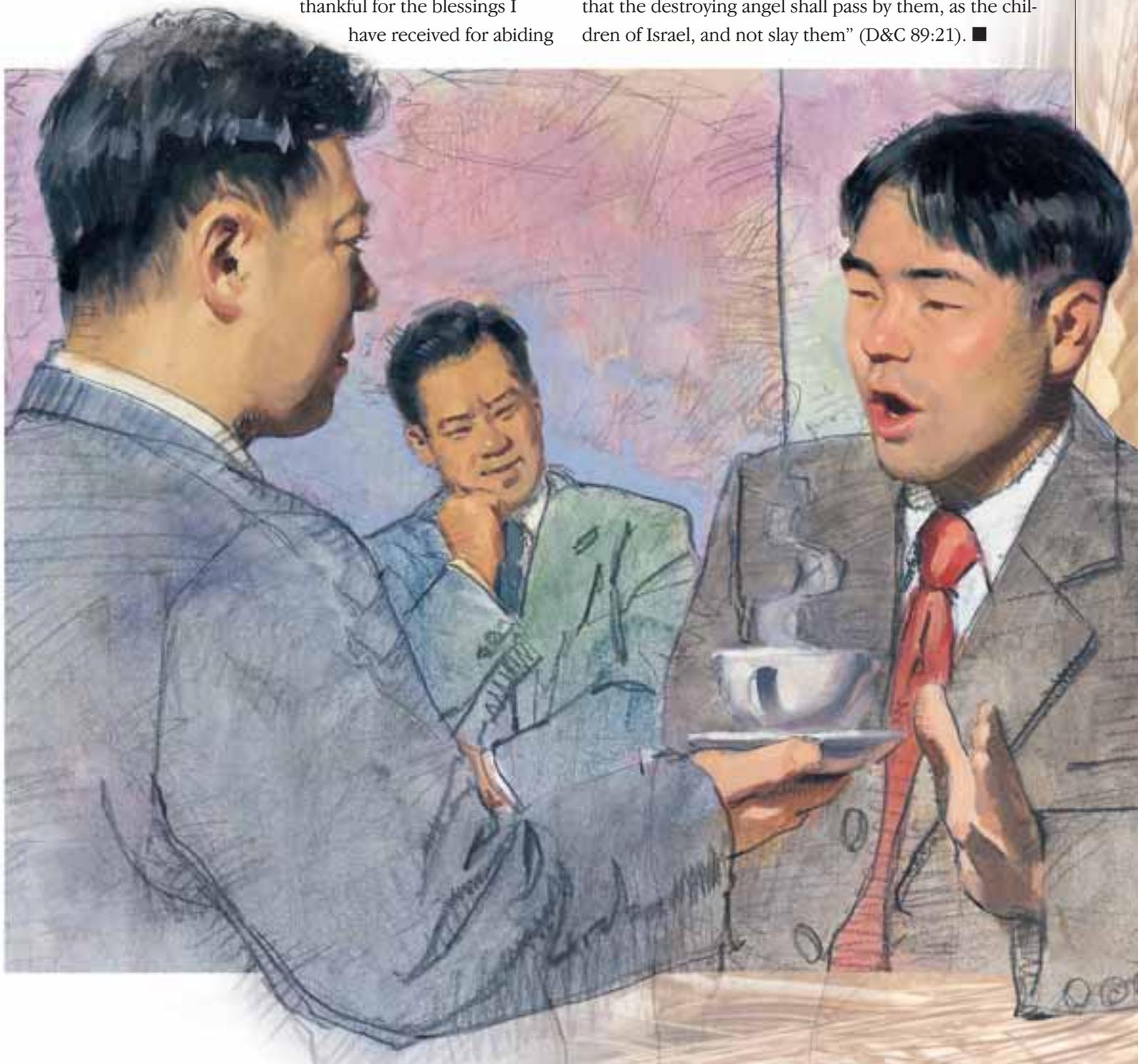
I took it upon myself to obey the Word of Wisdom as a sign of my obedience to God, despite any social pressure I might face.

“And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

“And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint” (D&C 89:18–20).

My testimony of the Word of Wisdom is strong. I am thankful for the blessings I have received for abiding

by this principle. It is my conviction that as we obey the Word of Wisdom—despite any pressure we may face from those around us—we can become worthy to receive the blessing promised by the Lord at the end of this great revelation: “And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them” (D&C 89:21). ■



Family Home Evening

as a Missionary Tool

A night with the family can be a simple way to share the gospel with others.

Many Latter-day Saints are looking for ways to become better missionaries to family members or friends. Here some members describe how they followed the prophets' counsel to hold family home evening and found that it is not only a way to build stronger family relationships, but also a way to bring a glimpse of the gospel to others.

The Only Member

Being the only member of the Church in my family was not easy. I longed for a way to share all I had learned about the Church with my family but feared they would accuse me of trying to convert them. I struggled with doubts. I knew the Lord wanted me to share the gospel with my family, but for more than a year I was too afraid to suggest that we have family home evening.

Finally, with my heart racing in fear, I asked the Lord for courage and strength to invite my family to have family home evening. To my surprise they said an enthusiastic "Yes!" to the suggestion, and our relationship has never been better.

Through family home evening I have been able to share the gospel and my testimony with everyone from my mother to my three-year-old niece. What a blessing it has been to read the Book of Mormon with them and hear

that they believe what they are reading. In addition, the missionaries have been welcomed into our home to assist in our scripture study.

The greatest blessing is that in such a busy time of work, school, and other activities, my family is committed to meeting together every Monday and devoting an hour to learning more about the Lord. Laughing, singing, and kneeling together in family prayer have brought a tremendous sense of peace and love to our home.

Arlene Pryce, Don Valley Ward, Toronto Ontario Stake

A Tool for Retention

I can still remember the joy I felt the day I was baptized. However, not long after, I felt disappointment as the missionaries suggested I stop associating with some of my current acquaintances and find a more appropriate circle of friends. Their words seemed harsh to me, an 18-year-old high school senior, but trusting them, I did as they counseled.

Understanding my need for friends in the Church, the missionaries soon invited me to participate in family home evening with some ward members. I was eager to understand more about my new faith, so I gratefully went to the Shaffer family's home.

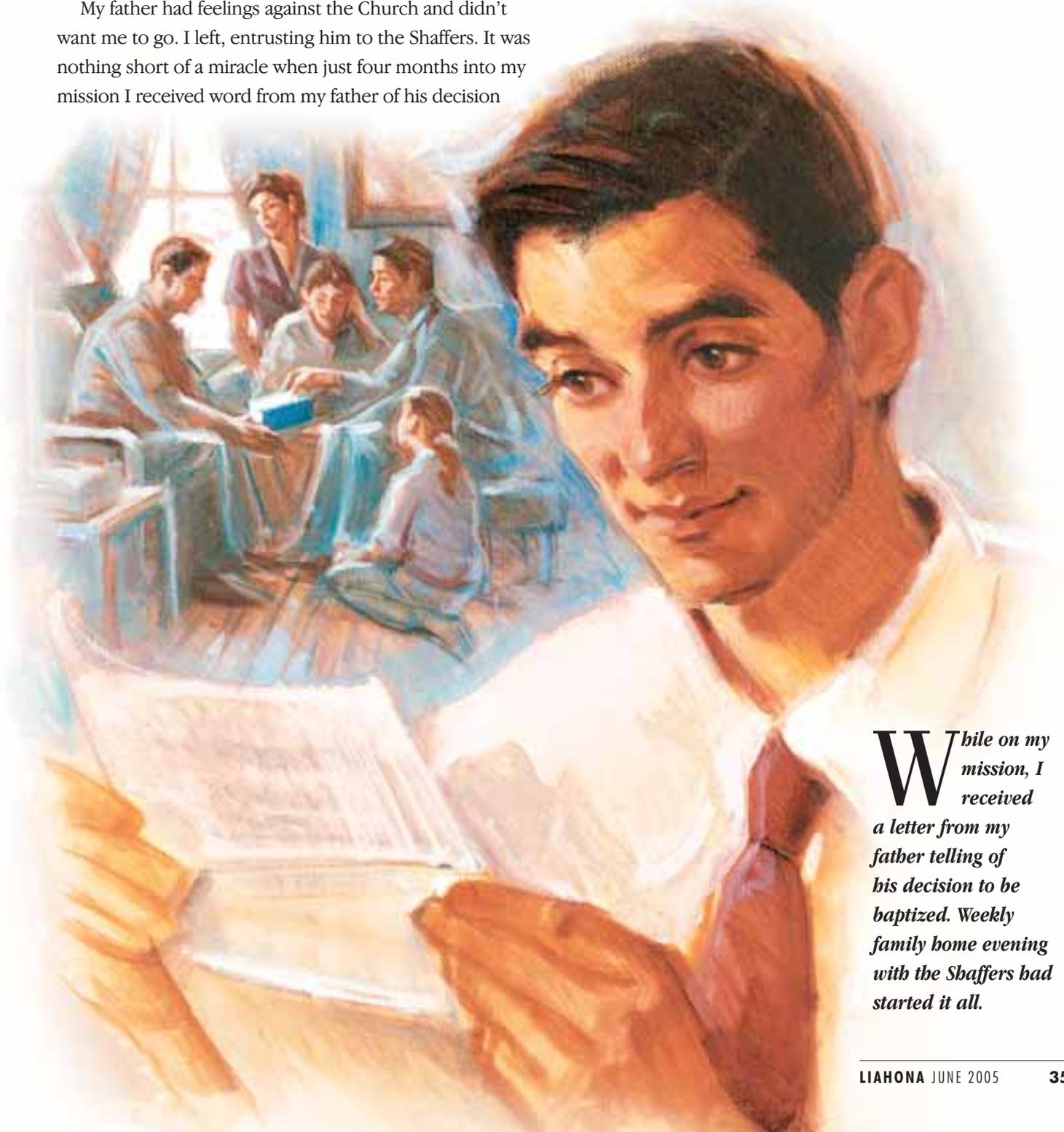
The Shaffers' home became a haven where, in the

nonthreatening atmosphere of simple family home evenings, I learned what it is to be a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After dozens of family nights at the Shaffers' and a year of Church membership, I accepted a call to serve a full-time mission.

My father had feelings against the Church and didn't want me to go. I left, entrusting him to the Shaffers. It was nothing short of a miracle when just four months into my mission I received word from my father of his decision

to be baptized. The Shaffers had taken him into their home for home evenings, just as they had done for me. Their efforts made it easier for him to understand the gospel and become converted to it.

Ruben Perez, Cordova Ward, Memphis Tennessee North Stake



While on my mission, I received a letter from my father telling of his decision to be baptized. Weekly family home evening with the Shaffers had started it all.



The Spirit was very strong during our family home evening lesson on the Holy Ghost. It was the turning point for my husband.

To Feel the Spirit

Ten years had passed since I had been baptized into the Church, but I had been less active for about nine of them. During that time I had married and now had a seven-year-old daughter. My mother and siblings were living with us when a friend reintroduced them to the Church, and the missionaries started coming to our home. I had a testimony of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon, but the knowledge I had acquired of the Church had melted away.

My husband became friends with the elders and, almost without knowing it, started taking the discussions. Each discussion took about a week; it was hard for him to accept the divinity of Jesus Christ. Nine months after being taught the first discussion, my husband felt he was not receiving answers to his prayers.

One morning when the missionaries came to pray with me for my husband, I felt impressed that I needed to help him recognize the influence of the Holy Ghost. The missionaries had given us a family home evening manual, and the next Monday I sat down with my husband and daughter and began my first family home evening by giving a lesson on the Holy Ghost. My husband listened in silence as he pondered the subject. The influence of the Spirit was very strong that night, and I could feel the Holy Ghost confirming the truthfulness of the Church, something I had not felt for a long time. The next day my husband bore his testimony to me and told me that the Spirit had borne witness to him and he had recognized it. That night we lit in our hearts a fire that was eternal and inextinguishable.

One week later my husband was baptized, and one year later we were sealed in the São Paulo Brazil Temple. We feel that sacrament meeting is the most important meeting we go to, and next in line is family home evening.

Elizabeth Duce de Mermies, Lezica Ward, Montevideo Uruguay North Stake

Not to Convert

My new husband and I knew the importance of family home evening in helping families learn to love each other and grow together, but our children were grown and on their own. It was hard for us to hold a family night until we decided to invite my husband's mother. At the time my mother-in-law was 74 years old and belonged to another church. She worked in a flower shop and scarcely ventured from her routine of going to work and then home.

At first she was a little hesitant to come because she knew nothing of our faith, but now she looks forward to Monday nights. We share dinners, laughter, and music and have become very close. We know that she does not want us to try to convert her, but she does allow us to share stories about our faith. One evening I read a talk from one of the Church leaders. We all felt the Spirit. We have had opportunities to show her the *Ensign*, and she looks at every page. We have taught her what temples are for, and she has watched Church videos. We do these things sparingly, as the Spirit guides us.

Before one of our family home evenings, I asked her to teach the lesson. She brought pictures of herself when she was young and of my husband when he was a baby. I heard stories of aunts, uncles, grandmas, and grandpas. The happiness in her eyes as she relived these experiences made my heart almost burst. I realized then that the commandment to have family home evening is divine instruction from our Father in Heaven.



FAMILY HOME EVENING PROMISE

"We have a family home evening program once a week [Monday night]

across the Church in which parents sit down with their children. They study the scriptures. They talk about family problems. They plan family activities and things of that kind. I don't hesitate to say if every family in the world practiced that one thing, you'd see a very great difference in the solidarity of the families of the world."

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "Family Home Evening," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Mar. 2003, 3.

Many doors have been opened for my mother-in-law to learn things pertaining to the gospel. I don't know that she will become a member of the Church during her life on earth, but I do know that our family has been strengthened and our love increased.

Dani Jeanne Stevens, Logan Ward, Huntington West Virginia Stake

A Seven-Year-Old Missionary

Late one Monday night when my husband and I were busily working in our home, our seven-year-old son, Sergio, appeared. "Well, nobody remembered family home evening," he said.

"I guess you're not interested."

My husband had come home late, and he tiredly explained that we had been too busy and still had much to do before we could turn in for the night. At that we continued with our work.

After a few moments we realized Sergio was reading his illustrated *Book of Mormon Stories* reader all by himself. My husband and I looked at each other and silently agreed that, even if it was late, we shouldn't deny ourselves the chance to hold family home evening.

When we went into the living room, Sergio told us in all seriousness that we didn't need to be concerned because he had already started his "individual home evening" and had sung a hymn, said a prayer, and now he was giving the lesson. We stayed and listened as our boy talked about the First Vision.

That night our son was a powerful missionary to us, testifying of the importance of family home evening. My husband and I realized that often we try to teach principles that we are not completely willing to obey. What a wonderful experience we would have missed if we had not participated in that individual home evening. ■

Cecila Lozada, Maranga Ward, Lima Perú Maranga Stake

STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

THE SACRED POWERS OF PROCREATION

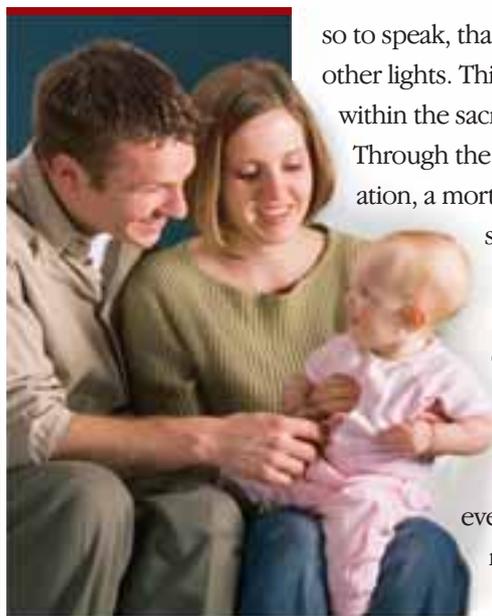
A continuing series giving insights for your study and use of “The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”

“God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.”¹

The Powers and the Plan

“Under the accepted plan,” explained President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Adam and Eve were sent to the earth as our first parents. They could prepare physical bodies for the first spirits to be introduced into this life.

“There was provided in our bodies—and this is sacred—a power of creation, a light,



so to speak, that has the power to kindle other lights. This gift was to be used only within the sacred bonds of marriage.

Through the exercise of this power of creation, a mortal body may be conceived, a spirit enter into it, and a new soul [be] born into this life.

“This power is good. It can create and sustain family life, and it is in family life that we find the fountains of happiness. It is given to virtually every individual who is born into mortality. It is a sacred and significant power. . . .

PHOTOGRAPHY (EXCEPT AS NOTED) BY CRAIG DIMOND, POSED BY MODELS; LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF HANDS © EYEWIRE

“The power of creation—or may we say procreation—is not just an incidental part of the plan: it is essential to it. Without it the plan could not proceed. The misuse of it may disrupt the plan.”²

Moral Agency and Chastity

Disrupting the plan is, of course, the focus of Satan’s attention, and encouraging the misuse of the power of procreation is one of his most pervasive and successful tactics. “Human sexuality,” wrote Terrance D. Olson, “is presented in our culture as if it were the driving force—if not the ultimate need—behind all human endeavor. If the popular culture is right, sex is so compelling that societies must figure out ways to allow the regular, frequent expression of sex. . . . Indeed, . . . the popular culture sees humans as victims of sexual needs and feelings.”³

The scriptures teach us otherwise. “The children of men,” Lehi taught his son Jacob, “have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day. . . . Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:26–27).

In this matter of chastity, we are not at the mercy of our physical bodies. We are moral agents, and these purported “needs” are no different than any other choices we face in mortality. We can choose obedience and spiritual life, or we can choose captivity, misery, and spiritual death.

Three Reasons to Obey

As president of Brigham Young University, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles offered three reasons for choosing chastity. First, according to scripture, the soul consists of both body and spirit (see D&C 88:15).



There was provided in our bodies . . . a power of creation, a light, so to speak, that has the power to kindle other lights.”

“In trivializing the soul of another (please include the word *body* there), we trivialize the Atonement. . . . We *cannot* then say in ignorance or defiance, ‘Well, it’s *my* life,’ or worse yet, ‘It’s *my* body.’ It is *not*. ‘Ye are not your own,’ Paul said. ‘Ye are bought with a price’ [1 Corinthians 6:19–20].”⁴

“Second, may I suggest that human intimacy . . . between a man and a woman is . . . a symbol of total union: union of their hearts, their hopes, their lives, their love, their family, their future, their everything.

. . . But such a total . . . union . . . can only come with the proximity and permanence afforded in a marriage covenant, with the union of *all* that they possess—their very hearts and minds, all their days and all their dreams. . . . Can you see then the moral [fracturing] that comes from pretending we are one, sharing the *physical* symbols and *physical* intimacy of our union, but then fleeing . . . all such other aspects . . . of what was meant to be a total obligation?”⁵

Third, “sexual intimacy is not only a symbolic union between a man and a woman—the uniting of their very souls—but it is also symbolic of a union between mortals and deity, . . . uniting for a rare and special moment with God himself and all the powers by which he gives life in this wide universe of ours. . . . Surely God’s trust in us to respect this future-forming gift is awesomely staggering. . . . We carry this procreative power that makes us very much like God in at least one grand and majestic way.”⁶

With good reason the inspired prophets of the Lord’s Church have declared “the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed.”⁷ ■

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. “Why Stay Morally Clean,” *Ensign*, July 1972, 111.
3. “Chastity and Fidelity in Marriage and Family Relationships,” in David C. Dollahite, ed., *Strengthening Our Families: An In-Depth Look at the Proclamation on the Family* (2000), 51.
4. “Of Souls, Symbols, and Sacraments,” in *Brigham Young University 1987–88 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* (1988), 78–79.
5. “Of Souls, Symbols, and Sacraments,” 79–80.
6. “Of Souls, Symbols, and Sacraments,” 82, 84.
7. *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.

THE HIGH PRIESTS QUORUM



During His mortal ministry Jesus Christ was the presiding high priest on earth. High priests' responsibility is to pattern their lives after Him.

The fifth in a series of articles about priesthood quorums and their purposes.

BY ELDER DAVID E. SORENSON
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

To be ordained a high priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood is a great honor and responsibility because the example for those holding this office is the Savior Himself. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrews: “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God. . . . And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that

said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. . . . Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Hebrews 5:1, 4–6). Just as the Savior did not take this honor unto Himself but was called of God, so are all high priests in the Lord’s Church. Their responsibility is to pattern their lives after the Savior, to bear witness through their words and deeds of His gracious Atonement and the truth of His gospel.

A Brief History

Throughout the history of humankind whenever the gospel in its fulness has been on earth, the Lord has called high priests to preside over His work.

- Adam, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek,



Abraham, Moses, and other righteous men were ordained high priests (see Alma 13; D&C 84:6–17; 107:41–53).

- After Moses’s time the Lord withdrew the Melchizedek Priesthood from the earth except among certain faithful men.

- Among the Book of Mormon peoples, the presiding spiritual authorities were high priests (see Alma 8:23; 30:20–23).

- During His mortal ministry Jesus Christ was the presiding high priest on earth (see Hebrews 3:1). And as the great high priest, the Savior made an eternal sacrifice and “obtained eternal redemption for us” (see Hebrews 9:11–12). He continues to preside over His Church.

- In the dispensation of the fulness of times, the first ordination to the office of high priest occurred at a conference of the Church held in Kirtland, Ohio, in June 1831. At that time 23 men were ordained high priests.

- For a time high priests quorums were organized in each ward, and each had its own presidency. But in 1877, shortly before his death, President Brigham Young directed that stake presidents should have responsibility over these quorums.

- In 1956 stake presidents began serving as presidents of the high priests quorums in their respective stakes.

- In December 1975 the First Presidency clarified that ward high priests groups function as part of the stake high priests quorum, with the stake president serving as president of the quorum and his counselors in the stake presidency serving as counselors in the quorum. Ward high priests group leaders function under the direction of the stake president.

Duties of High Priests Quorums

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) said that “it is the duty of the High Priests’ quorum to teach the principles of government, of union, of advancement and of growth in the kingdom of God. They are indeed the fathers of the people at large. In our High Priests’ quorums are numbered the Presidents of Stakes and their Counselors, Bishops and Counselors, Patriarchs, and all that have been ordained to



One of the primary responsibilities of high priests is to serve as home teachers. As such they “represent the Lord, the bishop, and . . . group leaders.”

the office of High Priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood. . . . They should be united with the quorum in such a way that they give it all the force that they can impart for good.”¹

Responsibilities of High Priests

“The rights and responsibilities of high priests are to preside and to hold all the authority of elders (see D&C 107:10). Brethren are ordained high priests when they are called to a stake presidency, high council, or bishopric or when otherwise determined by the stake president.”²

High priests should be worthy of great trust. Those who are ordained to this office in the priesthood should be men of faith, honesty, and integrity. They should be dependable and devoted to the Church so they can be depended upon to stand up for the gospel under all circumstances.

One of the primary responsibilities of high priests is to serve as home teachers. As such they “represent the Lord, the bishop, and . . . group leaders. They support and serve all members of the families they visit. They nurture the friendship and respect of these members, showing genuine concern and love for them. . . . Home teachers are the

Church's first source of help to members. They consult with the head of the household about the family's needs and the ways to be most helpful. They offer help when members are unemployed, ill, lonely, moving, or have other needs."³

President Joseph F. Smith taught that every high priest should "set an example before the old and young worthy of emulation, and . . . place himself in a position to be a teacher of righteousness, not only by precept but more particularly by example—giving to the younger ones the benefit of experience of age, and thus becoming individually a power in the midst of the community in which [he] dwells. . . . Those holding this office are, as a rule, men of advanced years, and varied experience. . . . Their experience . . . is the ripened fruit of years of labor in the Church, and they should exercise that wisdom for the benefit of all with whom they are associated."⁴

The Role of High Priests in Relation to Temple and Family History Work

Group leaders and quorum members set an example in doing temple and family history work, including regularly attending the temple where circumstances allow. They help members prepare to receive their own temple ordinances. They also encourage members to identify their kindred dead and provide temple ordinances for them. Elders quorum presidents and high priests "group leaders should ensure that the doctrines, principles, and blessings relating to redeeming the dead are taught regularly in priesthood meeting and home teaching visits. They also encourage members to teach their children the importance of the temple. . . . Under the bishopric's direction, the high priests group leader coordinates temple and family history work in the ward."⁵

High priests are men who are mature in the gospel and are capable of presiding. They set an example for

brethren who are less experienced, especially for members of the Aaronic Priesthood. They, along with other priesthood holders, are "to teach, expound, exhort, baptize, and watch over the church" (D&C 20:42). High priests are a great stabilizing force in each ward, branch, district, and stake, assisting in the mission of the Church, which includes preaching the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead. Above all, they are patriarchs in their homes and families, setting an example and establishing a pattern of righteousness for generations that follow. ■

NOTES

1. In Conference Report, Apr. 1907, 5.
2. *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* (1998), 162.
3. *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, 169.
4. In Conference Report, Apr. 1908, 5–6.
5. See *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, 165, 265.



THE FIRE OF BROTHERHOOD

BY LARENE PORTER GAUNT
Church Magazines

Mitch Dunford has been a member of the high priests group in the Santee First Ward, Santee California Stake, for most of the 11 years he has lived there. “Our high priests group has studied the scriptures together and done missionary work together,” he says. “We’ve given blessings to each other and to others’ family members. Our camaraderie is a natural outgrowth of helping each other honor callings in the priesthood.”

On the night of Sunday, October 26, 2003, the high priests in the Santee stake, along with most residents of San Diego County, found themselves under attack by the largest wildfire in the history of California. For nearly 24 hours, 50- to 70-mile-per-hour (80- to 110-km-per-hour) winds had pushed 100-foot (30-m) flames and burned hundreds of homes, killing 13 people.

Mitch Dunford stood alone in the hills behind his home with a garden hose in one hand and a shovel in the other.

Earlier he had taken his wife, Cathy, and their five children to a hotel. When the evacuation order was lifted, he returned home to see what he could do.

“The fire was 4 feet [1.2 m] high and 30 feet [9 m] wide,” says Brother Dunford. “It was coming from two directions. It was so quiet. I just stood there, wondering if I could really stop this fire by myself.”

Meanwhile, stake president Chris Allred was atop the stake center with binoculars. With flames coming toward the Dunfords’ house, he began making phone calls.

“I was alone,” says Brother Dunford, with more than a little emotion in his voice, “and then one by one they came—the ‘boys’ from the quorum and their sons, each with a shovel. I was overwhelmed, yet it seemed just the way it ought to be.”

Fifteen minutes later the first wave of fire swept through.

“We beat the fire down and tossed dirt on it,” says Steven Schimpf, 15, who came with his dad, Bishop Randall Schimpf.

After the first wave was out, the second wave came. They beat back that one too.

A news cameraman climbed up to the group and was amazed to discover they were just some men and boys from a church helping one of their own.

“It was touching to have our home saved by my priesthood brethren,” says Brother Dunford. “It is so typical of the way they are. My neighbors couldn’t believe all those men and boys just showed up to help. But we know it’s what you do when you’re a member of a priesthood quorum.” ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY LARENE PORTER GAUNT

My Tithing Tire

By Sarah Westbrook

My husband and I were struggling financially due to a recent career change. He had joined the United States Army to further his education and had taken a huge pay cut to do so. We were barely making ends meet and were deeply in debt. We had cut up our credit cards to avoid more debt, had used up all our savings, and were living on our year's supply of food.

I have always had a testimony of the gospel, but I was literally living on faith. After an incredibly difficult

month I was daunted by our pile of bills and knew we just weren't going to make it. For the first time in my adult life I was tempted not to pay tithing. I thought, "I need the money more than the Lord does. The amount I'm going to pay won't even pay the electric bill for the stake center, but it would make a huge difference to me."

After selfishly considering the many places the money could go, I had a scripture come to mind: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have

T*he attendant patiently showed me the nail and explained why it would be impossible to repair the tire.*

robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Malachi 3:8). I knew I had to pay tithing. Somehow things would work out. I wrote the tithing check, placed a stamp on the envelope, and put it in the mail.

The next morning I had to run a few errands. I walked to my car and to my utter despair realized one of the tires was almost completely flat. Frustrated, I drove to a nearby repair shop.

A flat would cost a few dollars to repair. I sat in the waiting room and prayed that Heavenly Father would

watch over us. A few minutes later the attendant called me to the cash register. He told me the tire had a nail in it, but the nail was positioned in such a way that the tire could not be repaired. It would have to be replaced, costing even more than I had mentally prepared myself for. I said, "I want to see it." The attendant patiently showed me the nail and explained

why it would be impossible to repair the tire. With tears in my eyes I asked him to please replace my tire with the cheapest one possible.

I went back to the waiting room and pleaded silently with Heavenly Father for help. We could not afford a new tire, but we had to have the car.

A few minutes later the attendant called me to the register again. He explained that my tires had locking lug nuts and without the key the tire



would not come off. I told him I didn't have the key. He apologized and explained that their shop did not have the proper tools to remove my tire. He recommended another shop. He then put air in my tire free of charge and sent me on my way.

I climbed back into the car and broke down in tears. Why was this happening? We had done everything right. We paid our tithing; we had a year's supply; we were trying to get out of debt; we were going to church every week. Why would the Lord allow this to happen?

I drove to the other shop and quickly explained my situation to the attendant. We picked the cheapest tire, and I proceeded to the waiting room. After what seemed like forever my name was called. I walked slowly to the register, dreading what I was about to hear.

"We have run your tire through the water about five times," the attendant told me. "Three of us have searched for the nail. There is nothing. You still have a lot of wear left on your tires. There is absolutely no reason to replace any of them." I stared blankly at the attendant. I had seen the nail with my own eyes. I knew it had been there. I thanked him, and he sent me on my way, again free of charge.

We have since been transferred to a new duty station and have driven about 8,000 miles (13,000 km) on that tire. I know the Lord blesses us and there is safety in obedience. ■

Sarah Westbrook is a member of El Paso First Ward, El Paso Texas Mount Franklin Stake.



Tuning In to the Spirit

By Mark Paredes

While traveling alone to visit friends on a holiday weekend, I decided to follow a rural highway instead of taking a long detour to a major interstate highway. It was dusk, and I wanted to arrive at my friends' home before midnight.

Mine was the only car on the road for long stretches of the highway, and in order to relieve boredom I turned on a radio station. As I sang along to a favorite tune, I received a distinct spiritual prompting to turn off the radio—and listen. At first I ignored the prompting, reasoning that it would be absurd to drive alone in silence on a deserted road. The prompting became more insistent, however. I reluctantly turned off the radio, sat back, and quietly told the Lord that now I was listening.

In short order I received three additional promptings to slow down immediately. These impressions

seemed to be much stronger, and they reached a much more receptive and focused mind. I obediently braked three times, slowing the car substantially.

Shortly I encountered a 90-degree unmarked curve. I had no time to react in the darkness and went through the curve, stopping at the edge of a ridge overlooking a deep ditch. Shaken, I got out to inspect the damage and found my car wholly intact but with its front bumper protruding over the precipice. Had I been going any faster, I would certainly have plunged into the ditch and been injured or killed. I offered a prayer of gratitude.

I made the rest of the trip in silence as I reflected on the need to eliminate "radios" from my life. I wondered how many times I had allowed the frivolous things of the world to take priority over spiritual matters. Although I have not given up listening to the radio at home or on the road, I do take time on a regular basis to turn off the music—and listen. ■

Mark Paredes is a member of the Santa Monica Second Ward, Los Angeles California Santa Monica Stake.

I Felt at Home

By Marina Petrova

I grew up in Russia in a close and loving family. My parents worked hard, and I stayed with my father's mother, Anastasiya Vasilyevna Ustavshchikova. She was always bustling about the kitchen, making wonderful flowers to put on

hats, and reading. She read all kinds of books, but I especially remember that she read the Bible. She would tell me about God and how she loved Him and awaited her meeting with Him. She said that if we would live God's commandments, we would return

to Him and inherit one of His kingdoms. That memory has warmed me all my life.

My life before joining the Church is a story with many trials and experiences. But I always loved hearing my grandma's simple, sincere prayers. She would start with the words "Heavenly Father," and I would get goose bumps.

In June 1993 I arrived at my mother's home in St. Petersburg,

When the time for my baptism arrived, I still had terrible tonsillitis. It was so cold we could see our breath, but I knew I was doing the right thing.



where a friend invited me to study English with her. We called a number we found in the newspaper, and a young woman answered. She told us to come at noon the next day. Her name was Tat'yana. After the lesson we invited her out for tea or coffee. We were quite surprised when we heard, "I don't drink tea or coffee."

"Why?"

"I'm a Mormon."

"What's a Mormon?" I asked.

"I'm a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If you're interested, come see us Sunday morning at 11:00."

She wrote down the address. I was very interested to find out what kind of church this was.

The week passed slowly, but Sunday finally came. The meetings were held in a music school. Some young men were at the entrance, and they were smiling. When they found out that I had come for the first time, they took me into the chapel. A lot of people were there, but I felt out of place. I very much liked the opening hymn though, and then a miracle happened. A man walked to the front, and the first words of his prayer were "Heavenly Father." That is what I had been searching for. Suddenly I felt at home. I was at peace.

After the meeting two young ladies approached me.

"Are you already meeting with the missionaries?" they asked.

"No."

"Could we teach you about the gospel?"

"Of course," I said. "That would make me very happy."

At one of our discussions they began telling me about three kingdoms. I stopped them and said, "May I tell you what my grandmother told me when I was little?" Now it was their turn to be surprised. The more we talked, the more I wanted to learn. On August 15, my missionaries asked if I would like to be baptized.

"Yes." That was already my desire.

My baptism was to take place in a lake the following Sunday, August 22. The weather had been hot and dry. But on Monday, August 16, a steady rain began, and the temperature dropped sharply. Friday morning I awoke with terrible tonsillitis. My whole throat was congested, and I was running a fever. I thought it would pass before Sunday.

The missionaries came on Saturday to interview me. Elder Parker, a young and very tall missionary, asked me the questions. He also agreed to baptize me. I said nothing about my illness.

The day of my baptism arrived. When I woke up I found that my throat was still the same. It was then I realized for the first time in my life what the Lord wanted from me. I said to myself, "I'll do whatever I have to for Him. I will be baptized. Everything will be fine. The water will be warm, and my sickness will disappear after I am baptized."

On the way to the lake I told the sisters what had been going on with me. They both looked in my mouth and said, all bundled up in their raincoats, "This is no joke. Should we move everything to a pool?"

"No, no." I had firmly made up my mind to go ahead with our plans.

It was beautiful when we got there. The lake was like a mirror, without even a ripple. It was about a hundred meters from the changing room to the water. It had rained all week and was muddy. When I came out of the changing room, I saw Elder Parker in his white clothes walking confidently through the mud toward the lake. That was a stunning sight.

We stood in a circle and sang a hymn. We could see our breath, but we were not paying attention to the weather anymore. As I took my first step into the water, I knew I was doing the right thing. It felt warm. And when I came up out of the water, I was happy and healthy. Everyone laughed and cried. I had taken my first step on the path home. Our Heavenly Father loves us and gives us trials, expecting us to make the right decisions, to not doubt what is good.

I will remember that miraculous day for the rest of my life. It will live in my heart with the memories of my grandmother, who sowed the seed that sprouted so many years after her death. ■

Marina Petrova is a member of the Kortrijk Branch, Antwerp Belgium Stake.



Testimony and Faith Increase

Since I was baptized I have marveled at Christ's love for me. He never fails me. His love gives me hope, light, and encouragement during the difficult times of life. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland's article "He Loved Them unto the End" (see *Liabona*, Sept. 2002, 11) helped increase my testimony and faith in Jesus Christ. It gave me determination to continue in faith despite any obstacles and hardships I may face.

*Maricar Caro,
Mangapsang Branch,
La Carlota Philippines District*

Indispensable in These Times

Thank you for Elder Henry B. Eyring's article "The Book of Mormon Will Change Your Life," in the February 2004 issue. We should all be like Ammon, who set an example of Christlike leadership by serving those he was sent to teach. The *Liabona* is indispensable in these times, and the world would be a better place if we all put into practice the counsel we find there.

*Ekpo E. Akiba,
Okokomaiko Ward,
Lagos Nigeria Stake*

Repentance Brings Peace

I first read "To Receive a Crown of Glory," a First Presidency Message by

President James E. Faust (see *Liabona*, Apr. 2004, 2), by myself, then we studied it in family home evening, and then we studied it again in an elders quorum meeting. At that time I was preparing to go to the temple to be sealed to my wife. When I studied President Faust's words regarding sin and repentance, I realized that I needed to confess an old sin to my bishop. Afterward I felt the peace we are promised when we truly repent. I am grateful to the Lord for His Church and for His leaders who guide us today.

Name withheld

Answers to My Questions

It has been nine years since I was baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For the last five years I have lived in a village 40 miles (70 km) from my branch, so I don't get many chances to interact with the members. But through the *Liabona*, I can have interaction with my brothers and sisters around the world. I read the stories and testimonies with great pleasure. They help me to understand Heavenly Father better and to withstand temptation. In the October 2003 issue, the article "Timing" by Elder Dallin H. Oaks especially impressed me. In it, I found answers to my questions. I love to read this magazine—from the first page to the last.

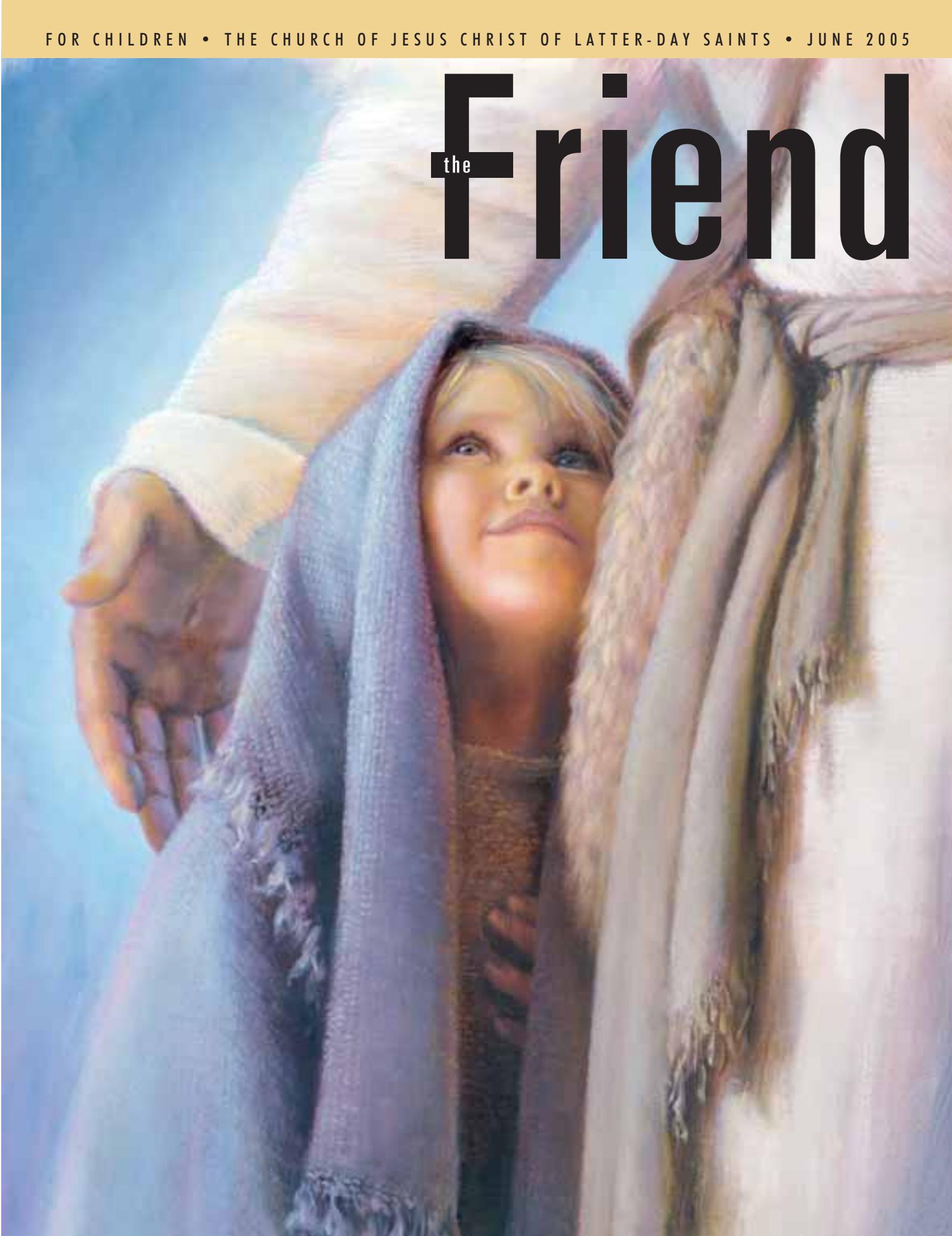
*Svetlana Tochilkina,
Saratovsky Zavodskoy Branch,
Saratov Russia District*



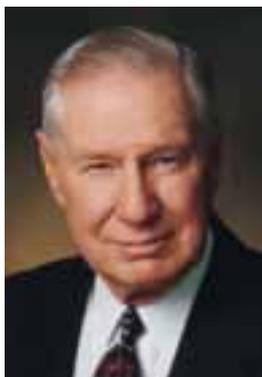
CALL FOR CHILDREN'S ARTICLES

We are looking for articles for our young readers—true stories that will strengthen the faith of children around the world. Please send accounts to Children's Stories, *Liabona*, Room 2420, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA; or e-mail to cur-liabona-imag@ldschurch.org. Please include your full name, home address, and ward and stake (or branch and district). If possible, include a photograph of the main characters in your article.

the Friend



Your Fascinating History



President Faust teaches that finding your ancestors can be one of the most interesting puzzles you work on.

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

Picture with me a little six-year-old orphan girl traveling across the plains of America. Her name is Elsie Ann. Her mother died when she was two. Her father remarried, and so for a time she had a stepmother. Then her father died at Winter Quarters when she was five. Her stepmother remarried and moved away, leaving this little orphan behind with Peter and Selina Robison, who were related to her stepmother. Elsie Ann left Winter Quarters with the Robisons in July of 1849 to come west. She no doubt ached for the love of her own mother. Sometimes she would even ask, “Where is my mother?” Elsie Ann was my great-grandmother.

My grandparents have had a great influence on my life. Even though they have been dead for many years, I still feel their love. One grandfather, James Akerley Faust, died before I was born. I knew him only through the stories my grandmother and my parents told about him. However, I feel a strong kinship with him because I am in part what he was. Among other things, he was a cowboy, a rancher, and a postmaster in a small town in central Utah. On one occasion Grandfather took a trip in the winter to Idaho, where he met an acquaintance who

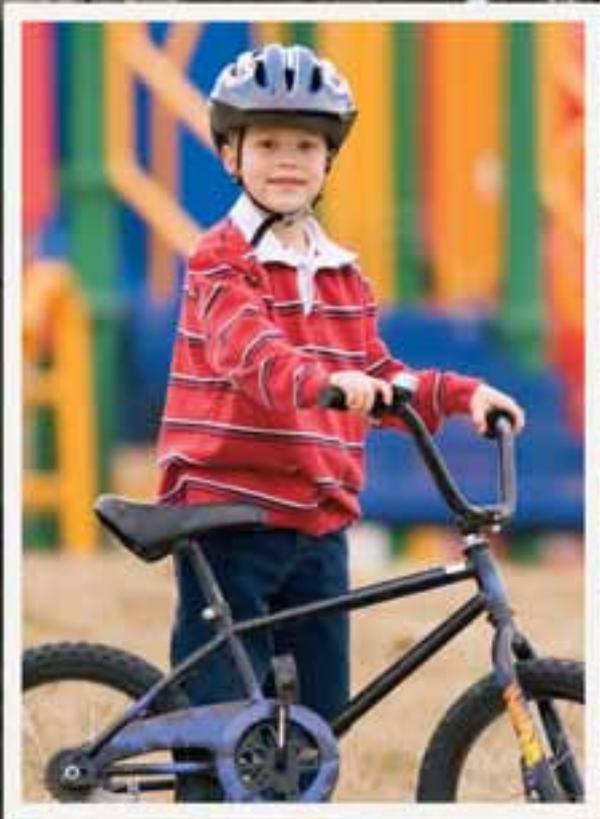
had fallen on hard times. It was cold, and Grandfather’s friend had no coat. Grandfather took off his coat and gave it to him.

I encourage you to begin to unlock the knowledge of who you really are by learning more about your forebears. They were very real, living people with problems, hopes, and dreams like we have today. The virtues they had may be our virtues, their strengths our strengths, and in a way their challenges could be our challenges. Some of their traits may be our traits. I noticed a while ago that one of my great-grandsons, a toddler, seemed to have an interesting kind of a walk. My wife said, “He walks just like you do!” Now I wonder from whom I inherited this characteristic.

Each of us has a fascinating family history. Finding your ancestors can be one of the most interesting puzzles you can work on. It can be more fascinating than any movie or any computer game.

Because this is a very spiritual work, we can expect help from the other side of the veil. We feel a pull from our relatives who are waiting for us to find them so their temple ordinance work can be done. This is a Christlike service because we are doing something for them that they cannot do for themselves. ●

From an October 2003 general conference address.



Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied, traced, or printed out from the Internet at wwwlds.org. For English, click on "Gospel Library." For other languages, click on the world map.

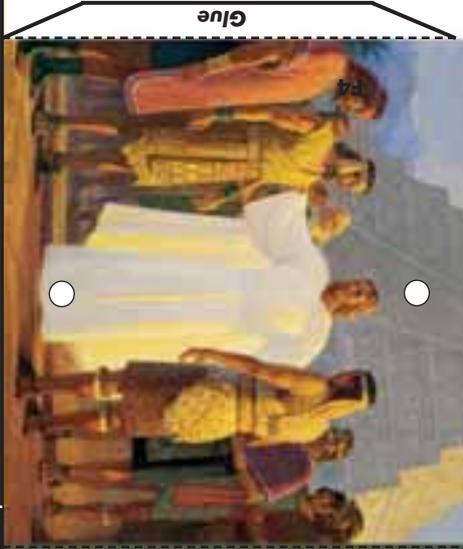
ILLUSTRATION



Because of my faith in Jesus Christ, I will

_____.

"Get on your knees and pray and stand on your feet and do His will and put your trust and faith in Him, and God will bless you" (Liahona, May 2001, 16; Ensign, Apr. 2002, 5).



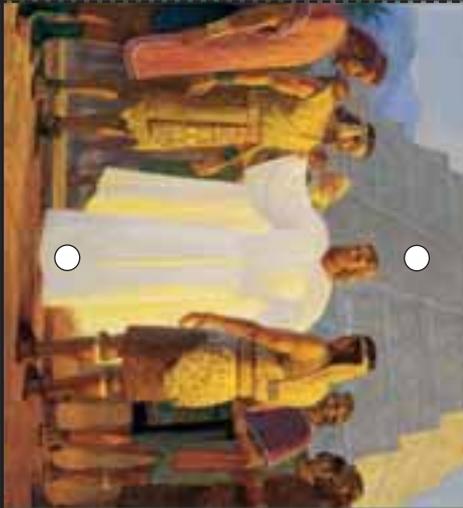
"And Christ hath said: If ye will have faith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me" (Moroni 7:33).



"I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God" (Joseph Smith—History 1:15).

"I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded" (1 Nephi 3:7).

"And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him" (Genesis 7:5).



"And Christ hath said: If ye will have faith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me" (Moroni 7:33).

I'll Follow Him in Faith

“We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Articles of Faith 1:4).

BY MARGARET LIFFERTH



What does it mean to have faith? Faith is believing in things that are not seen but are true (see Alma 32:21). The first principle of the gospel is to have faith in Jesus Christ. Even though we have not seen Jesus, we can have faith that He lives and loves us.

Our faith in Jesus Christ will grow as we read about Him. The New Testament teaches of when He was on the earth. We can read about Jesus healing a blind man and calming a storm. The New Testament teaches that He suffered for our sins, that He died, and that He was resurrected on the third day.

The Book of Mormon teaches that after Jesus Christ was resurrected, He visited the people in America. Many saw and touched Jesus. He administered the sacrament, healed the sick, and organized His Church.

The Pearl of Great Price gives us the account of Joseph Smith's First Vision. Joseph Smith had faith that Heavenly Father would answer his prayer. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith.

We can read the testimony of Joseph Smith in the Doctrine and Covenants: “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” (D&C 76:22–23). As we read the testimonies of those who knew Him, our faith will grow and we too will bear testimony that Jesus Christ lives today and that He knows and loves us.

Faith in Christ Mobile

Remove page F4 from the magazine, and glue it to heavy paper. Cut along the solid lines. Form the long

panel into a box by folding the dotted lines and gluing the tab. Draw or glue a picture of yourself in the blank panel, and write something you will do on the blank lines. Fold the five small panels along the dotted lines so the pictures and scriptures are on the outside. Punch holes where indicated. Attach pieces of string to the top of the box. Tie the picture of yourself to the strings at the top of the box so it hangs through the center of the box. Tie the four remaining pictures to the bottom of the box. (See illustration.)

Sharing Time Ideas

1. Using the shield in the front of the CTR manuals as a pattern, draw a large shield. Cut it into seven puzzle pieces, and write on each piece one of the following scripture references: Abraham 3:27 (Christ chosen as Savior), Jacob 4:9 (Creator), John 20:31 (Son of God), 3 Nephi 27:21 (example), John 11:25 (made it possible for us to be resurrected), Alma 34:8 (atoned for our sins), D&C 110:2–8 (He lives today and guides His prophet). Teach the children the fourth article of faith and that faith in Jesus Christ is the first principle of the gospel. Divide the children into seven groups, and give each group a puzzle piece. Invite each group to decide what the scripture reference teaches about Jesus Christ. Invite one child from each group to bring the piece up and put the puzzle together. Ask, “How can our faith in Jesus Christ form a shield?” Discuss D&C 27:15–17.

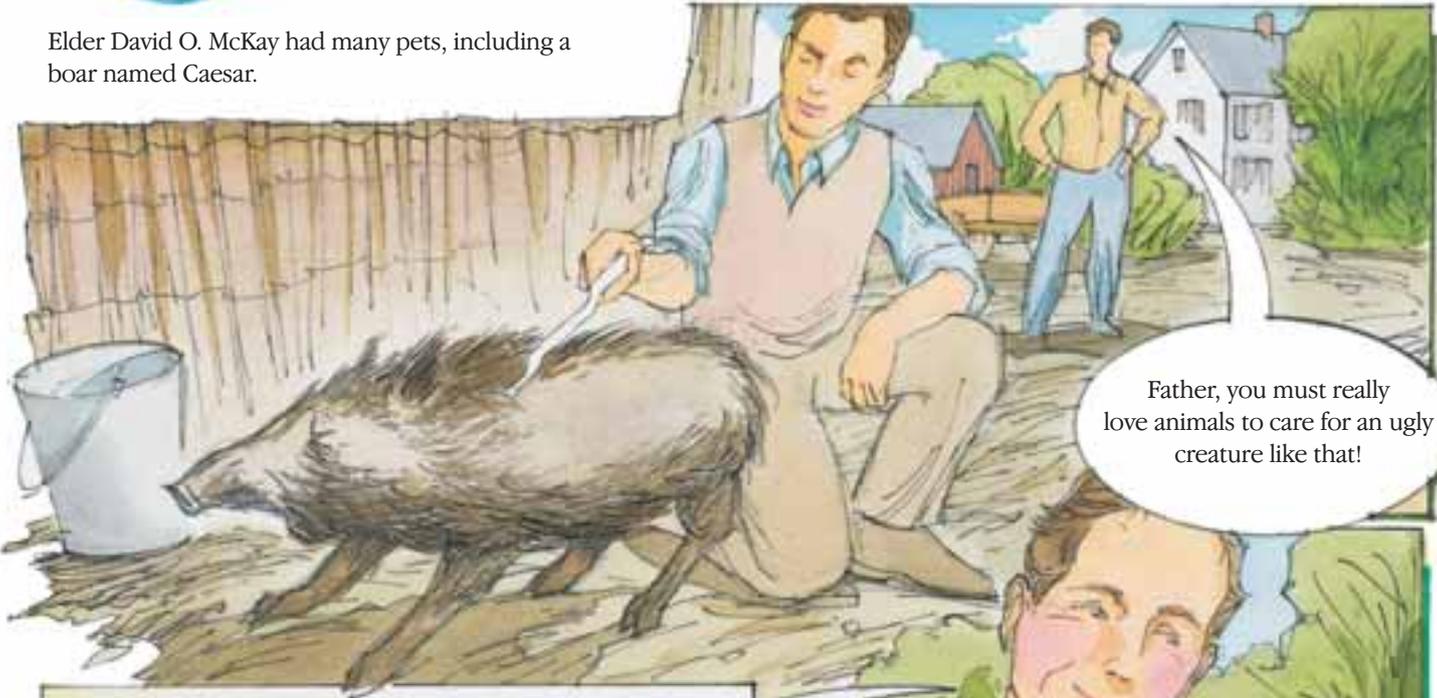
2. Put the following pictures facedown: Gospel Art Picture Kit 304 (Lehi and His People Arrive in the Promised Land), 308 (Abinadi before King Noah), 310 (Ammon Defends the Flocks of King Lamoni), 313 (Two Thousand Young Warriors), 314 (Samuel the Lamanite on the Wall), and 321 (Conversion of Alma the Younger). Have a child select a picture and play “Who Am I?” by answering questions with yes or no. The children must ask questions beginning with “Did your faith in Christ . . .” (For example, “Did your faith in Christ help you protect the king’s flocks?”) Play until each prophet is identified. ●



FROM THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

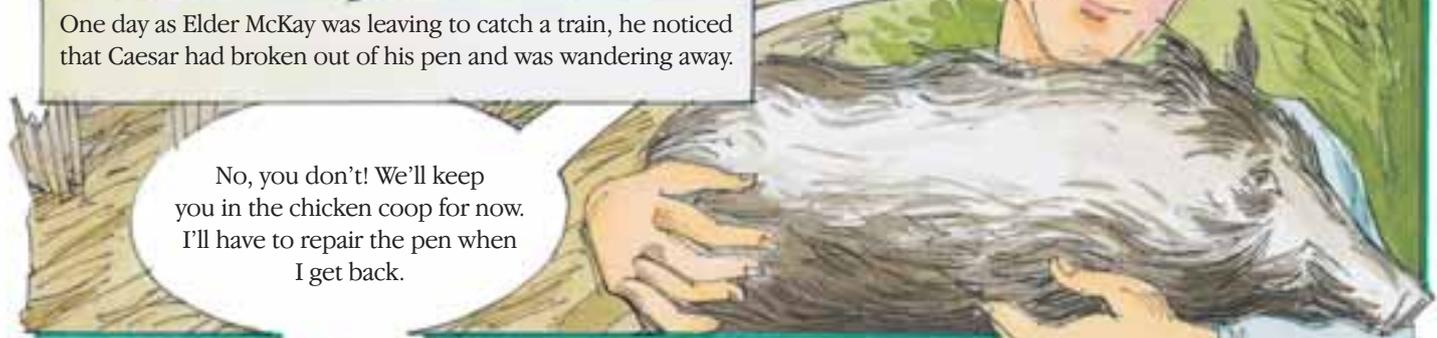
David's Pet Boar

Elder David O. McKay had many pets, including a boar named Caesar.



Father, you must really love animals to care for an ugly creature like that!

One day as Elder McKay was leaving to catch a train, he noticed that Caesar had broken out of his pen and was wandering away.

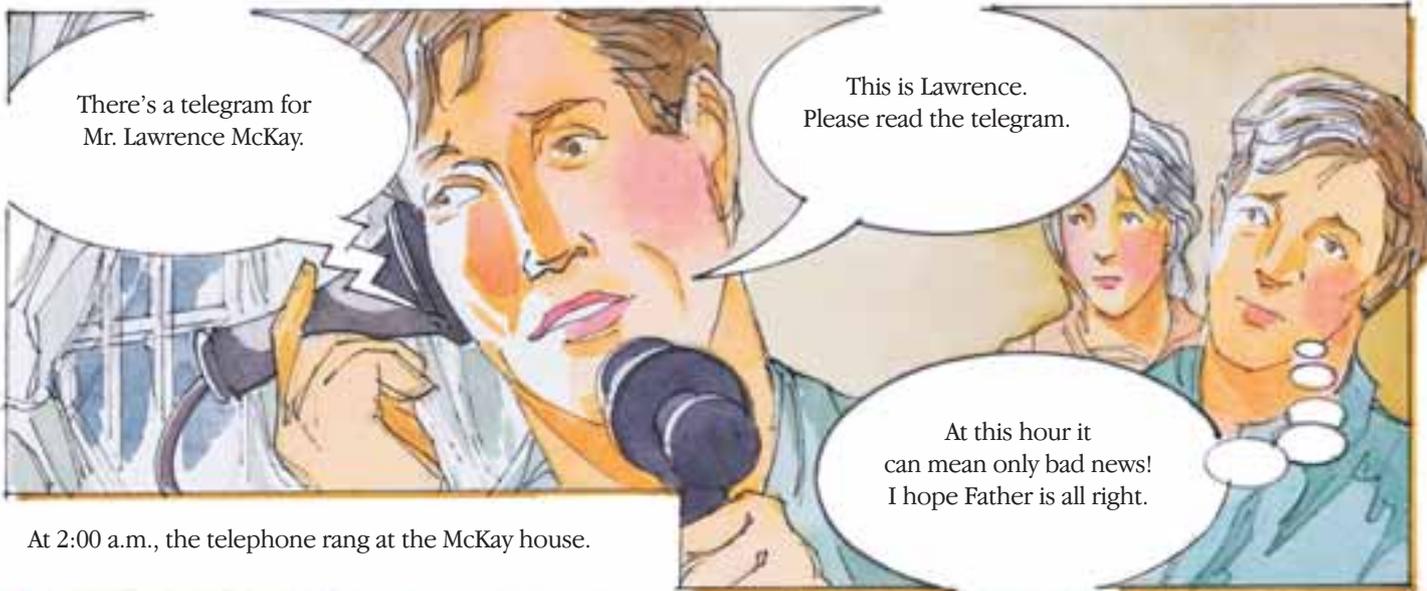


No, you don't! We'll keep you in the chicken coop for now. I'll have to repair the pen when I get back.



But Elder McKay forgot to tell the rest of the family where Caesar was, so no one could feed or water him.

ILLUSTRATED BY MIKE EAGLE

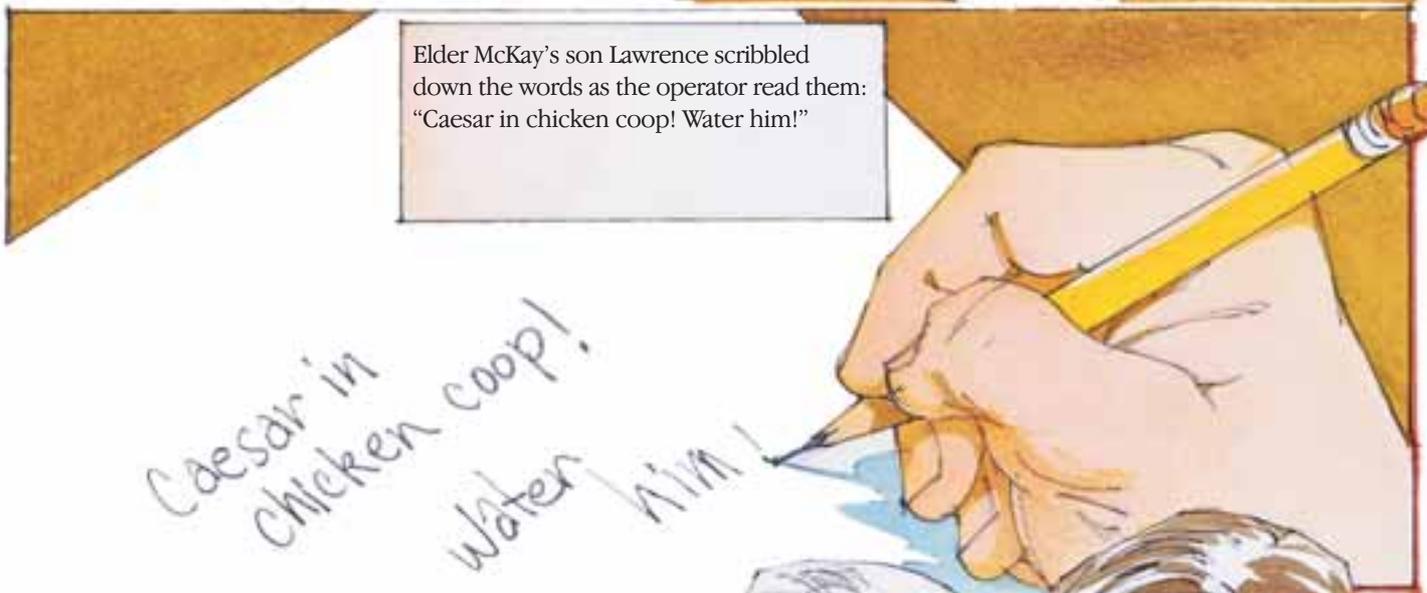


There's a telegram for Mr. Lawrence McKay.

This is Lawrence. Please read the telegram.

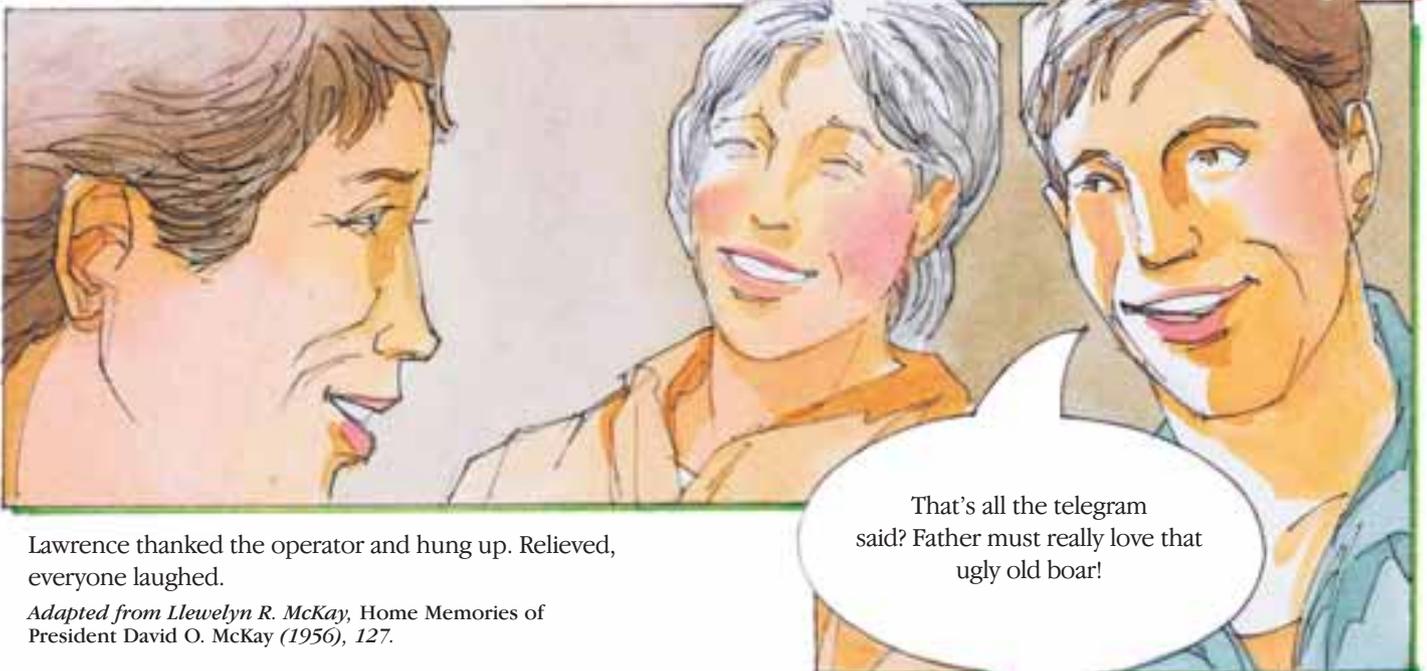
At this hour it can mean only bad news! I hope Father is all right.

At 2:00 a.m., the telephone rang at the McKay house.



Elder McKay's son Lawrence scribbled down the words as the operator read them: "Caesar in chicken coop! Water him!"

Caesar in chicken coop!
Water him!



Lawrence thanked the operator and hung up. Relieved, everyone laughed.

Adapted from Llewelyn R. McKay, Home Memories of President David O. McKay (1956), 127.

That's all the telegram said? Father must really love that ugly old boar!

Jumping Fences

“Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord” (Colossians 3:20).



From an interview with Elder Daryl H. Garn of the Seventy, currently serving in the Asia Area Presidency; by Callie Buys

As a young boy living on a small farm in Fielding, Utah, I always wanted a horse. When I was old enough to take care of one, my dad bought me a big black horse, and I named him Smokey.

I loved Smokey and took care of him the best I could. One morning when I went out to feed him, he was not in his corral. I hunted around and found him in the haystack, which was fenced off from the corral. He had been making a mess—trampling on the hay and ruining it. All the gates were closed; Smokey had obviously jumped over the fence. His manger had hay in it, so there was no reason for him to go into the haystack.

Elder and Sister Garn with their family.

A few days later Smokey was gone again. This time I found him out in the pasture. Soon he started jumping out of both the corral and the pasture. I had to ride my bike all over town looking for him. Sometimes Dad and I drove for miles before finding him and bringing him back.

Dad decided to buy some hobbles for Smokey. Hobbles are like handcuffs for horses to keep them from running away. “That will fix old Smokey,” Dad said.

It didn’t even slow him down. Jumping fences became a game to him, and he wasn’t much fun anymore. He was wild. I couldn’t catch him, and I couldn’t ride him very much. Finally Dad said, “We’ll teach old Smokey a lesson.” We tied a heavy log-chain to Smokey’s hobbles so that



wherever he went he would have to drag an eight-foot (2.5-m) log-chain between his legs. We thought surely this would stop him.

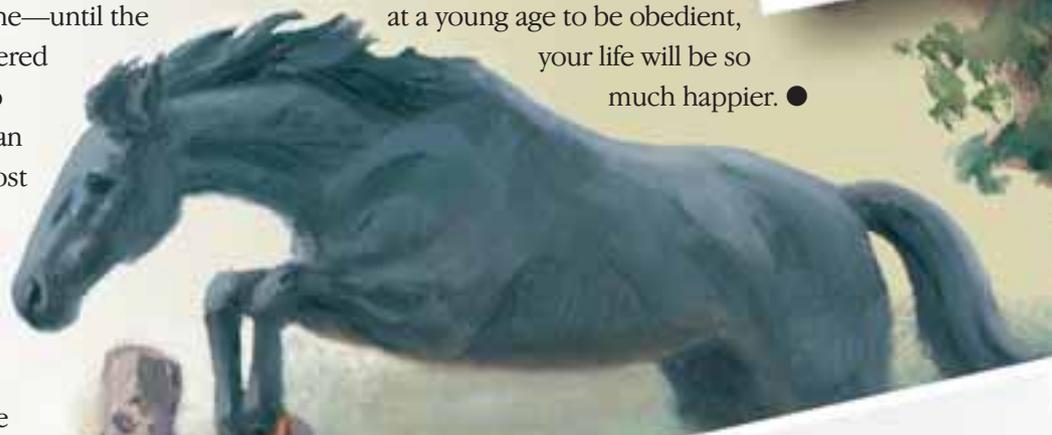
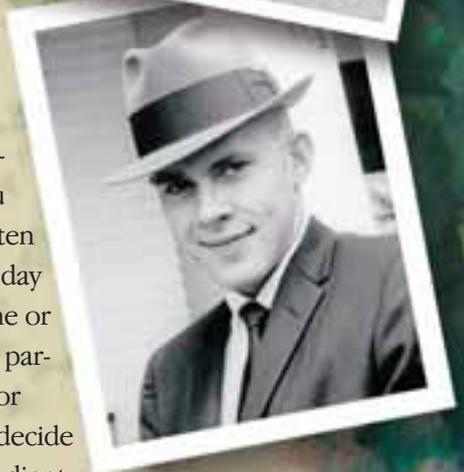
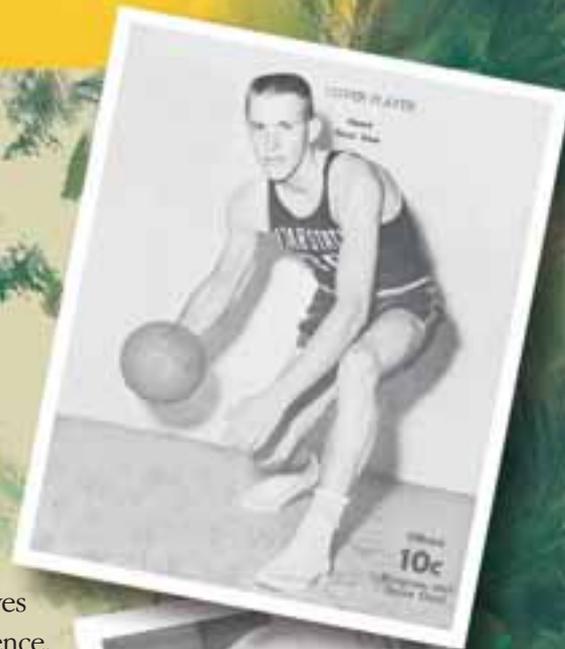
But that night Smokey tried to jump the fence again. The chain caught and tripped him. He fell into the fence and got cut up in the barbed wire. We got him out and called the veterinarian, who came and patched him up.

My home teacher, whom I called Uncle Claude, was a real horseman. He had an idea for Smokey, so he traded a gray horse to me for Smokey. Uncle Claude raced chariots, and he thought that if he could team Smokey with a horse that was a good chariot racer, he could break Smokey's bad habits and they could win some races. So Uncle Claude hooked Smokey up to the chariot, and they practiced a few times. Smokey seemed to be doing just fine—until the race. All of a sudden he veered off to the right and tried to jump over the fence that ran alongside the track. It almost killed Uncle Claude, and Smokey hurt himself so badly that he had to be put to sleep.

I've thought about my old horse many times since then. He had no good reason to jump over the fence that first time he got into the haystack. He was like some young people who decide that they want to be disobedient. Once we jump that first fence, it becomes easier to jump other fences—breaking the commandments and the

principles of the gospel—and before long we can destroy our lives through disobedience.

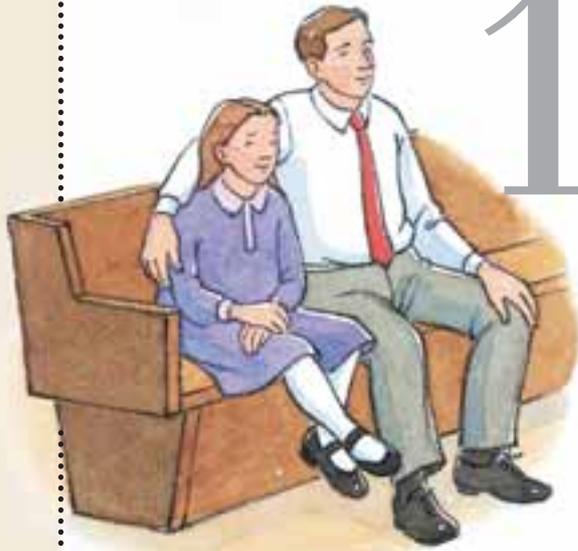
It is important to honor your father and mother and to be obedient to what they ask you to do. Their rules are often the first fence. It's a sad day in a person's life when he or she decides not to obey parents, gospel principles, or Heavenly Father. If you decide at a young age to be obedient, your life will be so much happier. ●



From top: Playing basketball in college. As a missionary. Riding his horse at age 16.



1



Fast Sunday is on the first Sunday of each month. It is a special day to humble ourselves before the Lord by fasting, praying, and attending fast and testimony meeting.



On fast Sunday, members of the Church do not eat or drink for two meals. Children may be encouraged to fast when they are old enough.

2

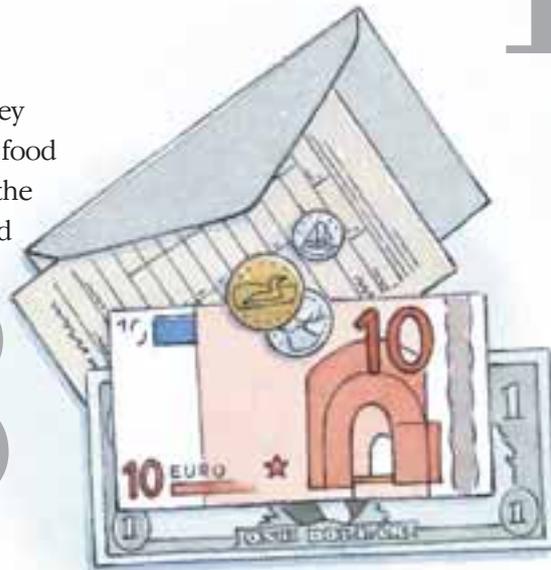
What Are Fast Offerings?

“Verily, this is fasting and prayer; or in other words, rejoicing and prayer” (D&C 59:14).

BY KIMBERLY WEBB
Church Magazines

Members donate the money they would have spent on food for the two meals to help the needy. This money is called a fast offering.

3



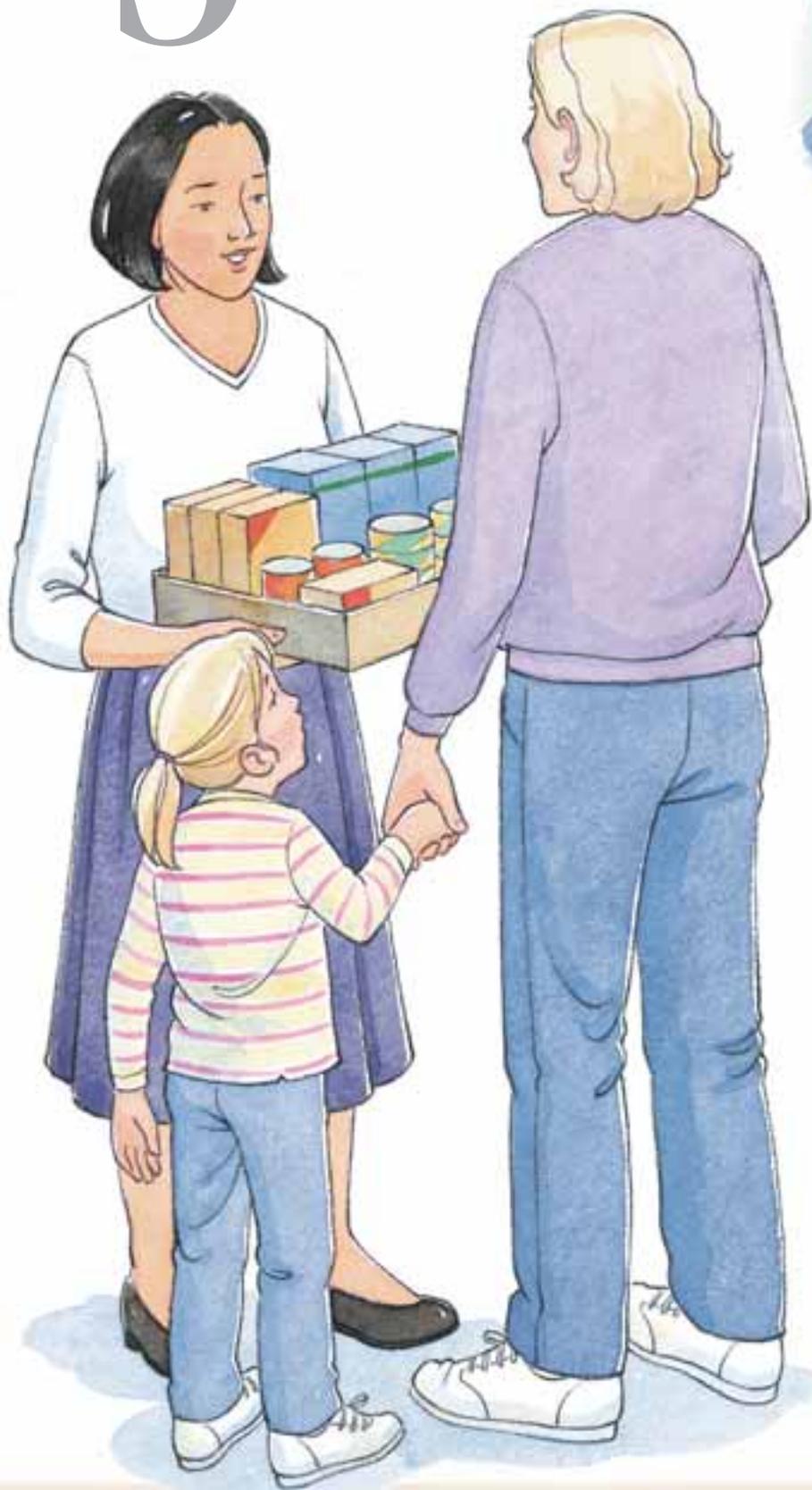
4



Members can give fast offerings to one of the bishopric or branch presidency members. The bishop or branch president uses the money to help those in need in his ward or branch.

5

Fast offerings may be used to help feed the hungry.



6

Fast offerings might be used to care for the sick.



7

In each way a fast offering is used, it helps take care of Heavenly Father's children. ●

Faith in Jesus Christ

Two blind men came to Jesus Christ and asked Him to heal them. Jesus asked if they believed that He could restore their sight. The men said, “Yea, Lord.” Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, “According to your faith be it unto you.” When they opened their eyes, they could see. (See Matthew 9:27–30.)

Color this picture illustrating the event. You could use the picture to talk about faith during family home evening or Primary. ●



ILLUSTRATION BASED ON TWO BLIND MEN HEALED AT CAPERNAUM, BY JAMES J. TISSOT

Greeting the Missionaries

BY ROBERT PETERSON



We like to visit with the missionaries. We want to serve missions when we are older! Help us find the following items: a bell, a candle, a comb, an eagle's head, an ice cream cone, a knife, a ladle, a leaf, a paintbrush, a ring, a snail, and a toothbrush. Then color the picture. ●

“Call on the name of . . . God for protection” (3 Nephi 4:30).

The House in the HURRICANE

BY MELODY WARNICK

Based on experiences from the author’s life

The wind was howling and shaking the palm trees by the time Grandma’s car reached Ana Luisa’s house. “Grab your things, girls, and go inside,” Grandma said. “I’m going to find some rocks to put behind the car’s tires.”

“Why?” Rebecca asked.

“So maybe the car won’t blow away,” Grandma said.

Rebecca and Sarah looked at each other, their eyes wide.

The girls didn’t remember the last hurricane that had come to Puerto Rico eight years ago, when Sarah was two and Rebecca just one. But they knew that the Arcibo River had flooded their neighborhood and that a lot of houses had been destroyed. Now Hurricane Georges was on the way, and newscasters warned that this hurricane might be even worse.

“So, girls, are you ready for Hurricane Georges?” asked Ana Luisa as they stepped through the front door.

“Brother Soto came to our house this morning and nailed boards on all the windows. Grandma says we need to pray that everything will turn out all right,” Sarah said.

“That’s right,” Ana Luisa said. “Heavenly Father will watch over us.”



Ana Luisa was a friend from their new church. Even though the girls were worried, Ana Luisa's comforting words and the familiar smell of rice and beans inside her cozy house made them feel better.

The sister missionaries, who had taught Grandma and the girls the gospel just three months ago, were spending the night at Ana Luisa's too. "It's going to be fun," Sister Lewis, one of the missionaries, told them, "like a party, except with really bad weather."

For a while it *was* like a party. They ate dinner, then munched on cookies and listened to the radio. Every once in a while they heard

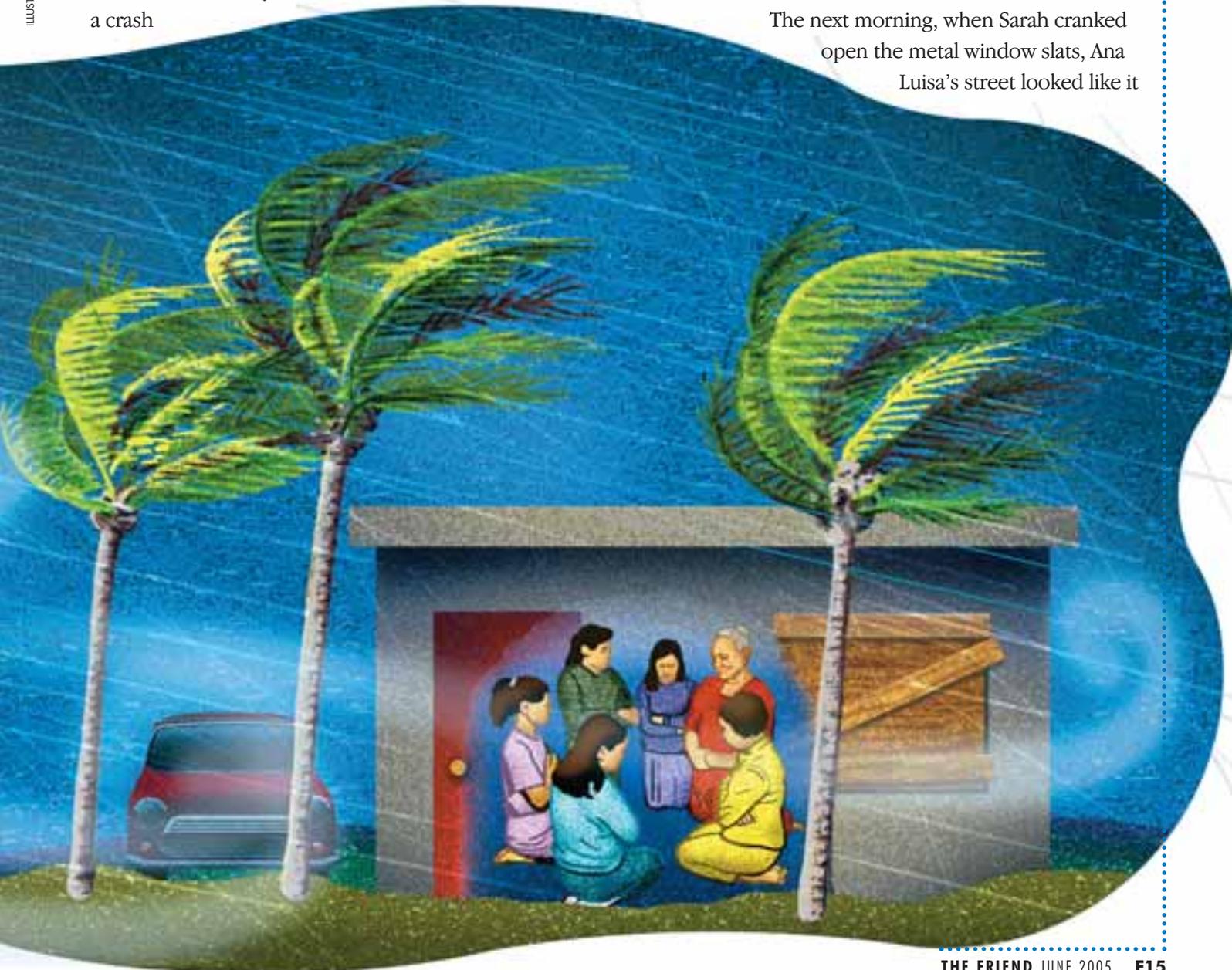
outside. Rebecca and Sarah wondered if Grandma's car had blown away after all, but it was too dark to see.

Later, the lights flickered and went out. As Rebecca made a funny face in the beam of her flashlight, Grandma said, "Now is probably a good time for bed."

After they put on their pajamas, Grandma called Sarah and Rebecca back to the living room. "We're going to say a prayer together," Grandma said. Sister Lewis asked Heavenly Father to keep them all safe during the hurricane and to protect Rebecca and Sarah's house. Hearing Sister Lewis pray helped the girls feel calmer.

* * *

The next morning, when Sarah cranked open the metal window slats, Ana Luisa's street looked like it





“The protection promised to the faithful . . . is a reality today as it was in Bible times.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Bible Stories and Personal Protection,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 39.

belonged on a different planet. Grandma’s car was still there, but some trees had fallen down, and sheets of metal from people’s roofs were on Ana Luisa’s lawn. Pigeons waddled helplessly down the sidewalk, too heavy with rainwater to fly. “If Ana Luisa’s street looks like this,” Sarah asked Rebecca nervously, “what do you think ours looks like?”

Early that morning Grandma had driven over to check on their house. She finally came back around lunchtime. “The neighborhood is flooded,” she said. “I couldn’t even get near our street.”

Rebecca wanted to cry. Sarah asked, “What do we do now, Grandma?”

“If it’s OK with Ana Luisa, we’ll stay here for a few more days. Maybe by then the water will go down, and we can go home.”

* * *

Everyone from church wanted to help Grandma, Rebecca, and Sarah. Ana Luisa cooked dinner for them, and the sister missionaries brought clothes that Sister Lewis’s family had sent. Bishop Espinosa even came to give Grandma a blessing when she was feeling sick. But it was hard not to be in their own house and harder still not to know if their house was even there anymore.

After eight days the streets in their neighborhood were finally clear. Buckled into the backseat of Grandma’s car, Sarah and Rebecca felt a twist of excitement and fear in their stomachs. As they rode, they saw houses with walls that had been blown down. Broken tables, water-logged mattresses, and mud-crusting refrigerators lay abandoned on the side of the road.

“What if our house is gone?” Rebecca asked.

“Then Heavenly Father will help us find a new one,” Grandma replied.

The streets in their neighborhood were still oozing with thick black mud, so they had to drive very slowly. Finally, Grandma turned the corner onto their street.

“I see it!” Rebecca shouted. “Our house is still there!”

“There’s a hole in the roof,” Sarah pointed out.

Inside, everything smelled musty. The girls leaned their mattresses against the wall to air them out and helped Grandma wipe up the water that had come in through the hole in the roof. “Can we stay here tonight, Grandma?” Rebecca asked.

“I don’t think so. We’ll have to wait a few more nights until we can get the roof fixed.”

Rebecca sighed and sank onto the damp couch.

“I wish we could stay.”

“I’m just glad our house is still here,” Sarah said.

“Heavenly Father listened to our prayers,” Grandma said. Then, looking through the doorway, she pointed toward the street. “I think He’s still listening.”

Outside, a large truck with a crane was pulling up. Bishop Espinosa and Brother Soto hopped down, along with some other men from their ward.

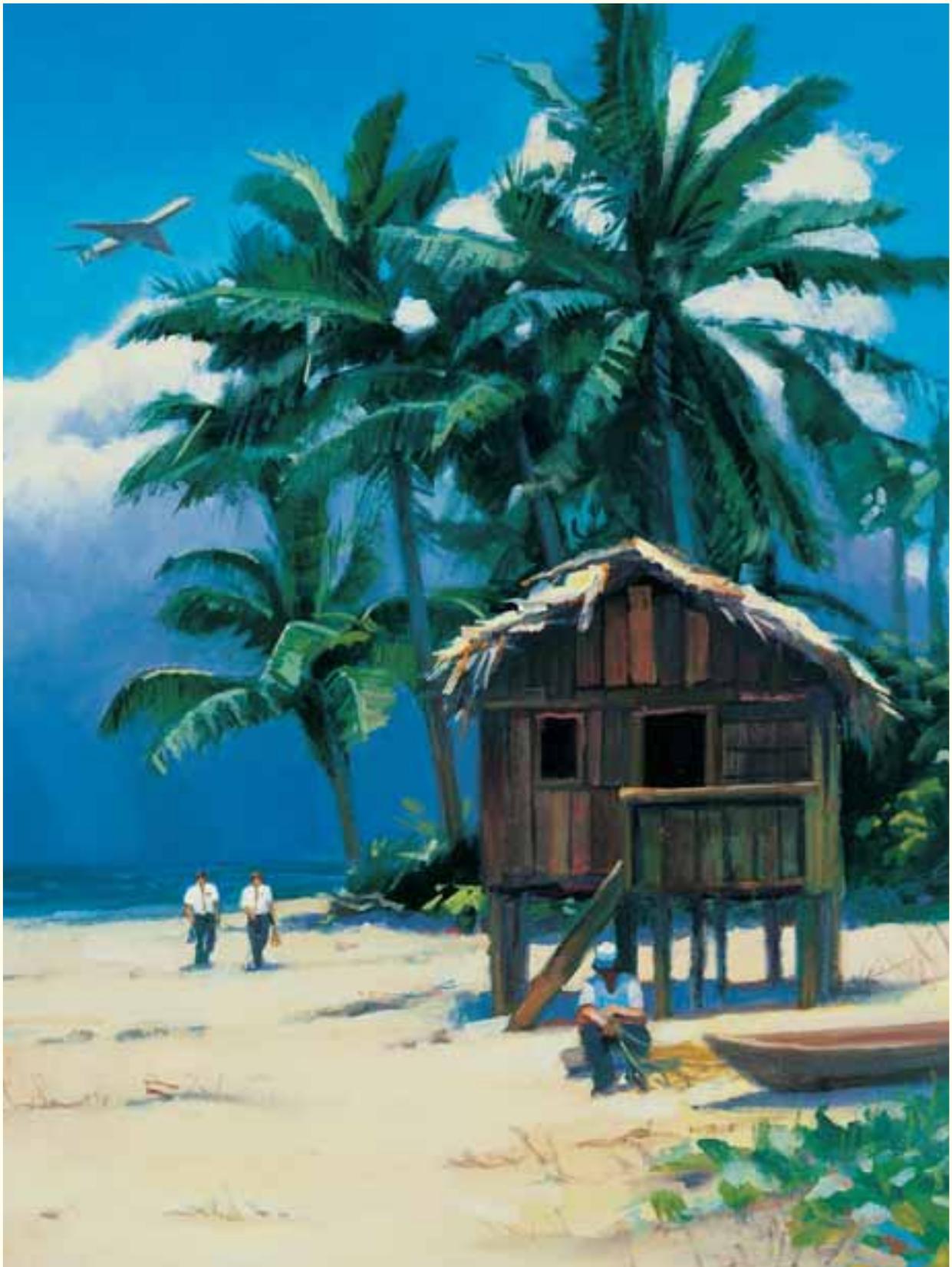
“Do you need any help?” the bishop called. “Maybe some people to fix your roof?”

Sarah and Rebecca grabbed hands and squealed. “Does this mean we can stay, Grandma? Can we sleep here tonight?”

Grandma smiled and nodded. “Welcome home, girls.” ●

Melody Warnick is a member of the Ames Ward, Ames Iowa Stake.





Unto the Islands of the Sea, by Mark Buehner

*“Send forth the elders of my church unto the nations which are afar off; unto the islands of the sea; send forth unto foreign lands; call upon all nations, first upon the Gentiles, and then upon the Jews”
(D&C 133:8).*



If our young women can know of His love, if they can have the truths of the gospel embedded in their hearts, they will not fear. With strong testimonies of the gospel and a firm knowledge of eternal doctrines, our young women will have the courage to face a world that is desecrating families.” See Susan W. Tanner, “Strengthening Future Mothers,” p. 16.