

# For the Strength of Youth

**Conference  
Notebook:**  
Capture revelation  
center section

## Building Zion Wherever You Are

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Which wolf will  
you feed?  
p. 12

God Will Fight  
Your Battles  
p. 15

*Finding Joy in Christ*



# ALORA D.

19, TENNESSEE, USA

---

**MY DAD'S IN THE** U.S. military, so we moved around a lot growing up. It was hard to be outgoing and make friends, and I thought being shy was my whole personality, like I was a painting with only one color.

Painting has helped me realize that I'm actually a very colorful person! I'm more reserved than other people, but there are so many other layers and pieces to my personality, like a full-color painting. Sometimes people are surprised by how colorful my paintings are, and I just tell them, "You need to get to know me!"

I'm still figuring out who I am and adding pieces to myself. In fact, I recently sang in the November 2020 Young Women Face to Face event. I know that when I do the simple things like read my scriptures and pray, it helps me learn about who I am and who Heavenly Father wants me to become.



Share your story and read stories from other youth at the [@StrivetoBe](#) Instagram or post using [#StrivetoBe](#).



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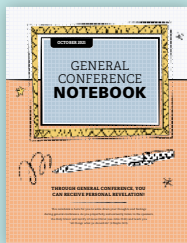
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This young woman was devastated, but the scriptures gave her a new perspective.

### YOUR GENERAL CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK IS HERE!

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Use these pages to help you prepare for and get the most out of general conference. Pull it out and use it as a separate booklet if you like.

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of Latter-day Saints, 50 E. North Temple St., Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA. Periodicals Postage Paid at Salt Lake City, Utah.

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**POSTMASTER:** Send all UAA to CFS (see DMM 507.1.5.2). **NONPOSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES:** Send address changes to Distribution Services, Church Magazines, P.O. Box 26368, Salt Lake City, UT 84126-0368, USA.

Canada Post Information: Publication Agreement #40017431.

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Doctrine and  
Covenants 97:21







**By Elder Jeffrey R.  
Holland**

Of the Quorum of the  
Twelve Apostles

# SEEKING ZION AND THE LORD'S BLESSINGS

*Building Zion is a great responsibility, but it also  
brings great rewards.*

**THE FIRST** great *truth* of heaven is that God *loves us* with all His heart, might, mind, and strength. He wants the very best for us—He always has, and He always will. He wants us to be happy; not temporarily or superficially happy but profoundly and eternally happy as He is. He wants us to grow and reach our divine potential as a son or daughter of God.

I know this isn't always easy. Many of you face hardships and personal trials that can sometimes be overwhelming. You have probably looked at your own circumstances, at some of the conditions in your family, or the problems among nations around the world, and wondered, "How can I make it through this maze of challenges?" One answer may surprise you: Seek to build up Zion.



## Where Is Zion?

Down through history God has regularly called His people to establish Zion. That was usually a particular place where God’s people could be free from the influences of the world and live in harmony with one another. But in this last great dispensation, Zion is not limited to one geographic location. In our day, Zion can be wherever a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is found. The Lord described these people of Zion as being “of one heart and one mind” (Moses 7:18) and “pure in heart” (Doctrine and Covenants 97:21). In short, we no longer think of Zion as *where* we are going to live but *how* we are going to live.

Many wonderful blessings are in store for you as you do your best to build Zion, to be who the Savior needs you to be, and to help prepare the way for His return to the earth. Such an effort takes work and tremendous faith, but it will also bring lasting happiness and joy. I hope you find this to be as moving and exciting as I do! As President Russell M. Nelson has taught, nothing—literally *nothing*—could be more important.<sup>1</sup> And we get to participate! We are the soldiers in the front lines of truth. We don’t carry

bullets; we carry bandages! We are called on to help heal the world and provide a worldwide congregation of people to whom the Savior can come.

## Love God and Neighbor

We can achieve this kind of family or neighborhood or nation by keeping the commandment to love. And the more we love God, the more we will love our neighbors and see ways we can bless them. There are neighbors to help, the poor to lift up, and good to do everywhere.

The Lord once described this responsibility and blessing this way:

“Wherefore, be faithful; . . . succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.

“And if thou art faithful unto the end thou shalt have a crown of immortality, and eternal life in the mansions which I have prepared in the house of my Father” (Doctrine and Covenants 81:5–6).

## Stand Up for Truth

When God calls us to build up Zion, He calls us to stand up for His teachings and to stay firm in our faith. This won’t always be easy or comfortable to do, but

“THERE ARE **NEIGHBORS** TO HELP, THE POOR TO LIFT UP, AND GOOD TO DO **EVERYWHERE.**”



we must do it—with compassion, humility, understanding, and unfailing charity for others. In our quest to establish Zion, we will surely come across those who may not look or dress or behave appropriately. When we meet such people, we must be careful to respond *righteously*, not *self-righteously*. In such situations the best thing we can do is behave properly ourselves and show “love unfeigned” for them (see Doctrine and Covenants 121:41).

I want others to enjoy the blessings that I have, but sometimes I wonder how to share them in a way that won’t be offensive or misunderstood. This scripture has helped me through all of my Church callings and personal responsibilities as a disciple of Christ:

“Therefore, verily I say unto you, lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men;

“For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say.

“But a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall declare whatsoever thing ye declare in my name, in solemnity of heart, in the spirit of meekness, in all things.

“And I give unto you this promise, that inasmuch as ye do this the Holy Ghost shall be shed forth in bearing record unto all things whatsoever ye shall say” (Doctrine and Covenants 100:5–8).



**“WE NO LONGER THINK OF ZION AS  
WHERE WE ARE GOING TO LIVE BUT  
HOW WE ARE GOING TO LIVE.”**

### **A Blessing Moving Forward**

My beloved young friends, there will be challenging days ahead, but your life is ultimately going to be magnificent as you give your heart to God, love the Lord Jesus Christ, and do your best to live the gospel. If you are faithful, Zion will be wherever you are. I bless you to embrace it joyfully. The Lord has so much in store for you! 🙏

#### **NOTE**

1. See Russell M. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), 8, [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

# BUILDING THE BEST YOU

*Five ways to build a happy and joyful life.*

**By Eric B. Murdock**  
Church Magazines

**WHEN THE LORD** commanded Joseph Smith to build the Kirtland Temple, He didn't leave him to figure out how to do it all on his own. He revealed a plan that would lead to success.

"Let the house be built, not after the manner of the world," the Lord declared. "Let it be built after the manner which I shall show" (Doctrine and Covenants 95:13–14). The Lord then gave instructions on how to build the temple (see Doctrine and Covenants 95:15–17).

Thankfully, the Lord has shown us more than just how to build temples. He has also given us instructions to help us become the best person we can be. As we follow them, we will build our lives "not after the manner of the world" but after the way the Lord has designed.

Here are five ways to build a happy and joyful life centered on Jesus Christ.

## NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Waiting on the Road to Damascus," Apr. 2011 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 76).
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Of Things That Matter Most," Oct. 2010 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 21).
3. Russell M. Nelson, "Hear Him," Apr. 2020 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 89).



## Build a Sure Foundation

Any architect or builder will tell you that a solid foundation is essential to any building. Helaman taught that the best foundation for our lives is "the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God" (Helaman 5:12). We can make Christ our foundation by coming unto Him and following His teachings. How do you feel you're doing at making Christ the foundation of your life?





## Serve Others

Another great way to build our lives, according to President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, then-Second Counselor in the First Presidency, comes when “we’re on our feet serving the Lord and serving those around us.”<sup>1</sup> When you serve others, you are doing what Jesus did and learning to become more like Him. And you will not only bless the lives of the people you serve, but *you* will be blessed as well.

## Create a Regular Routine of Prayer and Scripture Study

Another way to build a happy life is to build a relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. A great way to do that is through prayer and scripture study.

President Uchtdorf said: “To strengthen our relationship with God, we need some meaningful time alone with Him. Quietly focusing on daily personal prayer and scripture study. . . will be some wise investments of our time and efforts to draw closer to our Heavenly Father.”<sup>2</sup>

Prayer is an opportunity to communicate with our Father in Heaven. He knows us, loves us, and wants to hear from us! When we pray sincerely, offer our thanks, and ask for the things we need, He listens and always answers in His own way and time.

When it comes to scripture study, there is no one right way to do it. The important thing is that you do it! President Russell M. Nelson has taught, “Daily immersion in the word of God is crucial for spiritual survival.”<sup>3</sup> Spending time each day in the scriptures will, without a doubt, help you build a life of faith and strength.

## Surround Yourself with Those Who Encourage You to Do Good

Heavenly Father wants us to connect and build relationships with others—especially family and friends. We are often shaped by those we spend time with. Whether they are members of the Church or not, you should surround yourself with people who help you live the gospel, keep the Lord’s standards, and become a better person. You can also help those around you to do the same. Which of your friends is helping you build your foundation on righteousness?



## Find Joy in Building Your Foundation

There are many other ways you can build your life to be spiritually strong and have joy, including going to church and partaking of the sacrament, making and keeping covenants, and following the counsel of living prophets.

It’s important to remember that all of these things take work and time. There’s always building and learning to be done, but you don’t have to do it alone. The Lord will help you each day as you try your best to build a life that you and He can be proud of and that will bring you joy. 🏰

## DRESS DISTRESS

**WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL**, I was chosen to participate in a fashion show for an annual school event. I knew that the coordinator would choose dresses that were not modest, so I told her that I would not participate if the dress I had to wear was immodest. She said that would be all right.

When my friends and I went to check out our dresses, I was confused. Despite what the coordinator had told me, all the dresses were the opposite of the dress and appearance standards in the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet. Because it seemed like there was no solution, I tried on one of the immodest dresses. I wanted to look pretty, but when I wore that dress, I didn't feel like myself. I wondered, "How would I feel in the Lord's presence in this kind of dress?"

I thought about how I could get out of this situation. Finally, I found my older sister's prom dress, which did meet the Lord's standards. When I told my friends that I would use my own dress, I could tell from their facial expressions that they thought I would look better in the immodest dress. Fortunately, the coordinator said it was OK to wear the modest one.

I was relieved, and I felt confident. I didn't care what my friends thought. I found a way to participate with a gorgeous *and* modest dress. I was grateful that I had the courage to keep my standards high, especially when it was not easy or popular.

**Jessika S., Indonesia**

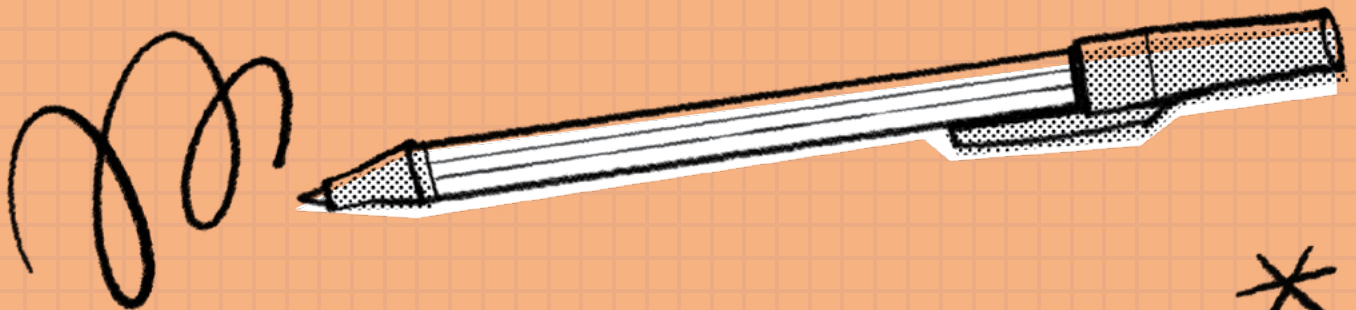






OCTOBER 2021

# GENERAL CONFERENCE **NOTEBOOK**



**THROUGH GENERAL CONFERENCE,  
YOU CAN RECEIVE PERSONAL REVELATION!**



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This notebook is here for you to write down your thoughts and feelings during general conference. As you prayerfully and earnestly listen to the speakers, the Holy Ghost will testify of Jesus Christ (see John 15:26) and teach you “all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:3).

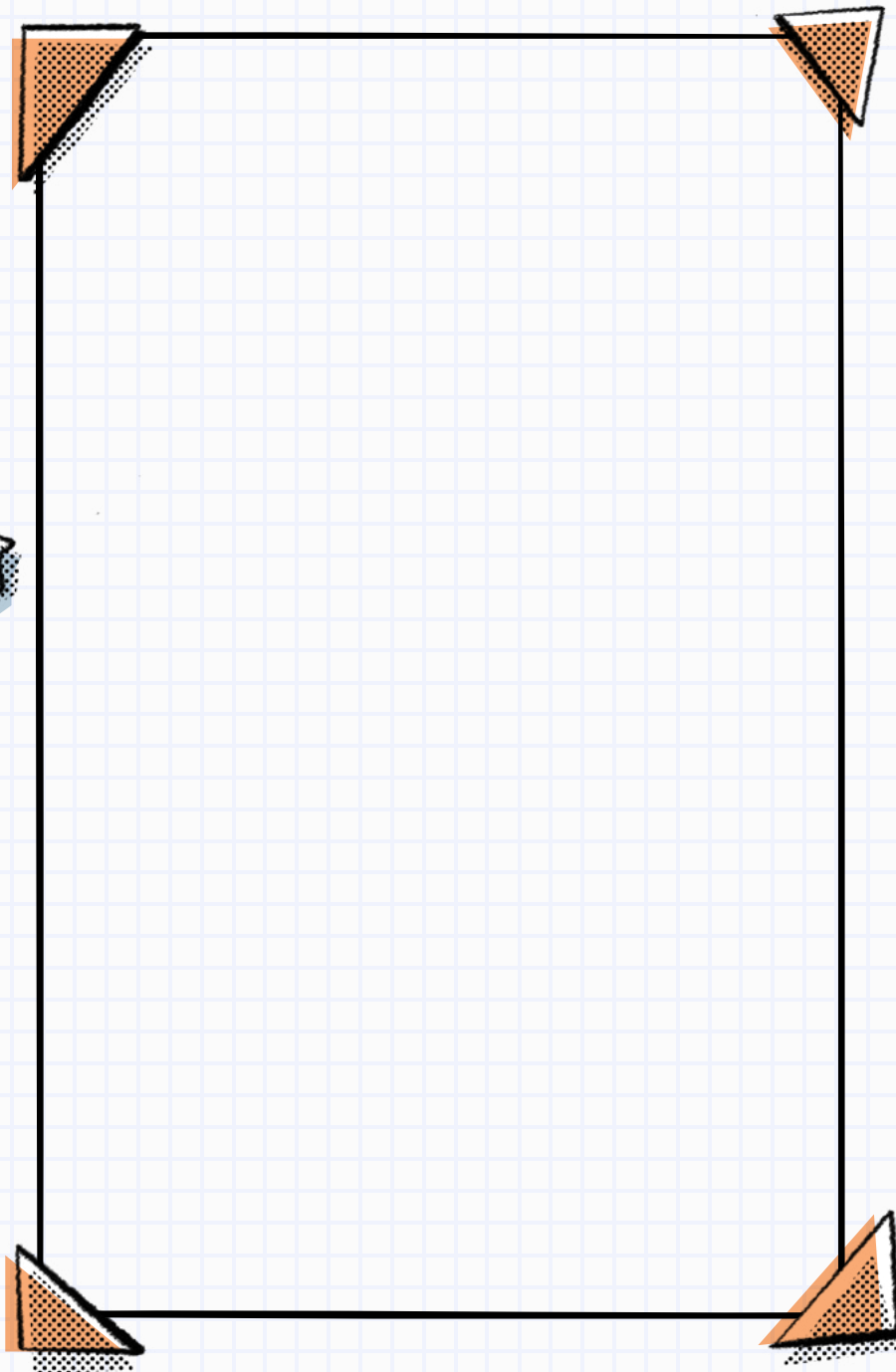
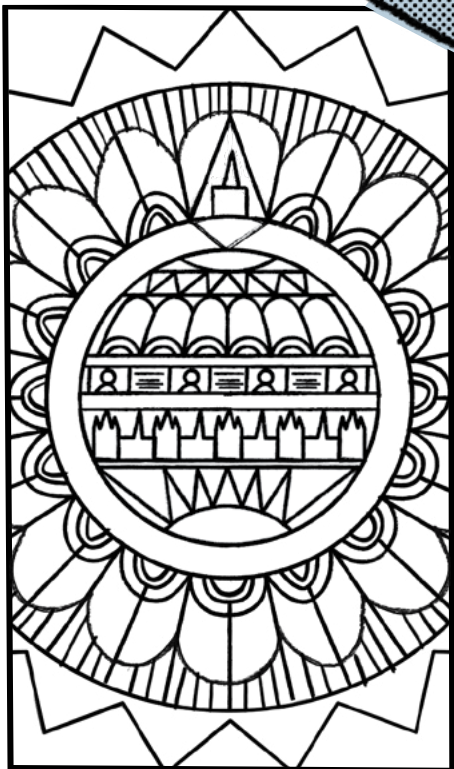
# Saturday MORNING SESSION

**"TOPICS WERE NOT ASSIGNED TO THE SPEAKERS. THEY EACH PRAYED FOR PERSONAL REVELATION IN PREPARING THEIR MESSAGES. . . . AS YOU STUDY THEM, SEEK TO LEARN WHAT THE LORD IS TRYING TO TEACH YOU THROUGH HIS SERVANTS."**

President Russell M. Nelson<sup>1</sup>

## SEEK AND FIND

Can you find these hidden objects?  
10 temples, 6 scrolls, 3 missionary tags,  
4 general conference speakers, 2 suns

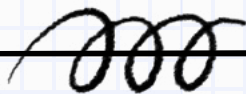
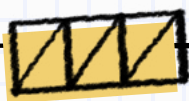
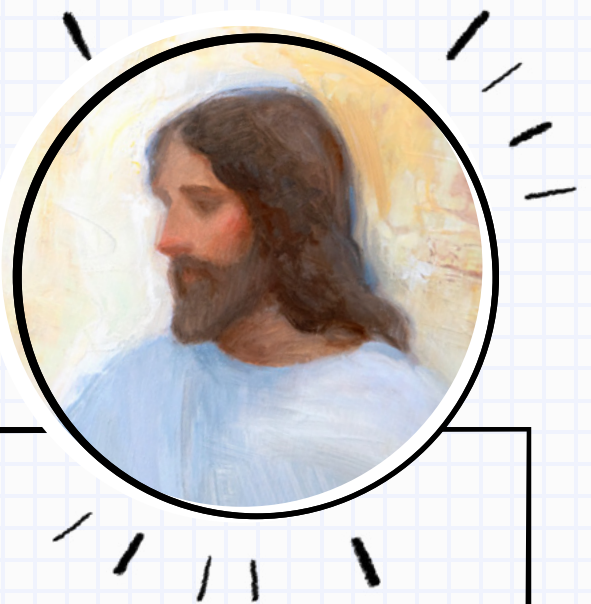




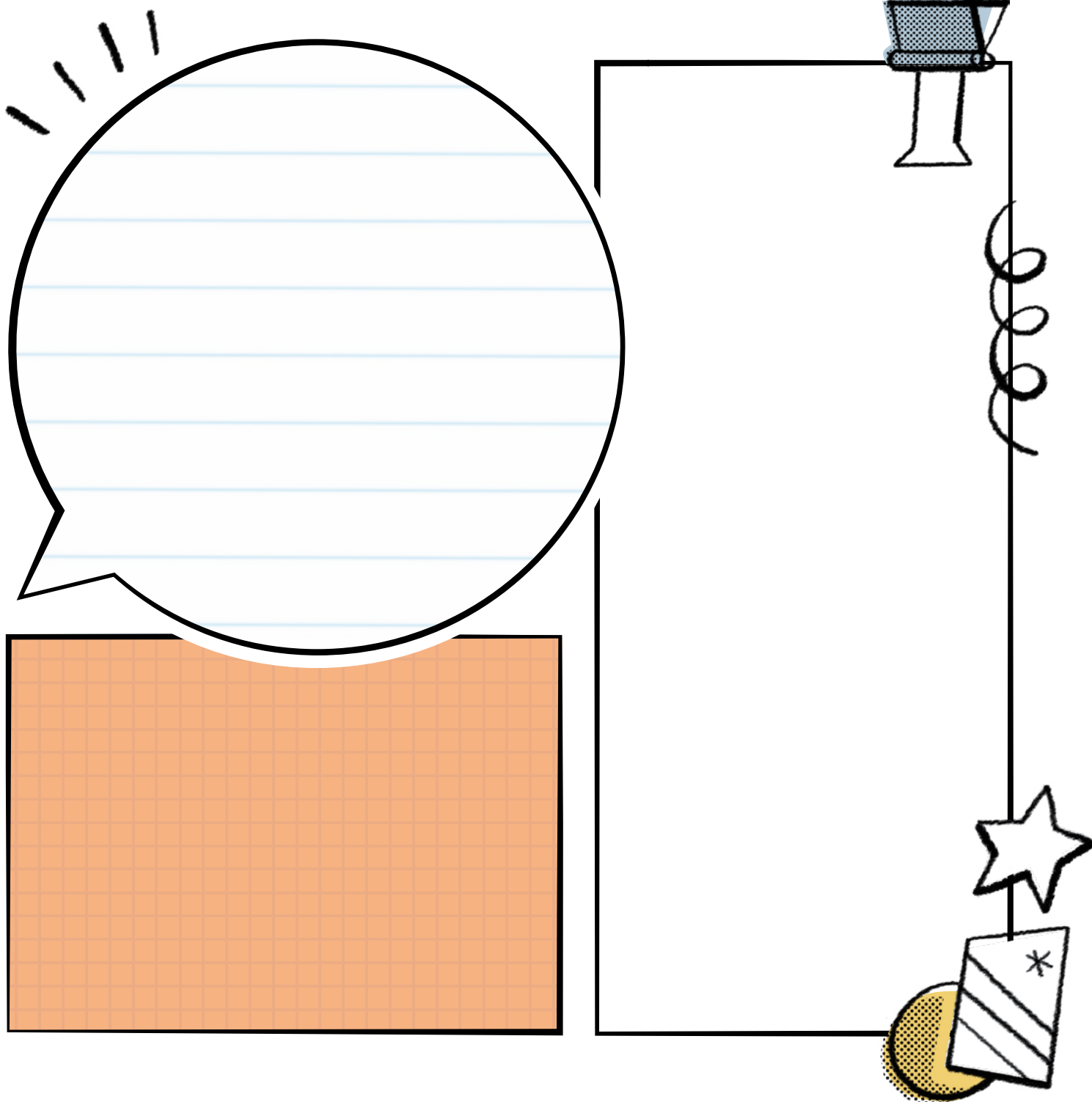
What do I feel the Lord is trying to teach me?

What messages stood out to me?  
Why?

What will I do now? What do I need to keep doing?



# Saturday **AFTERNOON SESSION**

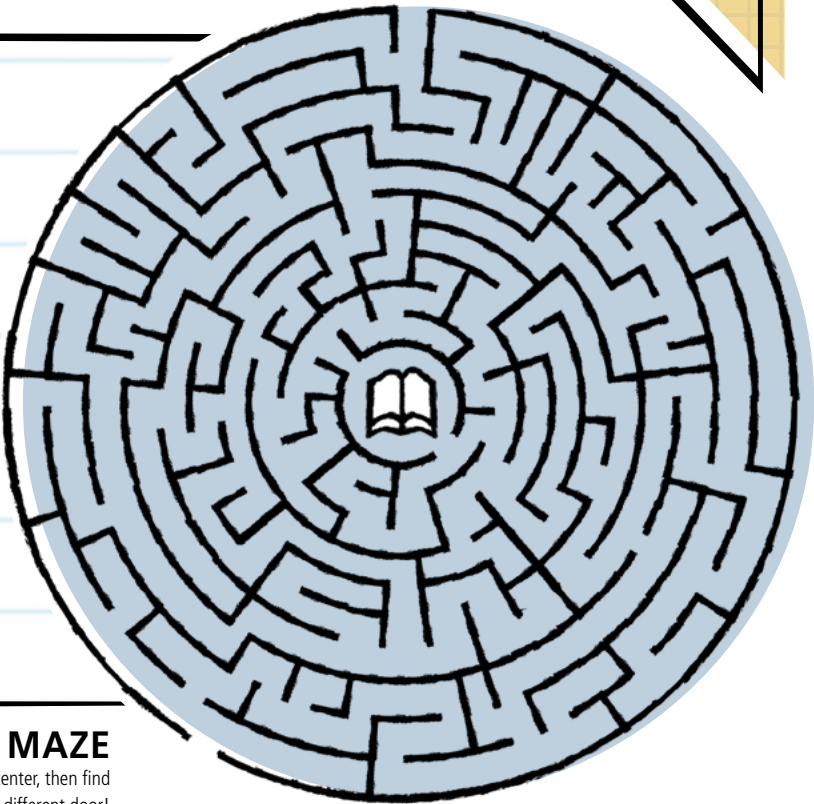
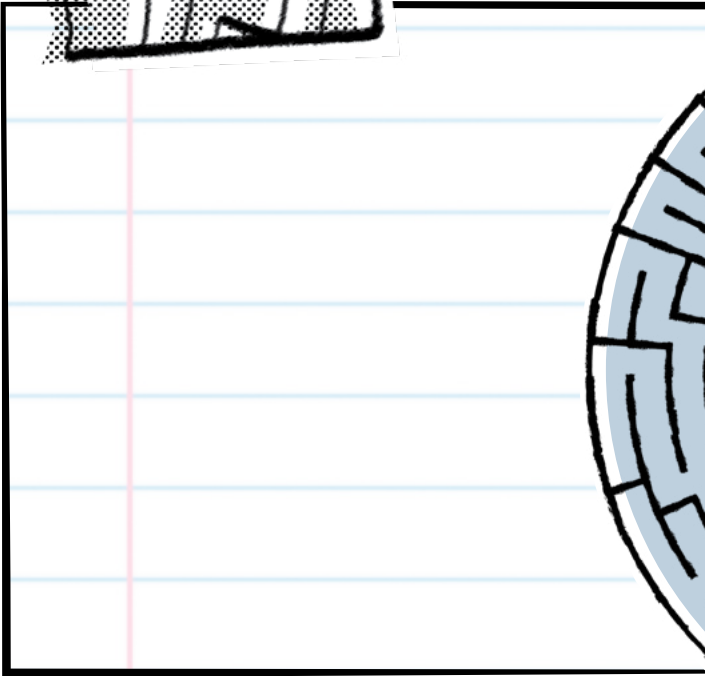
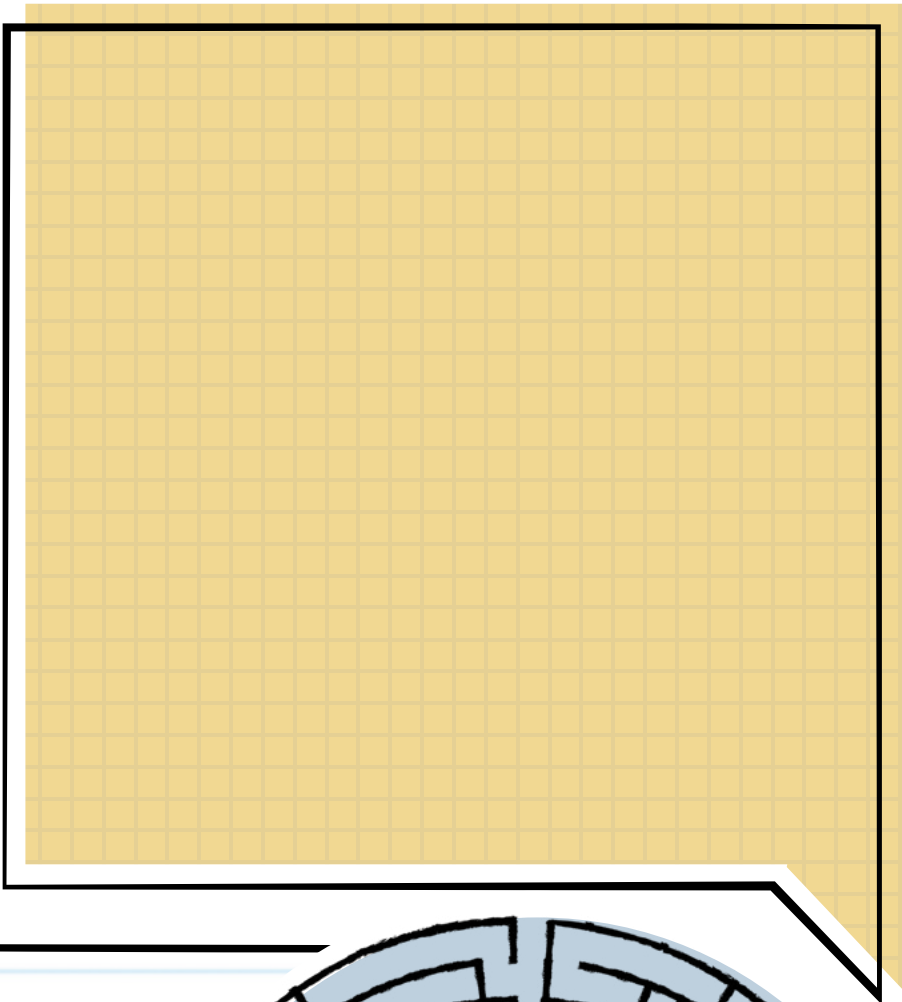




WHAT DO I FEEL  
I NEED TO DO TO  
DRAW CLOSER TO  
THE SAVIOR?

"I AM GRATEFUL THAT YOU HAVE  
COME TO [GENERAL] CONFER-  
ENCE TO FEEL INSPIRATION FROM  
HEAVEN AND TO FEEL CLOSER TO  
OUR HEAVENLY FATHER AND TO  
THE LORD JESUS CHRIST."

President Henry B. Eyring<sup>2</sup>

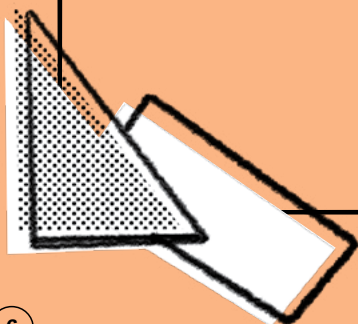
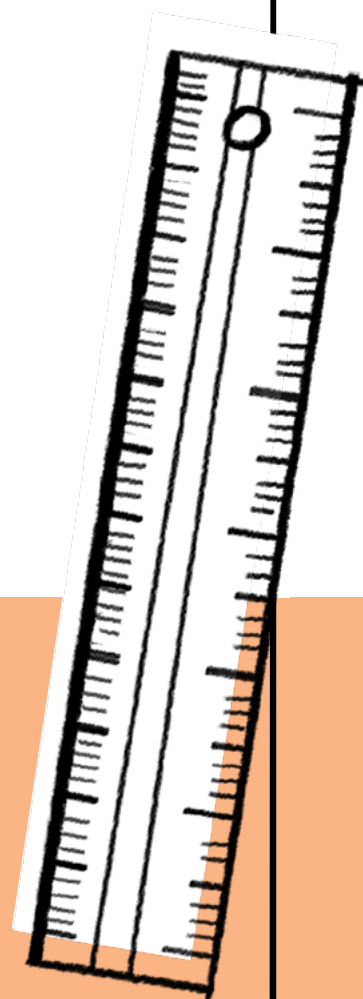


**MAZE**

Start from any maze door, reach the scriptures in the center, then find  
your way back out again, but this time through a different door!  
One more rule: you can't use any maze hallways twice.

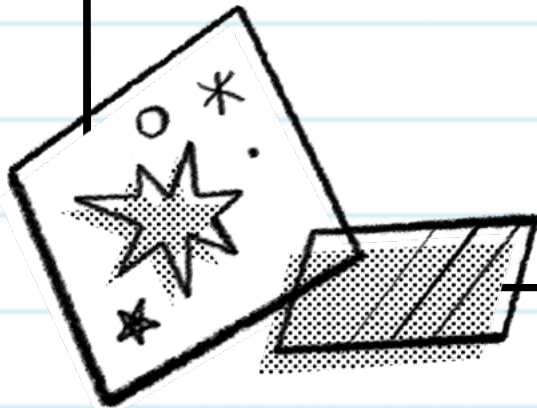
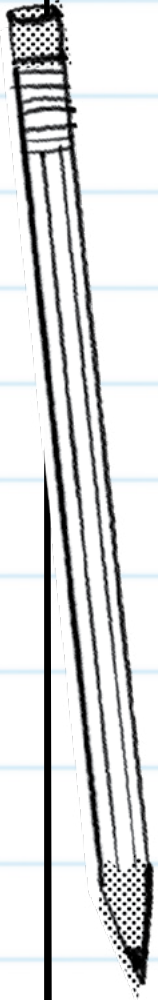
**"I PROMISE THAT AS YOU HEAR THE VOICE OF  
THE LORD TO YOU IN THE TEACHINGS OF THIS  
GENERAL CONFERENCE, AND THEN ACT ON THOSE  
PROMPTINGS, YOU WILL FEEL HEAVEN'S HAND  
UPON YOU, AND YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF  
THOSE AROUND YOU WILL BE BLESSED."**

Elder Neil L. Andersen<sup>3</sup>





WHAT WAS I INVITED TO DO THAT WILL  
HELP ME BE MORE LIKE JESUS CHRIST?  
HOW WILL I ACT ON THAT INVITATION?



llllll



# Sunday **MORNING SESSION**







*lllll*

**HOW DID I FEEL THE LOVE OF THE  
SAVIOR DURING THIS SESSION?**



**"WE HAVE PRAYED, AND INVITE YOU TO PRAY, THAT THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD WILL BE WITH  
US IN SUCH RICH ABUNDANCE THAT YOU CAN HEAR THE MESSAGES THAT THE SAVIOR HAS  
ESPECIALLY FOR YOU—MESSAGES THAT WILL BRING PEACE TO YOUR SOUL."**

President Russell M. Nelson<sup>4</sup>

# Sunday **AFTERNOON SESSION**



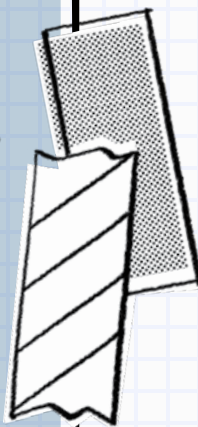
**"IF WE TEACH BY THE SPIRIT  
AND YOU LISTEN BY THE SPIRIT,  
SOME ONE OF US WILL TOUCH  
ON YOUR CIRCUMSTANCE,  
SENDING A PERSONAL PRO-  
PHETIC EPISTLE JUST TO YOU."**

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland<sup>5</sup>





**WHAT SPIRITUAL IMPRESSIONS HAVE I  
RECEIVED? WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR  
ME NOW?**

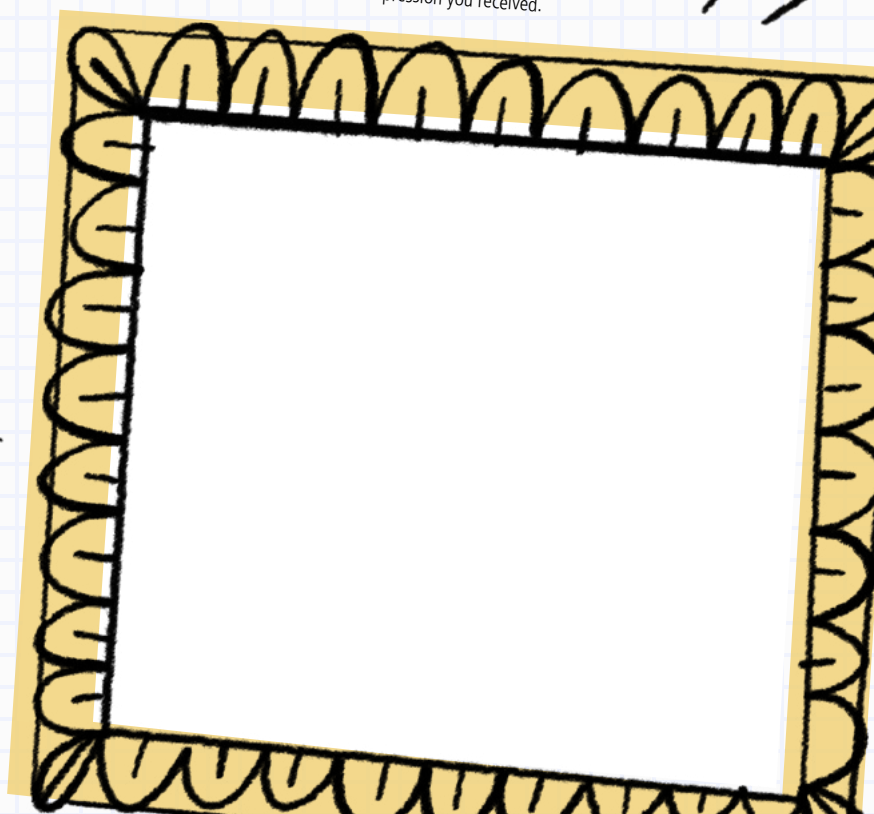


## SKETCH

Draw your favorite moment from conference here! It can be a speaker, a story, or even an impression you received.

## NOTES

1. Russell M. Nelson, "Closing Remarks," Apr. 2019 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 111).
2. Henry B. Eyring, "Where Two or Three Are Gathered," Apr. 2016 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 19).
3. Neil L. Andersen, Oct. 2017 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 126).
4. Russell M. Nelson, "Opening Message," Apr. 2020 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2020, 7).
5. Jeffrey R. Holland, Apr. 2011 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 113).
6. Neil L. Andersen, Oct. 2017 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2017, 125).





## INSPIRATION FOR YOU

**"THERE IS A TREASURE CHEST OF HEAVENLY DIRECTION AWAITING  
YOUR DISCOVERY IN THE MESSAGES OF GENERAL CONFERENCE.  
THE TEST FOR EACH OF US IS HOW WE RESPOND TO WHAT WE  
HEAR, WHAT WE READ, AND WHAT WE FEEL."**

Elder Neil L. Andersen<sup>6</sup>

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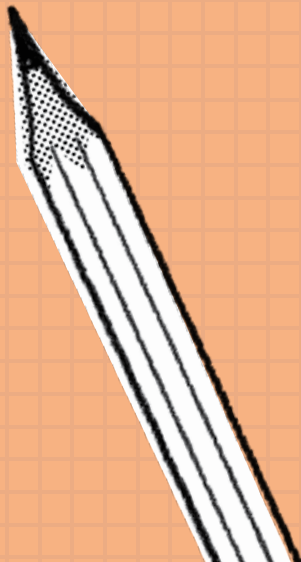
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# SESSION

Women's

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### Make New Friends

"I'd remind myself that God loves me.

Then I'd take the opportunity to get in touch with old friends, and I create activities to make new friends. You can use this time to build your confidence, talents, and testimony, and it will all work out."

*Julia S., 12, Alberta, Canada*

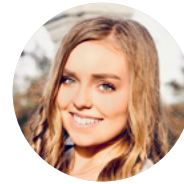


### Seek Guidance

"If you're struggling with feeling left out, ask Heavenly Father

for comfort. The Holy Ghost will guide you and be there for you. Also, you can always ask your parents and leaders for advice, because they've been where you are!"

*Jaime G., 17, Nuevo Casas Grandes, Mexico*



### Self-Improvement

"Try to have an eternal perspective

and spend time developing deeper relationships with your family and friends. These healthy patterns will draw others to you because they'll see the best you—the real you!"

*Ellie S., 17, California, USA*

**"It feels hard to keep the standards when everyone I know is dating someone seriously. What should I do?"**



### Prophets' Counsel

"It can be hard to think about eternity

when 'right now' seems more important. Remember that prophets and other Church leaders have strongly counseled against being in relationships in your teen years, even after age 16. Serious relationships when you're young can lead to heartbreak and immorality. You can also ask Heavenly Father about what the best thing for you to do would be."

*Julia C., 16, Utah, USA*



### Get Involved

"A good way to feel included is to get involved in other

things. Try out a new sport, audition for the school play, or join a robotics club. If you're doing something you love, you'll meet people you like being around."

*Mayah S., 16, Beijing, China*

### What Do You Think?

*Having sacrament at home was great. Why would the Lord want us to go back to church?*

Send your answer and photo by October 15, 2021.

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Responses may be edited for length or clarity.





# I DIDN'T MAKE THE DANCE TEAM

**By Emily Joy Thompson**  
Church Magazines

*My name wasn't on the list. I was devastated. But the Lord taught me something.*

**I'VE LOVED TO DANCE** since I was three. So when I was in middle school, I was excited when tryouts for the dance team came around. I had no doubt that with my talent and experience, I would easily make the team.

A few days after the tryouts, the names of

the dance team were posted. To my dismay, I couldn't find my name anywhere on the list. I was devastated. I went home and cried on my bed. I was mad at the dance teacher and disappointed that I had not been good enough to make the team. My mom quietly walked into

my room and suggested that I ask Heavenly Father for the strength to make it through this “bump” in my life. I reluctantly agreed and said a short prayer. After the prayer I didn’t feel any better, so I continued moping around and being miserable. I slept terribly that night.

The next morning I pulled myself out of bed. The memory of my failure was fresh in my mind, and I wanted to just slip right back under the covers. But before I did, I remembered a promise my bishop had made. He said that if I would read my scriptures every day, even if only for 15 minutes, then I would be blessed. If I ever needed a blessing, it was now.

As I read, I discovered this verse in the Doctrine and Covenants:

“I say unto you my friends, fear not, let your hearts be comforted; yea, rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks;

“Waiting patiently on the Lord, for your prayers have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and are recorded with this seal and testament—the Lord hath sworn and decreed that they shall be granted.

“Therefore, he giveth this promise unto you, with an immutable covenant that they shall be fulfilled; and all things wherewith you have been afflicted shall work together for your good, and to my name’s glory, saith the Lord” (Doctrine and Covenants 98:1–3).

I was shocked. I sat in my pajamas with my messy bed-hair and marveled at how much I had needed these scriptures. All the feelings of anger and sadness washed away in those three verses. I felt the love of my Heavenly Father and knew that He knew what I was going through. With this new perspective, I could see that not being chosen for the dance team

really was just a small bump in the road of my life. I fell to my knees in gratitude and thanked Heavenly Father.

For the rest of the day, I was able to keep the Spirit with me and look at my trials as opportunities for growth. I will always hold these verses close to my heart. And I will remember my bishop’s promise about the blessings of turning to the scriptures. I am very grateful I can be a part of this Church and have a knowledge of the gospel. I know that Heavenly Father’s plan for us is truly a plan of happiness. 🙏



### Start an Inspiration Index

When we search the scriptures for help, it often doesn’t take long to find a verse that seems like it was written just for us. Other times it may take a little longer to locate a scripture that speaks to us like that. One way to find the help you need when you need it is to make an “inspiration index.”

When you’re studying the scriptures, keep an eye out for verses containing promises or encouragement that may help you or others with future trials or struggles. Marking these scriptures and keeping a list of them can provide you with the strength you’ll need when you’re feeling down. For added help, sort the scriptures into different categories based on what difficulties they address. That way, you’ll always have scriptural promises and blessings ready to read when you need them.

### Things Will Work Out

“We know that challenges, disappointments, and sorrows will come to each of us in different ways, but we also know that in the end, because of our divine Advocate, all things can be made to work together for our good [see Doctrine and Covenants 90:24; 98:3]. It is the faith expressed so simply by President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) when he would say, ‘Things will work out.’ When we always remember the Savior, we can ‘cheerfully do all things that lie in our power’ [see Doctrine and Covenants 123:16–17], confident that His power and love for us will see us through.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “To Always Remember Him,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2011, 55.





**By President Dallin H. Oaks**  
First Counselor in the First Presidency



# CHOIC



**M**ANY YEARS AGO, one of our General Authorities shared this challenging story:

A wise Cherokee, one of the indigenous tribes in the United States, told his grandson a parable about life. *"Inside me there is a terrible fight between two wolves,"* the grandfather said. *"One is evil: full of anger and envy, self-pity and sorrow, greed and lies. The other is good: full of kindness and compassion, humility and truth, love and joy. That fight is going on inside each of us."*

*"Which wolf will win?"* the grandson asked.

*"The one you feed,"* the grandfather wisely answered.<sup>1</sup>

This parable of two wolves expresses an eternal truth. Children of God are born to make choices between good and evil. Opposition allows us to make meaningful, righteous choices. The Book of Mormon teaches this truth in scriptural language: "For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things."<sup>2</sup>

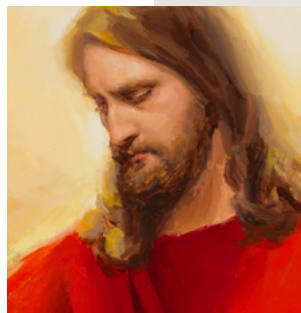
Our Heavenly Father's plan provides at least two gifts to assist in these choices: (1) He gives us the Holy Ghost to guide our choices, and (2) He gives us a Savior whose Atonement makes possible our repentance to remove the effect of bad choices—when they have fed the evil wolf.

## I. Repentance and Recognition

As I have talked to youth, one of the most frequent subjects they ask about is repentance. "How can you know when you have repented enough?" "How can you know when you are truly forgiven?" The answer to these questions comes through the Holy Ghost, the member of the Godhead who brings messages from heaven.

The gift of repentance has been called "the good news of the gospel."<sup>3</sup> It allows us to erase the effect of evil choices that have fed the wicked wolf and weakened our ability to hear the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Repentance includes recognizing that we have done wrong, abandoning that wrong, and resolving to turn our heart to God and the keeping of His commandments. When we repent, we call upon the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which increases our appreciation and love for Him as our Savior.

The need for repentance is not limited to serious sins that need to be confessed to the bishop. Repentance is an every-day necessity. Most repentance involves privately recognizing that we have done wrong, determining to change, and trying to make it right with those we have wronged. In terms of the parable of the two wolves, repentance consists of ceasing to feed the wicked wolf even small meals, such as when we choose to be angry or jealous. We also need to repent (change) when we have chosen to waste our God-given time on some of the many available activities that have no potential to make us better.



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## II. Recognizing an Important Difference

A wonderful result of repentance is to reestablish our worthiness to receive impressions from the Holy Ghost, who helps us make wise choices and fills us with joy. Many youth also wonder: “How do I know if the prompting or answer that I get is truly from the Lord and not just what *I* want?”

To recognize whether a prompting is a message from the Holy Ghost or just a personal desire, we need to apply three truths:

1. In the ordinance of the sacrament, the promise that we will “always have his Spirit to be with [us]” follows our promise that we will take His name upon us, and always remember Him, and keep His commandments.<sup>4</sup> When we fail to keep these promises, we are vulnerable to confusing the source of the promptings we feel.
2. Promptings from the Lord are usually received in quiet moments or in the midst of worship, scripture study, or prayer or during service in our callings, not in selfish pursuits or when surrounded by worldly activities.
3. Finally, we need to be especially sensitive to direction to change a course we are already pursuing. An impression to change course can be more reliable than an impression to pursue something we already want to do.

## III. Right Is Still Right

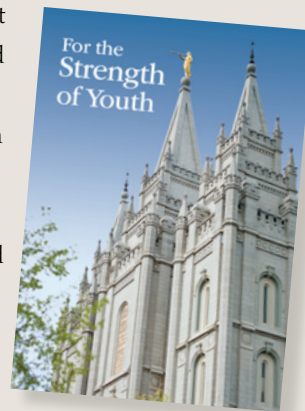
My dear young friends, you are coming to maturity in a very different world than your parents and grandparents experienced. That makes it especially important for you to remember that the ancient values and commandments are still in force. We are children of God, and His commandments remain essential, whether we travel by wagon or spaceship, and whether we communicate by voice or by texting.

Right is still right, and wrong is still wrong, regardless of what is said or done by movie idols, TV personalities, or sports stars. The standards in the scriptures, the teachings of living prophets, and the values in the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet are still your best guidance for personal choices in sexual purity, physical health, honesty, dress and appearance, and all of its other subjects. Follow them faithfully, and you will be blessed. “The booklet entitled *For the Strength of Youth* should be *your* standard,” President Russell M. Nelson taught us. “It is the standard that the Lord expects all His youth to uphold.”<sup>5</sup>

In his powerful worldwide youth devotional, our prophet promised:

“If you will sincerely and persistently do the spiritual work needed to develop the crucial, spiritual skill of learning how to hear the whisperings of the Holy Ghost, you will have *all* the direction you will ever need in your life. You will be given answers to your questions in the Lord’s own way and in His own time.”<sup>6</sup>

I join my promise to his, as I testify of our Savior Jesus Christ, whose teachings and Atonement make it all possible, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. 🙏



1. See Shayne M. Bowen, “Agency and Accountability,” *New Era*, Sept. 2012, 8.  
2. 2 Nephi 2:11.  
3. Dale G. Renlund, Oct. 2016 general conference (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 124).

4. Doctrine and Covenants 20:77.  
5. Russell M. Nelson, “Hope of Israel” (worldwide youth devotional, June 3, 2018), 16, [HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://HopeofIsrael.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).  
6. Russell M. Nelson, “Hope of Israel,” 3.



# GOD WILL FIGHT YOUR BATTLES— *in His Way*

*The early Saints learned a thing  
or two about God's ways.*

**By David Dickson**  
Church Magazines

**WITH AN ANGRY MOB** of more than 300 promising to destroy them in the morning, the group of Saints who made up Zion's Camp was hoping and praying for a miracle.

Under Joseph Smith's leadership, Zion's Camp had been marching for weeks from Ohio to Missouri. These Church members were hoping to help the Saints who had been driven out of Jackson County, Missouri, USA, to regain their lands. But they faced threats and opposition throughout their march. And now, yet another mob was threatening them.

The miracle that the Zion's Camp Saints prayed for would soon arrive. It came in the form of dark clouds gathering in the distance. A violent thunderstorm erupted on all sides and dumped massive hailstones. The storm stopped the mob in its tracks.

"It seemed as if the mandate of vengeance had gone forth from the God of battles to protect his servants from the destruction of their enemies," Joseph Smith's history explains. "The hail fell on them, and not on us, and we suffered no



harm except the blowing down of some of our tents and getting some wet, while our enemies had holes made in their hats and otherwise received damage, even the breaking of their rifle stocks and the fleeing of their horses.”<sup>1</sup>

Destructive hailstones were just one part of the storm. Rain poured down so hard that Fishing River, the river separating the two groups, swelled to almost 40 feet (12 meters) deep. It had only been ankle deep in the morning.

The Lord promised the members of Zion’s Camp, “I will fight your battles” (Doctrine and Covenants 105:14). When that happens, there’s no doubt which side is going to win.

## MODERN-DAY MIRACLES

Sometimes when you read accounts like this one, you might wonder why such dramatic miracles don’t seem to happen to *you* in *your* struggles.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles recently shared some insights that can help. He said: “Please understand that He who never sleeps nor slumbers cares for the happiness and ultimate exaltation of His children above all else that a divine being has to do. He is pure love, gloriously personified, and Merciful Father is His name.

“‘Well, if this is the case,’ you might say, ‘shouldn’t His love and mercy simply part our personal Red Seas and allow us to walk through our troubles on dry ground?’”

In other words, if God has fought such battles for His children in the past, why not do so now? Why not wipe out all disease? Why not put an end to war and hunger and suffering throughout the world?

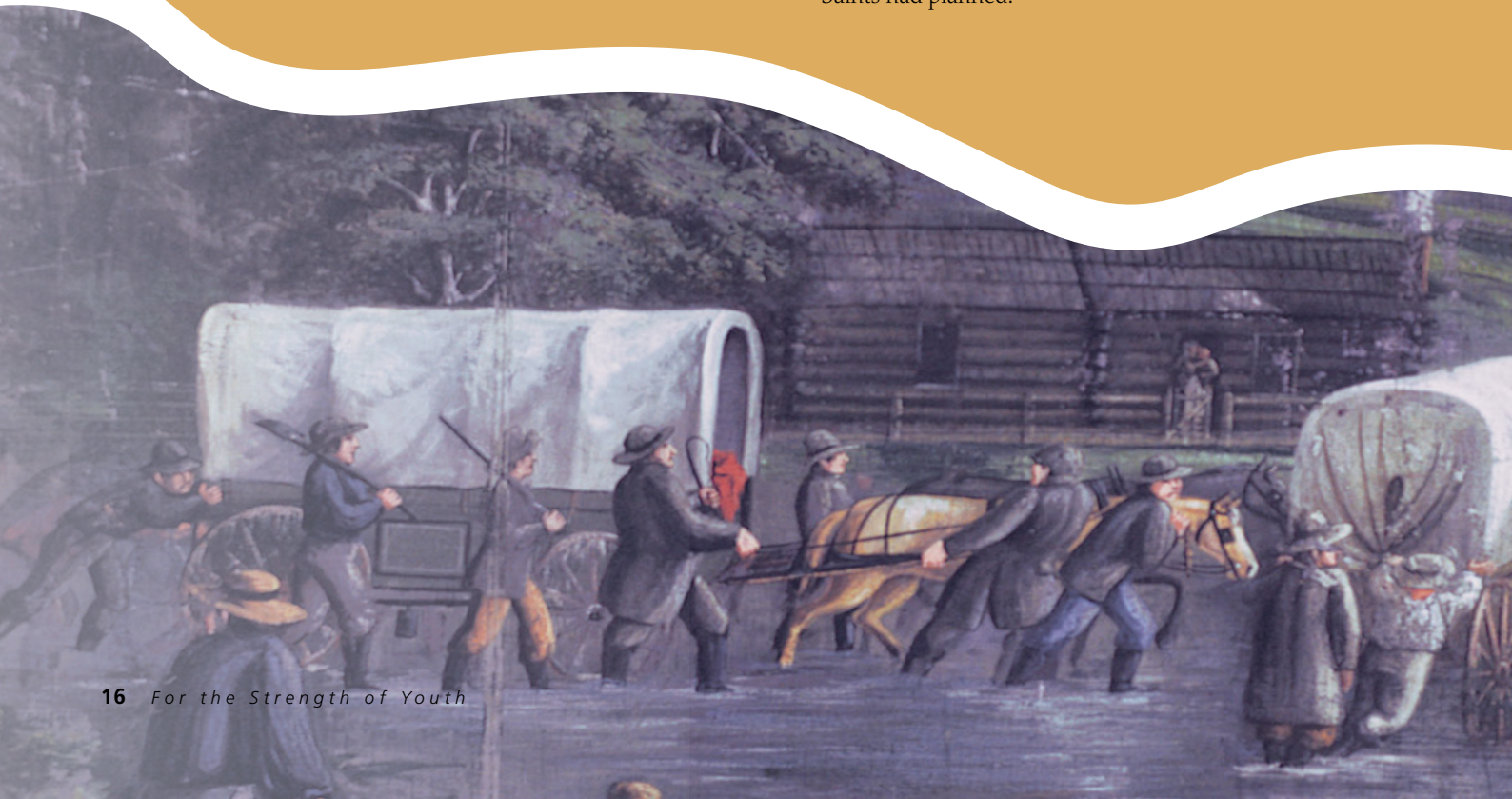
Or why not at least stop that bully who won’t leave you alone? Or help your family get along better?

Elder Holland taught further: “The answer to such questions is ‘Yes, God can provide miracles instantaneously, but sooner or later we learn that the times and seasons of our mortal journey are His and His alone to direct.’ He administers that calendar to every one of us individually.”<sup>2</sup>

When you follow God’s commandments, you are entitled to God’s help. But none of us can choose how or when that help arrives.

## UNEXPECTED BLESSINGS

Let’s return to Zion’s Camp for a bit. The miracle at Fishing River was certainly dramatic. And it wasn’t the only miracle the members of Zion’s Camp saw during their march. But as you’ll read in *Come, Follow Me* and learn in seminary this month, things didn’t turn out the way the Saints had planned.



They thought the whole point of Zion's Camp was to help regain lands in Jackson County that had been stolen from the Saints by angry mobs.

Did the Saints get their lands back? No.

Did the Saints suffer on the nearly 900-mile (1,448-kilometer) march to Missouri? Well, yes. Sometimes a lot. At the worst of it, an outbreak of cholera swept through the camp and killed 13.

On the surface, it might seem like the whole effort was a failure. But that's not the way many who marched in the camp saw it. Brigham Young said of this experience, "I was well paid—paid with heavy interest—yea . . . my measure was filled to overflowing with the knowledge that I had received by traveling with the Prophet [Joseph Smith]."<sup>3</sup>

Many other members of Zion's Camp also talked about the lessons learned and the value of the march. The Prophet Joseph Smith himself said: "Brethren, some of you are angry with me, because you did not fight in Missouri; but let me tell you, God did not want you to fight. He could not organize his kingdom . . . unless he took [his leaders] from a body of men who had offered their lives, and who had made as great a sacrifice as did Abraham."<sup>4</sup>

Their faithfulness may not have resulted in their lands being restored. But they were richly blessed in other ways. That's a pattern you might notice in your life as well. And what God helps us become *through* our trials is often a greater miracle than His delivering us *from* our trials.

## GOD'S CERTAIN VICTORY

As you study the lives of early Saints, you can detect God's influence time and again. You read about profound blessings. You also find times of deep struggle. But for those who trusted God to the end, their eternal reward was sure.

When you follow God and trust in Him, He will fight your battles and provide the miracles you need! These miracles will come in His own way and time, but the outcome is certain. Any trial will ultimately be resolved—in this life or the next. Equally important, as you follow Him, you'll never have to walk alone. "Therefore, be faithful; and behold, and lo, I am with you even unto the end" (Doctrine and Covenants 105:41). 🏰

### NOTES

1. History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 (23 December 1805–30 August 1834), 497, josephsmithpapers.org.
2. Jeffrey R. Holland, Oct. 2020 general conference (*Ensign*, Nov. 2020, 116).
3. Brigham Young, "Discourse," *Deseret News*, Dec. 3, 1862, 177.
4. Joseph Smith, in Joseph Young Sr., *History of the Organization of the Seventies* (1878), 14.

### COME, FOLLOW ME

Trials can teach us unique and valuable lessons. What have you learned from your own trials? Which of these lessons are you grateful for?







# A TEST OF FAITH

Written by **Eric B. Murdock**  
Illustrated by **Darren Rawlings**



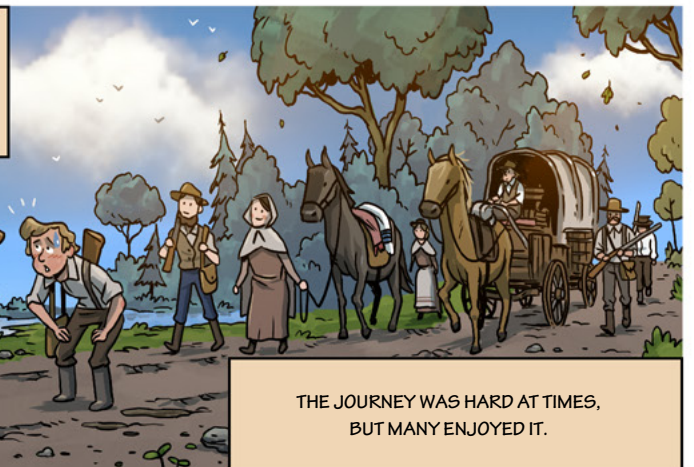
1833.  
JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI, USA.  
MOBS FORCED THE SAINTS LIVING THERE  
TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES.



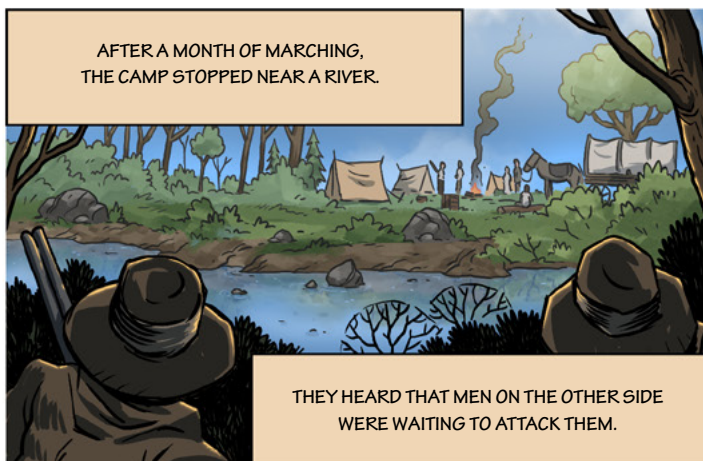
JOSEPH SMITH WONDERED WHAT TO DO.  
SOON A REVELATION CAME. JOSEPH WAS TOLD  
TO RECRUIT MEN TO TRAVEL TO MISSOURI  
AND HELP THE SAINTS REGAIN THEIR HOMES.



JOSEPH LEFT FOR MISSOURI WITH A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS.  
THE GROUP LATER BECAME KNOWN AS ZION'S CAMP.



THE JOURNEY WAS HARD AT TIMES,  
BUT MANY ENJOYED IT.



AFTER A MONTH OF MARCHING,  
THE CAMP STOPPED NEAR A RIVER.

THEY HEARD THAT MEN ON THE OTHER SIDE  
WERE WAITING TO ATTACK THEM.



WHAT WILL  
WE DO?

STAND  
STILL...

... AND SEE THE  
SALVATION OF  
GOD.





SOON A STORM CAME.



GOD IS IN THIS STORM!



THE RAIN CAUSED THE RIVER TO RISE SO MUCH THAT THE CAMP'S ENEMIES COULDN'T CROSS IT.

AFTER A FEW DAYS, JOSEPH RECEIVED A REVELATION THAT IT WAS TIME TO RETURN HOME, EVEN THOUGH THEY HADN'T HELPED THE MISSOURI SAINTS RETURN TO THEIR HOMES.



THE LORD HAS ACCEPTED OUR EFFORTS.

WE HAVE BEEN BROUGHT THIS FAR FOR A TRIAL OF OUR FAITH.  
 (SEE DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 105:19.)

SOME THOUGHT THE JOURNEY WAS A FAILURE.



WE CAME ALL THIS WAY FOR NOTHING!

WHY ARE WE GOING HOME BEFORE HELPING THE SAINTS HERE?

MOST SAW IT AS A PRIVILEGE TO BE WITH THE PROPHET AND TO LEARN FROM HIM.



ZION'S CAMP HELPED PREPARE FUTURE LEADERS OF THE CHURCH. EIGHT MEN WHO MARCHED WITH ZION'S CAMP WERE CALLED TO THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.



# Building Zion through Unity

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

*Based on an October 2008 general conference address.*

**ZION IS BOTH** a place and a people. Zion was the name given to the ancient city of Enoch. The Lord called Enoch's people Zion "because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them" (Moses 7:18). Elsewhere He said, "For this is Zion—the pure in heart" (Doctrine and Covenants 97:21).

To establish Zion in our homes, branches, wards, and stakes, we need to (1) become unified in one heart and one mind; (2) become holy people; and (3) care for the poor and needy. We cannot wait until Zion comes for these things to happen—Zion will come only as they happen.

We will become of one heart and one mind as we individually place the Savior at the center of our lives, follow those He has commissioned to lead us, and unite in love and concern for one another. This unity and love for one another, multiplied thousands of times in different ways, will "bring again Zion" (Isaiah 52:8).

**HOW MANY  
EXAMPLES OF  
BUILDING ZION  
CAN YOU FIND  
IN THIS PICTURE?**



# John Murdock

1792–1871

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After his wife, Julia, died, John asked Joseph and Emma Smith to raise his newborn twins.

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Established a mission in Sydney, Australia, in 1851.

John served at least six missions for the Church between 1831 and 1853—sometimes at a great sacrifice to himself and his family. Throughout his life, he defended the Prophet Joseph Smith and was constant in his devotion to the gospel of Jesus Christ.



YOU ARE PART OF

# A Great Work

Doctrine and Covenants 64:33–34



## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH US:

- How have you participated in the work of the Lord?
- What blessings have you experienced?

Share with us at **ftsoy@ChurchofJesusChrist.org** and don't forget to share on the youth Instagram channel, **@StrivetoBe!**

