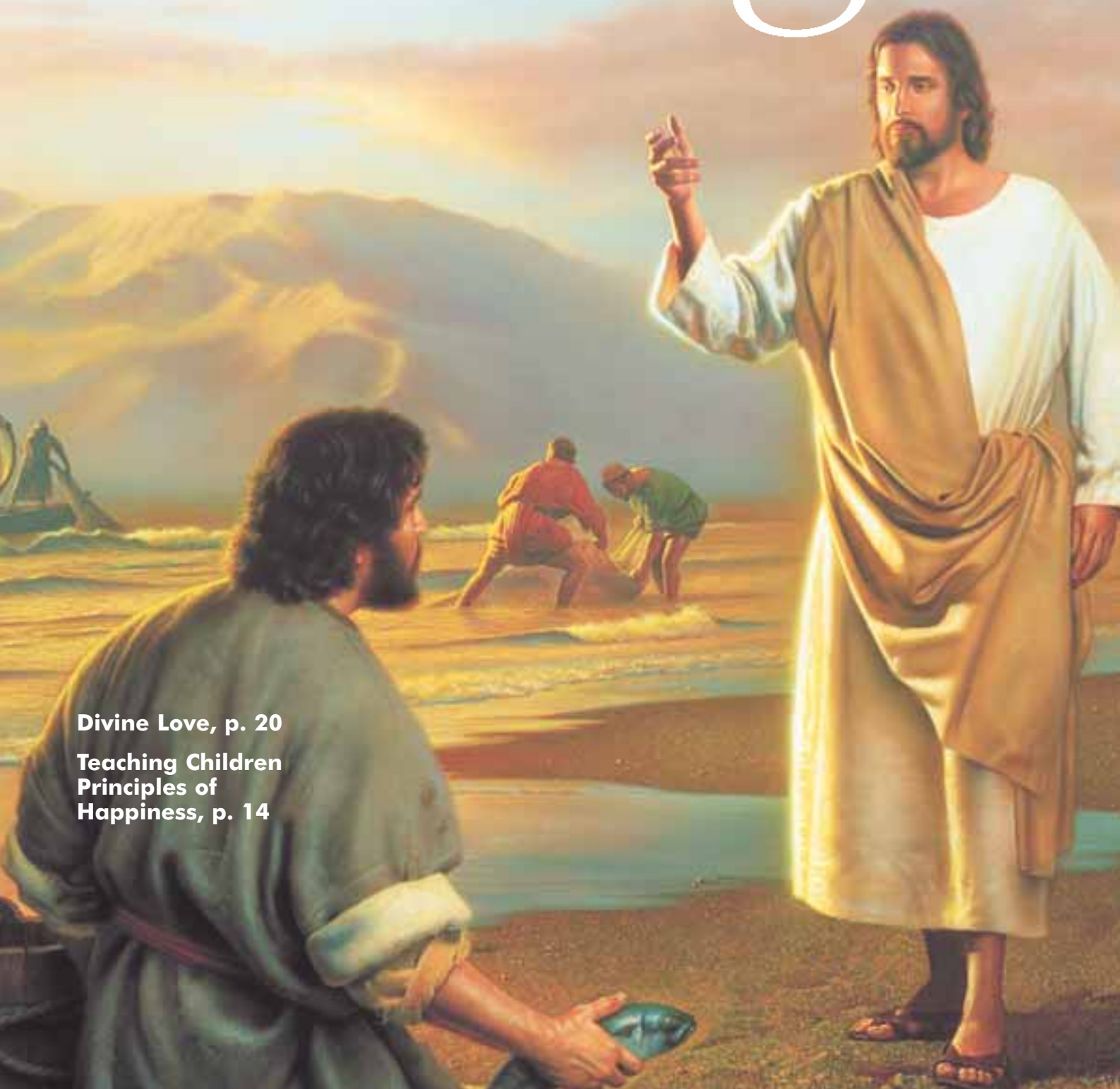


THE ENSIGN OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • FEBRUARY 2003

Ensign



Divine Love, p. 20

**Teaching Children
Principles of
Happiness, p. 14**



Growing in Wisdom, by Simon Dewey

*“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”
(Luke 2:40, 52).*

Ensign



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AN OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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Strengthening the Inner Self

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

The Apostle Paul's wish for the Ephesian Saints was that the Lord would grant unto them "to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" (Ephesians 3:16). In like manner, the basic program of the Church today is to strengthen the inner self. Our objective is to have everyone feel the security, love, and warm embrace of the gospel. The divine Redeemer gave us the pattern for achieving this when He commanded: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:37, 39).

We seek to build inner moral strength and character in the members of the Church in complete harmony with the following statements of modern prophets and apostles: "Our primary purpose [is to establish] . . . independence, industry, thrift and self respect."¹ Our "long term objective . . . is the building of character in the members of the

Church, . . . rescuing all that is finest down deep inside of them, and bringing to flower and fruitage the latent richness of the spirit, which after all is the mission and purpose and reason for being of this Church."²

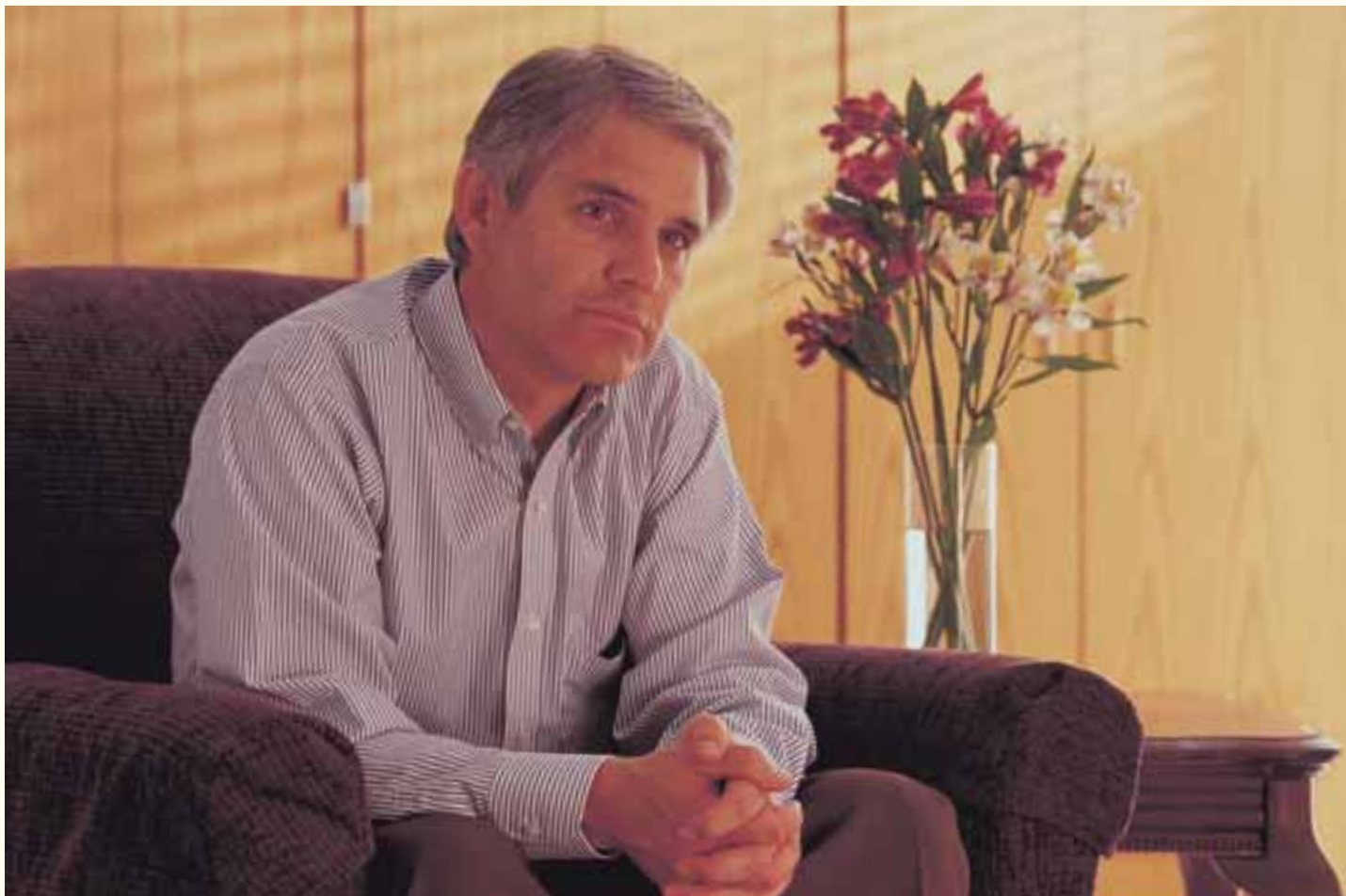
Our Priorities

In order to build this inner strength, there might need to be some reordering of priorities in the planning and activities of the local programs of the Church. We will accomplish the Lord's business better if our guiding stars are revealed principles rather than specified activities.

As we plan to reach, involve, and serve the one, the principles to be kept before us on a panoramic screen in heroic size are the two great injunctions of the Savior to all of His children: love and serve God and love and serve our fellowmen. The planning must begin by relating the activities to the spiritual needs of the members, including providing opportunities for members to be involved in meaningful service and, by their choice, in appropriate cultural, educational, recreational,



The basic program of the Church is to bring "to flower and fruitage the latent richness of the spirit," to strengthen the inner self.



and social activities approved by priesthood leaders. We should bear in mind that the success of a given activity cannot always be judged by its size. Rather, it must be judged by its effect on the lives of those participating. There must be a clear understanding that principles are more important than programs and that people are more important than organizations. We are trying to teach principles and guidelines more than to promote programs, as we seek to strengthen the inner person with the Spirit of God.

Our Actions

Our effectiveness can be judged best by the way we translate inner strength into action. What our religion really is can best be judged by our lives. Thomas Carlyle reminds us that “conviction . . . is worthless till it convert itself into conduct.”³ For us to be strengthened by God, by His Spirit, President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) counseled that membership in the Church “must mean more than just being a ‘card carrying’ member of the Church with a tithing receipt, a membership card, a temple recommend,

An important part of the spiritual being within all of us is the quiet and sacred part from which we may feel a sanctification in our lives. It is that part of us wherein no other soul may intrude. It is that part that permits us to come close to the divine.

etc. It means to overcome the tendencies to criticize and to strive continually to improve inward weaknesses and not merely the outward appearances.”⁴

We recognize that many of the adult single members of the Church may not have all the blessings they desire at this time. They are, however, on equal footing with all the Saints in their ability to keep the two great commandments and be abundantly blessed and strengthened thereby. The quality of their spirituality and devotion to the Master can be as fulfilling for them as for anyone. The quality of their goodness toward others can likewise be as meaningful and rewarding as the service given by anyone. Certainly spiritual understanding and testimony are available to all who earnestly seek them.

All Things Are Spiritual

The strengthening of the inner self must come about as Saints are strengthened spiritually. The admonition to the Galatians was, "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:8). Problems will yield to a spiritual solution, for the higher laws involve the spiritual. The Lord said, "All things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal" (D&C 29:34). But invoking these higher laws and then putting them into operation do not involve the claiming of higher *rights*; rather they require the performance of higher *duties*.

Often we feel that we need help beyond our own natural gifts and abilities in finding our way in a complex, challenging, and difficult world. The prophet Alma made clear the source of his understanding in many matters: "They are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God" (Alma 5:46). Many in this world now walk the streets and byways in fear of their lives, but if they had an inner strength and security, there would be no need for concern. The Savior said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matthew 10:28).

Healing the Inner Self

The healing that we all so often need is the healing of our souls and spirits. This can come through a transfusion of the spiritual into our lives. The seventh article of faith states that, among other spiritual gifts, we believe in the gift of healing. To me, this gift extends to the healing of both the body and the spirit. The Holy Spirit speaks peace to the soul, and this spiritual solace comes by invoking spiritual

gifts, which are claimed and manifested in many ways. They are rich, full, and abundant in the Church today. They flow from the humble and proper use of a testimony. Christ is the Great Physician who rose from the dead "with healing in his wings" (2 Nephi 25:13), and the Comforter is the agent of healing.

If we are to further strengthen the inner person, the inner self must be purged and cleansed of transgression. Companionship with evil causes our whole being to die spiritually. The spiritual tap in our lives will not turn on until all transgressions, particularly those involving moral turpitude, are purged. I refer not only to sexual sins but also to all forms of wrongdoing, including lying, cheating, stealing, and consciously or recklessly inflicting injury upon others.

Our Spiritual Feelings

An important part of the spiritual being within all of us is the quiet and sacred part from which we may feel a sanctification in our lives. It is that part of us wherein no other soul may intrude. It is that part that permits us to come close to the divine, both in and out of this world. This portion of our beings is reserved only for ourselves and our Creator. We open the portals thereof when we pray. It is here where we may retreat and meditate. It is possible for the Holy Ghost to abide in this special part of us. It is a place of special communion. It is the master cell of our spiritual battery. But this great energizer becomes dead when we allow sin to creep stealthily into our lives. The Romans were reminded, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6).

As we undertake to strengthen the inner soul, we move beyond concern for things that



The Holy Spirit speaks peace to the soul, and this spiritual solace comes by invoking spiritual gifts. Christ is the Great Physician who rose from the dead "with healing in his wings," and the Comforter is the agent of healing.



May we be strengthened in our inner selves with might by His Spirit, for spirituality is like sunlight: it passes into the unclean and is not tainted.

we can hold and possess. A wise man said, “The wealth of a soul is measured by how much it can feel; its poverty, by how little.”⁵

The Eternal Inner Self

The inner soul, with all that it has stored within it, is what continues beyond this life. A thoughtful author reminds us, “Everything here, but the soul of man, is a passing shadow. The only enduring substance is within.”⁶

We are comforted by the knowledge that those who strengthen their inner selves shall see the face of God. The Lord Himself said, “It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am” (D&C 93:1). Edna St. Vincent Millay reminds us,

*The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through.*⁷

For the inner self to be strengthened, a great humility must come into the inner being. Gideon said of himself, “My family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house” (Judges 6:15). Gideon went on to become the hero who delivered Israel from oppression by the Midianites.

The Old Testament says, “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth” (Numbers 12:3). Moses was one of the greatest prophets who ever lived and was the author of five books in the Old Testament.

Spiritual Sunlight

In my own search for inner strength, I express my respect, appreciation, and

gratitude for the example of the First Presidency, other General Authorities, and a host of other good men and women of this Church throughout the world who stand steadfastly against the ill winds that blow and the forces of insecurity, doubt, and destruction all about us. They, through the Spirit of God, recognize the falsity of the dulcet voices and the siren songs of deceit among us that advocate instant gratification, offering no lasting relationships in life and teaching that there is little responsibility for wrongdoing. With steadfast hands and holy hearts, these stalwart souls stand as trumpeters upon the watchtowers of righteousness, hope, and inner peace.

The oppressive fog that beclouds the tortuous lanes and passages of your lives will disappear in the spiritual sunlight that comes only from God. This spiritual sunlight will not shine unless we diligently and humbly seek to enjoy His Spirit, for “the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind” (D&C 64:34).

The Spirit of the Lord can ever be with us, even in the overheated ovens of life into which we may be cast, so that those who behold us will always see that we have a holy companion. Nebuchadnezzar experienced this when he looked into the fiery furnace and noted: “Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? . . . Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God” (Daniel 3:24–25).

May there be found in our thoughts and actions the manifestation of an inward, spiritual peace and strength. May we have an absolute faith that all things are possible to God and hold in our remembrance that through our obedience all things may be made known to us by His Holy Spirit. “He



The oppressive fog that beclouds the tortuous lanes and passages of your lives will disappear in the spiritual sunlight that comes only from God. This spiritual sunlight will not shine unless we diligently and humbly seek to enjoy His Spirit.

that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (Galatians 6:8).

And in sowing to our spirits, may we be strengthened in our inner selves with might by His Spirit, for spirituality is like sunlight: it passes into the unclean and is not tainted. May our lives be such that the spiritual within us may ascend up through the common, the sordid, and the evil and sanctify our souls. ■

NOTES

1. Heber J. Grant, in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 3.
2. Albert E. Bowen, *The Church Welfare Plan* (Gospel Doctrine course of study, 1946), 44.
3. In Martin H. Manser, comp., *The Westminster Collection of Christian Quotations* (2001), 2.
4. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee* (2000), 41.
5. William Rounseville Alger.
6. W. E. Channing.
7. “Renascence,” *Renascence and Other Poems* (1917), 14.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

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

1. Ask family members what a person can do to strengthen his or her physical body, such as exercising, eating a proper diet, and getting sufficient rest. Then have them identify ideas in President Faust’s message for building inner moral strength. Share your testimony of how some of these ideas have helped you withstand insecurity, doubt, and temptation.

2. Show family members a battery and review how a battery works. How is our spirituality like a battery? Read the section “Our Spiritual Feelings,” and discuss ways we can recharge our spiritual batteries.

3. Invite family members to discuss the benefits we receive from the sun. Read with them the section “Spiritual Sunlight.” Discuss ways spirituality is like sunlight and sin is like an oppressive fog. What are some ways President Faust said we can increase spiritual sunlight in our lives?

Three Parables

The Unwise Bee, the Owl Express, and Two Lamps

BY ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE (1862–1933)

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Three stories from Elder James E. Talmage's own experience teach us to trust in the Lord's perspective.

Elder Talmage served as an Apostle for 22 years and wrote two books for the Church that are in wide use to this day, *Jesus the Christ* and *The Articles of Faith*. Beginning in January 1914 Elder Talmage also published a series of parables, stories taken from his personal experience that teach gospel principles. Following are three of his choicest ones.

The Parable of the Unwise Bee

Sometimes I find myself under obligations of work requiring quiet and seclusion such as neither my comfortable office nor the cozy study at home insures. My favorite retreat is an upper room in the tower of a large building, well removed from the noise and confusion of the city streets. The room is somewhat difficult of access and relatively secure against human intrusion. Therein I have spent many peaceful and busy hours with books and pen.

I am not always without visitors, however, especially in summertime; for when I sit with windows open, flying insects occasionally find entrance and share the place with me. These self-invited guests are not unwelcome. Many a time I have laid down the pen and, forgetful of my theme, have watched with interest the

activities of these winged visitants, with an afterthought that the time so spent had not been wasted, for is it not true that even a butterfly, a beetle, or a bee may be a bearer of lessons to the receptive student?

A wild bee from the neighboring hills once flew into the room, and at intervals during an hour or more I caught the pleasing hum of its flight. The little creature realized that it was a prisoner, yet all its efforts to find the exit through the partly opened casement failed. When ready to close up the room and leave, I threw the window wide and tried at first to guide and then to drive the bee to liberty and safety, knowing well that if left in the room it would die as other insects there entrapped had perished in the dry atmosphere of the enclosure. The more I tried to drive it out, the more determinedly did it oppose and resist my efforts. Its erstwhile peaceful hum developed into an angry roar; its darting flight became hostile and threatening.

Then it caught me off my guard and stung my hand—the hand that would have guided it to freedom. At last it alighted on a pendant attached to the ceiling, beyond my reach of help or injury. The sharp pain of its unkind sting aroused in me rather pity than anger. I knew the inevitable penalty of its mistaken

opposition and defiance, and I had to leave the creature to its fate. Three days later I returned to the room and found the dried, lifeless body of the bee on the writing table. It had paid for its stubbornness with its life.

To the bee's shortsightedness and selfish misunderstanding I was a foe, a persistent persecutor, a mortal enemy bent on its destruction; while in truth I was its friend, offering it ransom of the life it had put in forfeit through its own error, striving to redeem it, in spite of itself, from the prison house of death and restore it to the outer air of liberty.

Are we so much wiser than the bee that no analogy lies between its unwise course and our lives? We are prone to contend, sometimes with vehemence and anger, against the adversity which after all may be the manifestation of

superior wisdom and loving care, directed against our temporary comfort for our permanent blessing. In the tribulations and sufferings of mortality there is a divine ministry which only the godless soul can wholly fail to discern. To many the loss of wealth has been a boon, a providential means of leading or driving them from the confines of selfish indulgence to the sunshine and the open, where boundless opportunity waits on effort. Disappointment, sorrow, and affliction may be the expression of an all-wise Father's kindness.

Consider the lesson of the unwise bee!

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).



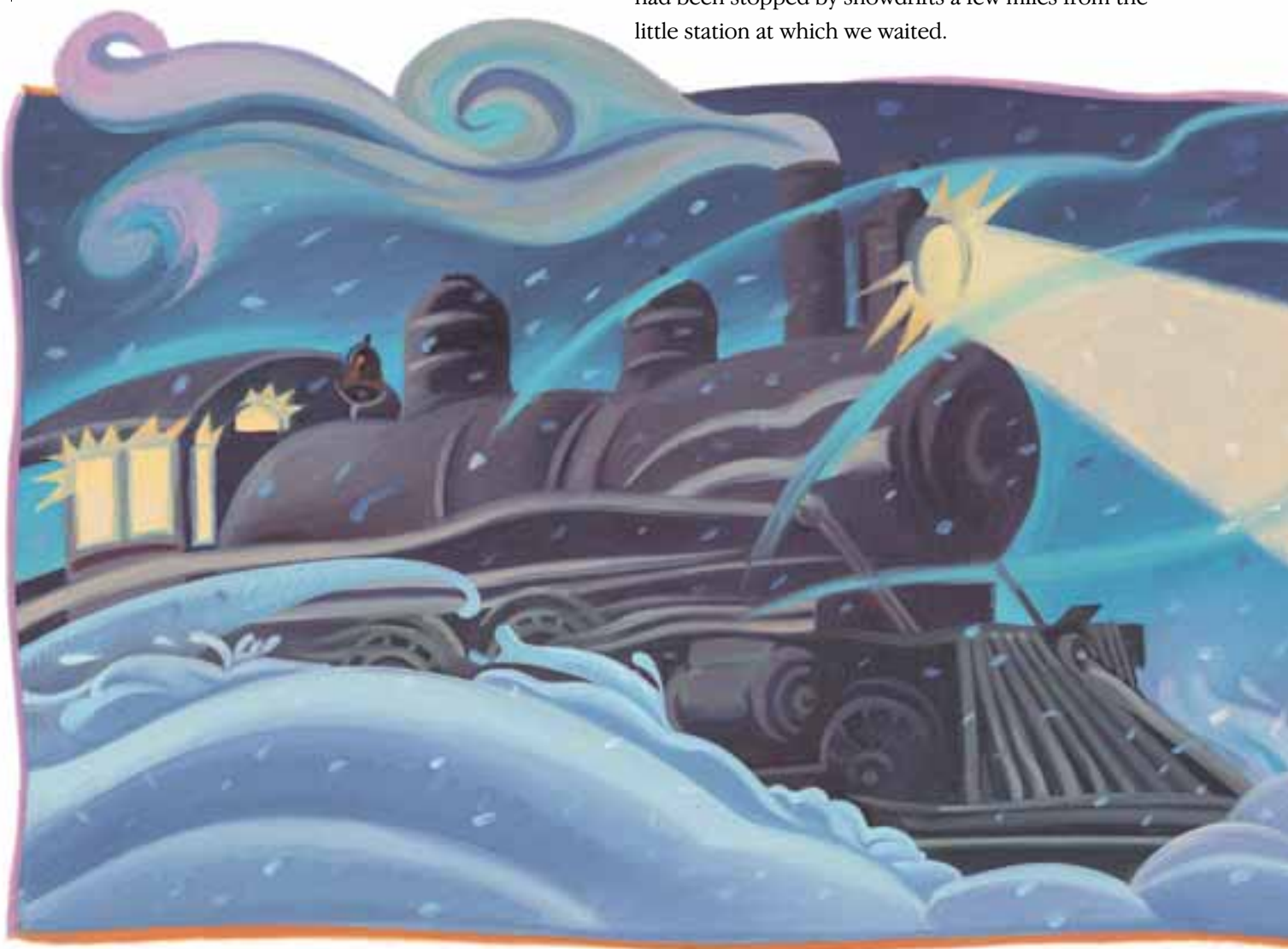
T*o the bee's shortsightedness and selfish misunderstanding I was a foe; while in truth I was its friend, offering it ransom of the life it had put in forfeit.*

The Parable of the Owl Express

During my college days, I was one of a class of students appointed to fieldwork as a part of our prescribed courses in geology—the science that deals with the earth in all of its varied aspects and phases, but more particularly with its component rocks, the structural features they present, the changes they have undergone and are undergoing—the science of worlds.

A certain assignment had kept us in the field many days. We had traversed, examined, and charted miles of lowlands and uplands, valleys and hills, mountain heights and canyon defiles. As the time allotted to the

investigation drew near its close, we were overtaken by a violent windstorm, followed by a heavy snow—unseasonable and unexpected, but which, nevertheless, increased in intensity so that we were in danger of being snowbound in the hills. The storm reached its height while we were descending a long and steep mountainside several miles from the little railway station at which we had hoped to take [a] train that night for home. With great effort we reached the station late at night while the storm was yet raging. We were suffering from the intense cold incident to biting wind and driving snow; and, to add to our discomfiture, we learned that the expected train had been stopped by snowdrifts a few miles from the little station at which we waited.



... The train for which we so expectantly and hopefully waited was the Owl Express—a fast night train connecting large cities. Its time schedule permitted stops at but few and these the most important stations; but, as we knew, it had to stop at this out-of-the-way post to replenish the water supply of the locomotive.

Long after midnight the train arrived in a terrific whirl of wind and snow. I lingered behind my companions as they hurriedly clambered aboard, for I was attracted by the engineer, who during the brief stop, while his assistant was attending to the water replenishment, bustled about the engine, oiling some parts, adjusting others, and generally

In effect the engineer said: “Look at the engine headlight. Doesn’t that light up the track for a hundred yards or more? Well, all I try to do is to cover that hundred yards of lighted track. That I can see, and for that distance I know the roadbed is open and safe.”

overhauling the panting locomotive. I ventured to speak to him, busy though he was. I asked how he felt on such a night—wild, weird, and furious, when the powers of destruction seemed to be let loose, abroad and uncontrolled, when the storm was howling and when danger threatened from every side. I thought of the possibility—the probability even—of snowdrifts or slides on the track, of bridges and high trestles which may have been loosened by the storm, of rock masses dislodged from the mountainside—of these and other possible obstacles. I realized that in the event of accident through obstruction on or disruption of the track, the engineer and the fireman would be the ones most exposed to danger; a violent collision would most likely cost them their lives. All of these

thoughts and others I expressed in hasty questioning of the bustling, impatient engineer.

His answer was a lesson not yet forgotten. In effect he said, though in jerky and disjointed sentences: “Look at the engine headlight. Doesn’t that light up the track for a hundred yards [90 m] or more? Well, all I try to do is to cover that hundred yards of lighted track. That I can see, and for that distance I know the roadbed is open and safe. And,” he added, with what, through the swirl and the dim lamplighted darkness of the roaring night, I saw was a humorous smile on his lips and a merry twinkle of his eye, “believe me, I have never been able to drive this old engine of mine—God bless her!—so fast as to outstrip that hundred yards of lighted track. The light of the engine is always ahead of me!”

As he climbed to his place in the cab, I hastened to board the first passenger coach; and as I sank into the cushioned seat, in blissful enjoyment of the warmth and general comfort, offering strong contrast to the wildness of the night without, I thought deeply of the words of the grimy, oil-stained engineer. They were full of

faith—the faith that accomplishes great things, the faith that gives courage and determination, the faith that leads to works. What if the engineer had failed, had yielded to fright and fear, had refused to go on because of the threatening dangers? Who knows what work may have been hindered, what great plans may have been nullified, what God-appointed commissions of mercy and relief may have been thwarted had the engineer weakened and quailed?

For a little distance the storm-swept track was lighted up; for that short space the engineer drove on!

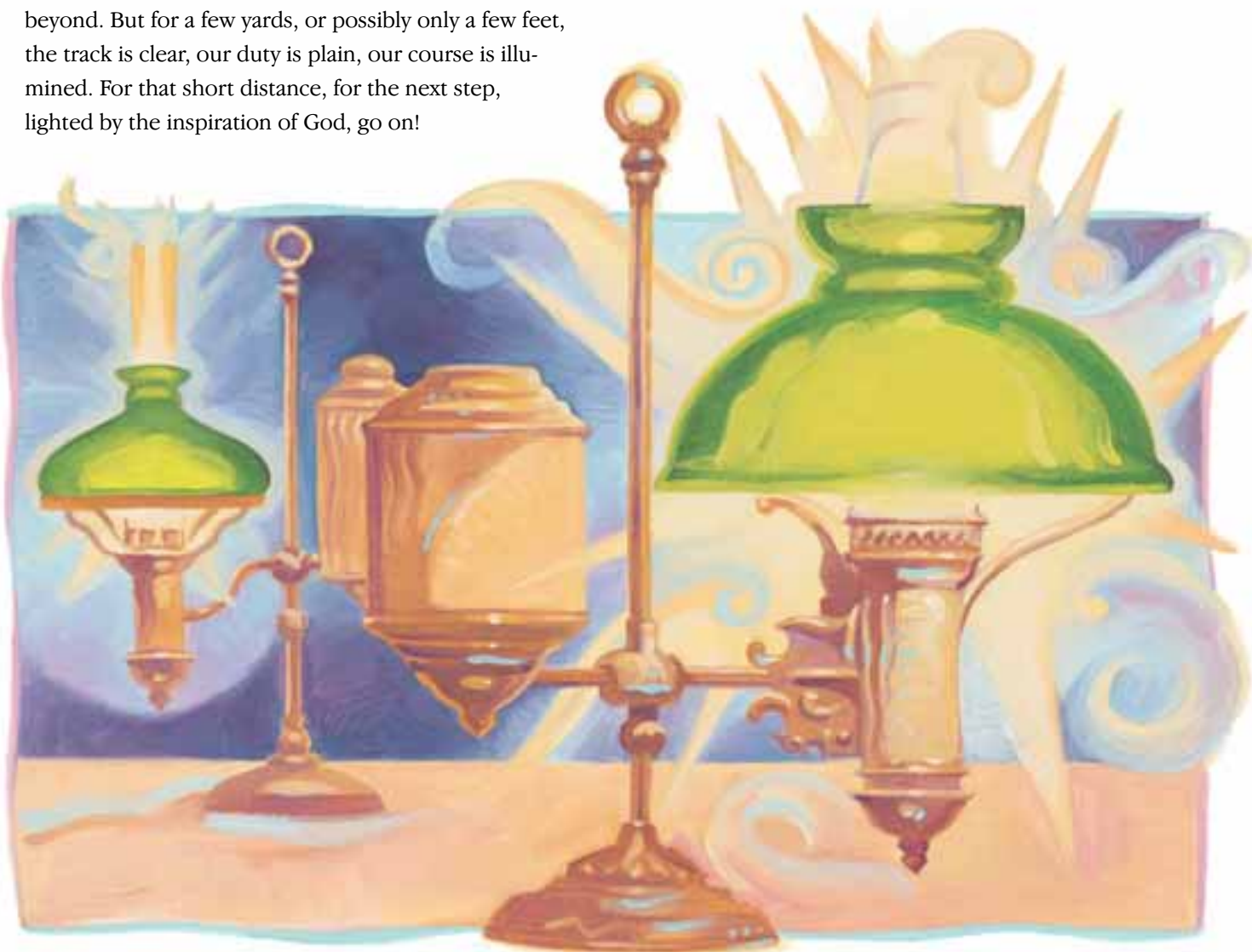
We may not know what lies ahead of us in the future years, nor even in the days or hours immediately beyond. But for a few yards, or possibly only a few feet, the track is clear, our duty is plain, our course is illumined. For that short distance, for the next step, lighted by the inspiration of God, go on!

The Parable of Two Lamps

Among the material things of the past—things that I treasure for sweet memory's sake and because of pleasant association in bygone days—is a lamp. . . .

The lamp of which I speak, the student lamp of my school and college days, was one of the best of its kind. I had bought it with hard-earned savings; it was counted among my most cherished possessions. . . .

One summer evening I sat musing studiously and withal restfully in the open air outside the door of the room in which I lodged and studied. A stranger approached. I noticed that he carried a satchel. He was affable and entertaining. I brought another chair from



within, and we chatted together till the twilight had deepened into dusk, the dusk into darkness.

Then he said: "You are a student and doubtless have much work to do of nights. What kind of lamp do you use?" And without waiting for a reply, he continued, "I have a superior kind of lamp I should like to show you, a lamp designed and constructed according to the latest achievements of applied science, far surpassing anything heretofore produced as a means of artificial lighting."

I replied with confidence, and I confess, not without some exultation: "My friend, I have a lamp, one that has been tested and proved. It has been to me a companion through many a long night. It is an Argand lamp, and one of the best. I have trimmed and cleaned it today; it is ready for the lighting. Step inside; I will show you my lamp; then you may tell me whether yours can possibly be better."

We entered my study room, and with a feeling which I assume is akin to that of the athlete about to enter a contest with one whom he regards as a pitifully inferior opponent, I put the match to my well-trimmed Argand.

My visitor was voluble in his praise. It was the best lamp of its kind, he said. He averred that he had never seen a lamp in better trim. He turned the wick up and down and pronounced the adjustment perfect. He declared that never before had he realized how satisfactory a student lamp could be.

I liked the man; he seemed to me wise, and he assuredly was ingratiating. "Love me, love my lamp," I thought, mentally paraphrasing a common expression of the period.

"Now," said he, "with your permission I'll light my lamp." He took from his satchel a lamp then known as the "Rochester." It had a chimney which, compared with mine, was as a factory smokestack alongside a house flue. Its hollow wick was wide enough to admit my four fingers. Its light made bright the remotest corner of my room. In its brilliant blaze my own little Argand wick burned a

weak, pale yellow. Until that moment of convincing demonstration, I had never known the dim obscurity in which I had lived and labored, studied and struggled.

"I'll buy your lamp," said I; "you need neither explain nor argue further." I took my new acquisition to the laboratory that same night and determined its capacity. It

turned at over 48 candlepower—fully four times the intensity of my student lamp.

Two days after purchasing, I met the lamp peddler on the street about noon-time. To my inquiry he replied that business was good; the demand for his lamps was greater than the factory supply. "But," said I, "you are not working today?" His rejoinder was a lesson. "Do you think that I would be so foolish as to go around trying to sell lamps in the daytime? Would you have bought one if I had lighted it for you when the sun was shining? I chose the time to show the superiority of my lamp over yours, and you were eager to

own the better one I offered, were you not?"

Such is the story. Now consider the application of a part, a very small part, thereof.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" [Matthew 5:16].

The man who would sell me a lamp did not disparage mine. He placed his greater light alongside my feeble flame, and I hastened to obtain the better.

The missionary servants of the Church of Jesus Christ today are sent forth, not to assail or ridicule the beliefs of men, but to set before the world a superior light, by which the smoky dimness of the flickering flames of man-made creeds shall be apparent. The work of the Church is constructive, not destructive.

As to the further meaning of the parable, let him that hath eyes and a heart see and understand. ■

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In the Rochester's brilliant blaze my own little Argand wick burned a weak, pale yellow. Until that moment of convincing demonstration, I had never known the dim obscurity in which I had lived and labored, studied and struggled.

Teaching Children Principles of Happiness

BY D. MICHAEL BARRETT

Parents who teach their children gospel values help prepare them to live fuller, more rewarding lives.

Several years ago I sat with a convicted murderer on death row. He was only 23, yet he had been sentenced to die. The young man had granted an interview to a local television reporter. During the interview he spoke of coming from a broken home, then being orphaned in his teenage years. When asked by the reporter, “Could anything have changed the course of your life to prevent you from being here?” the man replied, “I don’t believe I’d be here if there had been someone who cared enough about me to teach me how I ought to live.”

Through my years working as a trial attorney, I have represented many criminal defendants in their late teens or early 20s who did not understand how they ought to live. In most cases their early years were devoid of love, appreciation, or the teaching of values. They had not been taught by their parents the things they needed to know to make good decisions.

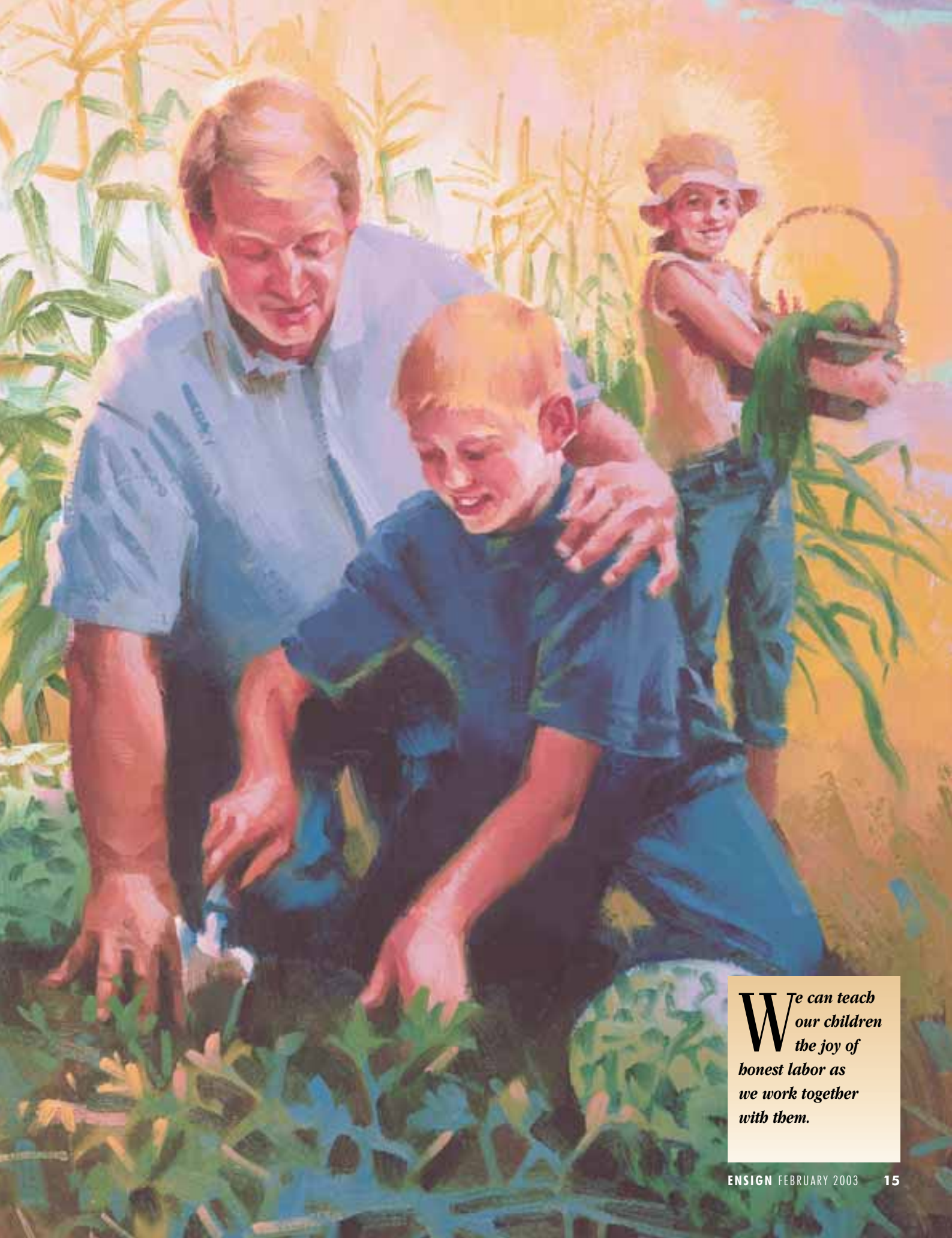
In the Book of Mormon, Enos writes that while hunting in the woods he became seriously concerned about his spiritual condition and so began to reflect upon the teachings which he had “often heard [his] father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints” (Enos 1:3). He sought a sure

knowledge from the Lord that his sins were forgiven, and through prayer he received that assurance. Thanks to his father’s teachings, he knew where to go to find peace.

The scriptures tell parents that they are here not only to learn similar lessons by experiences but also to share that knowledge with their families. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read, “I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth” (D&C 93:40). Like Enos’s father, we have an opportunity to teach our children gospel principles that will lead them to the path of safety and happiness during their lifetimes. But what should we teach? Following are four of many lessons parents can teach that may help their children lay a foundation for learning how they ought to live.

Teach the Dignity of Work

President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “We are all inherently lazy. We would rather play than work. . . . But it is work that spells the difference in the life of a man or woman” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 705). In our world today, many people are unwilling to work hard and to render an honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay. Yet we read in the scriptures about the Apostle Paul, who earned



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we work together
with them.*

HOW PARENTS CAN BEST TEACH THEIR CHILDREN



"What a beautiful place this world will be when every father and mother see the importance of teaching their

children the principles that will help them be happy and successful. Parents teach best when they lead by good example; govern their little ones with patience, kindness, and love unfeigned; and have the same spirit of love for children that Jesus exemplified."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Teach the Children," *Ensign*, May 1991, 80.

his living as a maker of tents (see Acts 18:1–3); Simon Peter, who labored as a fisherman (see Mark 1:16–17); and even of the Savior, who spent His early years as a carpenter (see Mark 6:3).

Paul wrote to the Thessalonians "that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10). Failure to teach children to work may tempt them to look for easy pathways in life. Such pathways more often than not lead downward. There is dignity in a job well done. Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

taught that "teaching children the joy of honest labor is one of the greatest of all gifts you can bestow upon them" ("The Joy of Honest Labor," *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 62).

Teach Reverence

Ours is a world in which some make a mockery of spiritual things. "A great man is reverent," wrote President David O. McKay (1873–1970). "He reverences Deity; he reverences all things associated with Deity. . . . Reverence for God's name should be dominant in every home" (*Gospel Ideals* [1953], 226–27).

In the book of Helaman we read of a righteous people who, because of being proud and mocking spiritual things, lost their many rich blessings:

"And it was because of the pride of their hearts, because of their exceeding riches, yea . . . making a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation. . . .

"And because of this their great wickedness . . . they were left in their own strength . . . until they had lost possession of almost all their lands" (Helaman 4:12–13).

Parents can learn from the Nephite example. In our daily speech and conduct, we can exemplify reverence. The flip-pant and irreverent use of God's name must be avoided. Even though the world chooses not to live this principle, as Church members we must strive to do so. Establishing habits of reverence for Deity in our homes and with our

children helps establish patterns of respect for everyone.

Teach a Love for the Scriptures

We live in a world where knowledge and secular education are readily available. But we must never forget the inestimable worth that a knowledge of the scriptures can be in the lives of our children.

During the early years of his life, Timothy was brought up in the faith of his grandmother Lois and his mother, Eunice (see 2 Timothy 1:5).

The Apostle Paul later wrote to Timothy "that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15). Timothy's training and home life paved the way for the consecration of his life to the service of Christ.

Through diligent study of the scriptures, our children too may develop the spiritual tools necessary to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ and fill their missions in life. As they do so, they will be blessed with an understanding of the purpose of life and will learn how to make righteous decisions.

Teach Love toward One Another

Some of our most memorable spiritual insights come as we render service to others. As a new convert, I had been called to serve as a stake missionary and also as the ward mission leader. One weekend was particularly draining. Late Saturday night I was awakened by a telephone call requesting that I administer to a sick member. I didn't return to bed until early Sunday morning. Then I had a meeting at 7:00 A.M., taught a priesthood class, and finally attended a baptismal service. By Sunday afternoon I was exhausted. I went home, crawled into bed, and pulled the covers over me for a short nap. Then the telephone rang; it was the elders quorum president. He needed me to go with him to visit a home where the parents were having a terrible fight.

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Because of my exhaustion, my reply was less than enthusiastic. A few minutes later the bishop called me. He told me he felt impressed that we should go to the home immediately and stabilize the situation.

Once we arrived, we found the reports to be accurate. The situation was terrible. Furniture and dishes lay broken everywhere. Clothing was strewn on the floor, and the children were huddled in corners crying.

Priesthood leaders counseled the couple throughout the night. Meanwhile, the children, with help from their grandmother, worked through the night to clean up the house. After several hours, hearts were softened and the situation was in control.

As I reflected on my attitude that night, I learned a lesson in humility, obedience to priesthood leadership, and the importance of responding to those in need. I have also learned that when parents love others and give willing service, their children see Christ's teachings reflected in their parents' lives.

These four principles are but a few that parents can teach their children. However, by taking the time to teach such important gospel truths, parents will not only bless their own homes now but also prepare their children with the knowledge of how they ought to live if they would be happy. ■

D. Michael Barrett is a member of the Stones River Branch, McMinnville Tennessee Stake.



BY MELANIE SILVESTER

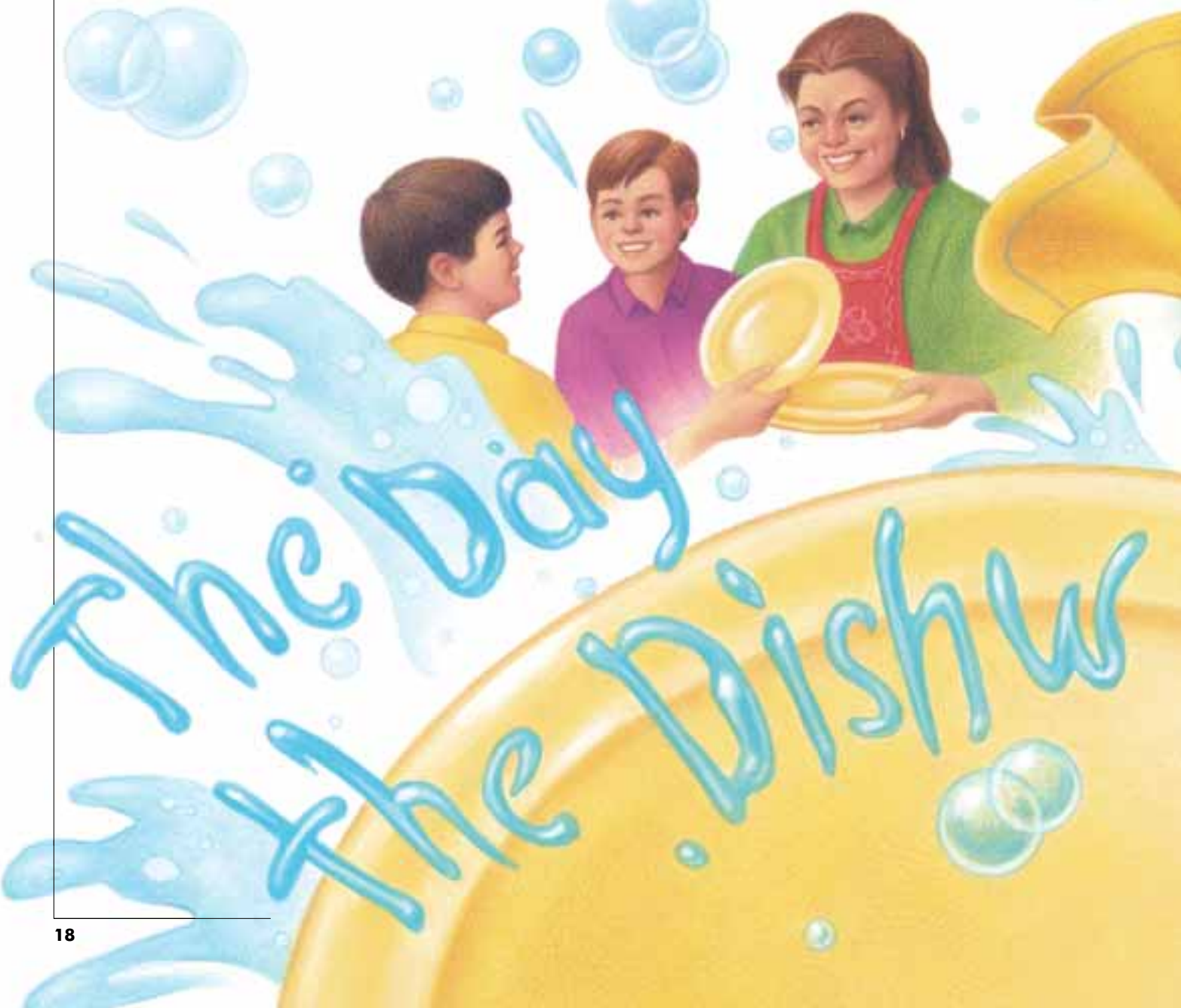
After my husband and I married, we were faced with the challenge of trying to blend two families into one. Nothing seemed to work. There were seven strong personalities that had to adjust to each other, fractured egos that wouldn't give in to each other's needs, and jealous rivalries all jammed into one big trying-to-be-happy family. Many times the bickering made me fear that it just wasn't going to work. The emotional strain was getting to be too much.

And then the dishwasher broke. It was the last straw during a summer of "if it's not one thing, it's another." In June the oven had broken, in July the air conditioner, and then the family car. Now we would have to wash dishes by hand until repair money was available.

When we announced our decision at the supper table,

we were met by moans and groans. But after dinner, as my husband filled the huge dishpan with hot suds and I gathered up clean dishtowels, helpers trickled in. Soon the whole family was sudsing, rinsing, drying, and putting away dishes in a kind of silent rhythm. Jokes were told, stories exchanged, and bickering failed to materialize as friendly talk replaced arguments. Time seemed to slow down, and getting out of the kitchen didn't seem so important. Calmness filled the room, and a new kind of peace came into our home—the peace of working happily together.

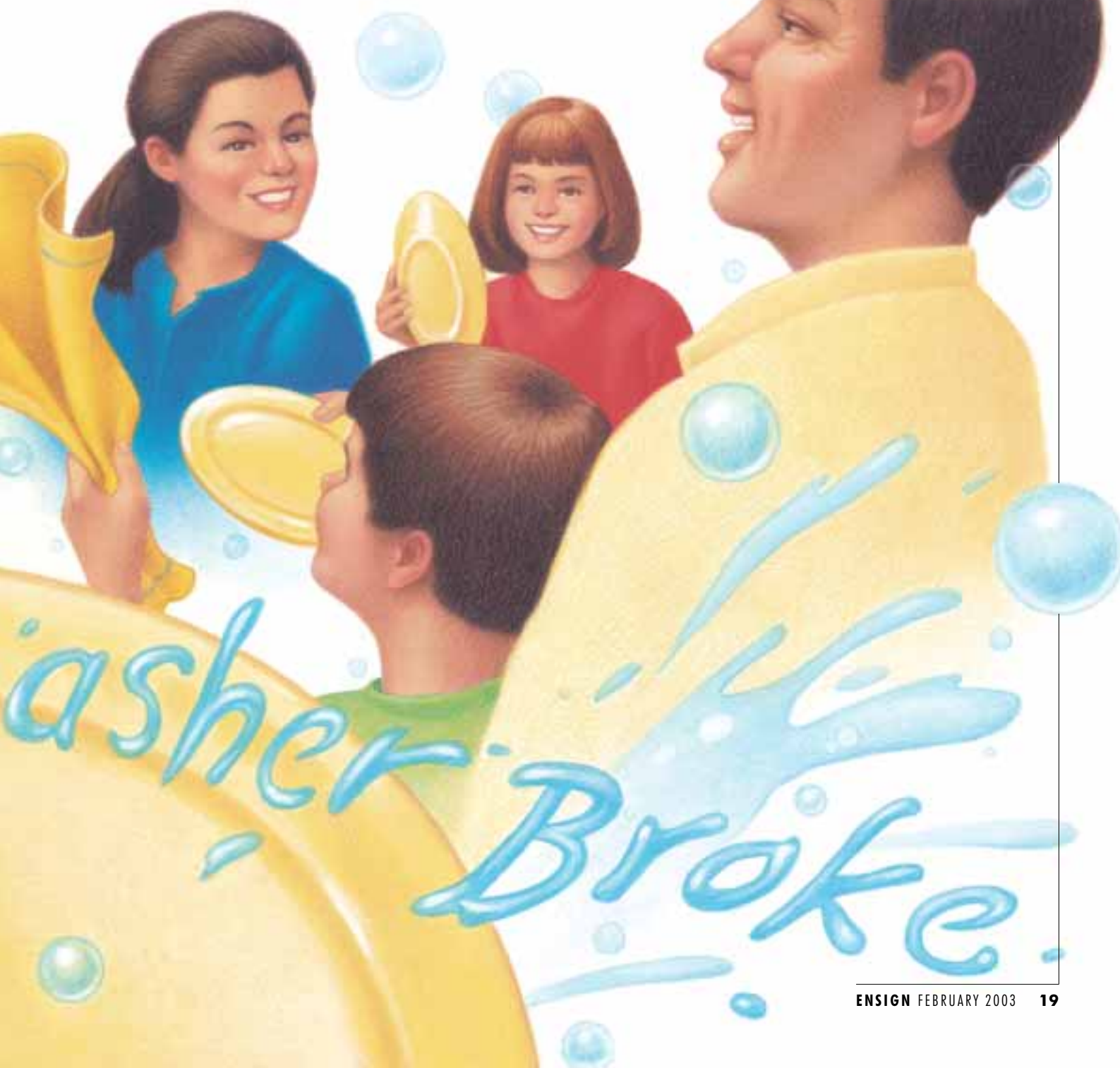
A couple of weeks later, my husband called from work to say we could afford to fix the dishwasher. Everyone was ecstatic, and convenience replaced the times together in the kitchen. But for a few days we had caught a glimpse



of what it was like to be a happy family, and we liked it. So we continued to build, gradually, on other things that brought us together.

That was years ago. Most of the children are on their own now, raising their own families. But we have learned to get along and enjoy each other, and working together is still helping to make our relationships, like the dishes we do, a little brighter. ■

Melanie Silvester is a member of the Clayton Valley Second Ward, Concord California Stake.



Divine

BY ELDER RUSSELL M. NELSON
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



In today's world trembling with terror and hatred, our knowledge of divine love is of utmost importance. We bear responsibility to understand and testify that Heavenly Father and Jesus the Christ are glorified, living, and loving personages. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."¹ Jesus "so loved the world that he gave his own life, that as many as would believe might become the sons of God."² Indeed, the Father and the Son are one—in purpose and love.³

Divine Love Is Perfect and Infinite

Their love is divine by definition. Scriptures also describe it as perfect.⁴ It is infinite because the Atonement was an act of love for all who ever lived, who now live, and who will ever live.⁵ It is also infinite because it transcends time.

Divine Love Is Enduring

Divine love is enduring.⁶ "The Lord . . . keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations."⁷

Divine Love Is Universal

Divine love is universal.⁸ God "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."⁹ Jesus is the light of the world,¹⁰ giving life and law to all things.¹¹ "He inviteth . . . all to come

unto him . . . ; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female."¹² And all are invited to pray unto our Father in Heaven.¹³

Divine Love Is Also Conditional

While divine love can be called perfect, infinite, enduring, and universal, it cannot correctly be characterized as *unconditional*.

At the Savior's invitation to follow Him, Peter and Andrew obediently left their nets, receiving great blessings as a result. Likewise, when we respond in humble obedience to His commands, we are blessed.



Love

While divine love can be called perfect, infinite, enduring, and universal, it cannot correctly be characterized as unconditional.



The word does not appear in the scriptures. On the other hand, many verses affirm that the higher levels of love the Father and the Son feel for each of us—and certain divine blessings stemming from that love—are *conditional*. Before citing examples, it is well to recognize various forms of conditional expression in the scriptures.

Conditional Forms

Several forms of conditional expression may be found in the scriptures:

- “If . . . [certain conditions exist], *then* . . . [certain consequences follow].” (The indicators if and then may be written or implied.)
- “*Inasmuch as* . . . [certain conditions exist], . . . [certain consequences follow].”¹⁴
- “*Except* . . . *cannot* . . .”¹⁵
- “*Prove* . . . , *if* . . .” For example, a verse pertaining to our creation reveals a prime purpose for our sojourn here in mortality: “We will *prove* them herewith, to see *if* they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them.”¹⁶ Life here is a period of mortal

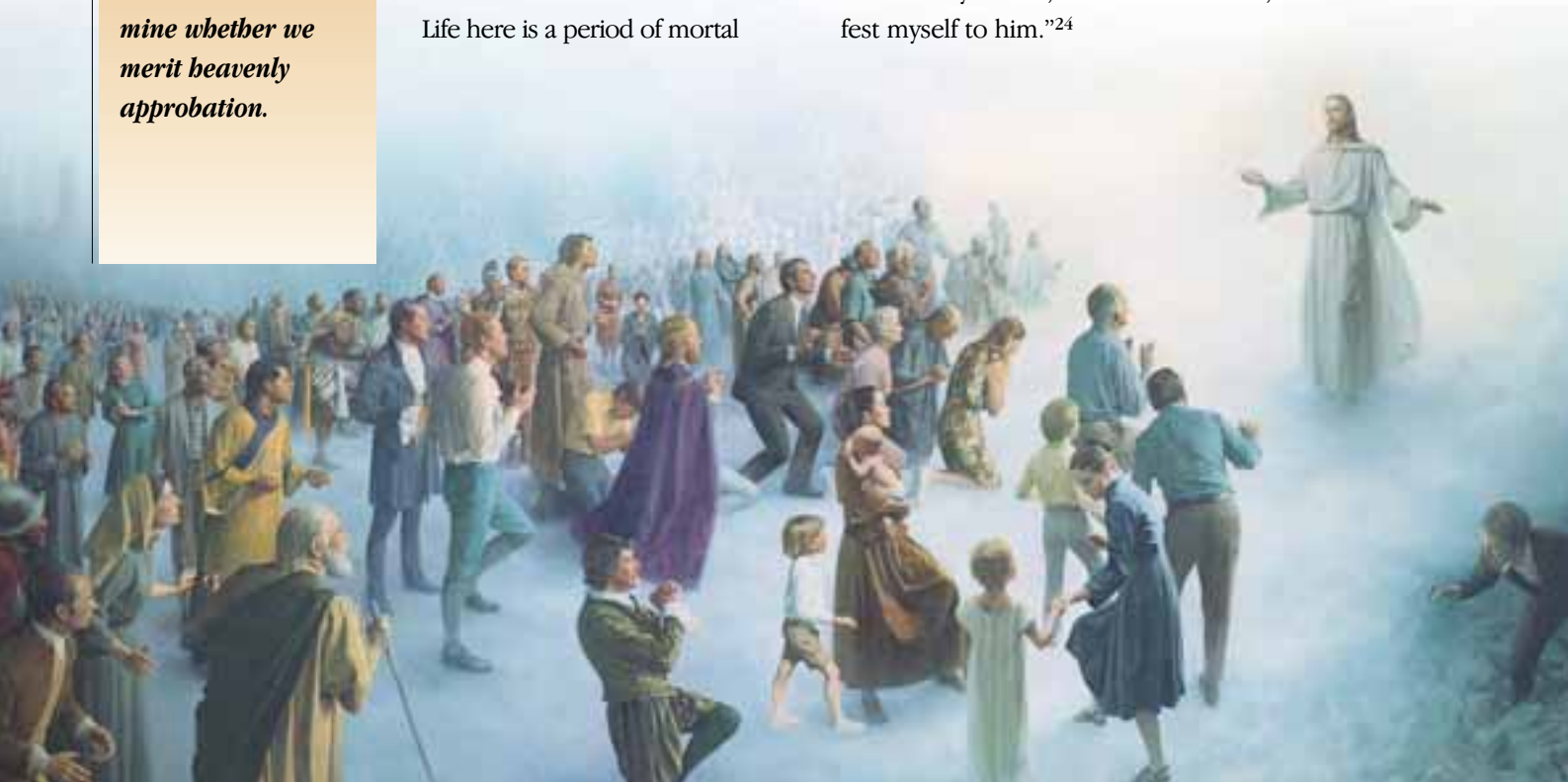
probation. Our thoughts and actions determine whether our mortal probation can merit heavenly approbation.¹⁷

The Conditional Nature of Divine Love

With scriptural patterns of conditional statements in mind, we note many verses that declare the conditional nature of divine love for us. Examples include:

- “If ye keep my commandments, [*then*] ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.”¹⁸
- “If you keep not my commandments, [*then*] the love of the Father shall not continue with you.”¹⁹
- “If a man love me, [*then*] he will keep my words: and my Father will love him.”²⁰
- “I love them that love me; and those that seek me . . . shall find me.”²¹
- “God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”²²
- The Lord “loveth those who will have him to be their God.”²³
- “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”²⁴

At the Last Judgment, the Savior will judge us according to our obedience during mortality. Our thoughts and actions will determine whether we merit heavenly approbation.



WHAT DOES CONDITIONAL MEAN?

The term *conditional* comes from Latin roots—*con*, meaning “with,” and *dicere*, meaning “to talk.” Thus, *conditional* means that “bounds or conditions have been communicated verbally.”

The term *unconditional* means “without condition or limitation; absolute.”

The Conditional Nature of Divine Blessings

It is equally evident that certain blessings come from a loving Lord only *if* required conditions are met. Examples include:

- “*If* thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, . . . *then* I will lengthen thy days.”²⁵
- “*If* thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments . . . ; *then* will I perform my word with thee.”²⁶
- “I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.”²⁷
- “When we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.”²⁸
- “Unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions.”²⁹

The Lord declares: “All who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof. . . .

“And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

“ . . . The conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not

made and entered into and sealed . . . of him who is anointed, . . . are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead.”³⁰

Other laws are designed to bless us here in mortality. One such law is tithing: “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and *prove* me now herewith, saith the Lord . . . , *if* I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”³¹ Such a blessing is *conditional*. Those who fail to tithe have no promise.³²

Again, “all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments; and he has promised . . . that *if* ye would keep his commandments ye should prosper in the land; and he never doth vary from that which he hath said; therefore, *if* ye do keep his commandments he doth bless you and prosper you.”³³

Why is divine love conditional? Because God loves us and wants us to be happy. “Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, *if* we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God.”³⁴

Our Defense against False Ideologies

Understanding that divine love and blessings are not truly “unconditional” can defend us against common fallacies such as these: “Since God’s love is unconditional, He will love me regardless . . .”; or “Since ‘God is love,’³⁵ He will love me unconditionally, regardless . . .”

These arguments are used by anti-Christ to woo people with deception. Nehor, for example, promoted himself by teaching falsehoods: He “testified unto the people that all mankind should be saved at the last day, . . . for the Lord had created all men, . . . and, in the end, *all men should have eternal life*.”³⁶ Sadly, some of the people believed



THE LAST JUDGMENT, BY JOHN SCOTT



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE BUNDERSON, POSED BY MODELS

Our children are to be taught that they receive the blessings of God's love by first obeying His commandments.

Nehor's fallacious and unconditional concepts.

In contrast to Nehor's teachings, divine love warns us that "wickedness never was happiness."³⁷ Jesus explains, "Come unto me and be ye saved; . . .

except ye shall keep my commandments, . . . ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."³⁸

Divine Love and the Sinner

Does this mean the Lord does not love the sinner? Of course not. Divine love is infinite and universal. The Savior loves both saints and sinners. The Apostle John affirmed, "We love him, because he first loved us."³⁹ And Nephi, upon seeing in vision the Lord's mortal ministry, declared: "The world, because of their iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of naught; wherefore they scourge him, and he suffereth it; and they smite him, and he suffereth it. Yea, they spit upon him, and he suffereth it, because of his *loving kindness* and his long-suffering towards the children of men."⁴⁰ We know the expansiveness of the Redeemer's love because He died that *all* who die might live again.⁴¹

Immortality and Eternal Life

God declared that His work and glory is "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."⁴² Thanks to the Atonement, the gift of immortality is *unconditional*.⁴³ The greater gift of eternal life, however, is *conditional*.⁴⁴ In order to qualify, one must deny oneself of ungodliness⁴⁵ and honor the ordinances and covenants of the temple.⁴⁶

The resplendent bouquet of God's love—including eternal life—includes blessings for which we must qualify, not entitlements to be expected unworthily. Sinners cannot bend His will to theirs and require Him to bless them in sin.⁴⁷ If they desire to enjoy every bloom in His beautiful bouquet, they must repent.⁴⁸

Counsel to Repent

President Brigham Young (1801–77) declared: "Every blessing the Lord proffers to his people is on conditions. These conditions are: 'Obey my law, keep my commandments, walk in my ordinances, observe my statutes, love mercy, . . . keep yourselves pure in the law, and then you are entitled to these blessings, and not until then.'"⁴⁹

President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) expressed a similar thought: "This is how I look at the requirements which God has made upon his people collectively and individually, and I do believe that I have no claim upon God or upon my brethren for blessing, favor, confidence or love, unless, by my works, I prove that I am worthy thereof, and I never expect to receive blessings that I do not merit."⁵⁰

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) said that the Lord "'cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance.'" (D&C 1:31.) . . . We will better appreciate his love . . . if similar abhorrence for sin impels us to transform our lives through repentance."⁵¹

Given the imperfections we all have, individual initiative is imperative: "He that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven;

"And he that repents not, from him shall be taken even

the light which he has received; for my Spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord.”⁵²

In climbing the pathway of repentance, both the effort and the result count. The Lord taught that spiritual gifts are given to “those who love me and keep all my commandments, and [who] *seeketh so to do*.”⁵³

Divine Love Provides Us with a Pattern

Jesus asked us to love one another as He has loved us.⁵⁴ Is that possible? Can our love for others really approach divine love? Yes it can!⁵⁵ The pure love of Christ is granted to all who seek and qualify for it.⁵⁶ Such love includes service⁵⁷ and requires obedience.⁵⁸

Compliance with divine law requires faith—the pivotal point of mortality’s testing and trials. At the same time, faith proves our love for God.⁵⁹ The more committed

we become to patterning our lives after His, the purer and more divine our love becomes.⁶⁰

Perhaps no love in mortality approaches the divine more than the love parents have for their children. As parents, we have the same obligation to teach obedience that our heavenly parents felt obliged to teach us. While we can teach the need for tolerance of others’ differences,⁶¹ we cannot tolerate their infractions of the laws of God. Our children are to be taught the doctrines of the kingdom,⁶² to trust in the Lord, and to know that they receive the blessings of His love by first obeying His commandments.⁶³

Divine love is perfect, infinite, enduring, and universal. The full flower of divine love and our greatest blessings from that love are conditional—predicated upon our obedience to eternal law. I pray that we may qualify for those blessings and rejoice forever. ■

NOTES

1. John 3:16.
2. D&C 34:3.
3. See 2 Nephi 31:21; Alma 12:33; D&C 93:3.
4. See 1 John 4:12, 15–18.
5. See Alma 34:9–12. Divine love is infinite also because all the faithful may be eventually “encircled about with the matchless bounty of his love” (Alma 26:15).
6. See Isaiah 54:10; see also 3 Nephi 22:10.
7. Deuteronomy 7:9; see also 1 Chronicles 16:15; Psalm 105:8.
8. Defined as “of, relating to, extending to, or affecting the entire world or all within the world; worldwide” (*The American Heritage Dictionary*, 4th ed. [2000], “universal,” 1883).
9. Matthew 5:45; see also 3 Nephi 12:45.
10. See John 8:12; 9:5.
11. See D&C 88:6–13.
12. 2 Nephi 26:33.
13. See Matthew 6:6; see also 3 Nephi 13:6; Moroni 7:48.
14. For examples, see 1 Nephi 2:20; 4:14; 2 Nephi 1:9, 20; 4:4; Jarom 1:9; Omni 1:6; Alma 9:13; 36:1, 30; 38:1; 50:20; Helaman 4:15.
15. Examples are: “*Except* a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he *cannot* enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5; emphasis added), and “*Except* ye abide my law ye *cannot* attain to this glory” (D&C 132:21; emphasis added). See also Ether 12:34; D&C 25:15; 132:21.
16. Abraham 3:25; emphasis added; see also Malachi 3:10; 3 Nephi 24:10.
17. See Matthew 25:21, 23.
18. John 15:10; emphasis added.
19. D&C 95:12; emphasis added.
20. John 14:23; emphasis added.
21. Proverbs 8:17.
22. Acts 10:34–35.
23. 1 Nephi 17:40.
24. John 14:21.
25. 1 Kings 3:14; emphasis added; see also Deuteronomy 19:9.
26. 1 Kings 6:12; emphasis added.
27. D&C 82:10.
28. D&C 130:21.
29. D&C 88:38; see also 132:5.
30. D&C 132:5–7; see also Alma 9:12; 42:13, 17.
31. Malachi 3:10; emphasis added; see also 3 Nephi 24:10. The Lord did not restrict *how* He would bless tithe payers. Some are blessed spiritually more than they are temporally.
32. See D&C 119:4–5. Tithing is also required for one to be enrolled with the people of God (see D&C 85:3).
33. Mosiah 2:22; emphasis added.
- That conditional counsel is repeated many times throughout the scriptures. See 1 Nephi 2:20; 4:14; 2 Nephi 1:9, 20; 4:4; Jacob 2:17–19; Jarom 1:9; Omni 1:6; Mosiah 1:7; 2:31; Alma 9:13; 36:1, 30; 37:13; 38:1; 48:15, 25; 50:20; Helaman 3:20.
34. Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 255–56; emphasis added.
35. 1 John 4:8, 16.
36. Alma 1:4; emphasis added; see also 1:3, 5–6; 2 Nephi 28:8–9. Such an unconditional concept (eternal life for all) would negate the need for ordinances, covenants, and temple work.
37. Alma 41:10.
38. 3 Nephi 12:20; emphasis added.
39. 1 John 4:19.
40. 1 Nephi 19:9; emphasis added.
41. See Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:14–15; see also 1 Corinthians 15:22.
42. Moses 1:39.
43. See Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Alma 12:8; D&C 76:17; Joseph Smith Translation, John 5:29.
44. See D&C 14:7.
45. See Moroni 10:32; Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:26.
46. See D&C 132:19.
47. See Alma 11:37.
48. The Lord said, “Thou art not excusable in thy transgressions; . . . go thy way and sin no more” (D&C 24:2). See also John 8:11; D&C 6:35; 29:3; 82:7; 97:27.
49. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1954), 454.
50. *Deseret News*, 12 Nov. 1873, 644.
51. *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 59.
52. D&C 1:32–33.
53. D&C 46:9; emphasis added.
54. See John 13:34; 15:12.
55. See Ether 12:33–34; Moroni 7:46–47.
56. See Moroni 7:48.
57. See Galatians 5:13; Mosiah 2:18–21; 4:15.
58. John taught, “Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected” (1 John 2:5).
59. See Deuteronomy 13:3; John 14:15; 15:6–7.
60. See Matthew 6:19–22; D&C 88:67–68; 93:11–20.
61. See Articles of Faith 1:11.
62. Doctrines include the plan of salvation, faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost (see Moroni 8:10; D&C 68:25; Moses 6:57–62).
63. See Mosiah 4:6–7.

Serving

THE DESIRE THAT NEVER GROWS OLD

BY SHARON BARBER

Both young and old benefit when the elderly are encouraged to share their wisdom and experience.

While riding the city bus one day, I witnessed a simple event that touched my heart. As the bus doors opened at one of the scheduled stops, an elderly man labored to climb aboard. After he boarded, standing with the help of his cane, he reached into his pocket and took out his fare. He then took one of the seats in front that are designated for those who are elderly or have disabilities.

Several stops later, after all the seats in the bus had been taken, a young mother with a baby in her arms and a toddler at her side stepped aboard. Before she could make her way toward the back of the bus, I watched the elderly gentleman gently reach out and touch her arm, motioning for her to take his seat. I immediately wanted to say, "No, you need your seat. Please take mine instead."

ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL LEWIS



But as I saw the young mother's face soften, I knew she would accept the offer from the elderly gentleman, not just because she needed to sit down but, more important, she knew he wanted to serve.

The young mother thanked the man graciously, and he arose from his seat. For the duration of the ride, he held tightly to the metal pole in the aisle of the bus. There was a quiet dignity about him, and the glow on his face reminded me that the desire to serve never grows old.

Many who are younger often take the opportunity to remember elderly friends with fruit baskets, lawn care, and so on. These are excellent ways to taste of the sweetness of service; yet I believe it is also important to let the elderly feel needed by *us*. One of the best ways we can do this is to invite them to share with us their experiences and their wisdom.

I remember spending hours as a girl listening to my grandmother tell me what times were like when she was my age. Her testimony of the gospel strengthened my own as she taught me lessons I could not have been taught by anyone else. I loved to see handcrafted items she had made over the years, to hear about her experiences in school, and to listen to what her dates were like when she was a teenager. I watched her crochet, and though I never learned how to do it myself, I did learn the value of talents and the importance of using them. I believe my grandmother's life was enriched when she saw that I valued her insights and benefited from her wisdom.

My grandmother was my friend. The night she passed away, I held her hand, and though she could not speak, I felt her love and I thanked Heavenly Father for the beautiful lessons of love and life she had taught me over the years.

Elderly people have both a desire to be needed and a desire to serve. How grateful I am for the service given to me by my grandmother as well as by elderly friends who have influenced me for good. In observing them I have learned that being served can be a great blessing and that serving others often brings even greater joy. ■

Sharon Barber is a member of the Maplewood Ward, Syracuse Utah South Stake.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question

My spouse died many years ago, and while we are sealed for eternity, I still find myself struggling with loneliness. What can I do to combat these feelings, and what can we all do to help relieve the loneliness of other widows and widowers?

Finding Comfort

I combat my feelings of loneliness by helping someone else who is lonely. I keep busy in my garden, and I joined a literary club. I also learned to play the organ after I was 70 years old. What a joy that has been to me. There is great joy and satisfaction in being able to make music.—**Marcell Wanner, Inkam First Ward, McCammon Idaho Stake**

I have found immense help in simply asking Heavenly Father what I should do today. Whom should I visit? Whom should I call?

I found that many in my ward had also lost a spouse. We have a singles family home evening group, with both sisters and brothers invited to attend. Our course of study for the past year has been the Book of Mormon. After completing 100 pages of study, we



Home teachers offer fellowship. Pets can help provide companionship.

have a party to celebrate. We also celebrate our birthdays, have picnics, go to the temple together, and go to activities together that individually we might not choose to attend.—**Shirley Arendt, Cleveland First Ward, Cleveland Ohio Stake**

Just one month before our 20th wedding anniversary, my 45-year-old husband passed away. I was left to raise four children between the ages of 11 and 17. A sure knowledge of the gospel certainly helped us through our grieving.

Having an eternal perspective on life can help the healing, but the personal loneliness is still hard for me to deal with at times. I have learned

to use the lonely evening hours to do things I didn't have time for during the busy day. I try to make some of it "my" time. I look forward now to those quiet evenings when I can reflect on my life and where I am headed. I also keep photos of my husband around the house so that the children and I are reminded of him.—**Susan Cole Catudal, Kirkland Ward, Montréal Québec Mount Royal Stake**

I have been blessed with many material things and good health, yet sometimes I sit home at night and cry. I wonder why I am alone and there is no one I can love. I really don't know if there is only one good answer to overcoming loneliness, but the love of my children and a lot of prayers have kept me going.—**Max Crowson, Claremore Ward, Tulsa Oklahoma East Stake**

My husband was the only member of the Church in his family. Doing his family history has been my salvation! It keeps me busy, and I feel I am doing a service to him and his family.

—**Marilyn Corsetti, Mesa Park Ward, Sandy Utah Alta View Stake**

One tool that has helped me is the scriptures, especially Mosiah 14:2–10. These verses have helped me understand the nature of trials, tribulation, loneliness, and sadness. When I ponder the fact that our Lord and Savior

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARILYN E. PEO

was despised and rejected, “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (v. 3), I feel reassured. Jesus Christ knows us; He loves and understands us in our afflictions, grief, pain, and loneliness.—**James Mayo, Skowhegan**

Ward, Bangor Maine Stake

It is still difficult for me to go out in public without a companion. I feel as if I don’t belong because I am not with my spouse. This has made me more sensitive to others in the same situation. I’ve also come to appreciate people who just listen and give me the chance to talk about my late husband and share my memories of him. He is still very much a part of my life. I try never to speak of him as if he doesn’t exist.—**Janalyn Biesinger,**

Oxford Ward, Salt Lake Granger South Stake

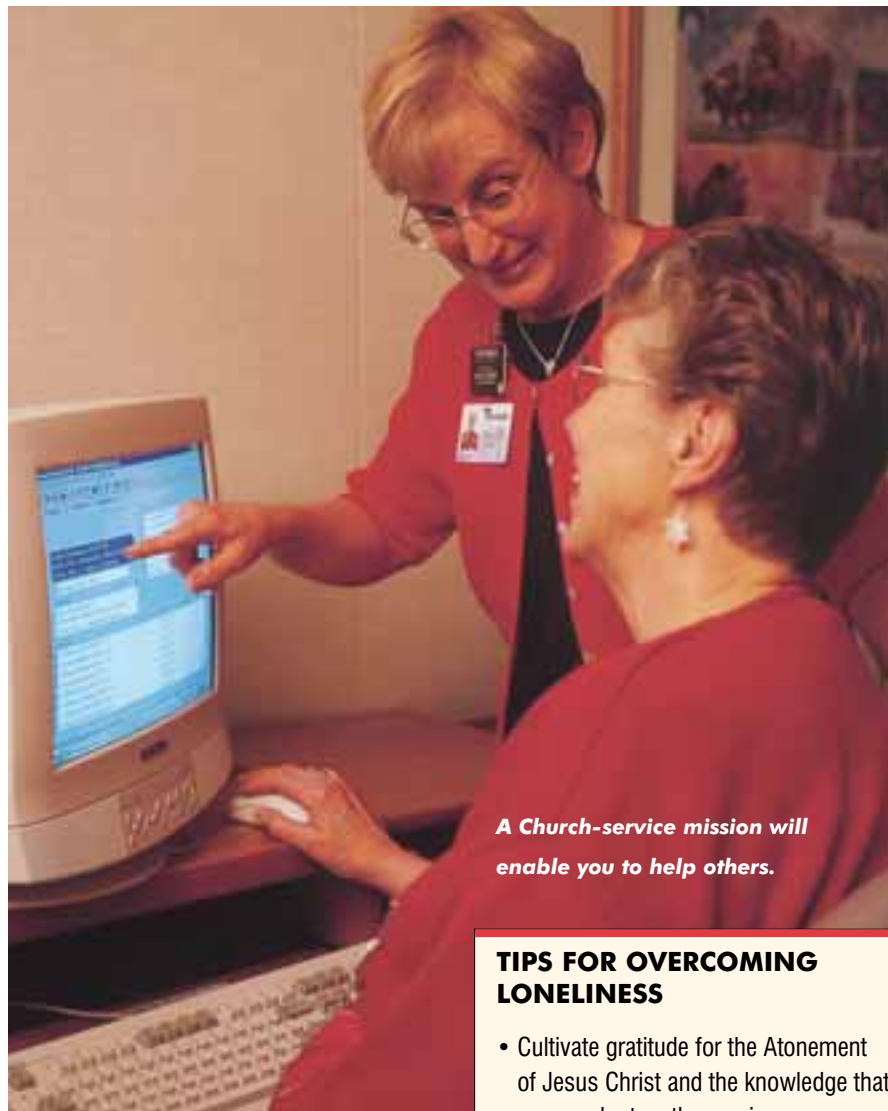
I have made it a priority to concentrate on the positive—the here and now—by recording in a journal



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE BUNDERSON

Church singles groups offer support and social activities.

each day at least three things for which I am grateful.—**Dianne Billstrom,**
Clayton Valley First Ward, Walnut Creek
California Stake



PHOTOGRAPH BY JED CLARK

A Church-service mission will enable you to help others.

TIPS FOR OVERCOMING LONELINESS

- Cultivate gratitude for the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the knowledge that you can be together again.
- Read, think, meditate, ponder, and pray often.
- Prayerfully study and ponder your patriarchal blessing.
- Request and receive priesthood blessings when needed.
- Listen to and ponder the words of a hymn every day.
- Work on your family history.
- Attend or volunteer to serve at the temple.
- Consider serving a full- or part-time Church mission.
- Get involved in your ward or stake single adult group activities.
- Write a history of your life or of your spouse and family.
- Get a pet for company and security.
- Go for walks. Exercise.

After my husband died more than 11 years ago, I had to accept the reality that he was gone and then make the choice to be happy. I knew that feeling lonely was at least in part a matter of choice and attitude.

I have also tried to stay busy in missionary work. I was blessed to work with many wonderful elders and sisters who were so full of brightness. Their enthusiasm for life was more than enough to enliven my sagging spirits.—**Nenita A. Cea, Naga**

Second Ward, Philippines Naga Stake

Dating is not easy after age 60, but finding someone to share my life with was well worth the effort. I became

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

acquainted with a wonderful woman whose husband had died. We decided we could be happy together and were married for the rest of this life in the temple. The past five years have convinced me that the best way for me to overcome loneliness was a happy second marriage.—**David**

**Mumford, North Logan Third Ward,
North Logan Utah Green Canyon Stake**

I have learned to be grateful for the marriage I shared with my husband and to turn my life over to the Lord and let Him direct me. It has been six years since my husband died. I have relocated and found a new job and new friends, yet I still stay close to family and old friends. I have a different life, but I am more dependent on the Lord than ever. And I feel stronger within myself than before. I won't ever stop missing my husband, but I can finish becoming the person the Lord knows I can be.—**Janet Hardy, Clear Creek Ward,**

Quincy California Stake

My husband, Peter, had already retired from work, and our desire was to serve a mission when I retired in August 1976. But my husband passed away earlier that year in January. With the help and love of my family, I decided to go ahead with our plans. I served a mission for nine years and was released in 1985. By actively serving the Lord, I have found a solution to my loneliness.—**Jean Hurley,**

Orpington Ward, Maidstone England Stake

Jesus Christ promised us in John 14:18, "I will not leave you



PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL SCHORNFIELD

***Time with family members or friends
can reassure and strengthen you.***

comfortless: I will come to you." He is willing to help us. If we ask and trust in Him, He will make us whole again. Through the influence of the Holy Ghost, we are able to feel His love and be blessed with beautiful, comforting memories of our loved one.—**Jason Taylor, Ensign Fourth Ward,
Salt Lake Ensign Stake**

Giving Comfort

My husband died when I was 37. When others asked, "Is there anything I can do?" I felt awkward. If a person is sincere about wanting to help, don't just ask; do something. Make a dinner, offer to take the person grocery shopping, send a card, share memories you have of the person's spouse, or just listen.

Remember the widows and widowers when holidays, anniversaries, or other special occasions are approaching—especially if they are alone.

Invite them to your activities if appropriate. Holidays are often a difficult time to be alone, and grief deepens. Knowing they will be remembered helps ease their loneliness.—**Ruby Von Dwornick, Cambridge Second Ward,
Cambridge Massachusetts Stake**

The bishop of our ward arranged one time for the young people to get acquainted with the widows and widowers. The youth learned our names and made an effort to speak to us. It had a heartwarming effect on most of us. After the bishop was released, many of the youth continued with kind words and service to the older people.—**Nell C. Folkman, Ygnacio Valley Ward, Walnut Creek California Stake**

My progress in adjusting to my new situation as a widow has been helped by the love and concern of those around me. It is amazing how much simple acts can help—a hug, an inquiry into how I am doing, sitting next to me in sacrament meeting, or an invitation to go on a walk or to dinner or a movie. It reassures me that someone cares and is thinking of me. One sister called me almost weekly for a year after my husband's death, even when she was traveling, just to check on me. Another sister took me to a garden store and bought some plants for my yard. Then she came to my house with her young daughter to help plant them. As those flowers blossomed throughout the summer, I thought of her love for me.

—**Candace E. Anderson, Herndon Ward,
Oakton Virginia Stake** ■

Our Thorns in the Flesh

BY ELDER RAY H. WOOD
Of the Seventy

Each time I read of the Apostle Paul's "thorn in the flesh," I learn something new. Paul's testimony of the blessing and power of adversity in his life reminds us that if we endure it well in our own lives, "God shall exalt [us] on high" (D&C 121:8).

Paul relates his lesson in four verses in 2 Corinthians 12:7–10:

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions,

in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."

Paul's initial reaction to his "thorn" was probably not unlike that of many of us: "Why me?" "What have I done to deserve this?" "Please remove this from me." "This is not fair."

We can learn a number of important principles from Paul's words.

"Lest I Should Be Exalted"

In the opening verse, Paul reasons that the success of his missionary efforts and the constancy of his heavenly blessings could cause him to be lifted up and to forget to seek the grace and goodness of God. The thorn was to serve as a reminder of his dependence upon the Lord. Thus he correctly identifies the purpose of his affliction and the reason it was not removed. He is therefore not resentful nor offended by the Lord's refusal to comply with his prayerful requests. As hard as it may be,



Willing submission to whatever God imposes brings God's grace to strengthen us and help us bear that which is imposed.

he willingly submits. He recognizes that willing submission to whatever God imposes brings God's grace to strengthen us and help us bear that which is imposed.

The people of Alma learned this great lesson when their prayers for deliverance from persecution and bondage were met instead with the power to endure their temporary captivity and thereby stand as witnesses that God hears us in our afflictions and provides for our needs as He perceives them rather than as we desire (see Mosiah 24:15).

Paul's comparison of the thorn to "the messenger of Satan to buffet me" is most likely a recognition that the devil delighted to witness his distress and revel in his discomfort, "for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself" (2 Nephi 2:27). A pointed lesson to be learned from this is that although Satan is not normally the one who imposes the affliction—for most afflictions come as the result of the operation of natural laws—he rejoices in our misery and would love to see us accuse God and resent the infirmity that may be for our benefit and blessing.

"My Strength Is Made Perfect in Weakness"

Paul then quotes the Lord, who tells him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). All men and women are bound by mortally imposed weaknesses and limitations in strength, knowledge, and power. Contrasting these limitations with the infinite wisdom and power of God brings humility. "Weaknesses are a constant reminder of our dependence upon the Lord. It is when we take those weaknesses to Him, in humility, that we can become effectively joined with Him in a great work. It is when we have done as much as we can do that His grace . . . can move us

beyond our natural abilities" (Carolyn J. Rasmus, "Faith Strengthened in Weakness," *Church News*, 26 Feb. 1994, 10). It is in this sense that God's strength can then be made perfect in our lives. "The Lord God showeth us our weakness that we may know that it is by his grace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things" (Jacob 4:7).

We find relevant instruction in the Book of Mormon on the meaning of the grace of God. Alma reminds his newly ordained priests that they are not to labor for money nor depend upon the people for their support. Instead, they are to receive the grace of God in return for their priestly labors, "that they might wax strong in the Spirit, having the knowledge of God, that they might teach with power and authority from God" (Mosiah 18:26).



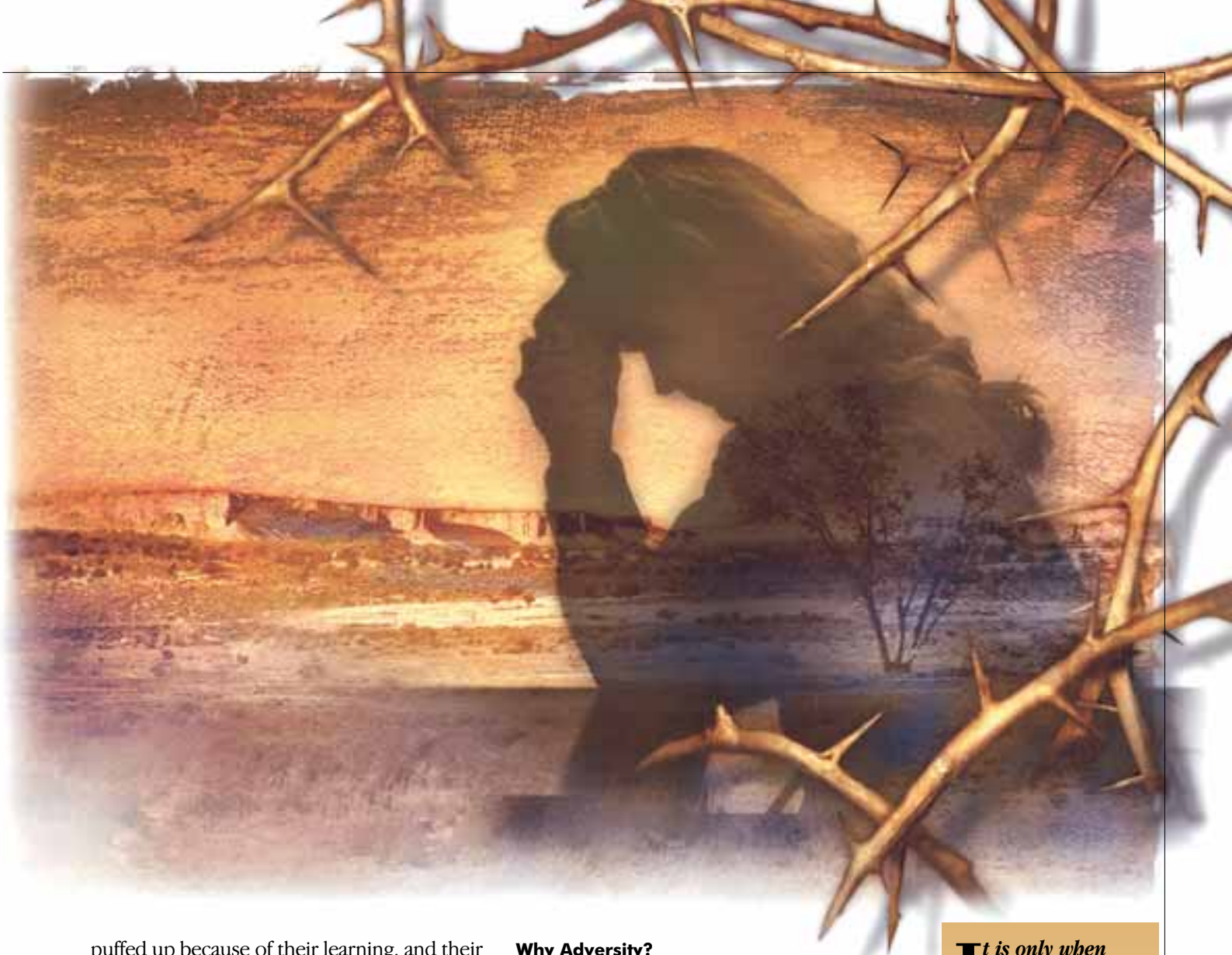
To understand why the Lord allows suffering, we must first understand the purpose of mortality and our ultimate destiny in God's kingdom.

In the Bible Dictionary we read, "The main idea of the word [*grace*] is divine means of help or strength, given through the bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ. . . . This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts" (p. 697). Paul learns that it is because of Christ's merits that he is sustained in his adversity, not because of his own abilities or willpower. But there is a condition! The grace of Christ—His power, His strength, His help—is only "made perfect in weakness." When a per-

son ultimately recognizes his total dependency on Christ and lets his will be swallowed up in God's will, then and only then can this enabling power be brought to bear in perfection.

Jacob's words in the Book of Mormon summarize the required completeness of this surrender:

"And whoso knocketh, to him will he open; and the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are



puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches . . . save they shall cast these things away, and consider themselves fools before God, and come down in the depths of humility, he will not open unto them” (2 Nephi 9:42).

Understanding this, Paul “most gladly,” therefore, glories in his adversity. He takes “pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake” (2 Corinthians 12:10), because he knows that only by enduring well can the power of Christ rest upon him. It is only when he recognizes his weakness, his inability to save himself, his vulnerability to evil and death, and his need for a Redeemer that he can then become strong, “relying alone upon the merits of Christ” (Moroni 6:4).

Why Adversity?

Why does the Lord allow adversity, hardship, and personal pain and suffering in our lives? To help answer that question, we must first understand the purpose of mortality and our ultimate destiny in the kingdom of God.

The Lord has promised, “All that my Father hath shall be given unto [you]” (D&C 84:38), and “he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23). Can any promise be greater than these? But there was a cost, an enormous cost:

“The atonement . . . is the occasion on which a God paid the ransom to reclaim fallen man. . . . In it, the Only Begotten made amends for a broken law, satisfied the

It is only when we recognize our weakness, our inability to save ourselves, and our need for a Redeemer that we become strong, “relying alone upon the merits of Christ.”



President Harold B. Lee remarked: *“In the Garden of Gethsemane . . . the scriptures record, ‘And, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.’ . . . Sometimes that may happen to you in the midst of your trials.”*

demands of justice, and took upon himself the sins of all men on conditions of repentance. Through it, all men are raised in immortality while those who believe and obey are raised also unto eternal life in the kingdom of the Father. The atonement makes possible a reconciliation between God and man; it provides a Savior and a Redeemer for mortals; it gives man an advocate and an intercessor in the courts above. The atonement is the great and eternal plan of redemption” (Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 107).

Such a cost demands more of people than a simple confession or acknowledgment. It requires proof that we will “abide in [his] covenant. . . . For if ye will not abide in my covenant ye are not worthy of me” (D&C 98:14–15). President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901) remarked, “The Lord seems to

require some proof on our part, something to show that He can depend upon us when He wants us to accomplish certain things in His interest” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1900, 2).

The Lord seems to have several purposes in giving us trials: First, to test and prove us, to see if we are loyal to Him and to our beliefs. Second, to give us the opportunity to prove that we love Him more than any other thing. Third, to teach us something about ourselves and our commitment to remain true and focused on the eternal nature and possibilities of our lives, our families, and the mission of the Church.

Sister Sheri L. Dew, former second counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, put into vital perspective what that proof entails:

“This life *is* a test. It is only a test—meaning, that’s *all* it is. Nothing more, but nothing less. It is a test of many things—of our convictions and priorities, our faith and our faithfulness, our patience and our resilience, and in the end, our ultimate desires” (“This Is a Test. It Is Only a Test,” BYU Women’s Conference, 1 May 1998).

In late 1833, the Saints in Missouri were suffering great persecution. The Prophet Joseph Smith, unable to understand why so great a calamity had come upon Zion and what the cause of the affliction was, inquired of the Lord. The response indicated that part of the reason was the consequence of their transgressions. The Lord laid out a strong principle: “Therefore, they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son. For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified” (D&C 101:4–5).

We are also reminded that part of the

purpose of mortality is to “prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abraham 3:25).

President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) once remarked: “Don’t be afraid of the testing and trials of life. Sometimes when you are going through the most severe tests, you will be nearer to God than you have any idea, for like the experience of the Master himself in the temptation on the mount, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross at Calvary, the scriptures record, ‘And, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.’ (Matthew 4:11.) Sometimes that may happen to you in the midst of your trials” (in Conference Report, Munich Germany Area Conference, 1973, 114).

Growth through Trials

As we come closer to the Lord, we also draw greater attention from Lucifer and encounter greater turbulence in our lives. Elder Bruce C. Hafen of the Seventy explained the effects of growth through meeting the challenges of life:

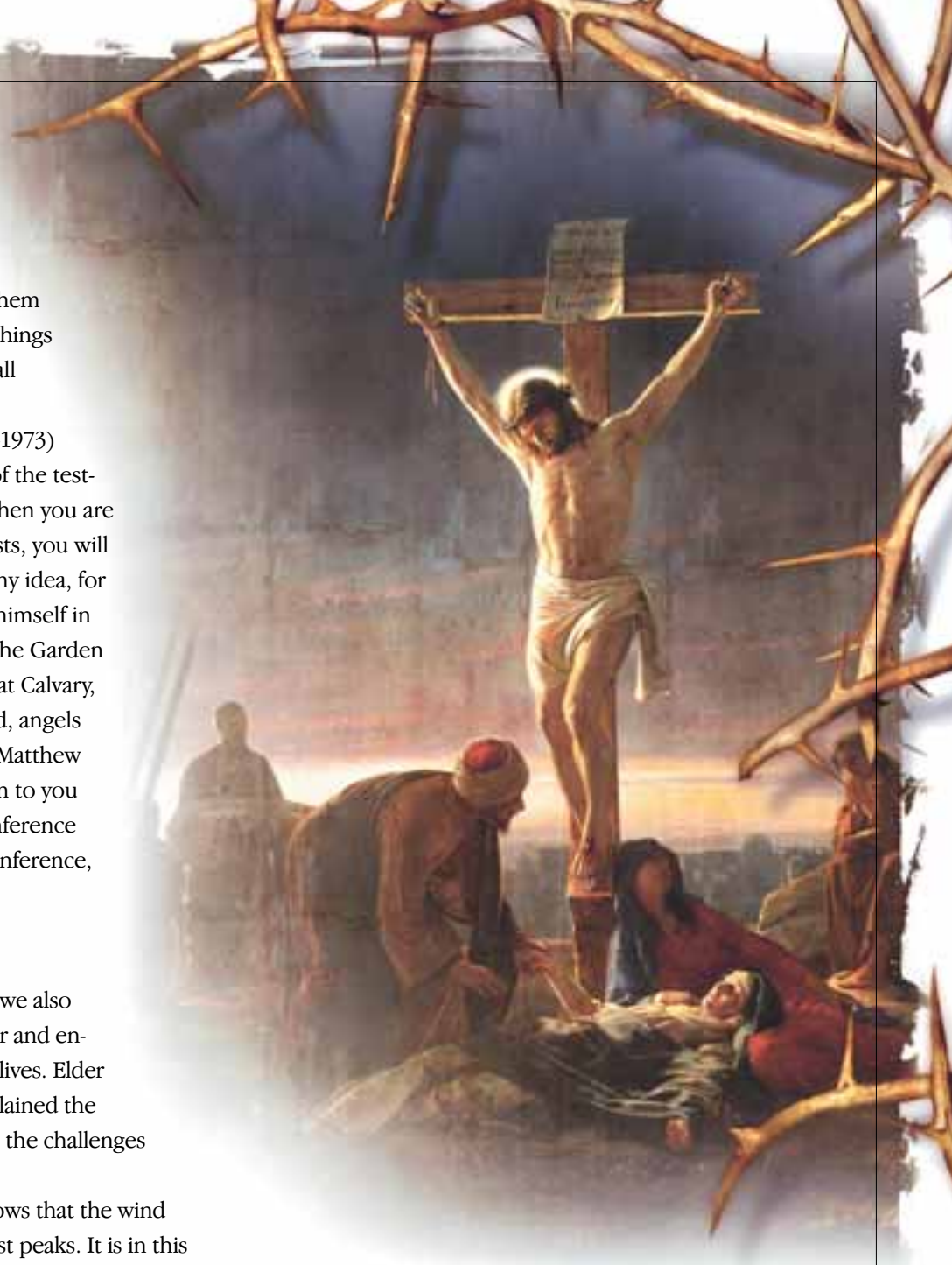
“We learn as our knowledge grows that the wind whistles loudest around the highest peaks. It is in this stage that we learn the difference between cobwebs and cables. But as we nourish our seedling testimony, building on our portion of sure knowledge by stretching further the reach of our faith, our confidence matures and our perspective broadens. Our learning from experience over time yields knowledge having a special kind of depth, for the maturing of our spiritual understanding reflects itself in the maturing of our own character” (*The Believing Heart* [1986], 38).

When we understand the principle of opposition in all things, reasons for adversity and disappointment, and the blessings of trials, we can accept the daily events of our lives

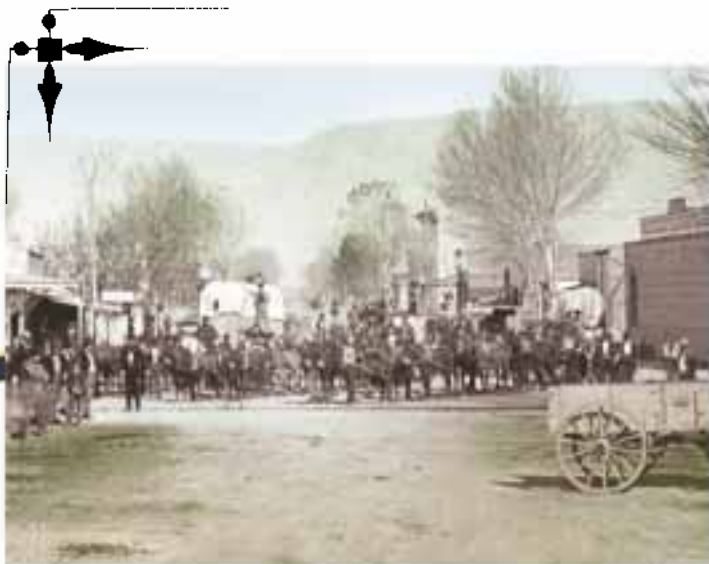
Through the Savior’s Atonement in Gethsemane and on the cross, He learned how to succor us in our afflictions.

with greater hope and desire to endure well and to look unto Christ, that His power may rest upon us and see us happily through our mortal lives. Is it any wonder then that Paul glories in his infirmities or takes pleasure in reproaches, persecutions, and distress? These are among the vital means of growth and the development of true Godlike character. ■

Elder Ray H. Wood served as a member of the Seventy from 1998 to 2001.



THE CRUCIFIXION, BY CARL HEINRICH BLOCH

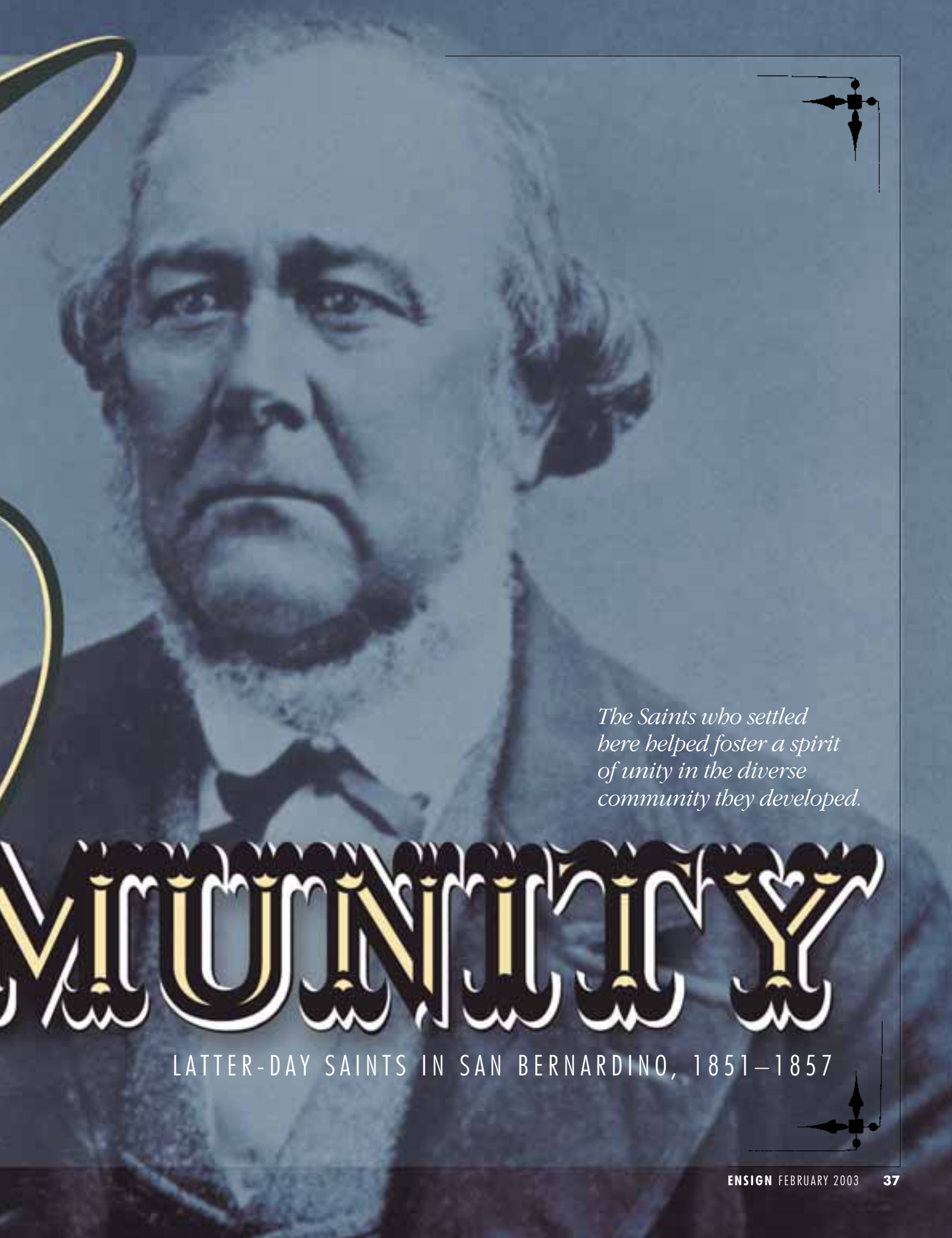


TRUE

BY MARILYN MILLS

In the fall of 1851, the San Bernardino Valley was transformed from a Mexican rancho into the largest predominantly Anglo-American settlement in the California southland with the arrival of some 400 Latter-day Saints. They possessed a unique commitment to their new community forged by persecution and pioneering challenges.¹ Some had traveled across the plains with President Brigham Young. Others had come west around Cape Horn to San Francisco on the ship *Brooklyn*. Some were Mormon Battalion veterans, who had marched thousands of miles for God and country. The group also included an entire branch of Southern converts, some of whom had given up plantations and come west, bringing with them their African-American servants, including slaves who ultimately received their freedom. This diverse group of colonists, unified by their

Above: All were welcome in San Bernardino. Here we see an early community gathering. Right: Elder Charles C. Rich, one of the leaders of the Saints in San Bernardino.



*The Saints who settled
here helped foster a spirit
of unity in the diverse
community they developed.*

COMMUNITY

LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN SAN BERNARDINO, 1851–1857



Mormon Battalion Route

faith, was well suited to help establish a community where all were welcome and all worked together.

The Mormon Battalion

Prior to the arrival of the Saints in San Bernardino, the Mormon Battalion had helped to pave the way for the new colony. On 29 January 1847, the battalion had reached San Diego, completing its grueling desert march. Because the Mexican War had almost ended, battalion members were assigned peacekeeping duties. One company was given orders to build a makeshift fort at the mouth of the Cajon Pass near San Bernardino to guard the Mexican ranchos against attacks from thieves. Here they came in contact with the Lugo family, who owned the neighboring San Bernardino Rancho, where the Saints would eventually settle. Battalion members used furloughs to work on the Chino Rancho owned by Lugo son-in-law Isaac Williams. Williams, learning of the Church's desire to colonize in the West, offered to sell his rancho to the Church. Captain Jefferson Hunt reported this as early as May 1847 in a letter to President Young, who was already considering a southern California colony. After mustering out of the army in July 1847, several former battalion members stayed behind and contracted with Isaac Williams to build a mill on his Chino Rancho.²

About this time, as Saints began arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, Church leaders saw an immediate need for grain, beef, and other supplies to support the growing population. Former battalion captain Jefferson Hunt urged them to consider making a supply trip to southern California. Leaders approved the idea, and Hunt, with a group of former battalion men, made the trip in 45 days, headquartering at the

familiar Chino Rancho. They obtained cuttings, supplies, and 240 head of cattle, returning in February 1848. This was the first known cattle drive through the Cajon Pass of California to what is now Utah.³ Hunt later escorted gold-seeking '49ers on this all-weather route to California, thus helping to forge a well-worn trail to the coast from the Salt Lake Valley.

Planting the Colony

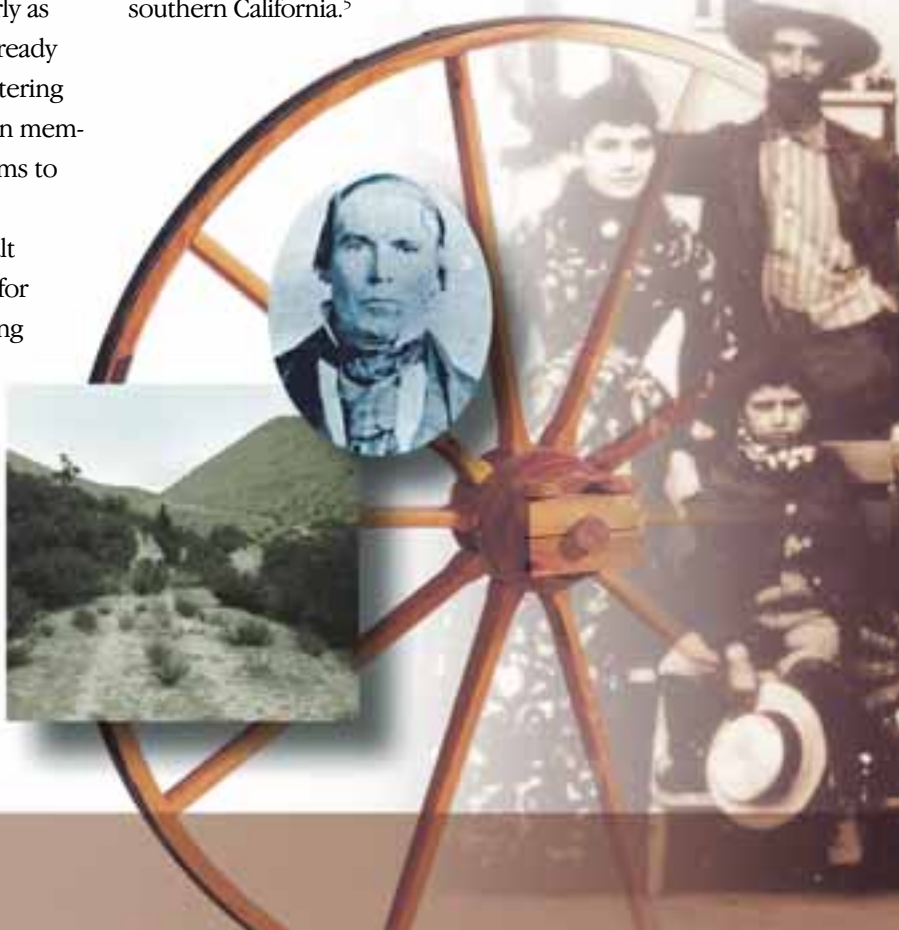
In 1849 President Young assigned Elders Amasa M. Lyman and Charles C. Rich of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to travel throughout California to determine what kind of Church presence was feasible there. They concluded that the Chino Rancho, which Isaac Williams had offered to sell to the Church, was an ideal site for the settlement. Elder Rich met with Williams and then enthusiastically reported the agricultural and financial possibilities of the rancho to President Young.⁴ President Young soon requested that several families, including the Mississippi Company (see sidebar, p. 41), travel with Elders Lyman and Rich to colonize southern California.⁵

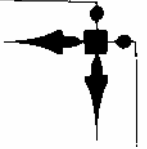


Captain Jefferson Hunt



Insets: Ruts from the pioneer wagons are still visible; Andrew Lytle, LDS mayor of San Bernardino. Far right: Portrait of the Lugo family, original owners of the San Bernardino Rancho. Above right: A sketch of the San Bernardino colony in 1852.



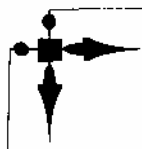


By the spring of 1851, 437 men, women, and children had gathered in Payson, Utah, ready to begin the journey. President Young came to bid farewell to the colonizers, expecting about 200 people, but many others had come who wanted to escape the harsh climate and poor economic conditions. His clerk noted that President Young was “sick at the sight of so many of the saints running off to California.”⁶ Disappointed, he left without addressing the travelers.

President Young instructed Elders Lyman and Rich that the settlement was to be a way station for missionaries and immigrants traveling to and from the Pacific Islands. He also wanted a “continuous line of stations and places of refreshment” between Salt Lake City and the Pacific coast as soon as possible.⁷ He counseled that the colony was to be self-reliant, to attempt to manufacture olive oil, to cultivate grapes, and to experiment with growing tea, sugar cane, and cotton.⁸

Andrew Lytle was elected captain of the wagon train, with Joseph Matthews and David Seeley as subordinate captains—each of these three directing 50 wagons. William Crosby, Sidney Tanner, Jefferson Hunt, Alfred Bybee, Robert Smith, Daniel Clark, Samuel Rolfe, Wellington Seeley, George Garner, and Elders Lyman, Rich, and Parley P. Pratt headed up 10 wagons each.⁹ They set out on 23 March 1851, a total of 150 wagons, 588 oxen, 336 cows, 21 young stock, 107 horses, and 52 mules.¹⁰ Three members of the Twelve, the Mississippi Company, 15 former Mormon Battalion men and their families, pioneers from Nauvoo, and even some seafaring San





Francisco Saints were now bound together for a unique experience in fellowship and cooperation that would have a profound impact on the history of the West.

The Arduous Trek

The harsh desert terrain and scarce water and feed made this one of the most difficult trips ever attempted by a wagon train. "It was certainly the hardest time I ever saw," recorded Elder Parley P. Pratt near today's Baker, California, "but we cried unto God and in the name of Jesus Christ asked Him to strengthen us and our teams, and He did so in a miraculous manner, and we were saved from the horrors of the desert."¹¹ Exhausted by the ordeal, men, women, children, and animals struggled along the sandy trail, forced to rest every few minutes. They could travel no faster, even though the life-restoring water of the Mojave River was just 14 miles away.

Despite the difficulty of the desert crossing, the company's greatest challenge was still before them—the Cajon Pass through the San Bernardino Mountains. Fortunately,

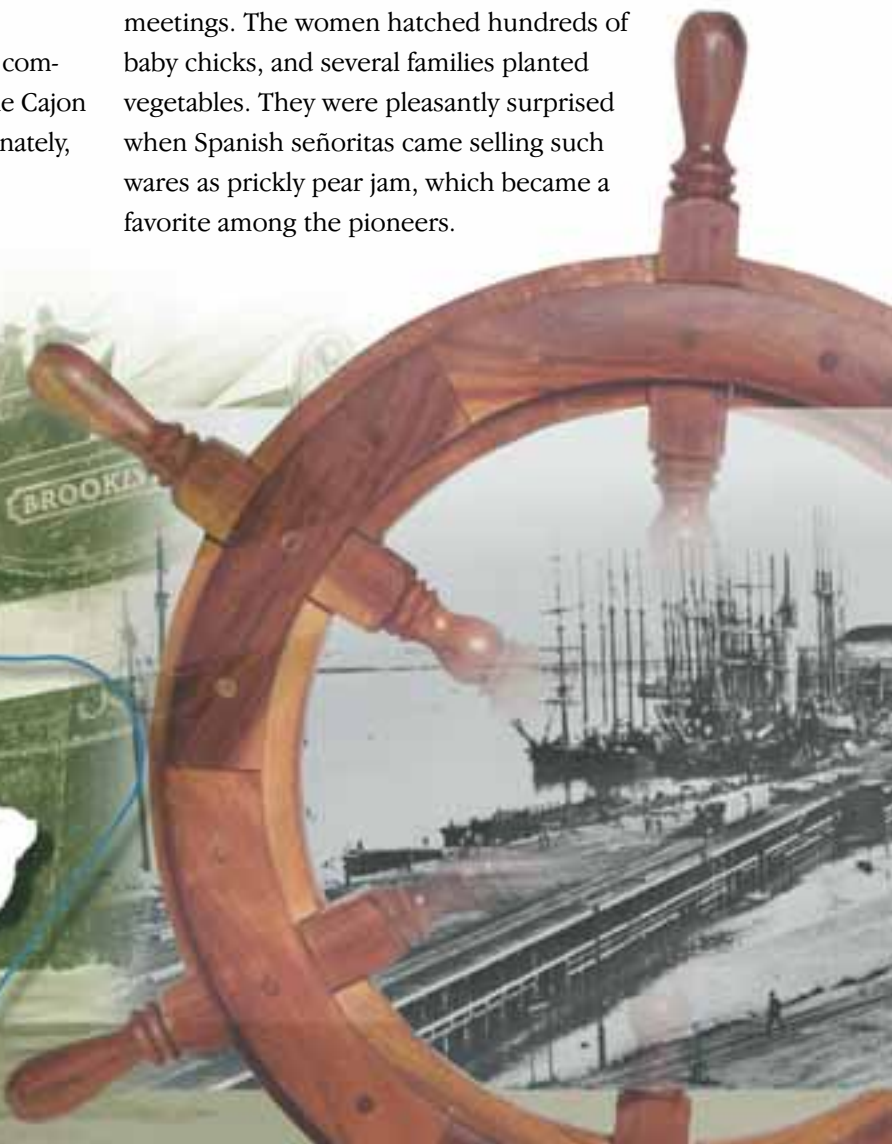
freighter William T. Sanford had established a new trail in the West Cajon Canyon. But the slope at the top was still very steep, and they had to lower the wagons down the short ridge with ropes or use snubbing posts to slow the descent. For a distance of 60 feet the entire company, including wagons and animals, slid down to the trail.

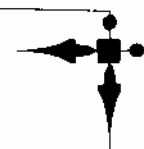
A few miles farther down the canyon, they found a perfect camping spot in a nearby grove of sycamores, with plenty of water and forage. Elders Lyman and Rich traveled to the Chino Rancho, where they learned that Williams had changed his mind and would not sell.¹² After giving this disheartening news to the colonists, they set out to find another location where the Saints could settle. The group made good use of their three-month encampment. While they waited, they started a school under a large tree, where they also held Sunday meetings. The women hatched hundreds of baby chicks, and several families planted vegetables. They were pleasantly surprised when Spanish señoritas came selling such wares as prickly pear jam, which became a favorite among the pioneers.

Background and map: Many of the Latter-day Saints who traveled on the ship *Brooklyn* from New York to San Francisco settled in San Bernardino. Far right: San Pedro Harbor served as a major port for Latter-day Saints.



Brooklyn's Journey from New York to California





THE MISSISSIPPI SAINTS

The nucleus of the San Bernardino colonists was a group of former plantation owners and their households from Mississippi. In the early 1840s, a Latter-day Saint schoolteacher named John Brown served a mission in the South. He and his companions found a “fertile field” in Monroe County, Mississippi, and in a short time established a congregation of about 200 members. Their move from Mississippi to Utah and eventually to San Bernardino is one of the epic tales in Church history.

As President Young led the Saints west from Nauvoo in February 1846, the Mississippi Saints expected to gather with them on the trail. Led by John Brown, 14 families, some with slaves and servants, left in April 1846 and along the way were joined by the Crow and Kartchner families.¹ They reached the Platte River an entire year before President Young and the first company. Continuing west, they soon learned from trappers that the Saints had set up camp in Winter Quarters on the west side of the Missouri River and in Kanesville, Iowa, on the east side of the river. Needing provisions and a place to wait for the winter, the Mississippi company followed French trapper John Richard to a fort called Pueblo. They built cabins and planted crops, establishing Colorado’s first colony.²

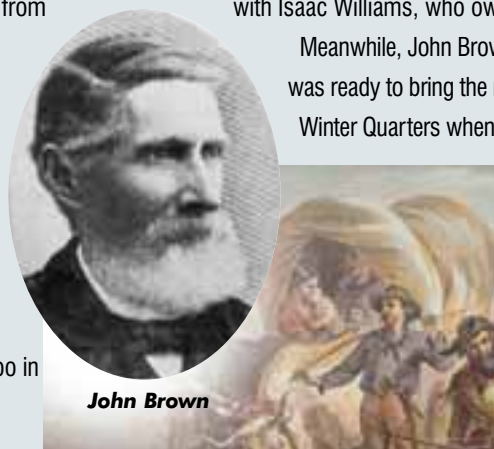
John Brown left for Mississippi to gather the rest of the Southern converts. Meanwhile, at Kanesville (modern-day Council Bluffs), President Young was encouraging the men to enlist in the U.S. Army and march to California to fight in the war with Mexico. He saw this as an opportunity for the group to use their monthly pay to help the Church move west. Although the Mormon Battalion had no military experience, the 520 men (accompanied by 35 women and 42 children) completed one of the longest infantry marches in United States history—a journey of nearly 2,000 miles. During the march, a detachment of sick men and accompanying families split off from the main group and fortunately met John Brown. He told them of the Pueblo settlement. They arrived in October 1846. Two other detachments also joined the colony.³

When the main group of the Mormon Battalion reached San

Diego on 29 January 1847, the Mexican War had almost ended, so they were assigned to peacekeeping duties throughout southern California. This eventually led to the meeting of battalion members with Isaac Williams, who owned Chino Rancho.

Meanwhile, John Brown had arrived in Mississippi and was ready to bring the rest of the Southern Saints to Winter Quarters when he received word from President

Young to have the group wait another year until the Saints had located in the West. Instead, he was to bring only a few able-bodied men to join President Young and the advance party in their 1847 trek from Winter Quarters west to



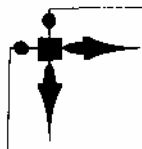
John Brown

the Salt Lake Valley. John Brown arrived with four white men and two African-American slaves, Hark Lay and Oscar Crosby. Another African-American, Green Flake, also joined the group.

On 8 April 1847, President Young’s advance company began its journey along the Platte. They were welcomed in Laramie, Wyoming, by 17 of the Latter-day Saint Pueblo colonists. President Young then sent Elder Amasa M. Lyman of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles back to lead the rest of the Pueblo group to Utah. Some of the Mississippi Saints, including African-American pioneers, made history by arriving in the Salt Lake Valley on 23 July. By the time President Young arrived on 24 July, they had already planted potatoes and beans.⁴ The 275 Pueblo Saints arrived a few days later. President Young thanked the Mormon Battalion for having “saved the people by going into the Army.”⁵ After spending the first winter in the fort, some of the Mississippi Saints established the area of Holladay southeast of the city, the first settlement outside of Salt Lake City. Not long after, President Young asked them to lead out in the settlement of the San Bernardino area in southern California. ■

NOTES

1. Edward Leo Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community* (1996), 19.
2. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 19.
3. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 21.
4. Leonard J. Arrington, “Mississippi Mormons,” *Ensign*, June 1977, 50.
5. Richard E. Bennett, *We’ll Find the Place: The Mormon Exodus, 1846–1848* (1997), 231.



Establishing San Bernardino

Elders Lyman and Rich eventually decided that the best location for the settlement was the abandoned San Bernardino Rancho, which had plentiful water sources and a nearby timber supply. The Lugo family sold the 35,000 acres for \$77,500, and on 1 October 1851, the pioneers became the first group of colonists to settle in Los Angeles County after California became a state. A building frenzy began, with 100 structures erected in two months.

Jefferson Hunt's married daughter, Nancy Daley, later recalled her log cabin built at that time. The roof was thatched with brush and clay, and Nancy covered the dirt floor with mats and dry grass. The determined housewife also spread Chinese matting on top of the mats and grass and covered the rough inside walls and ceiling with cotton cloth brought from "the States."

Just as the Saints completed these homes, news arrived of an imminent attack by renegade Indians gathering in the mountains from San Geronio in the south to Santa Barbara in the north. The pioneers used teams of oxen to drag the new homes into a row. This became the 700-foot-long west wall of a stockade, with 12-foot poles completing the exterior walls.

Preparations were almost complete when Juan Antonio, chief of the Cahuilla Indian tribe who had previously protected ranch property for the Lugo family, arrived in camp with good news. He assured the colonists that "he had all ways been the friend of the whites . . . and that he stood at all times ready to prove it by his actions." He and 25 of his warriors captured the leader of the renegades and delivered him to federal authorities, saving the colony from possible tragedy.¹³ The 400 residents never needed the fort again, but because of their determination to pay off the rancho debt, they remained confined in that eight-acre enclosure for more than two years, pooling their resources and working community fields. The majority of the colonists placed a higher priority on the general good of the community than on private interests.



David Seeley

One outstanding example of this community spirit was the building of a logging road into the San Bernardino Mountains, a road that can still be seen today. Elder

Lyman had determined a road was needed to establish a lumber industry for the colony. When he requested manpower, 100 men, including African-American Grief Embers (known for assembling the Saints by blowing the "bishop's horn") and a number of Native Americans, volunteered. They worked an estimated 1,000 man-days to complete the engineering feat.

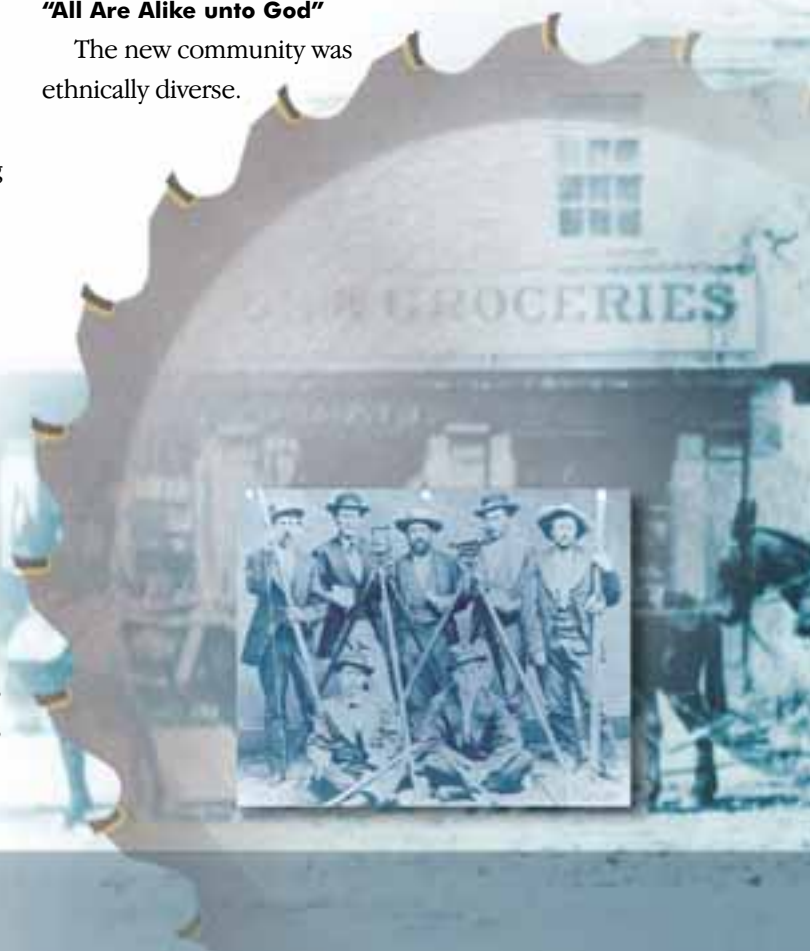
David and Wellington Seeley built sawmills to provide lumber for Los Angeles and nearby areas, where boards were called "Mormon banknotes."¹⁴

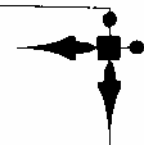
Several hundred buildings went up in 1854–56 in

Los Angeles alone, nearly all of them constructed with lumber cut and milled by Latter-day Saint colonists. The Saints, though, built their homes of adobe to save the precious lumber to sell.¹⁵

"All Are Alike unto God"

The new community was ethnically diverse.





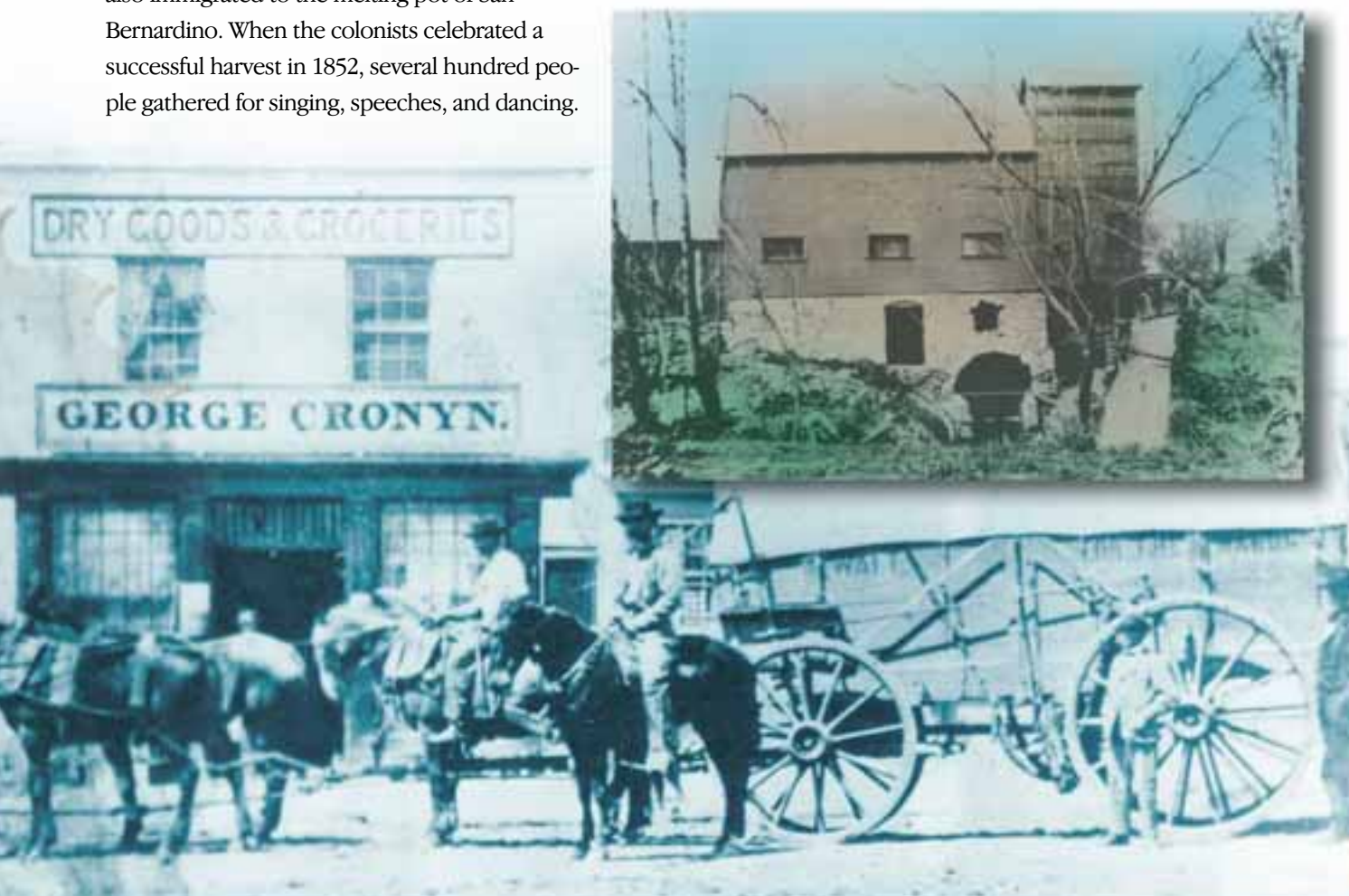
In addition to the LDS pioneers of European descent, there were African-Americans, including colony midwives Biddy Mason and Hannah Smith, who was noted for her daring rides on horseback in the middle of the night to “catch babies.” Local Cahuilla and Serrano Indians also frequented the settlement, and some worked in the fields. Former Mexican governor Pio Pico and other rancho families attended colony celebrations. Pico recorded that he considered Elders Lyman and Rich his personal friends.

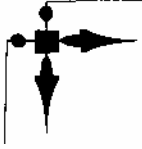
Several Jewish merchants were also part of the colony. As early as 1852, Marcus Katz had a mercantile inside the fort. Jewish pioneer Jacob Rich traveled with a Latter-day Saint wagon train, bringing the first Torah into the San Bernardino Valley. This Torah rests at Temple Emanu El in San Bernardino still today.¹⁶ Polynesians and Australians who had been taught the gospel by LDS missionary Addison Pratt also immigrated to the melting pot of San Bernardino. When the colonists celebrated a successful harvest in 1852, several hundred people gathered for singing, speeches, and dancing.

Tables were filled with food, and there were so many present that they had to feast in shifts. Colony clerk Richard Hopkins noted that various races—“white, black, and red”—mingled without distinction.¹⁷ The community thus helped fulfill Nephi’s declaration that God “inviteth . . . all to come unto him . . . , black and white, bond and free, . . . and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile.”¹⁸

In 1853 Elders Lyman and Rich engaged H. G. Sherwood to plan San Bernardino as he had Salt Lake City.¹⁹ Streets with names like “Nauvoo” and “Kirtland” were wide enough for wagons with teams to turn completely around. A center lot for a temple was also designated, although it was never used for that purpose. The residents of the fort now moved

Background: San Bernardino in 1870. Left inset: Surveyors. Below: One of the many sawmills built by David Seeley.

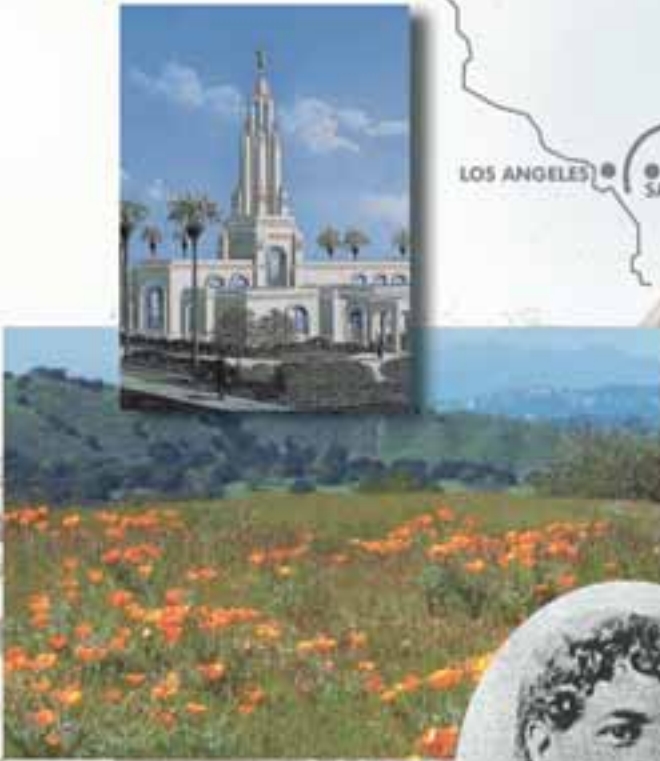
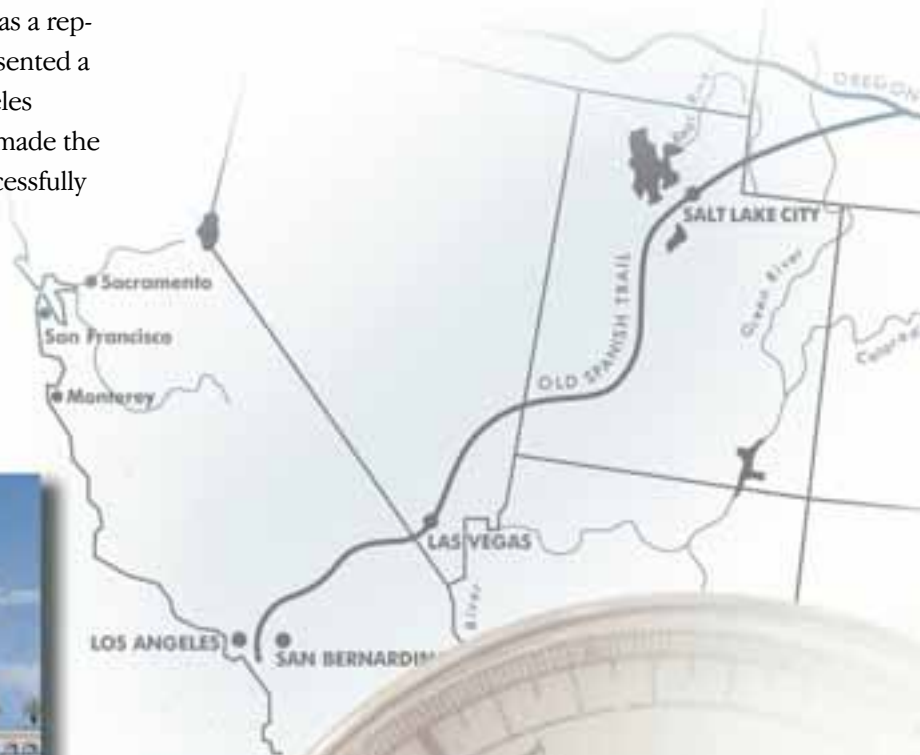


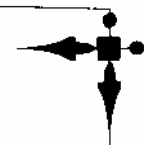


to their own lots and began diverse enterprises. San Bernardino was incorporated in 1854, and Elder Lyman became the first mayor.

The innovative Jefferson Hunt, who contracted to deliver mail between southern California and Utah, improved a wagon road west to Cucamonga, a part of Base Line Road today. Also in 1853, Hunt was elected as a representative to the state legislature and there presented a petition to divide San Bernardino from Los Angeles County. The act passed that year, and Hunt was made the representative of the new county. Hunt also successfully introduced a bill to construct a road from San Pedro Harbor through the Cajon Pass toward Utah. The harbor had become important to the Church as “the permanent depot for the territory of Utah . . . with emigrants and merchandise.”²⁰

After colony land was divided and sold for private use in 1853, some settlers went outside to homestead unclaimed acreage. When it was discovered they were still on colony land, disputes arose that alienated several families. As tensions increased, hopes for a peaceable community began to dissipate.





The Return to Utah

In 1857, when a federal army threatened to invade Utah, President Young requested that colonists from outlying areas return to Utah to help deal with the crisis. The San Bernardino clerk recorded that the colonists received word on 30 October to return and that the first wagons left on 3 November. The last entry in the clerk's journal reads, "December 15 Left San Bernardino for Utah."²¹ At least two-thirds of the 3,000 Saints in the San Bernardino colony abandoned, or sold for pennies on the dollar, the property they had acquired through years of sacrifice.

Clearly, these early pioneers made some of the most significant contributions in California history. The men of the Mormon Battalion not only blazed the Mormon-Carson Emigrant Trail in northern California, but also served as catalysts to the colonization of southern California. Subsequently, San Bernardino became the economic center of early California life. Production in colony fields exceeded that of Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and San Diego fields combined.²² Development of a major irrigation system and related technology garnered more profit for California than the discovery of gold.²³ The colony lumber industry fueled the development of the Los Angeles basin. Pioneer wheat fields and gristmills provided fresh flour for all of southern California. Pioneer children helped churn thousands of pounds of butter a year to sell.²⁴

The more significant but less tangible aspect of the economic success of early San Bernardino was the colonists' belief in the brotherhood of man, which allowed the spirit of true community to thrive. A Jewish historian captured the essence of the Saints' interaction with the various cultures: "Friendly relations always existed between Mormons and Jews. Wherever Mormon influence prevailed race prejudice was notably absent. The spirit of good will



Green Flake

and cooperation between Mormon and Jew left its impress in the development of the city and county."²⁵

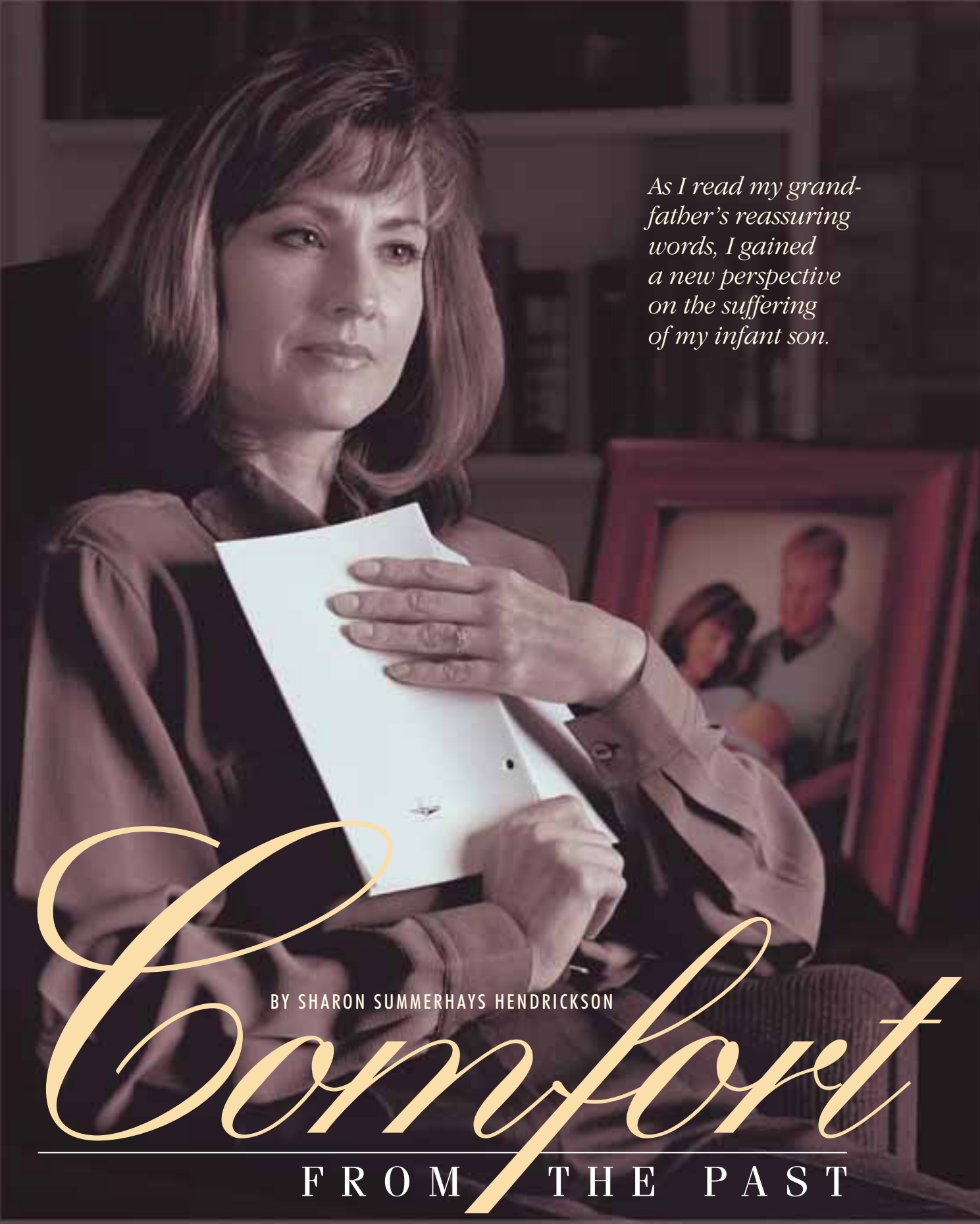
Today, descendants of the early African-American pioneers and Native Americans from the Serrano and Cahuilla tribes also recount stories of good will between their forefathers and the Latter-day Saint pioneers.²⁶ The enduring strength of such family traditions is a testament to the community spirit of the San Bernardino colony. Perhaps Mary Ann Phelps Rich, wife of Elder Charles Rich, best described the sense of community when she wrote that the colony residents "worked almost as one family, they were so united."²⁷ Historian Edward Leo Lyman, great-great grandson of Elder Lyman, noted that "few instances in the history of the American West would have better exemplified true community spirit and enterprise than San Bernardino at that time."²⁸ ■

Marilyn Mills is a member of the Upland Third Ward, Upland California Stake.

NOTES

1. Edward Leo Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community* (1996), ix-x.
2. Norma B. Ricketts, *The Mormon Battalion: U.S. Army of the West, 1846-1848* (1966), 7-8.
3. Ricketts, *The Mormon Battalion*, 169.
4. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 28.
5. Leonard J. Arrington, "Mississippi Mormons," *Ensign*, June 1977, 50.
6. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 39.
7. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 38.
8. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 38.
9. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 40.
10. Chris Montgomery and Carol Duranceau, *Following the Footsteps of Faith* (1990), 6.
11. Journal of Parley P. Pratt, 21 and 23 May 1851, in Journal History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
12. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 46.
13. San Bernardino journal of Richard Hopkins, 1851-1857, Family and Church History Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
14. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 74.
15. Montgomery and Duranceau, *Following the Footsteps of Faith*, 13.
16. "From a Single Torah in the San Bernardino Wilderness," *San Bernardino Sun*, 18 Aug. 1997.
17. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 78.
18. 2 Nephi 26:33.
19. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 15.
20. Steve Gilliland, "San Pedro: A Mormon Gateway to the Pacific" (unpublished paper); Edward Leo Lyman and Larry Lee Reese, *The Arduous Road: Salt Lake to Los Angeles, The Most Difficult Wagon Road in American History* (2001), 21.
21. San Bernardino journal of Richard Hopkins.
22. *New York Herald*, quoted by Joseph L. Wirthlin in Conference Report, Apr. 1941, 63.
23. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 227.
24. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 230.
25. *The Pinkos (Jewish Chronicle)*, 1935.
26. Oral histories collected by the author.
27. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 70.
28. Lyman, *The Rise and Fall of a California Community*, 70.

Background: San Bernardino in 1880 and map showing original trail. Insets: Redlands California Temple; meadow outside of San Bernardino today; midwife Lizzy Flake.



As I read my grandfather's reassuring words, I gained a new perspective on the suffering of my infant son.

BY SHARON SUMMERHAYS HENDRICKSON

Comfort

FROM THE PAST

The doctor placed Ricky's seven-month-old limp body in my arms. My heart ached as Ricky stared at me in quiet agony. He had survived 10 life-saving operations. He breathed through a hole in his throat with the aid of an oxygen tube. He took nourishment through a tube that went directly into his stomach. He had no voluntary movement below his waist because of severe nerve damage suffered before, during, and after his birth.

Ricky was only 24 hours old when the neurosurgeon told us of the many struggles our sixth child would encounter. "Perhaps it would be better not to perform the first operation," he said in somber warning. We decided to commit ourselves to saving his life, and the next day the doctor performed the first surgery. The day after that, a shunt was placed in Ricky's head to control the hydrocephalus. Without this shunt, fluid would quickly collect on his brain and create fatal pressure.

Now, seven months later, the pressure had returned. Relieving the pressure to protect Ricky's brain was of paramount importance. Despite his numerous physical problems, his mind was extremely bright, and he was intellectually alert. He understood all his age would allow, and he was a wonderfully warm and responsive son.

As I drove with Ricky the half hour from the children's hospital, I noticed there was a gray tint to his skin. His eyes were open wide, in what the doctor called sunset eyes. The veins across his forehead were bulging; his body was listless. I imagined the look in his eyes to say, "Can't you help me?" My heart felt lacerated.

"I wish I could have your pain, Ricky. How desperately I want to relieve and comfort you."

Finally we arrived home, and I put him in his bed. I wanted to hold him in a gentle, healing bond. I longed to caress his small body, to bring comfort to both of us. But Ricky's body, covered with incisions from the many operations, could not tolerate even a gentle caress. He recoiled from my touch. I felt lost.

I prayed for him. I prayed for me. I cried more and more. "Bless this little boy, Father, bless him—however that may be."

At last Ricky slept. With his sleep came the impression to read: thoughts to help me cope, words to bring

comfort, ideas to relieve my anxiety. I found a pamphlet written by my grandfather Richard B. Summerhays. My mother had given it to me as a teenager, but I had not read it since. As I began to read, I felt my grandfather was close at my side, telling me his story, a dream called "The Day of My Life." In his dream, he saw his entire life experience taking place in a single day. His task, during the day, was to build a house. This house would be the home he would live in forever. He understood that "it must be built while the sun shines, for as the sun goes down, all work ceases."

I felt he was talking to me as I read: "The materials must be chosen by the builder. The most desirable materials are hard to get but are closest to you. All good materials appear undesirable and are at first forbidding. They can only be obtained through the effort we call 'trial.' He who turns away loses all. Every bit of material requires faith, great effort, perseverance, and repetition, continuing these until the house is fully formed before the setting of the sun."


At the end of his dream Grandfather wrote: "I now realize that knowledge is bought by experience—the experience gained while building the house. Having finished, an exquisite peace filled my soul as I acknowledged the joy of accomplishment."

Warmth surged through my body. I too now felt the peace he described, not the peace of accomplishment but the peace of understanding. This house I am building within myself will be my home forever. The difficult materials are indeed closest to me. And I see that Ricky is building his house, using the best materials available to him.

My grandfather's story gave my life a new perspective. Through his eyes I saw that pain and suffering purchase a type of knowledge and understanding that cannot be acquired in any other way. I looked at my son with new vision; our shared experience seemed priceless.

Ricky is now 17 years old. Many times I have placed him in the hands of the Lord and the surgeons. Yet he silently teaches eternal treasures as he endures with a smile. And I now know that difficulties are trials that allow me to build a worthy and eternal home. ■

Sharon Summerbays Hendrickson is a member of the Park View Ward, Palm Springs California Stake.



WORDS
OF
JESUS

Forgiveness

“Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven” (Luke 6:37).



Our understanding that we owe a great debt to our Heavenly King unlocks the door to the gifts of repentance and forgiveness.

BY ELDER CECIL O. SAMUELSON JR.
Of the Presidency of the Seventy

It is the Savior’s desire that we each feel His peace. He said: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). In these troubled times, a familiar hymn assures us:

*Sweet is the peace the gospel brings
To seeking minds and true.
With light refulgent on its wings
It clears the human view.¹*

We may have much that worries us, and we may find many reasons to be concerned. Yet, as President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) observed, peace and the Savior’s doctrine of forgiveness are inseparably connected: “The essence . . . of forgiveness is that it brings peace to the previously anxious, restless, frustrated, perhaps tormented soul.”²

Luke records a story from the life of the Savior that demonstrates the kind of peace the Savior bestows when we receive His forgiveness (see Luke 7:36–50). Jesus was invited to the home of Simon, a Pharisee, for dinner. A woman who is described as a sinner learned that Jesus was in the house

and came, bringing ointment. As Jesus rested leaning forward on a couch with His feet extended away from the table, the woman approached Him from behind, weeping and washing His feet with her tears. She wiped His feet with her hair, kissed them, and poured the fragrant ointment on them, taking care to gently rub the oil into His feet. The host found fault with Jesus for accepting this act of kindness from a sinner. Jesus perceived his thoughts and offered for his chastisement one of His most poignant lessons on the doctrine of forgiveness.

He told the story of a creditor who had two debtors. One owed 10 times more than the other. Neither had the means to pay his debt, so the creditor graciously forgave them both. “Tell me therefore,” the Savior asked, “which of [the debtors] will love [the creditor] most?” (Luke 7:42). Simon rightly answered that the debtor who owed the most would probably love the most.

Jesus then compared Simon’s lack of care and hospitality for Him to the woman’s actions. The Master wanted Simon to see himself in the story as the debtor who owed less and the woman as the debtor who owed



more. Jesus reinforced His point by saying, “Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little” (Luke 7:47).

Jesus then turned His attention to the woman. Looking her in the eyes, He bestowed His peace upon her, saying: “Thy sins are forgiven. . . . Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace” (Luke 7:48, 50).

We do not know the circumstances surrounding this woman’s transgressions, but we can imagine the gratitude, joy, and peace she must have felt at that moment.

Peace in Christ

We must look to the Savior, not the wisdom of the world, for peace and forgiveness. You may recall the story of the man with palsy

who was paralyzed (see Matthew 9:1–8; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26).

The Savior was in Capernaum, teaching in a house crowded to overflowing. Four men came carrying their disabled friend on a stretcher, hoping Jesus would heal him. Because of the great congestion at the door, the men carried him to the roof, made an opening, and carefully lowered the palsied sufferer into the room where Jesus was. Jesus was not irritated by this interruption but was touched by their faith. He boldly and publicly said to the sick man, “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee” (Matthew 9:2) and admonished him to sin no more (see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 9:2).

As the man still lay on his bed, some of the scribes and Pharisees thought to themselves that Jesus had just committed the sin of

Jesus offered one of His most poignant lessons on forgiveness when He said, “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”

blasphemy (see Bible Dictionary, “Blasphemy,” 625–26). He confronted their faithless minds by asking if it requires more power to forgive sins than to heal the sick (see Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 5:23). The Savior said that so His listeners would “know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins” (Matthew 9:6; see Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 9:6).

Jesus then turned to the palsied man and declared, “Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house” (Mark 2:11). And immediately he arose and did as he was commanded. The complainers and critics could not dispute the obvious miracle and its clear implication: Jesus has the power to forgive sins. And “good cheer” or peace results when we know that our sins have truly been forgiven by Him.

Forgiving Others

When the Master taught His disciples what to do when they felt offended or received trespasses (see Matthew 18:15–35), it seemed to them to be a new doctrine. “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother” (Matthew 18:15). The Savior’s words about forgiving others required a significant adjustment in attitude. They had been schooled in the notion of “an eye for an eye” (Matthew 5:38; see Leviticus 24:20). Peter, wanting to be sure he understood the meaning of the teaching, asked, “Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?” (Matthew 18:21). Peter was probably aware of the rabbinical requirement that the offender make the first move to resolve the offense and that the offended person forgive only two or three times.³

Jesus answered with clarity, “I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:22). In other words, there must be no constraints, numerical or otherwise, placed on our forgiveness of others.

The Savior then told His disciples a parable so that they might more fully appreciate, remember, and apply the lesson that we must forgive everyone (see Matthew 18:23–32). He described a king who wanted to settle his

accounts with his servants who owed him money. The first servant owed him 10,000 talents, which would probably be the modern equivalent of millions of U.S. dollars. The servant was not able to repay the debt, so the king ordered him and his family to be sold into slavery. The desperate servant petitioned for time and patience, promising to pay all. Touched by his sincerity, the king was moved with compassion and forgave his very large debt. The servant, therefore, fell down and worshiped him.

This same servant, who had just been the recipient of the king’s wonderful act of mercy and forgiveness, immediately went in search of a fellow servant who owed him 100 pence, the probable equivalent of a few U.S. dollars. He rudely demanded immediate payment. When the fellow servant pleaded for time and patience, the first servant was not willing to extend what he had just freely received from the king. He had his fellow servant cast into prison until he could pay the debt. This callous act was observed by other servants and duly reported to the king. “And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.” Jesus then added this postscript, “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses” (Matthew 18:34–35).

Those who wish to consider themselves as disciples of the Master must understand that we, like the first servant, owe a great debt to our Heavenly King for the many gifts we have received from Him. This understanding unlocks the door to the gifts of repentance and our own forgiveness. The retention of these gifts depends upon our faithful forgiveness of those who have offended us. The Savior said, “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew 5:7) and, “With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged” (Matthew 7:2).

Forgiving others, however, does not necessarily mean that we would endorse or approve of the behavior or transgression. In fact, there are many actions and attitudes that deserve clear condemnation. But even in these we must completely forgive the offender. “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven” (Luke 6:37).

All Sins but One

The Savior was very clear that, conditioned on repentance, all of our sins can be forgiven through His sacred and atoning sacrifice except for what He called “blasphemy against the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 12:31; see also Mark 3:28–29). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught on this subject: “Jesus will save all except the sons of perdition. What must a man do to commit the unpardonable sin? He must receive the Holy Ghost, have the heavens opened unto him, and know God, and then sin against Him.”⁴

Thus, the clear assurance of the Redeemer is that “all sins shall be forgiven” (Mark 3:28) when we repent, for the Savior’s mission was to preach repentance (see Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 3:22; see also Mosiah 26:29–30).

The Gift of Forgiveness

The Savior taught His disciples on two separate occasions that they were to pray for forgiveness of sins or debts to God. We are also to demonstrate the sincerity of our prayers by forgiving those who have sinned against us. He instructed them to pray, “Forgive us our debts [offenses], as we forgive our debtors [those who have offended us]” (Matthew 6:12) and, “Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us” (Luke 11:4). Implicit in this teaching is a direct link between pleading for forgiveness and our efforts to repent of all our sins.

In all our forgiving and seeking forgiveness, we must recognize that, despite whatever restitution we may be capable of providing or receiving, our efforts and those of others are woefully insufficient to meet the demands of eternal justice. How, then, is true




forgiveness possible? Paul, in speaking to the Ephesians, wrote that it is in Christ that “we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Ephesians 1:7).

The blessings that flow from the gift of forgiveness are many. Chief among them is peace. It is the Savior’s desire that we each feel His peace. He said: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). The forgiveness we offer to others and the forgiveness we receive from Jesus Christ lead us to Him and along the path to eternal life. ■

NOTES

1. *Hymns*, no. 14.
2. *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 363.
3. See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 391–93.
4. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 358.

When a disabled man's friends lowered him into the room where Jesus was, the Savior taught His listeners that He has the power to forgive sins, boldly declaring, “Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.”



WORDS
OF
JESUS

Riches

“For a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15).



The Savior cautioned that great spiritual danger awaits when we own a lot of money or things.

BY ELDER WILLIAM R. BRADFORD

Of the Seventy

Generation after generation, mortal men have developed cultures and traditions for their time.

A common practice that occurs in nearly all cultures is the ranking of people and placing them into social levels or castes. Invariably the highest positions in these social systems are given to those who have the greatest wealth.

To understand what the Savior taught about riches as He walked the earth among men, we must realize that He paid no heed to the traditions of men. The words of Jesus contain lessons that are counter to the traditions of our day. His teachings guide us on the acquiring, amassing, and spending of wealth and are as applicable today as they were when He first uttered them.

Getting Riches

Most of us can be easily caught up in thinking we are poor and imagining what we could do if we only had more material possessions. In the movie made from the famous Broadway play *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye, a poor Jewish milkman who struggles to support his wife and several daughters, ponders and speaks about riches. He asks, “Would it spoil some vast

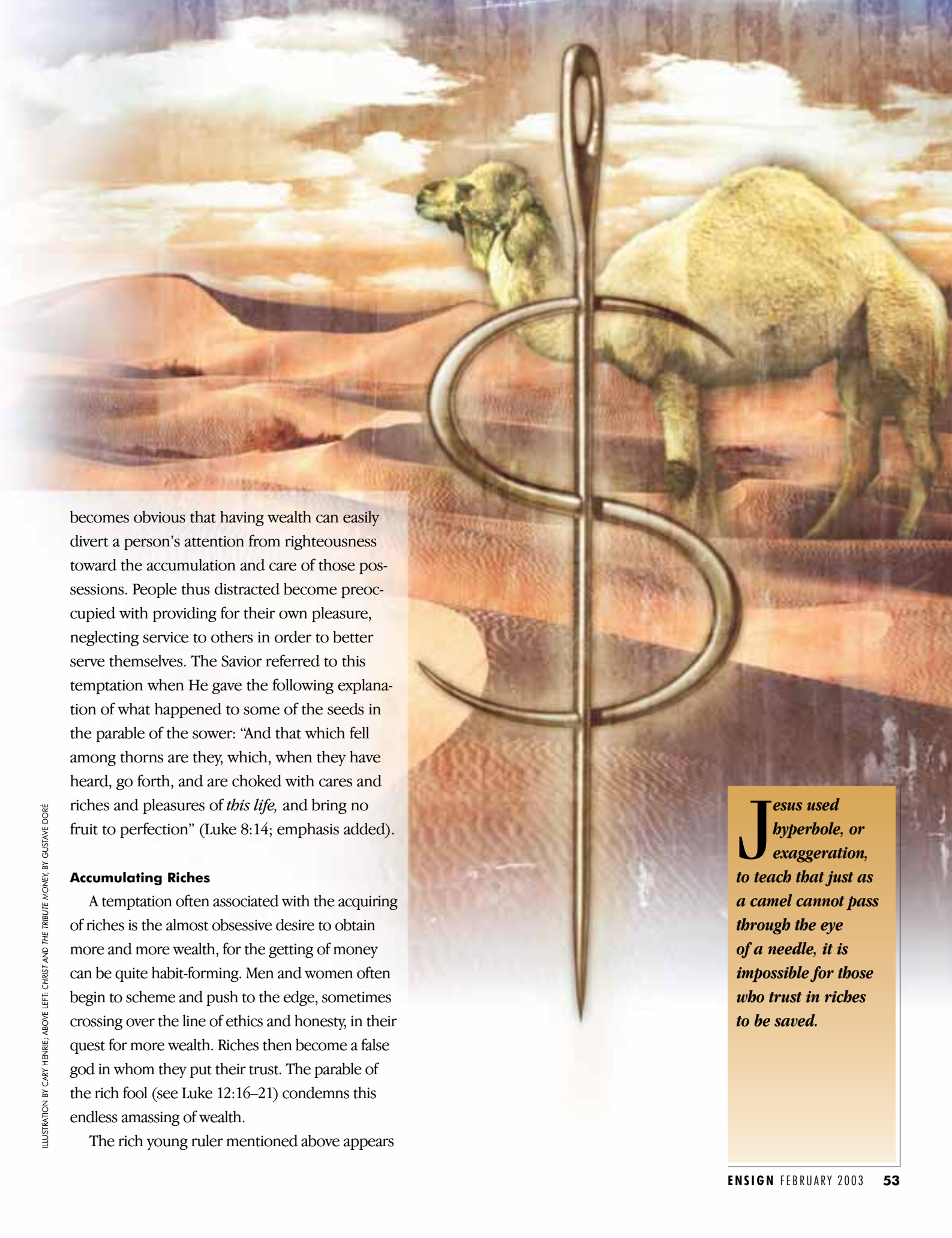
eternal plan if I were a wealthy man?” (Sheldon Harnick, “If I Were a Rich Man” [1971]).

The Master taught that the obtaining of temporal wealth does not produce or equate to righteousness. His doctrine was that the accumulation of wealth is often an enemy to righteousness. In His teachings on this matter, He cautions that great spiritual danger awaits when we own a lot of money or things.

Said He to His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal” (Matthew 6:19). When a man asked how he should divide an inheritance with his brother, Jesus replied, “Beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15).

To the rich young ruler who desired eternal life, He said, “Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven” (Mark 10:21). The young man turned away, preferring his riches over following Christ. This prompted the Savior to lament, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:23).

As we analyze the world around us, it



becomes obvious that having wealth can easily divert a person's attention from righteousness toward the accumulation and care of those possessions. People thus distracted become preoccupied with providing for their own pleasure, neglecting service to others in order to better serve themselves. The Savior referred to this temptation when He gave the following explanation of what happened to some of the seeds in the parable of the sower: "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this life*, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Luke 8:14; emphasis added).

Accumulating Riches

A temptation often associated with the acquiring of riches is the almost obsessive desire to obtain more and more wealth, for the getting of money can be quite habit-forming. Men and women often begin to scheme and push to the edge, sometimes crossing over the line of ethics and honesty, in their quest for more wealth. Riches then become a false god in whom they put their trust. The parable of the rich fool (see Luke 12:16–21) condemns this endless amassing of wealth.

The rich young ruler mentioned above appears

Jesus used hyperbole, or exaggeration, to teach that just as a camel cannot pass through the eye of a needle, it is impossible for those who trust in riches to be saved.

to have fallen prey to this kind of seduction, for the Master further said of him: “How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:24–25). Astonished at this doctrine, Jesus’ disciples did not understand that He was using hyperbole, an exaggeration, to make a point. They wondered who then could be saved, for they knew it was impossible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle! Jesus helped their understanding: “With men that trust in riches, it is impossible [to be saved]; but not impossible with men who trust in God and leave all for my sake” (Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 10:26).

There is perhaps no more pointed and succinct saying from the Savior on riches than “Ye cannot serve God and mammon [or riches]” (Matthew 6:24; see Bible Dictionary, “Mammon,” 728).

Many of the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day trusted in riches. At His cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem, Jesus overthrew the tables of the money changers, saying, “Make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise” (John 2:16). The sanctity of the temple was, for these Jewish leaders, less important than the obtaining of riches.

On one occasion Jesus derided certain of the Pharisees for their covetousness and greed, saying: “I will liken you unto the rich man. For there was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple, and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores” (Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 16:23–24). In the parable, the rich man and Lazarus (not the same Lazarus who was raised from the dead) then both die, with Lazarus being carried into heaven and the rich man to hell. In his torment the rich man pleaded with Father Abraham for even the smallest relief from his suffering. The Savior then quoted what Abraham would say to all those who trust in money instead of God: “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And . . . there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us” (Luke 16:25–26). It is truly impossible for those who trust in riches to be saved.

Spending Riches

Just as the Savior taught principles that apply to the getting and accumulating of money, he also gave counsel concerning managing and spending it. The Lord clearly stated that wealth in and of itself is not bad. Money is a tool with which a person does good or evil. Those who love Christ and are converted to His gospel will use any surplus wealth to help others and to build up the kingdom of God. Furthermore, how a person chooses to spend his money is often an indication of the attitude in which he or she obtained it.

Jesus taught that we are to manage our money in ways that enable us to meet our financial obligations to God and others, including those who govern our societies.

As He preached in the temple during the week just prior to His Crucifixion, certain Pharisees and Herodians asked Him, “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?” Jesus perceived the wicked intent of their question and replied, “Shew me the tribute money.” When a Roman penny was brought, He asked, “Whose is this image and superscription?” When they answered that it was Caesar’s, Jesus gave one of His greatest sermons on the spending of riches: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (see Matthew 22:17–21).

The Lord also expects us to perform our financial duties to Him and others in an honest manner. This means an honest day’s work for our daily wages. It means being truthful with ourselves and all those we work with and for. It means that we treat people who work for us fairly in every instance. And it means we are honest in the payment of our taxes.

We must also be honest with the Lord, for a man can rob God (see Malachi 3:8). Are we honest with our tithes, fast offerings, and the other financial responsibilities of our membership in His restored Church? Meeting these financial obligations is a requirement for all those who desire to enter the temples of God.

“All That She Had”

One of the most humbling and powerful stories from the life of the Savior is that of the widow’s mite. Jesus’ words on this occasion leave us with much to ponder as we measure our generosity against that of a “certain poor widow.”

While Jesus sat teaching in the outer court of the temple, He noticed a lone, destitute woman as she approached one of the 13 trumpet-shaped receptacles provided for the voluntary deposit of contributions by worshipers. It was Passover time, and the temple court was crowded with people from all walks of life. Just ahead of her had been several rich people who had thrown large amounts of money into the basins. As the woman approached, Jesus discerned the hearts of those in the line and called to His disciples. He pointed to the woman and said, "This poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury" (Mark 12:43). But she had only given two mites, the smallest coins then in circulation in Palestine! Jesus then explained the mystery: "For all the rich did cast in of their abundance; but she, notwithstanding her want did cast in all that she had, yea, even all her living" (Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 12:44).

It is not the amount of money that we donate to the Church or others that matters to the Lord. Rather it is whether we give of our abundance or of our living. We should give until it is a sacrifice to give.

To the individuals and families of the Church who struggle with finding enough money to pay their obligations, I say: Take care of your financial duties to God, nation, and others first. This may mean that you will have to postpone the acquisition of some of the comforts and conveniences of life you greatly desire. Casting in all that you have will mean that you must "seek . . . first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

To those who have in abundance, even more than you need, I say: Find happiness in the relationships and service you share with God, family, and others. Resist the feeling of



constantly needing things just to entertain yourself and occupy your time. We have the scriptures and books of all kinds available. Conversation and service are a better use of time than watching television. Casting in all that you have will be so much more rewarding than the alternative of personal gratification.

The Test of Riches

Our time on earth is a proving ground "to see if [we] will do all things whatsoever the Lord [our] God shall command [us]" (Abraham 3:25). Whether we are rich or poor, the proper attitude toward and management of material blessings is something we should strive to achieve. Concerning this test, the Lord said: "He that is faithful in that which is least [he who uses riches wisely] is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [riches], who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (Luke 16:10–11).

For many of us, riches bring some of our greatest opportunities in life. As we strive to follow the Savior, may we ever remember His saying in the Sermon on the Mount: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21). ■

More on this topic: Brent L. Top, "Thou Shalt Not Covet," *Ensign*, Dec. 1994, 22–26; Jack M. Lyon, "How Many Loaves Have Ye?" *Ensign*, Dec. 1989, 36–38; Rex D. Pinegar, "Become Rich toward God," *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 32–34.

Observing the donation of a poor widow, Jesus taught that it is not the amount of money we donate that matters but whether our donation is a sacrifice.



The Parable of the Seed

Growing Secretly



In the Savior's parable the sower plants in faith and harvests in joy.

BY ELDER WILFREDO R. LÓPEZ
Area Authority Seventy

My grandfather was a farmer. When I was quite young, I used to go to work with him at planting time. I loved to see him get the animals ready, put on their yokes, and hitch them to the harrow and plow. “Where are we going to plant today?” I would ask. “Down yonder,” he would reply. He knew well where the fruitful ground was.

I loved the moist, rich smell that rose from the ground when the tip of the plow broke the earth. As my grandfather prepared the furrows, I would bury the seed. “This ground is *fruitful*,” he would say. Later we would go back to the field to see the first green sprouts coming up. Soon the shoots became stalks, and then the grain would appear. The plants continued to grow until they were mature.



At harvesttime, the workers would cut the sheaves and take them to the threshing area, which consisted of poles wired together into a large circle. The sheaves were placed on the ground around the outside of this circle. Then the horses came and ran around the circle, trampling the sheaves, which loosened the grain from the stalks and crushed the kernels. Next, workers came with their tools to



fan the chaff, separating it from the grain. After their labor was done, the workers sang and danced and enjoyed a traditional meal of roast lamb. It was a beautiful rustic celebration. The grain was stored in sacks and later processed into a variety of useful products.

And yet, despite all that we did to plant and harvest, the success of the whole process was primarily based upon the richness of the ground, the weather, and other conditions beyond our control. Without these

conditions, the seeds would not have germinated, and there would have been no harvest.

The Savior's Parable

During Jesus' ministry in Galilee, a great multitude gathered by the seaside to hear Him teach. He spoke to them of a sower who planted seeds in different kinds of earth—stony, thorny, and fertile—and received different amounts of fruit.

He then taught them another parable, recorded only in

the testimony of Mark, that focuses on what causes a plant to grow. He said:

“So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

“And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should . . . grow up, he knoweth not how.

“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

“But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come” (Mark 4:26–29).

In this parable the sower plants in faith and harvests in joy. Once the planting is done, he simply awakes one day to find that his seeds have grown to maturity. He discovers that under the influence of the soil’s richness and the sun, rain, wind, and dew, as well as other factors he cannot manipulate, the leaf sprouts and the ear is formed.¹

Spiritual Growth

An important lesson of this parable is for those of us who are teachers, whether in the home or Church classroom, or who are involved in missionary work. The germination and full flowering of living gospel seeds in the hearts and minds of those we teach depend on factors over which we may have little control. The choice of whether a person will ponder and accept the truths of the gospel belongs, as a matter of personal agency, with those we teach. If a person’s testimony is to grow until it bears mature fruit, or conversion, God must be the primary force behind our harvest. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we may participate in the education of those who are growing and becoming fruitful. We, as authorized sowers, need to understand and trust that

the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is a living seed and that if we will teach it, the grace of God will attend those we teach, as they grow to spiritual maturity and bring forth good works. Our joy will then be full in the day of the harvest.

When I was a mission leader in the Independencia Ward in Santiago, Chile, we focused on inviting the influence of the Spirit into the lives of the new converts.

From that period of time in that ward have come some of Chile’s great priesthood leaders: seven stake presidents, two mission presidents, two regional representatives, one member of a temple presidency, and a great many bishops.

Why was the harvest so successful? It came from the fruitfulness of the ground, and it came from God. Therefore, the joy I feel comes from knowing that “the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself” (Mark 4:28). A favorite hymn reminds us that when we are planting for the Master, we do not labor alone. Indeed, when we seek to sow precious seeds of gospel truth, we can be assured of divine help:



The restored
gospel of Jesus
Christ is a living
seed, and if we will
teach it, the grace
of God will attend
those we teach.

*Thou who knowest all our weakness,
Leave us not to sow alone!
Bid thine angels guard the furrows
Where the precious grain is sown,
Till the fields are crown'd with glory,
Filled with mellow, ripened ears,
Filled with fruit of life eternal
From the seed we sowed in tears.*² ■

Elder Wilfredo R. López is an Area Authority Seventy serving in the Chile Area.

NOTES

1. See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 289.
2. “We Are Sowing,” *Hymns*, no. 216.



Slow
to

Anger

What can we do to overcome the tendency to be easily provoked?

BY ELDER GORDON T. WATTS

Of the Seventy

A man can rather accurately be measured, it has been said, by the size of a thing that makes him angry. Unfortunately, far too many individuals today are easily provoked. Unchecked anger—whether expressed verbally, physically, or both ways—can lead to a host of problems such as ill health, “road rage,” conflicts in the workplace, and damaged or disrupted relationships.



Additionally, anger is sometimes perpetuated for generations when children learn from their parents that irrational, outraged behavior is acceptable and tolerated. Note the result when the letter *d* is added to the front of the word *anger*. Not only does contentiousness harm others; it harms ourselves as well.

In Proverbs we find, “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GREG THORKELSON



PAINTING DETAIL BY JUDITH MEHR

Pahoran responded to Captain Moroni's letter in a manner that revealed his wisdom and restraint.

he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs 16:32). What can we do, then, to rule our spirits and be "slow to anger"?

Seek to Understand

The story is told of a parent who angrily scolded a child for completing an artful masterpiece on a newly painted wall. The child tearfully responded, "But I saw you painting the wall and was only trying to help!" So much anger and heartache can be avoided when we seek to understand another's point of view.

The interchange between Moroni and Pahoran, as described in the book of Alma, is instructive on this point. Fearing for the welfare of his army during a difficult conflict, Captain Moroni sends a message to Pahoran, governor of the land, in which he solicits much-needed aid and assistance. Moroni uses some rather harsh words in his letter:

"And now behold, we desire to know the cause of this exceedingly great neglect; yea, we desire to know the cause of your thoughtless state.

"Can you think to sit upon your thrones in a state of thoughtless stupor, while your enemies are spreading the work of death around you? . . .

"But why should I say much concerning this matter? For we know not but what ye yourselves are seeking for authority. We know not but what ye are also traitors to your country" (Alma 60:6–7, 18).

Moroni's lengthy complaint against Pahoran comprises the entire 60th chapter of Alma. Moroni does not know of the difficult circumstances Pahoran himself is encountering. As we read Pahoran's response, we gain

insight into his wisdom and restraint:

"I, Pahoran, who am the chief governor of this land, do send these words unto Moroni, the chief captain over the army. Behold, I say unto you, Moroni, that I do not joy in your great afflictions, yea, it grieves my soul" (Alma 61:2).

Pahoran then proceeds to inform Moroni of his own desperate situation, and then in cordial and composed language he writes:

"And now, in your epistle you have censured me, but it mattereth not; I am not angry, but do rejoice in the greatness of your heart. I, Pahoran, do not seek for power, save only to retain my judgment-seat that I may preserve the rights and the liberty of my people. My soul standeth fast in that liberty in the which God hath made us free" (Alma 61:9).

What a remarkable example! Given the circumstances, some might say Pahoran would have been justified in responding harshly to Moroni. But because of Pahoran's love and respect for Moroni, his desire to understand Moroni's situation, and his own self-control, he replaces anger with kindness. Let us seek to do likewise, even in situations in which we are unjustly accused.

Develop Patience and Love Others Unselfishly

Anger can be conquered by developing patience and sincerely desiring to love others more than self. I have learned this lesson many times from the example set by my parents.

As a youth I worked long, hard hours on the family farm. My parents had ample opportunity to respond in anger as this novice son made numerous mistakes in learning the art of farming. Nevertheless,

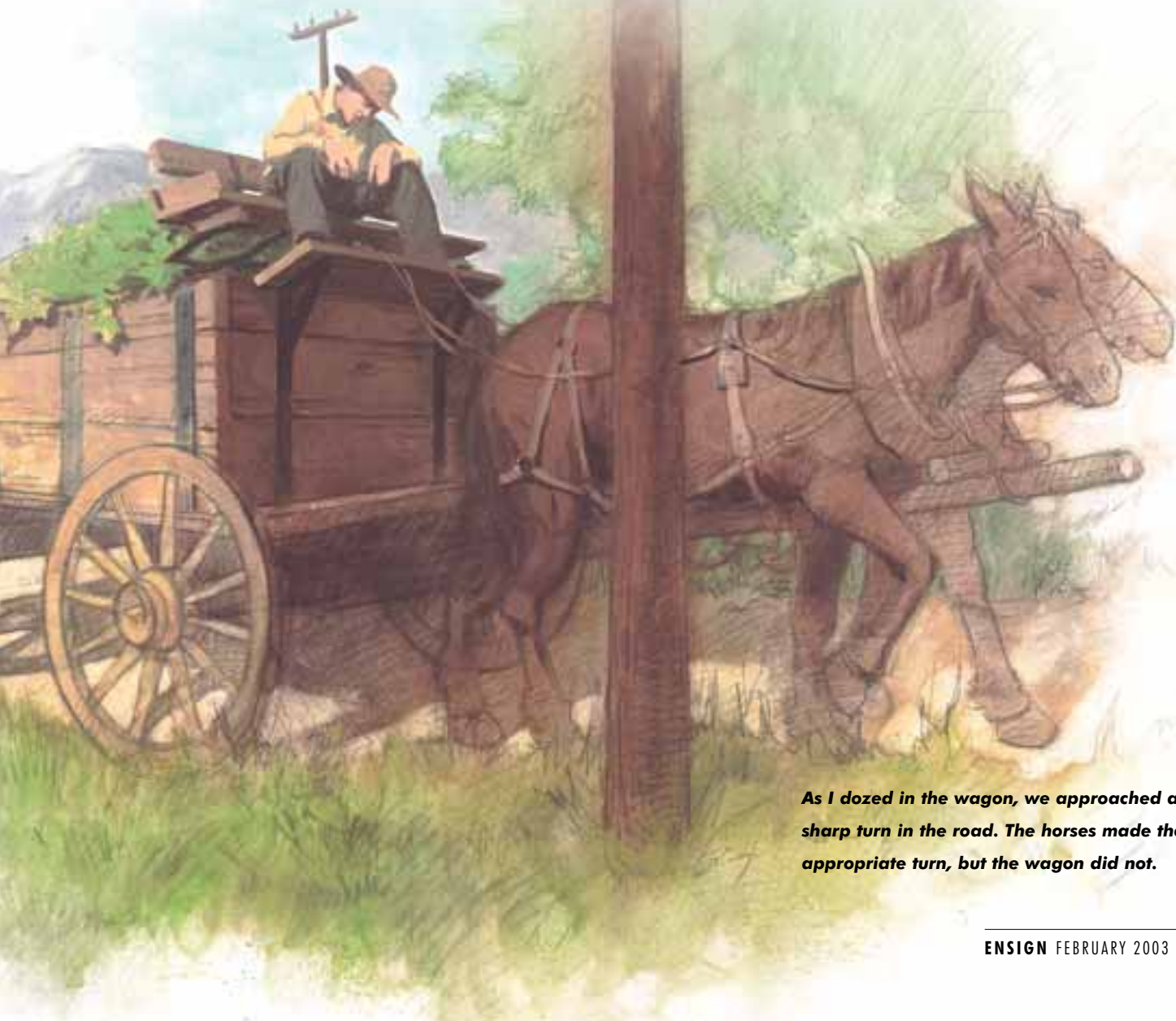
they continued to be patient, even when some of my inadvertent blunders resulted in financial losses as well as the loss of valuable time.

During the pea harvest one year, I was entrusted with the responsibility of transporting freshly cut pea vines from the field to the vinery in a horse-drawn wagon. The hours were long, and the harvesting time was short. Late one afternoon, while proceeding along the farm road, I became drowsy, closed my eyes, and relaxed my hold on the reins. The horses were well trained and continued their journey without the guidance of their wagon master. When we came to a sharp turn in the road,

the horses made the appropriate turn, but the wagon did not. I remember being abruptly jolted as the wagon collided with a large telephone pole. Fortunately, the team stopped, but not before extensive damage was done to the wagon. As a result of my afternoon catnap, a much-needed piece of equipment was taken out of service in addition to needing costly repairs. However, my father spoke no angry words, only expressing concern for my welfare. I vowed I would be more responsible from that time forth.

As I reflect on this experience, the counsel given by Paul comes to mind:

“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they



As I dozed in the wagon, we approached a sharp turn in the road. The horses made the appropriate turn, but the wagon did not.

be discouraged” (Colossians 3:21). Because of the patience and love my parents consistently showed me, I was able to learn and grow through my mistakes rather than feeling overwhelmed and discouraged by them.

Use Humor

Another tool that can turn the tide of anger into a calming wave of peace is the wise use of humor. Anger can be kindled when one unkind remark is followed by a retaliatory response from another. If you find yourself in a tense situation, even if it appears a negative response is warranted, the use of humor where

My colleague and I stood in front of the Christus for a moment, and I witnessed in him a soberness and kindness I had not observed before.

appropriate will often endear you to others.

Someone once made the disparaging remark to Abraham Lincoln that he was “two-faced.” Without being the least bit offended, President Lincoln gave the clever response: “I leave it to my audience. If I had another face, do you think I’d wear this one?” (quoted in Russell Freedman, *Lincoln: A Photobiography* [1987], 1, 4).

Deflecting an offense with humor requires a concerted effort. Perhaps no individual is more adept in the wise use of humor than our prophet, President Gordon B.

Hinckley. Time and again he has used humor to defuse a tense moment. One seeking an excellent role model would do well to follow the prophet.

Seek Inspiration through Prayer

The Savior said that he who has a spirit of anger and contention “is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

“Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away” (3 Nephi 11:29–30).

Prayer is a powerful weapon through which anger and contention can be “done away.” Blessed are those who, when stirred to anger, engage in silent prayer, thus making themselves more receptive to the guidance of the Spirit. Nephi counseled, “But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ,

that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul” (2 Nephi 32:9).

I know from personal experience that Heavenly Father will indeed guide our actions when we turn to Him in prayer. For example, when I was employed with a large manufacturing firm several years ago, my assignment required that I work daily with a senior manager in some rather tense and difficult situations. Over time we had repeated conflicts, which resulted in feelings of resentment. I struggled to know how to keep my composure, accomplish my task, and refrain from responding in anger. In what seemed like a hopeless situation, I turned to prayer, pleading with Father in Heaven for direction. There followed a prompting to invite my associate to accompany me on a few sales presentations in Salt Lake City. I followed the prompting, he accepted my invitation, and shortly thereafter we were conducting business in Salt Lake.

One evening I invited him to join me on a tour of Temple Square. He accepted. We attended the Mormon Tabernacle Choir rehearsal, then proceeded to the visitors' center. As we stood in front of the *Christus* for a moment of silent contemplation, I witnessed in him a soberness and kindness I had not observed before. He was appreciative and cordial, and we had a warm, heartfelt conversation. From that time on, our relationship was different. In fact, he became my strongest supporter and friend. How grateful I am for the great gift of prayer.

Follow the Example of the Savior

The Savior is the supernal example of one who exercised patience and self-control. This was evident during His mock trial when the

high priest Caiaphas asked Him, “Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?”

Then the divine example:

“But Jesus held his peace” (Matthew 26:62–63).

Following His agony in Gethsemane and before His death on the cross, the Savior pleaded to His Father for those who had been so unkind and despicable toward Him: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

We learn from the Savior that in our quest to be slow to anger, there are times when we must “hold our peace.” We must be forgiving of others and harbor no malice or desire for revenge. And we must seek to love others unselfishly as the Lord loves us.

“A new commandment I give unto you,” said the Savior; “That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:34–35).

I testify that unrighteous anger is done away in Christ and that following His example will bring true personal happiness. ■

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Most *Ensign* articles can be used for family home evening discussions. The following questions are for that purpose or for personal reflection:

1. In what situations are we too easily provoked? How can we learn to respond to these situations differently?
2. How can we allow the Lord to help us control our anger?



ART BY CARL BLOCH

We learn from the Savior that in our quest to be slow to anger, we must be forgiving of others and harbor no malice. We must seek to love others as He loves us.

To the Ends

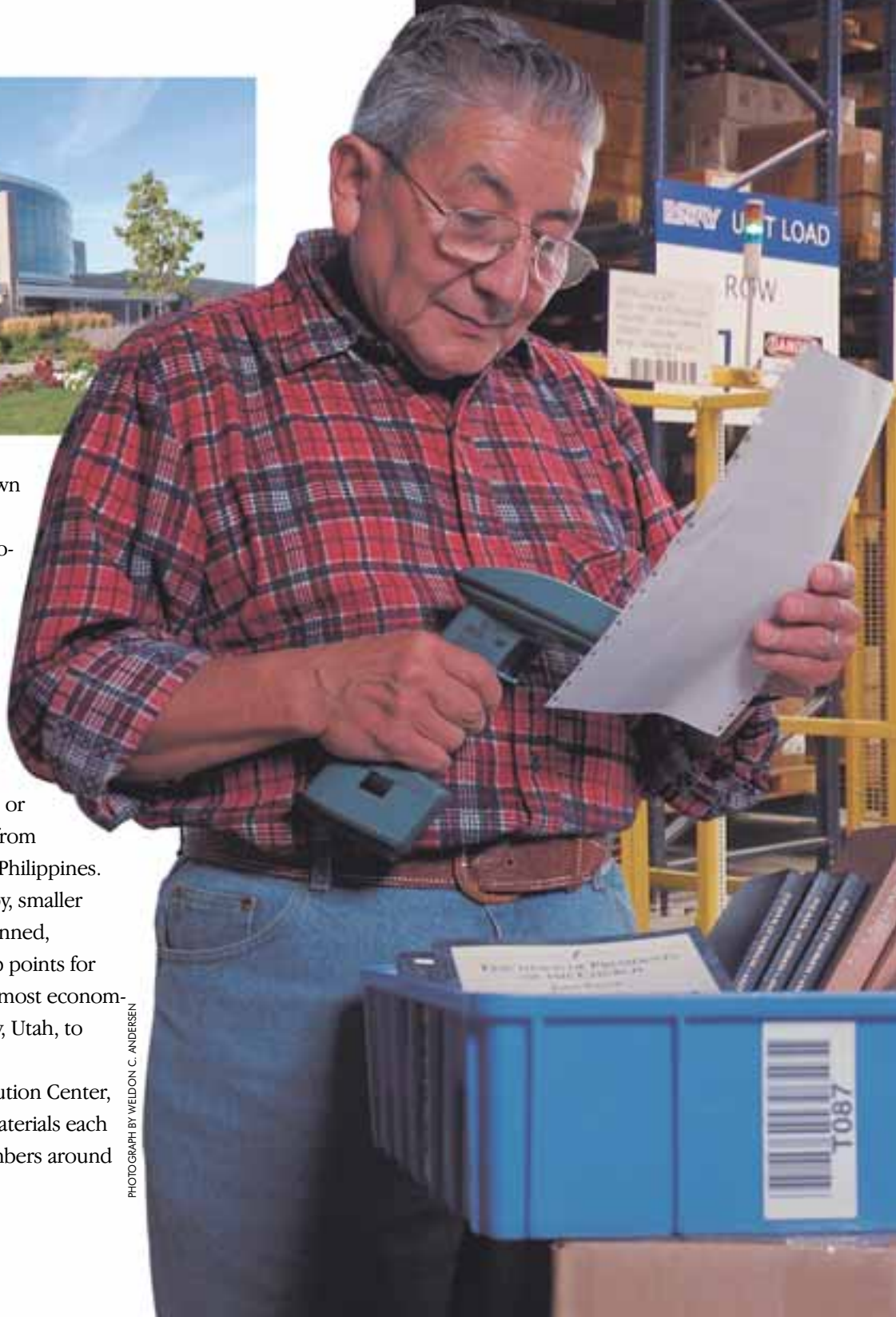


Tall steel cranes glide down narrow aisles between stacks of shelves four stories high, stopping to pick up the case of scripture books or the carton of manuals the computer has sent them to find. The cranes glide back to a conveyor belt and deposit their cargo with other items bound for wards and branches or individual members in places from Missoula, Montana, to Manila, Philippines.

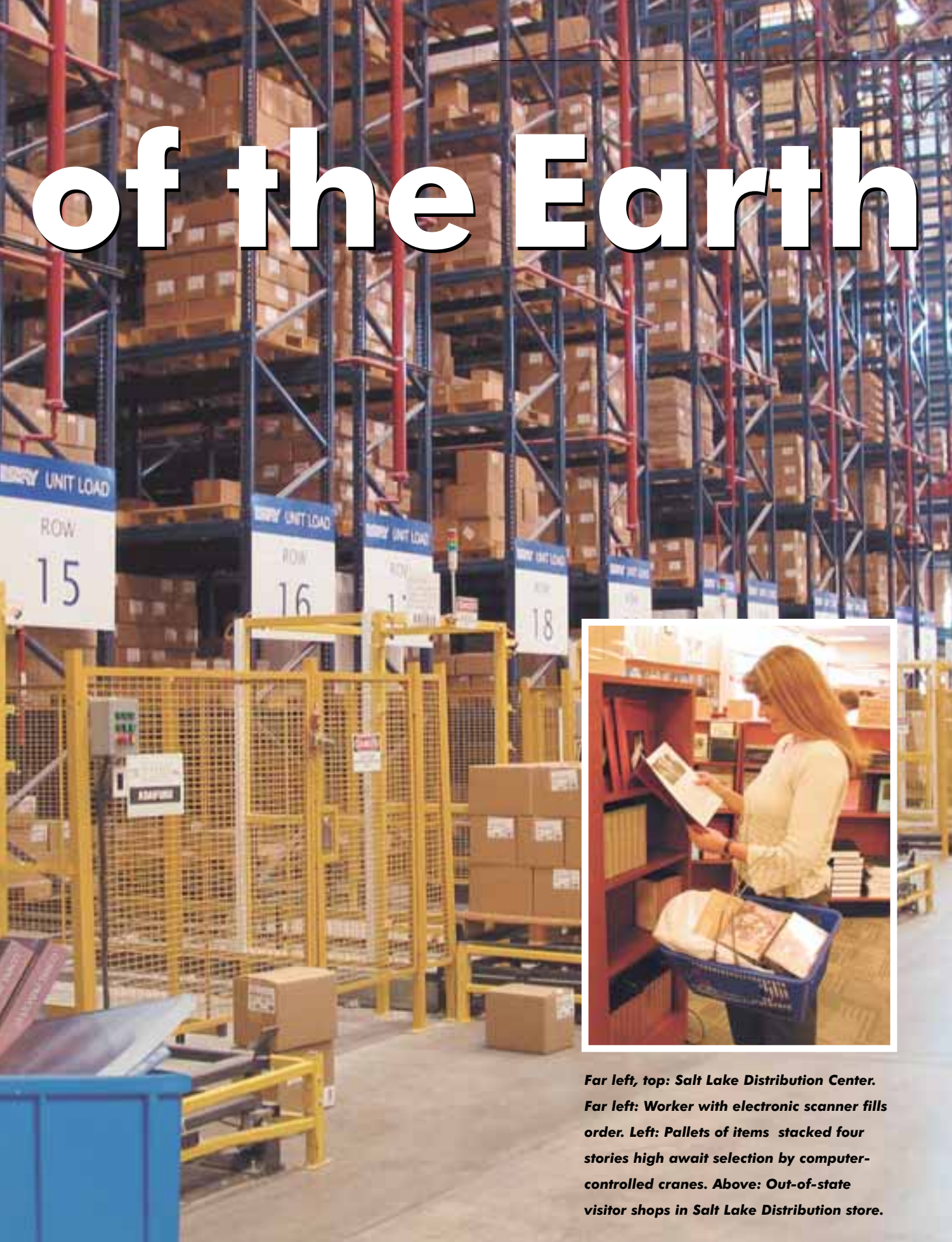
On another conveyor nearby, smaller packages are automatically scanned, weighed, and routed to pickup points for the carrier that will take them most economically to places from Cedar City, Utah, to Accra, Ghana.

This is the Salt Lake Distribution Center, filling orders for curriculum materials each day from Church units or members around the world.

PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDON C. ANDERSEN



of the Earth



***Far left, top: Salt Lake Distribution Center.
Far left: Worker with electronic scanner fills
order. Left: Pallets of items stacked four
stories high await selection by computer-
controlled cranes. Above: Out-of-state
visitor shops in Salt Lake Distribution store.***

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DON SEARLE, UNLESS IDENTIFIED OTHERWISE

Near right: Flags of destination countries hang above shipping area. Second right: Items to fill future orders are stored in receiving area. Right, below: Microfilms from high-density storage racks (rear) are assembled to fill family history center order. Far right: Order boxes travel down conveyor system in distribution center warehouse.



While 46 additional distribution centers are located throughout the world, the Salt Lake facility plays a central role in distributing curriculum and gospel support materials. But computerization has made some of the other centers part of a new, less centralized network. Managers in many parts of the world can now log on to their computers to see what is in inventory in Salt Lake City and in many other centers.

Sometimes Salt Lake City imports materials from the other distribution centers—curriculum materials in Asian and some European languages, for example, that are produced in those areas.

The volume of materials shipped from the center in Salt Lake City has increased with Church growth. In 1991 the center shipped nearly 802,000 orders. Ten years later, it shipped some 1.74 million orders. The volume by weight increases dramatically toward the end of the year, when annual curriculum orders from wards and branches are being filled.

In addition to books of scripture and curriculum items, the Salt Lake center is responsible for shipping temple garments and clothing from the nearby Beehive Clothing





plants to distribution centers in many areas. These clothing shipments make up one-third of the volume.

It would be impossible, says Kris T. Christensen, director of the Church's Distribution Services Division, to handle this volume without automation and other innovations in shipping. For example, packages bound for a country with a highly efficient postal system may be consolidated into a single shipment, then separated again by a freight forwarder in that country and put directly into the local mail system, thus avoiding unnecessary handling by the area's distribution center.

Automation in the Salt Lake Distribution Center has also accelerated the mailing of microfilms to family history centers. Another set of computer-controlled cranes retrieves reels of film from a high-density storage area that can hold up to one million reels. The facility can ship up to 4,500 reels a day and reshelve an equal number of returned films.

The technology that speeds the shipping of Church materials has been acquired from industry, where it was developed to streamline shipping of products such as hair spray or auto parts to waiting retailers. Perhaps its inventors never envisioned a spiritual role for this machinery, but now their work is helping to fulfill the commandment to "send forth my word unto the ends of the earth" (D&C 112:4). ■



Spacious Salt Lake Distribution Center store offers items from scriptures to Church videos and posters.

Sacrament in the Attic

By Gerard Van Zeben

My father worked with the underground resistance in Hilversum, Netherlands, during World War II. We sometimes hid and protected downed British and American flyers in our attic until my father could get them back to England.

Our family also quietly held Latter-day Saint services each Sunday in this same attic. The German occupation forces had forbidden Latter-day Saint meetings because they considered the Church to be an American institution.

I remember one particular Sunday we were hiding two pilots in the attic—one British and one American. The British pilot happened to be a member of the Church. We were about to start our services when we heard a loud knock at the front door. I looked over at my older brother with a frightened look on my face. We all sat for a short time in stunned silence. Finally, Mother said, “I’ll go see who it is.” We

I’ll never forget the terrified expressions on the pilots’ faces when they saw the German soldiers climbing into the attic.



apprehensively let the ladder down so she could go downstairs.

Mother opened the front door, horrified to see two German soldiers standing there in full uniform. Trying to mask her fear, she said in a curt voice, "What do you want?" The soldiers replied that they were Latter-day Saints and asked if they could worship with our family. I'm sure Mother said a quick prayer. Then, feeling impressed to let them join us, she told them to leave their guns by the door. "We don't need these when we hold meetings," she said.

Mother led the soldiers upstairs and knocked on the wall, our signal to let down the attic ladder. I'll never forget the terrified expressions on the pilots' faces when they saw the German soldiers climbing into the attic, nor will I forget what happened after that.

My father asked the British flyer and one of the German soldiers to sit together at the sacrament table. One blessed the bread, and the other blessed the water, each in his own language, and we partook of the sacred emblems of the sacrament. These were simply two priesthood bearers and faithful Latter-day Saints who were in the military as required by their respective countries.

After the meeting, the German soldiers left. We never saw them again, and they never betrayed us.

Shortly thereafter, we were able to get the two flyers to England through the underground.

This experience of priesthood brotherhood proved a wonderful lesson to me as a young boy. I learned then that serving our Heavenly

Father is always the most important thing we do, no matter what the circumstances. ■

Gerard Van Zeben is a member of the Salt Lake Second Branch, Salt Lake Stake.

Thanks to a Single Act

By Brad Osgood

When I was a boy of nine, our family moved to a small community in northern Arizona. The town had a large Latter-day Saint population, so we found ourselves surrounded by people interested in sharing the gospel.

Within a short time we were taking the missionary discussions, and we eventually received the gospel and joined the Church. It was a joyous time for us, but along with the joy of conversion, my parents also faced trials not uncommon to new members.

During their first year of Church membership, my parents braved stark criticism from family members and former friends. In the midst of these unexpected challenges, they faced another difficulty—isolation. The warm feeling from ward members that existed when our family was investigating the truth seemed to dwindle after our conversion, even though we needed more support than ever. As a result of these and other trials, my parents grew weary of the "good fight" (see 1 Timothy 6:12) and decided to leave their newfound faith.

I remember well the evening my father was preparing to talk to our

bishop about formally leaving the fold. As he dressed in his Sunday best, the house was somber. Even though I was only 10, I could feel the tension weighing heavily on our family.

As my father was putting on his shoes, a knock came at the door. He opened the door to find our home teacher and the home teacher's nephew standing on the porch. The overalls and heavy boots worn by our home teacher, a cattle rancher, were covered in dirt and grime. In his hands was a copy of the standard works.

Surprised, my father greeted our two visitors and invited them in. After preliminary greetings, our home teacher came right to the point.

"Chuck, what's going on?" he asked my father.

Reluctantly and ever so carefully, my father rehearsed the difficulties of the last few months and his intention to leave the Church.

Our home teacher responded, "I thought it might be something like that." He then related to us what had transpired earlier that evening.

He had been finishing his work in the field when he heard a voice tell him to get in his truck and head toward

town. Without hesitation, he called to his nephew, who was working nearby, and they started driving down the road.

When his nephew asked, "Where are we going? What's the rush?" our home teacher had no answer, for he had no idea where the Spirit was leading him.

Our home was on the way to town, and when he came to the small dirt road that led to our home, he felt prompted to turn onto it.

Now, with a full understanding of why he had been summoned from his work, he did what a faithful home teacher is called to do and began to teach. Sharing a few key scriptures, he brought the Spirit into our home and hearts. My parents decided to stay with the Church.

Years later, my father told me what he had done after our home teacher left that night. He went outside alone and looked up at the stars. Silently, my father offered a prayer of thanksgiving. He realized that despite the vastness of the universe, God knew him and cared enough to send a messenger to keep him from making a serious mistake.

I, too, am thankful for a fine home teacher who recognized the promptings of the Spirit and put aside the concerns of the world for a moment to nurture and strengthen my family. Now generations of our family have been blessed, and through our missionary service many others have converted to the gospel, all because of this single act of a home teacher. ■

Brad Osgood is a member of the Petaluma First Ward, San Rafael California Stake.

A Lesson for the Teacher

By Sharon Johnson

Oh, we're having a substitute teacher today!" exclaimed the eight-year-old girl, seeing me as she came into the classroom. I had arrived early at school in order to look over the lesson plans for Mrs. Allred's second-grade class. Just as I was getting started, in walked this rather vivacious child named Abby.

Following me around the room, Abby pointed out, in what seemed to me a bossy manner, various things she thought I needed to know. For the next half hour she overwhelmed me with useless information, hindering my efforts to get organized. Who was this child who was advising me on how to handle the class? Her endless chattering was exhausting.

I was relieved when the bell rang and the rest of the class came in. Abby sat down on the chair closest to the teacher's desk. Of course! Mrs. Allred must have put Abby there in order to keep a close watch on her. "This girl is a troublemaker," I thought.

Giving my attention to the rest of the class, I noticed a boy on crutches standing hesitantly just inside the classroom door. One of his legs was paralyzed, and his back looked stiff and a little crooked. Abby jumped up and ran to him, talking loudly and walking with him to a seat right next to hers. I wished she would stay in her seat and sit quietly.

The boy's name was Travis, and I realized that Mrs. Allred must have seated Travis close to her desk so that it would be easier for her to help him. "Travis sits close to the teacher because of his disability," I thought, "and Abby sits close to her because of the girl's behavior problems." I congratulated myself on my quick understanding of the classroom situation and devoted myself to a firm control over Abby.

By lunchtime my stern responses to Abby's questions were working. Her enthusiasm and eagerness were diminishing, and her manner was subdued. Several times I caught her looking at me with a puzzled expression. She was no longer talking to me, and her quick smile was gone.

The class went to lunch, and I was left to enjoy the quiet of the classroom while I ate. Looking through the window at the children playing, I noticed Travis standing alone outside against the wall of the school. I realized I had not seen him interacting with any of the boys and girls except Abby all morning long. She had talked to him often, and I had reprimanded her for it. Now I watched as Abby came up to him and they walked together to where their classmates were lining up to come into the school. "Maybe she is his only friend," I thought, and decided to observe the two of them more closely.

The class came flooding into the room, and I watched as Abby helped Travis take off his coat and boots. I remembered seeing her do the same thing after morning recess. She walked him to his chair. "I'll help you with that math problem now," I heard her say gently.

I began to notice that each time Travis finished an assignment or colored a page, he shyly showed the work to Abby. She was ready with her praise. Again and again I watched her as she helped Travis, making sure he had everything he needed and giving him encouragement. His face lit up whenever she turned her attention to him. I watched her help Travis get ready for afternoon recess, showing patience and kindness when it took longer for him to maneuver his body out of his chair and use his crutches.

The classroom was empty, and I sat quietly at my desk. How could I have been so wrong? I knew now that Mrs. Allred had seated Abby close to her not because Abby was a boisterous "problem child" but because Abby's generous

nature and kindheartedness made her the best person to help Travis. Who was I to have judged her so quickly and harshly? While I had been showing Abby disapproval, she had been busy helping her friend have a good day at school. I was older, but Abby's heart was bigger. I had treated her unfairly, and I felt ashamed.

As so often happened during my eight years in a classroom, a child had reminded me of something Jesus taught nearly 2,000 years ago: "Inasmuch as ye have done it

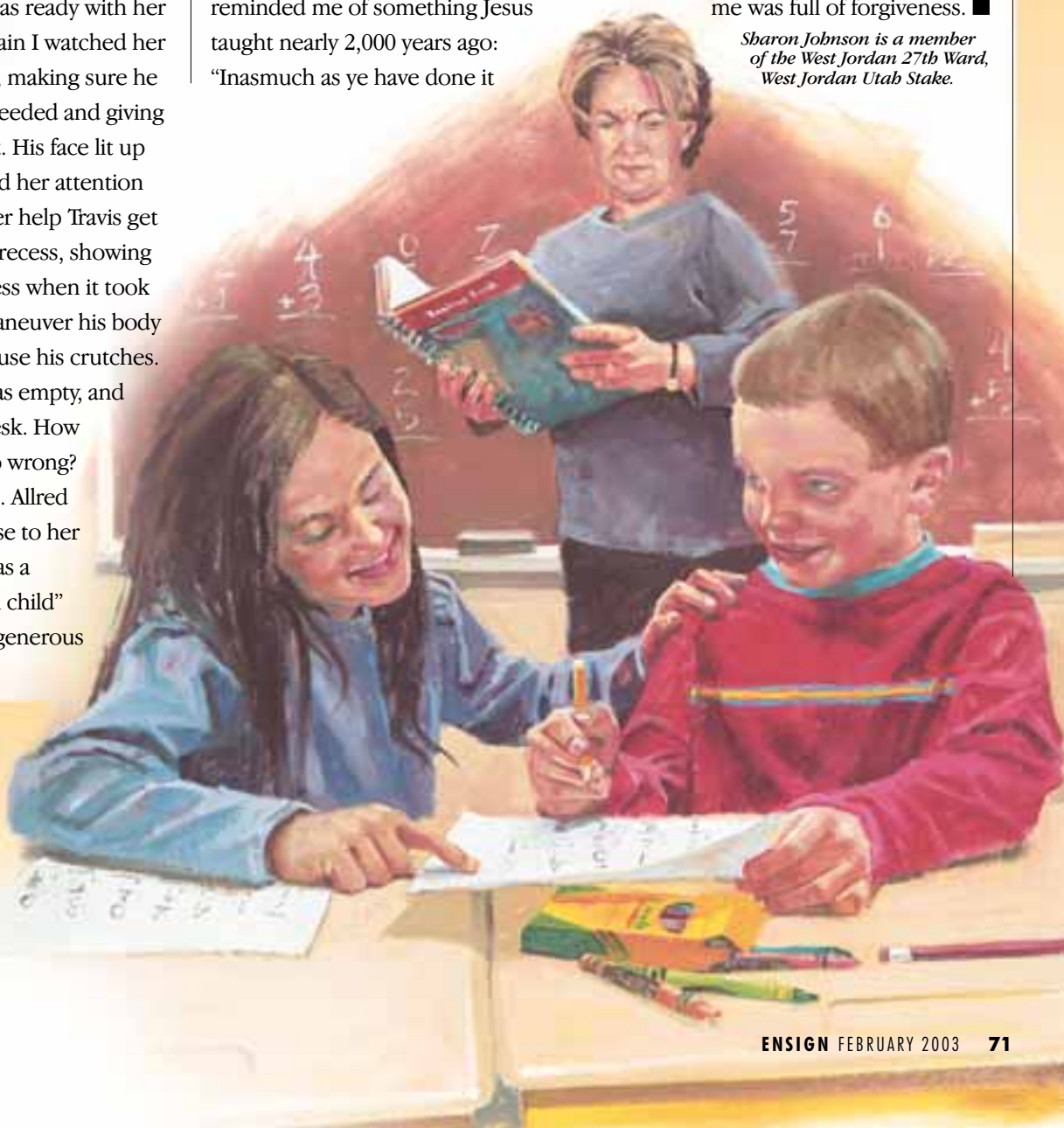
unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

The class came back from recess. I waited until they were busy working on an assignment. "Abby," I whispered, "Abby." She looked at me apprehensively. "I think you're the kindest little girl I've ever known."

And once again she taught me an important lesson. The smile she gave me was full of forgiveness. ■

Sharon Johnson is a member of the West Jordan 27th Ward, West Jordan Utah Stake.

I was older, but Abby's heart was bigger. I had treated her unfairly, and I felt ashamed.



Illustrated by Children

As a Primary teacher I have found storytelling to be one of the children's favorite activities, especially when pictures go along with the story.

In my search for illustrations to use with my lessons, I looked for color pictures that were large enough for a group to see, but outside of the ward library I could find few pictures that would serve my story-time needs.

Eventually I turned to my own artistic abilities. One evening I tried to draw a crow for a story to be told in Primary the next day, but when my 10-year-old daughter asked me why I had drawn a whale, I groaned to myself and thought, "The kids could do better themselves!" Then I realized I had found a solution. I would let the children illustrate the stories.

Now when I have a story to tell, I read it through several times until I am familiar with it. Then I write numbers in the margins where I want to show an illustration. I take some plain sheets of paper and number them to correspond with the story.

Before I tell the story to the class, we have coloring time. I ask the children, "Who would like to draw a picture of a bird sitting in a tree for me?" or "Who will draw me a



picture of a man building a fire?"

I hand out the papers with the corresponding numbers and some crayons or markers until all of the children are working on a picture. Sometimes I will ask two or three children to work together on one picture so that all the children are involved. I give them a time limit, then I collect the pictures and put them in order.

While I tell the story, the students give me their full attention because they want to see how their pictures fit into the story. Giving the children the opportunity to illustrate the story helps them pay closer attention, learn more, and retain more.

*Linda Pratt, Mountain View 10th Ward,
West Jordan Utah Mountain View Stake*

Planning for Family Unity

Over 100 years ago, my great-great-grandfather Ezra Thompson Clark organized a family association to help his descendants plan family reunions and preserve the family's history. Today the association continues to unite our extended family, as evidenced by the 400-plus attendance at a recent reunion. Focusing on four key areas, the association's simple outline has withstood the test of time and can serve as an effective model for organizing family associations today.

READY-MADE FAMILY HOME EVENING



1. Testimony. At the first official family gathering, my great-great-grandfather bore his testimony of the gospel and had it written down so, as he put it, “my children and my children’s children may know.” His full testimony has been read at every family reunion since 1901.

2. Family standards. At the end of that first gathering, my great-great-grandfather encouraged family members to cultivate their own personal testimonies, be charitable and honorable, and teach the children well. This advice was also written down and has been shared at our family reunions.

3. Organizational structure and written instructions. Ezra carefully outlined an organizational structure—a president, an executive committee, and a secretary/registrar for keeping the family records. Specific family members were then assigned to these roles, and written instructions were provided for replacing these positions and for scheduling family reunions.

4. Funding. Ezra left money in his will to be used as a genealogical fund and to support the association. In recent times, the organization has also sought family contributions to cover expenses.

For generations, many family members, including my immediate family, have been involved in the association. I now serve as president, and my involvement in the association has deepened my appreciation for the blessing of eternal families. Because

One of the reasons our family nights are successful is

that we store lesson and activity materials in a handy kit. All you need is a container big enough to store your materials. A few suggestions for kit materials, available through Church distribution centers, are listed below. Or you can simply use items you already have in your home.

1. Scriptures. I keep an additional set in the kit so they are always handy.

2. Family Home Evening Resource Book (item no. 31106; U.S. \$5.00). Whether you plan a lesson in advance or on the spur of the moment, this resource book is full of good ideas for all ages.

3. Gospel Principles (31110; U.S. \$3.00). Basic

explanations of gospel principles are important for the entire family to learn.

4. Hymns (31243; U.S. \$5.00) and **Children’s Songbook** (35395; U.S. \$10.00). Since music can bring the Spirit to any lesson, these items are essential.

5. Gospel Art Picture Kit (34730; U.S. \$30.00). Children learn especially well when visuals are used, and the stories printed on the backs of these pictures provide instant lessons.

6. Church magazines. The *Ensign*, *Liahona*, *New Era*, and *Friend* magazines offer many articles that can be used in lessons.

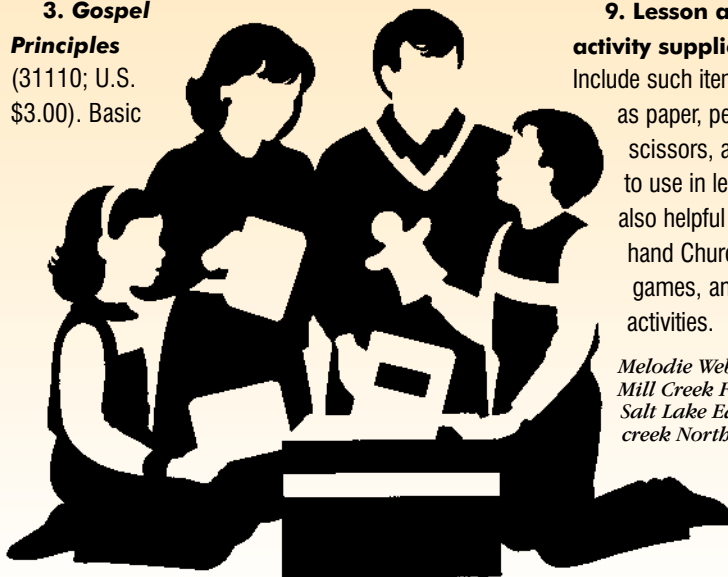
7. New Era posters. These gospel messages can be easily adapted for

family discussions. They are available as individual posters or in sets.

8. Church pamphlets and booklets. My kit contains several pamphlets. A few suggestions are *For the Strength of Youth* (36550; no charge), *Our Family: A Practical Guide for Building a Gospel-Centered Home* (33405; U.S. \$.30), and *How to Talk to Your Teenager* (32541; U.S. \$.35). To see a listing of all Church distribution center materials, log on to www.lds.org or www.ldscatalog.com.

9. Lesson and activity supplies. Include such items as paper, pencils, scissors, and glue to use in lessons. It’s also helpful to keep on hand Church videos, games, and other activities.

Melodie Webb, East Mill Creek First Ward, Salt Lake East Millcreek North Stake



of the unity my family feels with extended family, we have a heightened gratitude for our forebears—a kinship we share largely because of my

great-great-grandfather’s foresight over a century ago.

Carol L. Clark, Little Cottonwood First Ward, Salt Lake Little Cottonwood Stake

Prepare Every Needful Thing

Payerfully 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 88:119: The Lord gave counsel to the Saints building the Kirtland Temple that also applies to building righteous lives and righteous families today: “Prepare every needful thing.”

How do we determine what is “needful,” or of highest priority, as we prepare ourselves and our families?

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Jesus taught about priorities when He said, ‘Seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to

build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you’ (JST, Matt. 6:38, in Matt. 6:33, footnote a). ‘Seek . . . first to build up the kingdom of God’ means to assign first priority to God and to His work. The work of God is to bring to pass the eternal life of His children (see Moses 1:39), and all that this entails in the birth, nurturing, teaching, and sealing of our Heavenly Father’s children. Everything else is lower in priority” (“Focus and Priorities,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 83–84).

Patricia T. Holland, former first counselor in the Young Women general presidency: “On a pristinely clear and beautifully bright day, I sat overlooking the Sea of Galilee and reread the tenth chapter of Luke. But instead of the words on the page, I thought I saw with my mind and heard with my heart these words: ‘[Pat, Pat, Pat], thou art careful and troubled about many things.’ Then the power of pure and personal revelation seized me as I read, ‘But one thing [only one thing] is [truly] needful’ [vv. 41–42]. . . .

“Our loving Father in Heaven seemed to be whispering to me, ‘You don’t have to worry over so many things. The one thing that is needful—the *only* thing that is truly needful—is to keep your eyes

toward . . . my Son.’ . . . All I needed to do was to renew my faith, and get a firm grasp on his hand” (“‘One Thing Needful’: Becoming Women of Greater Faith in Christ,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1987, 26).

How can we avoid distractions as we prepare ourselves and our families?

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Some places are sacred and holy where it seems easier to discern the direction of the Holy Spirit. The temple is such a place. Find a retreat of peace and quiet where periodically you can ponder and let the Lord establish the direction of your life. Each of us needs to periodically check our bearings and confirm that we are on course. Sometime soon you may benefit from taking this personal inventory:

“What are my highest priorities to be accomplished while on earth?”

“How do I use my discretionary time? Is some of it consistently applied to my highest priorities?”

“Is there anything I know I should not be doing? If so, I will repent and stop it now.”

“In a quiet moment write down your responses. Analyze them. Make any necessary adjustments.

“Put first things first” (“First Things First,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 9).

3 Nephi 13:33: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” ■

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG HILL, CHURCH NEWS



Saints gather outside the Monticello Utah Temple for its rededication. It was the first small temple to be built and was recently expanded.

Monticello Temple Rededicated

A severe weather drought has afflicted much of southeastern Utah. But members there have also felt another drought while their temple was closed for renovation. On 17 November 2002 this drought ended when President Gordon B. Hinckley rededicated the Monticello Utah Temple.

"It was a pretty good end to a seven-month drought," says Obid Hamblin, Moab Utah Stake patriarch, speaking of the dedicatory services. "It's been a hard seven months without our temple."

The expanded and remodeled temple was rededicated in one session by President Hinckley, who presided over the first dedication in July 1998. The Monticello temple

was the first "small" temple to be completed. High temple attendance made expansion necessary in a relatively short time.

"The patrons of the temple responded so wholeheartedly to having a temple here," says Lisle G. Adams, president of the Monticello temple. "The facilities we had were just not adequate to take care of the work that was being done."

With the renovation, the size of the temple increased from 7,000 square feet to 11,225 square feet. A second ordinance room and a second sealing room were added, and other facilities were expanded. The temple district includes 13,000 members in Utah and Colorado.

In the dedicatory prayer,

President Hinckley asked for a blessing upon the temple and upon the Saints who attend it. And with the quenching of the seven-month temple drought, President Hinckley also pleaded for the end of the weather drought afflicting those living within this temple district.

"Open the windows of heaven and shower down blessings upon those of the communities which this temple serves. May rains come upon the thirsty land that there may be sufficient water. May their plantings be dedicated unto Thee, and may their harvests be garnered with thanksgiving." ■

President Hinckley Dedicates Buildings, Visits Members

Continuing a busy season of travel, President Gordon B. Hinckley participated in the dedications of new buildings—one named in his honor—and visited with members in Pennsylvania and Utah.

Gordon B. Hinckley Building

President Hinckley was "flummoxed" at the recommendation that Brigham Young University—Idaho name a building after him. But he humbly accepted the honor at a dedicatory service for the new building held on



President Gordon B. Hinckley greets a young man attending the Monticello Utah Temple rededication in November.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG HILL, CHURCH NEWS



President Gordon B. Hinckley waves to students and guests after the dedication of a building named in his honor at Brigham Young University—Idaho.

22 October 2002 in Rexburg, Idaho.

“The name of this building will be a constant reminder to me to live worthy of the trust that you have placed in me,” President Hinckley said during the dedicatory services of the new Gordon B. Hinckley Building.

It was a fitting tribute to the Church President, who has been instrumental in the school’s recent transition from a junior college known as Ricks College to a university offering four-year degrees.



President Thomas S. Monson called President Hinckley “a man of faith” and “a man of God” during the dedication of the Gordon B. Hinckley Building.

“It is a comfortable fit,” said President Thomas S. Monson, First Counselor in the First Presidency, “for President Hinckley is a man of prayer, a man of fasting, a man of faith, a man of learning, a man of glory, a man of order, a man of God.”

President Monson was a keynote speaker during the dedication and offered the dedicatory prayer. Other Church and university leaders were also in attendance. The 54,000-square-foot (5,000-square-meter) building provides meeting space for Sunday worship services as well as faculty offices and academic classrooms.

Salt Lake Institute Building

No education can be considered complete without attention to spiritual matters, said President Hinckley at the dedication of a new institute building that serves almost 6,000 students in Salt Lake City, Utah.

“It is important that we qualify ourselves in those matters which will assist us in earning a living and in making contributions to the society in which we live,” President

Hinckley told the large crowd gathered for the building’s dedication in October 2002. “But there is something of divinity in each of us. It is also important that this side of our nature be cultivated and given opportunity for expression.”

The new building, which is associated with the nearby University of Utah, provides classrooms, multipurpose rooms, chapels, and offices. Several Church and university leaders also attended the dedication, where President Hinckley offered the dedicatory prayer.

“The influence of what happens in this building will

Dick Cheney and other Church and educational leaders in a private dedicatory ceremony on 25 October 2002 for an academic building named in honor of Elder Jon M. Huntsman, an Area Authority Seventy.

The eight-story building, part of the Wharton School of Business on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania, was named Huntsman Hall in tribute to Elder Huntsman’s philanthropic contributions throughout his life.

A 1959 graduate of the Wharton School, Elder Huntsman began a small company 30 years ago that



The recently dedicated Salt Lake institute building serves almost 6,000 young adults in the Salt Lake City area.

outlast the structure many times over in the lives of the students and their families,” said Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and Commissioner of Church Education.

Approximately 350,000 students are currently enrolled in institute programs worldwide.

Huntsman Hall Dedication

President Hinckley joined United States vice president

has grown into the largest privately held petrochemical and plastics business in the world.

But his success in the business world is only half the story, said President Hinckley at the ceremony. He told how Elder Huntsman as student body president at Palo Alto High School in California bought ties to honor the school custodians and how young Jon Huntsman befriended a sickly boy at his school. President Hinckley



A family in Pennsylvania attends the meeting at which President Hinckley urged members to share the gospel.

also shared an experience from the time when a young married Jon Huntsman took \$50 from their tight budget and quietly left it in the mailbox of a widow in their ward.

"He did not become a philanthropist when he grew rich," President Hinckley said. "He gave freely when he was poor."

In his comments, Vice President Cheney said, "My highest hope for this building is that every person who goes through its doors will know something about the man for whom it is named, about his life of great accomplishment and purpose, and about the values that define it."

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Pleading with Church members to share the gospel, President Hinckley addressed some 5,000 Latter-day Saints in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in October 2002. He was accompanied by Elder David B. Haight and Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

During the meeting, President Hinckley asked: "Can anyone doubt that through the Restoration of the gospel faith has increased in the earth? Your very presence here this night, my brothers and

sisters, is an indication of the faith that you have, your willingness to subscribe to the covenants you have made, to undertake lives consistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ, to walk in faith and righteousness and truth before Him. What a burden that places upon us, but also what a responsibility, and what a precious and priceless opportunity."

President Hinckley noted: "The Church is in wonderful condition because of the faith of the people, and it has spread across the world. Today there are more Latter-day Saints outside of the United States than there are in the United States. . . . It is truly a remarkable thing, but it is not enough. We can do so much more."

The Church President pondered on "why we are so reluctant" to share the gospel with friends. "I do not know why we are so fearful," he said. "I do not know why we are so backward. We do not like to do it. Why? It is the greatest thing on earth. You know what you have. . . . Wouldn't you like someone else to have that? I am sure you would. Let us reach out . . . and spread the gospel among our friends."

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

Park City, Utah

President Hinckley used a rare free Sunday to stop in on a stake conference taking place in Park City, Utah, in October 2002. In his brief remarks, he urged the congregation to live worthy of their patriarchal blessings.

"Think of it," President Hinckley said. "Here is a man who has been called and set apart to bless and ordain, as it were. He stands as a prophet to individuals. . . . Every member of the Church who is worthy may come and let him place his hands upon their head and give them a blessing."

"You have in your midst a patriarch who has been called

and chosen and set apart to bless you, my brothers and my sisters," President Hinckley continued. "And if you have not received a patriarchal blessing, I urge you to square up and straighten up your lives and become worthy to receive a patriarchal blessing. Then go to your bishop so you might be properly recommended and make an appointment to see [the patriarch] and let him place his hands upon your head and by the power of the Spirit speak to you in an individual and wonderful way, my brothers and sisters." ■

Church News contributed to this report.

Ordinance Index On-Line

A new version of the FamilySearch™ Ordinance Index is available for the first time online at www.familysearch.org. This database contains a record of all completed temple ordinance work for deceased individuals. Members can access this database to verify if temple ordinance work has been done for deceased individuals before submitting names to the temple. This verification will help reduce duplicate ordinance work.

To access ordinance information, members must register and log on to the FamilySearch Web site. Church members will need their membership record number and confirmation date for the registration process. Ward and branch clerks can provide members

with this information. Once registered and logged on, members then search for an individual's name, and the Ordinance Index information, if available, will appear with the name.

Millions of names recently have been added to the Ordinance Index, and it will be updated weekly to ensure members have current information about their ancestors.

Members who have access to the Internet at home or through their local family history center will be able to access the information in the Ordinance Index. Family history centers without Internet access may contact the Family and Church History Department about being connected to the Internet after receiving authorization from local priesthood leaders. ■

Strengthening the Community

Hong Kong Plays

Three-on-Three Basketball

The Church-sponsored seventh annual Three-on-Three Basketball Tournament in Hong Kong drew 2,000 players, 375 teams, and Brigham Young University—Provo's head basketball coach, Steve Cleveland. The event garnered tremendous support from the community; about 95 percent of the participants were not Latter-day Saints. Among the largest tournaments in all of Asia, this Church-sponsored event took place in the Hong Kong Kowloon East Stake Center, where Brother Cleveland spoke during the opening ceremonies about his 25 years of coaching experience. He encouraged players to instill in their personal lives the discipline, work ethic, and respect that bring success on the court. Invited by the Asia Area Presidency,

Brother Cleveland also conducted a basketball clinic for boys and girls ages 10–18 and participated with his wife in two firesides.

Honolulu Saints

Make a Difference

The national Make a Difference Day in 2002 mobilized members of the Honolulu Hawaii Stake to

complete a four-month service project providing 500 hand-sewn fabric bags containing stuffed toys and soft blankets to the Children's Justice Center of Oahu. These "love bags," made with help from the Hawaii Chapter of American Mothers, Inc., will be given to children taken from their homes and placed in foster care. "We have some



Players from throughout the community go three-on-three in Hong Kong's seventh annual basketball tournament.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ASIA AREA PUBLIC AFFAIRS

children carrying their belongings in a paper bag," says Jasmine Mau-Mukai, programs director for the Children's Justice Center. "There really is love in these 'love bags.'"

The project began four months before Make a Difference Day. Members made the bags and blankets in their homes and with their wards. More than 140 people volunteered at a work session held in the Honolulu Tabernacle in July, and 120 people volunteered in August.

"We've filled our gym with sewing machines, and the work has been done by men, women, and children with and without sewing experience," says stake president Waldemar Thiim. "Everyone is happy about possibly making a difference in the life of a child."

Houston Stakes Receive Mayor's Award

Recognizing nine years of volunteer work in Houston's inner city, the mayor of

Study the Scriptures with the Help of E-Mail

E-mail users are now able to receive daily e-mails from the Church containing selections from the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the New Testament.

The selections will be mailed five times a week and are grouped so that each book of scripture can be read cover to cover within one year. Readers can choose which book or books of

scripture they would like to receive.

These e-mail messages will be provided by the Church's Curriculum Department through LDS-Gems. LDS-Gems is a free e-mail service that currently sends daily inspirational quotations from Church leaders and weekly counsel for families and youth.

For further information or to subscribe on-line to any of these services, visit the

LDS-Gems Web page at www.lds.org/gems.

You may also subscribe via e-mail. To receive LDS-Gems, send a message to listserv@lists.lds.org with "subscribe lds-gems" (without quotes) in the body of the message. To receive the selections from the Book of Mormon, send an e-mail to the same address with "subscribe lds-gems-bofm" (without quotes) in the message. For the Doctrine and

Covenants and Pearl of Great Price, type "subscribe lds-gems-dandc" (without quotes) in the message. For the New Testament, type "subscribe lds-gems-nt" (without quotes) in the message.

Currently these e-mail services are available only in English, but several language versions are in development and will be announced as they become available. ■



Members in Honolulu show off their handiwork. Working with community groups, they made bags full of toys and blankets for local children in crisis.

Houston, Texas, presented a Mayor's Proud Partner Award to local units of the Church at an annual luncheon honoring community organizations.

Beginning in the early 1990s, several stakes provided volunteers for the annual "Keep 5 Alive" project, created to improve inner-city public grounds. In 2002, 250 young people from a four-stake Laurel/priest conference cleaned and landscaped public grounds, while more than 75 volunteers from the Houston Texas East Stake painted houses. Another project included cleaning the city's bayous.

Without the Church's support, says Mike Easley, the leader of the project, "Keep 5 Alive" would not have happened in 2002. Commenting on members' responses to such large-scale service projects, Brent Webber of the Katy Texas Stake says, "All participants came back saying it had been a wonderful experience. They came back with really good, positive feelings."

Church Helps Bring Boats to Timor

The Church in Australia is aiding a local charity organization and villages in East Timor, a small island in Indonesia. Volunteers from Aussie Boats for East Timor (ABET) have constructed wooden fishing boats, each of which can provide food for about 100 villagers of East Timor. Church Welfare Services in Australia is donating money to help ship the boats to East Timor.

Australia/New Zealand Area President, Elder Kenneth Johnson of the Seventy, first heard a television report that ABET needed help transporting the fishing boats to Timor. In 2000 the Church donated money to refugees from troubled East Timor.

Elder Elwin Johnson is grateful that the Church's contribution will build self-sufficiency beyond just providing boats. After arriving in East Timor, the shipping container the Church is helping to purchase will be used to form the first part of a factory in Hera, a

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

town east of Dili, where ABET representatives will teach East Timor natives to make their own wooden boats.

If giving a man a fish can feed him for a day, teaching a village to build fishing boats can do much more, Elder Elwin Johnson suggests. "This project is adding to the ability of the people in East Timor to help themselves. We feel it is a worthwhile project and want to express our support."

Washington Stake Builds Natural Greenway

"I think you should take on a more realistic project," the Kennewick city manager told representatives of the Kennewick Washington East Stake when they proposed turning an unsafe, overgrown canyon into a nature trail and recreation area as a Church sesquicentennial service project in 1997.

But volunteers moved ahead, spending the next five years clearing thorny blackberry bushes and Russian olive trees; planting trees, shrubs, and flowers; constructing culvert bridges; channeling streams; and building walls. Their efforts were rewarded by the dedication of "The Spirit of America Trail" in October 2002.

Joined by other community organizations, almost 1,000 volunteers provided 20,000 hours of labor to remove garbage, dispose of trees blocking the trail, and create a "sanctuary in an urban setting," as one reporter described it. At least six Eagle Scout projects were completed as part of the work done in the canyon.

"I have never seen anything like the commitment and dedication of these people," says Cindy Cole, manager of buildings and grounds. "It's amazing." ■

Comment

Children of Divorce

I appreciate the article "Children of Divorce" by Elaine Walton in the August 2002 *Ensign* (page 36), as well as other articles that have appeared recognizing the existence of divorce among faithful members and offering practical and spiritual guidance for dealing with related issues.

I voice my hope that we will all refrain from making assumptions, stereotyping, and judging divorced individuals and their children. My child is a daughter of God—bright, loving, creative, and, among other things, the daughter of divorced parents. This is one of many things that is part of who she is and who she will become, but it is not the defining characteristic.

It would be naive to think my daughter is not affected by our divorce. However, I do not think this has to ruin her life. While we can empathize with our children and comfort them in their pain, we must also teach them how to deal with less-than-ideal situations in a constructive and prayerful manner so they can find peace and happiness even in the midst of trials in life.

Andrea Howard Durrant
Salt Lake City, Utah



MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 3

were when He first uttered them." See "Words of Jesus: Riches" on page 52.

- "If a person's testimony is to grow until it bears mature fruit, or conversion, God must be the primary force behind our harvest," teaches

Elder Wilfredo R. López of the Seventy. See "The Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly," page 56.

Divine Love

"While divine love can be called perfect, infinite, enduring, and universal, it cannot correctly be characterized as *unconditional*," writes Elder Russell M. Nelson. Yet "Jesus asked us to love one another as He has loved us. Is that possible? Can our love for others really approach divine love? Yes it can!" See "Divine Love," page 20.

Teachings of Jesus

- "The blessings that flow from the gift of forgiveness are many," says Elder Cecil O. Samuelson Jr. of the Seventy. "Chief among them is peace. It is the Savior's desire that we each feel His peace." See "Words of Jesus: Forgiveness" on page 48.

- "To understand what the Savior taught about riches as He walked the earth among men, we must realize that He paid no heed to the traditions of men," writes Elder William R. Bradford of the Seventy. "His teachings guide us on the acquiring, amassing, and spending of wealth and are as applicable today as they

- Four hundred people at a family reunion? Read about one family's simple four-point model for family organizations that has withstood the test of time and blessed several generations. See "Planning for Family Unity," page 72.

Three Parables

Elder James E. Talmage turned three personal experiences into parables that teach gospel principles. Each would make an excellent home evening message. Perhaps Elder Talmage's stories of the unwise bee, the two lamps, and the Owl Express will help you see how you can use experiences from your own life to teach the gospel. See page 8.

Harmony at Home

It was only a small misfortune, but it helped one family see beyond selfish individual concerns and discover common interests and lasting harmony. See

"The Day the Dishwasher Broke," page 18.

Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 74.

Did You Know?

The *Friend* and the *New Era* are available in Braille for visually impaired children and youth and visually impaired parents or other adults who work with children and youth. These magazines are available at no

charge, although donations are appreciated. An \$8.00 donation each year has been suggested for either the *Friend* or the *New Era*. These items can be ordered from Special Curriculum, Floor 24, 50 East North Temple Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3200. Make checks payable to "Corporation of the President." You can call Special Curriculum at 801-240-2477.



More to Strengthen a Family

- Have you ever wavered in your commitment to the gospel or wondered if the Lord knows your needs and concerns? Read about a family whose lives were changed because the Lord inspired their home teacher to visit at just the right moment. See page 69.

- Stories from Latter-day Saint Voices can teach your family important principles, such as not making hasty judgments about others. See how a disruptive child taught the teacher a valuable lesson about jumping to premature conclusions, page 70.



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Edward Partridge, by Gary Smith

Called on 4 February 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio, Edward Partridge served as the first bishop of the Church. Of him the Lord said, "His heart is pure before me, for he is like unto Nathanael of old, in whom there is no guile" (D&C 41:11).

Jesus asked us to love one another as He has loved us. Is that possible? Can our love for others really approach divine love? Yes it can! The pure love of Christ is granted to all who seek and qualify for it. Such love includes service and requires obedience.
—Elder Russell M. Nelson

