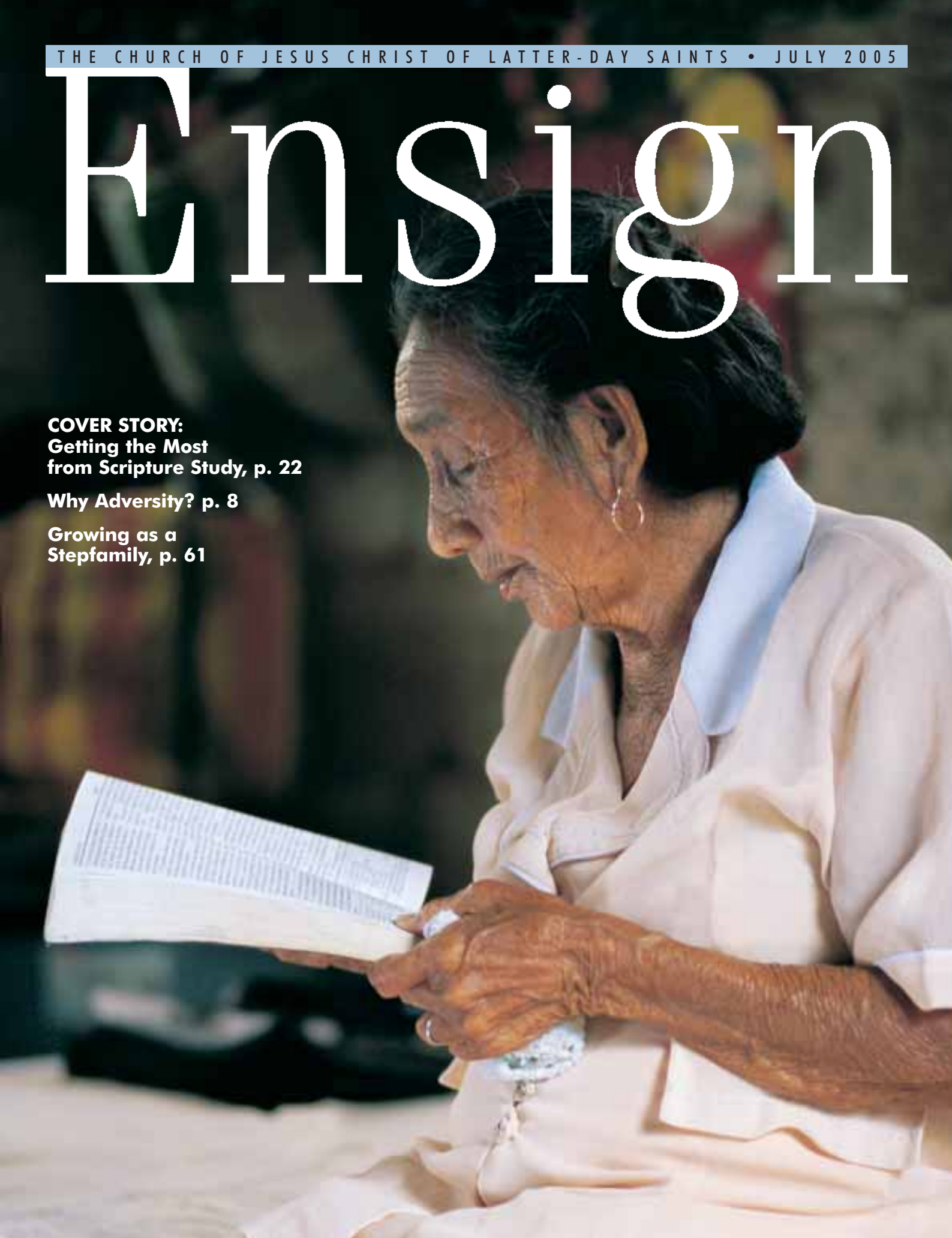


THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS • JULY 2005

Ensign



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from Scripture Study, p. 22

Why Adversity? p. 8

Growing as a
Stepfamily, p. 61



MAY NOT BE COPIED

Heber C. Kimball Home in Nauvoo, 1845, by Al Rounds

Zina Young wrote of this time in Nauvoo: "The Church is in prosperous circumstances for there appears to be the most union that has ever been. . . . The temple prospers" (Diary, Mar. 10, 1845, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; spelling standardized).

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HE Healeth

THE BROKEN IN HEART



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

I wish to give assurance that there is a sure cure for heartache, disappointment, torment, anguish, and despair. The Psalmist stated, “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.”¹ The healing is a divine miracle; the wounds are the common lot of all mankind. Shakespeare has said, “He jests at scars that never felt a wound.”² It seems that no one escapes the troubles, challenges, and disappointments of this world.

In today’s overloaded society, some of the healing agents that our parents enjoyed seem not to be at work in our lives. Fewer and fewer are able to relieve stress by working with their hands and by tilling the soil. The increasing demands, the diversity of voices, the entreating sales pitches, the piercing noises, the entanglement of many personal relationships can rob our souls of the peace they need to function and survive. Our hurry to meet the relentless demands of the clock tears away at our inner peace. The pressures to compete and survive are great. Our appetite for personal possessions seems enormous. The increasing forces that destroy the individual and family bring great sadness and heartbreak.

One reason for the spiritual sickness of our society is that so many do not know or care about what is morally right and wrong. So many things are justified on the basis of expediency and the acquiring of money and goods. In recent times, those few individuals and institutions that have been courageous enough to stand up and speak out against adultery, dishonesty, violence, and other forms of evil are often held up to ridicule. Many things are just plain and simply wrong, whether they are illegal or not. Those who persist in following after the evil things of the world cannot know “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.”³

Somehow, some way, we must find the healing influence that brings solace to the soul. Where is this balm? Where is the compensating relief so desperately needed to help us survive the world’s pressures? The offsetting comfort in large measure can come through increased communion with the Spirit of God. This can bring spiritual healing.

Spiritual healing is illustrated in the story of Warren M. Johnson, pioneer ferryman at Lee’s Ferry, Arizona. As a young man, Warren Johnson came west seeking his fortune in gold in the summer of 1866. He became very

We believe
in the gift
of healing.
*Although the Warren
Johnson family
suffered a great
tragedy, they
discovered that
this gift extends to
healing of both the
body and the spirit.
The Spirit speaks
peace to the soul.*



ill, and his companions left him under a tree in the yard of a family in Bountiful, Utah. One of the daughters found him and reported there was a dead man out in the yard. Although he was a complete stranger, this kind family took him in and nursed him back to health. They taught him the gospel and he was baptized. He eventually ended up as the ferryman at Lee's Ferry.

In 1891 the Warren Johnson family suffered a great tragedy. Within a period of a short time, they lost four children to diphtheria. All four were buried in a row next to each other. In a letter to President Wilford Woodruff, dated July 29, 1891, Warren told the story:

"Dear Brother,

"In May 1891 a family residing in Tuba City, came here from Richfield Utah, where they had spent the winter visiting friends. At Panguitch they buried a child, and without disinfecting the wagon or themselves, not even stopping to wash the dead child's clothes, they came to our house, and remained overnight, mingling with my little children. . . .

"We knew nothing of the nature of the disease, but had faith in God, as we were here on a very hard mission, and had tried as hard as we knew how to obey the Word of Wisdom, and attend to the other duties of our religion, such as paying tithing, family prayers etc. etc., that our children would be spared. But alas, in 4 1/2 days [the oldest boy] choked to death in my arms. Two more were taken down with the disease and we fasted and prayed as much as we thought it wisdom, as we had many duties to perform here. We fasted some 24 hours and once I fasted 40 hours, but all of no avail for both my little girls died also. About a week after their death my fifteen year old daughter Melinda was stricken down and we did all we could for her but she followed the others, and three of my dear girls and one boy [have] been taken from us, and the end is not yet. My oldest girl 19 years old is now prostrate with the disease, and we are fasting and praying in her behalf. . . . What have we done that the Lord has left us, and what can we do to gain his favor again[?]

"Yours in the gospel

"Warren M. Johnson"⁴

In a subsequent letter to his friend Warren Foote, Brother Johnson testified that he had found a spiritual peace:

"I can assure you however, that it is the hardest [trial] of my life, but I set out for salvation, and am determined through the help of my Heavenly Father to hold fast to the iron rod, no matter what trials may come upon me. I have not yet slackened in the performance of my duties, and hope and trust that I shall have the faith and prayers of my brethren that I may live so as to receive the blessings, you having authority, have placed on my head."⁵

The seventh article of faith states that, among other spiritual gifts, we believe in the gift of healing. I believe this gift extends to healing of both the body and the spirit. The Spirit speaks peace to the soul. 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. They also come through administering to the sick following an anointing with consecrated oil. Christ is the Great Physician, who rose from the dead "with healing in his wings,"⁶ while the Comforter is the agent of healing.

The Lord has provided many avenues by which we receive this healing influence. I am grateful that He has restored temple work to the earth. It is an important part of the work of salvation for both the living and the dead. Our temples provide a sanctuary where we go to lay aside many of the anxieties of the world. Our temples are places of peace and tranquillity. In these hallowed sanctuaries God "healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

The reading and study of the scriptures can bring great comfort. President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988), First Counselor in the First Presidency, stated:

"I feel certain that if, in our homes, parents will read from the Book of Mormon prayerfully and regularly, both by themselves and with their children, the spirit of that great book will come to permeate our homes and all who dwell therein. The spirit of reverence will increase, mutual respect and consideration for each other will grow. The

spirit of contention will depart. Parents will counsel their children in greater love and wisdom. Children will be more responsive and submissive to that counsel. Righteousness will increase. Faith, hope and charity—the pure love of Christ—will abound in our homes and lives, bringing in their wake peace, joy, and happiness.”⁷

When I was young, the health benefits of the Word of Wisdom, including abstinence from tobacco, alcoholic drinks, tea, and coffee, were not as well established as they are today. However, the spiritual benefits have long been validated. The Word of Wisdom promises that those who remember to keep this counsel and walk in obedience to the commandments “shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones.”⁸

Marrow has long been a symbol for vibrant, healthful living. But in a day of life-saving bone marrow transplants, the phrase “marrow to their bones” takes on an additional significance as a spiritual covenant. The promises for those who keep the Word of Wisdom continue. Those who observe this law “shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

“And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

“And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them.”⁹

If we are to be spared, we do indeed need to be fortified against the many destroying agents at work in the world today.

For many of us, however, spiritual healing takes place not in great arenas of the world but in our sacrament meetings. It is comforting to worship with, partake of the sacrament with, and be taught in a spirit of humility by



neighbors and close friends who love the Lord and try to keep His commandments. Our good bishop assigns the speakers to treat a gospel subject or principle. Invariably they speak by the power of the Holy Ghost, opening their hearts so that the audience can behold the jewels therein. The messages are given in humble witness and sweet counsel. We of the audience understand that which is taught by the Spirit of Truth and verify the accompanying testimonies.

Our sacrament meetings should be worshipful and healing, restoring those who attend to spiritual soundness. Part of the healing process occurs as we worship through music and song. Singing our beautiful, worshipful hymns is food for our souls. We become of one heart and one mind when we sing praises to the Lord. Among other influences, worshiping in song has the effect of spiritually unifying the participants in an attitude of reverence.

Spiritual healing also comes from bearing and hearing humble testimonies. A witness

Our temples are places of peace and tranquillity. In these hallowed sanctuaries God “healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.”



I doubt that sincere members of this Church can achieve complete spiritual healing without being in harmony with the foundation of the Church, which the Apostle Paul stated is “the apostles and prophets.”

given in a spirit of contrition, thankfulness for divine providence, and submission to divine guidance is a powerful remedy to help relieve the anguish and concerns of our hearts.

I doubt that sincere members of this Church can achieve complete spiritual healing without being in harmony with the foundation of the Church, which the Apostle Paul stated is “the apostles and prophets.”¹⁰ This may not be the popular thing to do based on the long history of rejection by the world of the prophets and their messages. Nevertheless they are the oracles of God on earth and those called to lead and direct the work in this day and time. It is also essential for us to be found sustaining our bishops, branch presidents, and stake and district presidents.

Recent information seems to confirm that the ultimate spiritual healing comes in the forgetting of self. A review of the accounts indicates that those who survived best in

prison and hostage camps were those who were concerned for their fellow prisoners and were willing to give away their own food and substance to help sustain the others. Dr. Viktor Frankl stated: “We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”¹¹ The Savior of the world said it very simply: “And whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.”¹²

Of all that we might do to find solace, prayer is perhaps the most comforting. We are instructed to pray to the Father, in the name of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Ghost. The very act of praying to God is satisfying to the soul,

even though God, in His wisdom, may not give what we ask for. President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) taught us that all of our prayers are answered, but sometimes the Lord says no.¹³ The Prophet Joseph taught that “the best way to obtain truth and wisdom is . . . to go to God in prayer.”¹⁴ Prayer is most helpful in the healing process.

Wounds inflicted by others are healed by the “art of healing.” President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) stated, “But the healing of a wound is an art not acquired by practice alone, but by the loving tenderness that comes from universal good will and a sympathetic interest in the welfare and happiness of others.”¹⁵

There is hope for all to be healed through repentance and obedience. The prophet Isaiah verified that “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”¹⁶ The Prophet Joseph Smith stated, “There is never a time when the spirit is too old to approach God. All are within the reach of pardoning mercy.”¹⁷

After full repentance, the formula is wonderfully simple. Indeed, the Lord has given it to us in these words: “Will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?”¹⁸ In so doing, we have His promise that “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.”

We find solace in Christ through the agency of the Comforter, and the Savior extends this invitation to us: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”¹⁹ The Apostle Peter speaks of “casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”²⁰ As we do this, healing takes place, just as the Lord promised through the prophet Jeremiah when He said: “I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. . . . I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.”²¹

And in the celestial glory, we are told that “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.”²² Then faith and hope will replace heartache, disappointment, torment, anguish, and despair, and the Lord will give us strength, as Mormon says, that we

“should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ.”²³ ■

NOTES

1. Psalm 147:3.
2. *Romeo and Juliet*, 2.2.1.
3. Philippians 4:7.
4. Quoted in P. T. Reilly, “Warren Marshall Johnson, Forgotten Saint,” *Utah Historical Quarterly*, winter 1971, 19; spelling modernized.
5. Warren Foote Autobiography, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (5 vols.), 2:260–61.
6. 2 Nephi 25:13.
7. In Conference Report, Apr. 1960, 112–13.
8. D&C 89:18.
9. D&C 89:19–21.
10. Ephesians 2:20.
11. *Man’s Search for Meaning* (1959), 86.
12. Luke 17:33.
13. See *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1996), 127.
14. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 191.
15. *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. (1939), 264.
16. Isaiah 1:18.
17. *Teachings*, 191.
18. 3 Nephi 9:13.
19. Matthew 11:28.
20. 1 Peter 5:7.
21. Jeremiah 31:13, 25.
22. Revelation 21:4.
23. Alma 31:38.

IDEAS FOR HOME TEACHERS

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

1. Show what you use or invite family members to show what they use to treat minor wounds, such as soap, water, and bandages. Discuss the process of physical healing. According to President Faust, why do we need spiritual healing today? (See the article’s first four paragraphs.) Discuss several of President Faust’s “agents” for obtaining the gift of healing. Bear testimony of the healing power of Jesus Christ.
2. Read aloud or tell in your own words the story of Warren M. Johnson. What can we learn from this story about spiritual wounds and healing?
3. Read what President Faust says about sacrament meetings. Invite family members to share how attending sacrament meeting has helped them feel the Holy Spirit and be healed.
4. Point out that President Faust uses the word of God from key scriptures to help heal wounded souls (see Jacob 2:8). Identify and share those scriptures that impress you.



Why Adversity?



BY ELDER D. ALLEN ANDERSEN

Area Seventy
Asia Area

How we deal with challenges helps to define who we are and what we may become.

It has been said that into every life a little rain must fall. But why does it sometimes seem that it pours? A loving God created this world for our benefit, so why do we often face events that are unpleasant and challenging or that bring us pain, sorrow, and heartache? And it certainly doesn't seem fair that some people appear to experience much more adversity than others!

What are some causes of adversity in our lives? In addressing the subject of sin, King Benjamin noted, "I cannot tell you all the things whereby ye may commit sin; for there are divers ways and means, even so many that I cannot number them" (Mosiah 4:29). The same could be said of the adversities that attend the human condition. They cannot be numbered. Some result from our own actions; others result from the actions of those around us. Still others result from conditions of mortality or from causes unseen or not yet understood. There is,

in fact, no effective way to comprehend or cope with all the difficulties of this life without faith in a loving Heavenly Father and without understanding the plan of salvation and the reality of a premortal and postmortal existence.

To Be Chastened

Perhaps the simplest way to look at these difficult events in our lives is to separate them into two categories: those that occur because of our personal choices and actions and those that come from all the other events that impact our lives. We are responsible for the first.

During a time of great persecution of the Saints, after they were driven from their homes in Jackson County, Missouri, the Lord said, "I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted, in consequence of their transgressions" (D&C 101:2). Afflictions and difficulties that come directly as a result of our actions are perhaps the easiest for us to understand. And they have a divine purpose.



Sister Ye did not have much in the way of material things, but she was as peaceful and cheerful as anyone I had ever met.

God's Great Wisdom

We also face other adversities in life, those that can cause us to think, "What did I do to deserve this?" How we deal with these challenges helps to define who we are and what we may become.

I have a hero. She does not know that I think of her as a hero. I have met her only once, but the

The Lord explained, "All those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified" (v. 5).

We have a choice when the Lord chastens us. We can be among those who, when faced with the consequences of our actions, spurn our responsibility and turn from God and His chastening love. Or we can be like those who patiently submit, learn, and grow in righteousness.

The Apostle Paul taught, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Hebrews 12:6). Scourging is not a painless process!

Paul continues:

"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? . . .

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (vv. 7, 11).

impression she left on me was lasting. After meeting her I inquired about her of the missionaries, her stake president, and the mission president, and I found even more reasons to respect her. She is Sister Ye Hui Hua of the Tainan Taiwan Stake. I met her when I was visiting Tainan for a stake conference. She was tending the grounds of the meetinghouse. I was drawn to the obvious happiness that enveloped her as she worked. As we spoke she shared her testimony and her gratitude for her many blessings. I left our only encounter carrying the radiance of her joyful spirit and pondering my relative ingratitude for my blessings. She obviously did not have much in the way of material things, but she was as peaceful and cheerful as anyone I had ever met. When I asked others about her, I found out the rest of her story.

As a young adult she had a great desire to attend university but knew the financial burden would be too heavy for her parents. Instead she worked and gave her income to

During a time of great persecution, the Saints in Missouri learned that their afflictions had a divine purpose.



her father, whom she dearly loved and who was a good and righteous man. After she married and in answer to her prayers, the missionaries visited her and her family and they joined the Church. Her husband, however, suffered from lingering health problems and passed away, leaving Sister Ye with three children and little means of support. Following her husband's death, Sister Ye had to work several jobs to support her family. She managed to save a little every day so her children could serve missions. All three of her children have now served missions; two served in Taiwan and one in the Utah Salt Lake City Temple Square Mission. After returning from his mission, one of her sons became ill and passed away.

As missionaries spoke with Sister Ye at my request, she commented: "I can't think of any reason why I would have these trials, but I have faith that it is according to God's great wisdom. I have come to have a very deep appreciation and understanding of Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. I believe that only when we keep God's commandments can we understand His will for us. I thank God daily for allowing me to be here. When I have trials, I remember the pain of others. If someone is sick or has a need, I pray about what I can do to help, and the Lord leads me to know what I can do."

The missionaries often see Sister Ye—"Ye Mama," as they fondly call her—trimming the bushes or cleaning



When the Prophet Joseph Smith pleaded for help in Liberty Jail, he learned that the Lord will help us through our adversities and sorrows.

around the meetinghouse. They say that she is every missionary's "second mother" and that she is as thoughtful of them as if they were her own children.

Principles of Faith

I will long carry a mental picture of a beaming Sister Ye on the grounds of the Tainan meetinghouse, garden tools in hand, sharing with me her gratitude for her blessings—Sister Ye, who has lost opportunities for education and material benefits, who has suffered the loss of those close to her, and who has repeatedly sacrificed for her children and others. What principles of faith separate Sister Ye from those who, when met with the trials of this life, "curse God, and die" (Job 2:9)?

Important is the assurance that a loving Heavenly Father and an understanding Savior are aware of our individual situations. With Their deeper wisdom and greater vision, They will not allow any trial to afflict our lives that will not be to our eternal good if it is properly dealt with. I take great comfort in the guidance given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail. The Lord recites a list of horrific trials, and then come the words of comfort and guidance:

"Know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.

"The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?

"Therefore, hold on thy way, and the priesthood shall remain with thee; for their bounds are set, they cannot pass.



As our Lord approached His hour of greatest trial, He was serving others.

Joy through Service

Even with faith and patience, is there more to coping with the trials of this mortal existence? I believe there is another key, a key that has allowed Sister Ye in Tainan to not only survive her trials but to

find joy in this life. The Savior, as always, is our exemplar. He taught this key on the eve of His great suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, at a time when He knew that within hours He would be facing incomprehensible pain and sorrow. He met with His Apostles in an upper room and taught them sacred ordinances and principles. With His hour of greatest need so imminent, He could have looked to those most dear to Him for comfort and support. Rather, “he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.” He then taught: “If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. . . . If ye know these things, *happy are ye if ye do them*” (John 13:5, 14–15, 17; emphasis added).

As our Lord approached His hour of greatest trial, He was serving others. I believe that is the secret Sister Ye has found and that all of us can discover for ourselves. Amid our trials, our faith and patience can bring us comfort and peace, and our love and service to others can bring us joy. Let us follow the example of the Savior and know that if we will turn to Him, all our afflictions can be for our good, just as He promised. ■

Thy days are known, and thy years shall not be numbered less; therefore, fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever” (D&C 122:7–9).

What wonderful counsel in such short verses! The Lord knows our trials; He has suffered worse and can understand and help us through our adversities and sorrows. Our afflictions can be for our good and cannot exceed the bounds He has set.

The scriptures and the prophets give wise counsel on how we should cope with the challenges and trials that enter our lives. We must meet afflictions with patience and faith. While suffering for months in Liberty Jail, the Prophet Joseph Smith pleaded with the Lord to alleviate the trials of the Saints. The Lord replied in part,

“My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

“And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes” (D&C 121:7–8).

The Lord also taught the Prophet in a revelation concerning the persecution of the Saints in Missouri: “Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God” (D&C 101:16).



GROWTH

through Setbacks

BY ELDER JAMES M. DUNN

Of the Seventy



When we do the best we are capable of and allow the Lord to guide our lives, apparent setbacks often set us on another course for our own good.

The scriptures tell us that if we will turn to the Lord, ultimately “all things shall work together for [our] good” (D&C 105:40). Throughout the years I have found that disappointments often lead to choice blessings in unexpected ways. One example from my younger years illustrates this.

I loved high school, where I had many good friends and was given many opportunities to lead in athletics and student government. However, I didn’t accomplish some of the things I wanted most to do.

I was a relatively good student, certainly not the head of my class. My strongest subjects were English, history, and current affairs. I avoided math and science classes as much as possible.

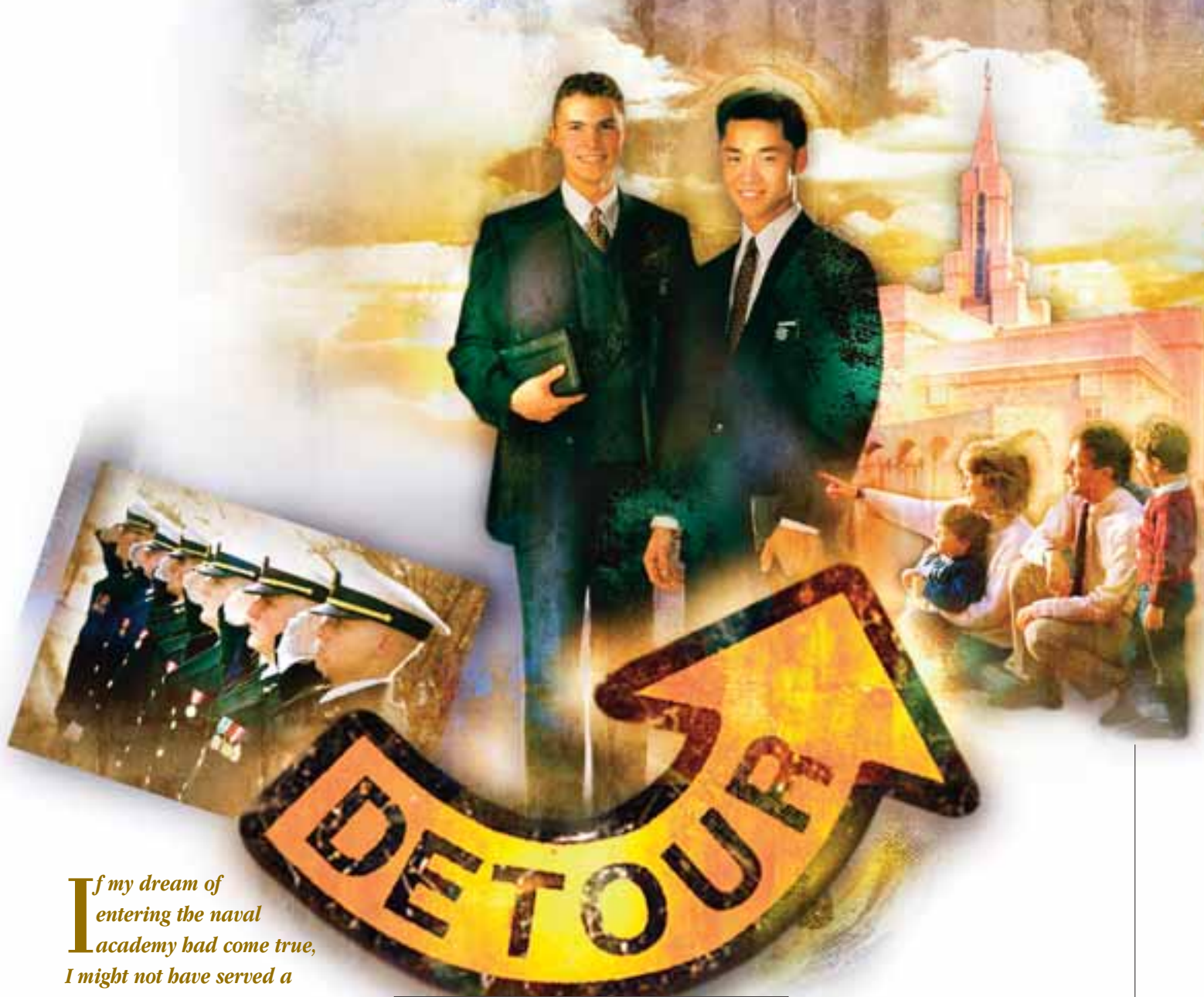
Toward the end of my senior year, I heard about the United States Naval Academy and how one could go there on full scholarship and graduate as a commissioned naval officer. I picked up some brochures about the academy. I particularly remember the pictures of naval cadets strolling about the campus in their uniforms or marching smartly in formation. I could see myself in a white uniform

walking through the beautiful campus. The brochures extolled the leadership skills that could be developed at the academy. I imagined I could do well there because I thought I could be a leader. I didn’t appreciate as much the academic program that would lead to the only degree offered at the time: engineering.

I sought out and obtained a congressional appointment to the naval academy. Then I ran head on into the admissions test. It contained a lot of math. I received tutoring, but still I was not that good. Then there was the physical examination. I had high blood pressure and less than 20/20 eyesight. I was admitted to the hospital to see if bed rest would lower my blood pressure. It didn’t. I failed the physical and lost my congressional appointment. I not only suffered a great disappointment; I thought I was a failure somehow. I felt pretty low.

Isn’t it interesting how things turn out? The playwright Oscar Wilde wrote: “In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it.”¹

With the encouragement of my college sweetheart, and with the help of my family,



If my dream of entering the naval Academy had come true, I might not have served a mission or had my family.

I went on a mission. It changed my life. I later became a military officer and found that being in the military really was not my passion. I studied law and was an attorney for nearly 30 years.

Looking back, I realized I might not have married my college sweetheart and had six beautiful daughters if I had decided not to serve a mission. I was surprised to hear my wife say not long ago that she would not have married me if I had



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Read aloud Doctrine and Covenants 105:40. Then make a list of the blessings Elder Dunn received because he was not accepted to the military school. Invite family members to consider their own lives. How has the Lord blessed you through setbacks? Conclude by sharing Doctrine and Covenants 122:7.

2. Make a sweet drink or dessert without the sugar and invite family members to taste it. Ask what ingredient is missing. How was Elder Dunn's experience like this? Discuss why attitudes can sweeten our setbacks. Add the sugar to the drink or dessert and enjoy the treat.

decided not to serve a mission. How different my life would have been. How much of eternal value I would have lost had my teenage dream come true.

When we do the best we are capable of and allow the Lord to guide our lives, apparent setbacks often set us on another course for our own good (see D&C 122:7).

I can testify to that. ■

NOTE

1. Quoted in John Bartlett, comp., *Familiar Quotations*, 14th ed. (1968), 839.

The Body, a Sacred Gift

Let us regard our bodies in the Lord's way rather than the world's way.

BY DIANE L. SPANGLER

When you look into a mirror, what thoughts run through your mind about your body? If you experience a flood of disparaging thoughts, you are far from alone. Recent studies find that approximately 63 percent of women and 50 percent of men in the United States are dissatisfied with their body and view it negatively—statistics that are reflected in the Latter-day Saint community.¹

In my practice as a psychologist, I have seen talented, righteous Latter-day Saint women who despise themselves because their bodies do not look like what they see in movies or magazines. Many say they are no good unless they look good. Other clients have been so seduced by pornography that they view the body as a thing to be consumed and exploited. Often they eventually feel duped, trapped, and degraded themselves, since along with a loss of respect for the body and for others comes an inevitable loss of respect for oneself.

The world teaches that bodily appearance determines individual worth and desirability. The more “ideal” one’s body type, the greater one’s worth and the greater one’s chances of leading a happy, fulfilling life. Those without ideal bodies are often criticized or ignored, while those

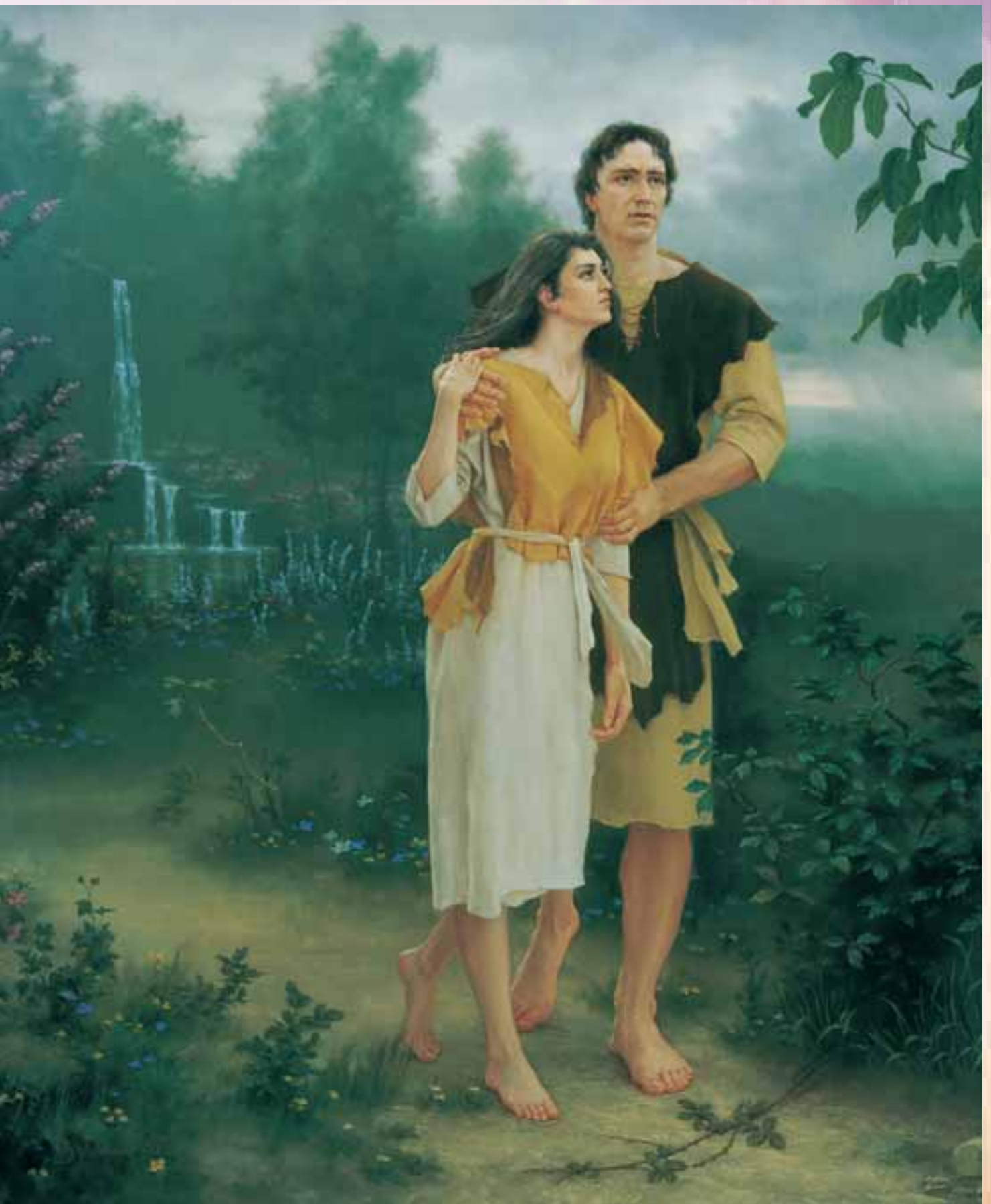
with ideal bodies are sought after, envied, or given authority.

Is this the way God intends us to regard our bodies? In the scriptures God reveals a perspective on the body that is radically different from that of the world. The scriptures and other revelations offer unparalleled truths about the body that free us from worldly ideas and practices that weigh us down.

The Body Is Godlike and Helps Us Progress

One foundational gospel truth about the body is the principle that having a physical body is a godlike attribute—you are more like God with a body than without. Our religion stands virtually alone in believing that God has a tangible body of flesh and bone and that our bodies were literally created in His likeness. In the Pearl of Great Price we read that “in the image of his own body, male and female, created he them” (see Moses 6:8–9). To become as God is requires gaining a body like He has and learning to correctly comprehend and use it. Those who chose not to follow God in the premortal state were denied mortal bodies. The Prophet Joseph Smith

Having a physical body is a godlike attribute. In the Pearl of Great Price we read that “in the image of his own body, male and female, created he them” (see Moses 6:8–9).



stated that Satan's lack of a body is a punishment to him.²

The body then is necessary for progression and for obtaining a fulness of joy. Having a mortal body indicates that you chose righteously in the premortal state. Inherent in the mortal body are powers and capabilities that enable you to continue to progress toward godhood. The body is not merely a mobile unit for the head nor a carnal vexation for the spirit, as some believe. Rather, it is an integral, powerful component of the soul, for "the spirit and the body are the soul of man" (D&C 88:15). Being privileged to know about the literal embodiment of God and the progressive nature of the body gives us a rare vantage point from which to comprehend and enjoy its tremendous capabilities.

The Body Is a Sacred Gift

A second truth the scriptures offer about the body is the clarification of its nature as a sacred gift from God. Though in mortality we will all die, because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ we will all be resurrected and united with our bodies forever (see 1 Corinthians 15:22). Indeed, one of the essential purposes of Christ's Atonement was to give us the opportunity to overcome death. In sharp contrast to the world's definition of a "perfect" body is our belief in a *perfected* body—a body together with a spirit—that has overcome both physical and spiritual death. A perfect or perfected body can ultimately be obtained only through Jesus Christ.

The scriptures warn us not to trifle with sacred things and to be wary of treating the body disrespectfully.

Alma asks:

"Can ye lay aside these things, and trample the Holy One under your feet; yea, can ye be puffed up in the pride

of your hearts; yea, will ye still persist in the wearing of costly apparel and setting your hearts upon the vain things of the world . . . ?

"Yea, will ye persist in supposing that ye are better one than another[?]" (Alma 5:53–54).



A *perfected body has overcome physical and spiritual death and can be obtained only through Jesus Christ.*

Such scriptures beg us to consider how we regard our bodies. If you become preoccupied with manipulating or adorning your body, for what purpose are you using your gift? If you do not properly care for your body, to what extent are you limiting your gift? If you use your body in direct opposition to the commandments of God, what ends will your gift serve? The scriptures ask a pointed question: "What doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift?" The sobering reply is "Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift" (D&C 88:33).

The purpose of the body is to help us learn, progress, serve, and glorify the Giver of the gift: God. Too often,

however, people mistakenly presume that the body is intended to glorify the self. Disrespecting our body in any manner—flaunting it, disparaging it, participating in immoral behavior, or neglecting it—constitutes rejecting the gift. A wise and loving God counsels us instead to be grateful for our body and to become a wise steward of it.

To become a grateful and wise steward of the body often requires giving up something worldly to gain something heavenly. For some, such an offering may include giving up a quest to become model-thin, while for others, it may include giving up excessive grooming habits and the wearing of costly or immodest apparel. For still others, it may include giving up the short-term pleasures of over-eating, the avoidance of proper exercise, or the viewing of

others' bodies as objects for self-gratification. With such forsaking of worldly practices come tremendous spiritual gains. Realizing and following the truth about the body brings freedom—freedom from the tyranny of vanity, fashion, envy, superficiality, self-criticism, backbiting, the ill effects of over-eating or undereating, lust, pornography, substance addiction, tattooing, and a host of other forms of worldly weight and oppression. Developing an understanding of the true purpose of the body enhances our ability to use our agency, to progress, and to find joy.

The Body Is a Temple

Another truth the scriptures teach about the body is that it is a temple (see 1 Corinthians 6:19). A temple not only is sacred, but it also radiates light and truth.

When the Lord sent the prophet Samuel to anoint a new king from among the sons of Jesse, Samuel saw one of the eight sons of Jesse named Eliab and assumed, based on Eliab's physical appearance, that he was to be anointed king. But the Lord informed Samuel that his judgment was mistaken and counseled him to “look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; . . . for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

We must learn, as Samuel did, that the body and the person are not to be judged using worldly criteria. A person's worth is not dependent upon his or her appearance. What makes a temple precious is what it allows us to learn and to do. Many buildings are outwardly beautiful, but only within the



temple can the splendor and magnificence of God's eternal truth and promises be found. Likewise, the worth of the body is great in the sight of God, but the preciousness of the body comes from what it allows us to learn and do and from what it radiates from within. We must enable our temple-bodies to radiate the light, love, and truth of Christ. Alma asks: “Have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances?” (Alma 5:14). A Christlike countenance that radiates truth, charity, and hope constitutes true beauty—beauty in the eyes of the ultimate beholder, God. True beauty comes from who and what an individual is. Such divine beauty is felt more than it is seen and is not bound by culture, age, or other worldly criteria.

Relying on God versus the Arm of Flesh

Because he was denied a mortal body, Satan understands all too well how precious bodies are. He seeks to confuse and tempt us to misuse the body or even to reject it so

While temples are outwardly beautiful, what makes a temple precious is what it allows us to learn and to do.



Through the Atonement, Jesus Christ can heal your mind and heart concerning your body.

others' bodies in a manner consistent with the scriptures, your vision of the body will be transformed. You will recognize the illusions of the world, and you will experience a release from worldly views and practices. Faith

that we might be miserable as he is (see 2 Nephi 2:27).

Ways of mistreating the body abound in all cultures. Amid such influences, treating the body properly requires deliberate thought and effort.

If you find yourself preoccupied with the appearance of your own body or those of others or if you struggle to feel at peace with your body, you might ask of God what you can do to remedy this. If you ask this question with real intent, the strength and assistance you need can be given to you through the scriptures, the Holy Ghost, and other means. Our Father in Heaven will help us with the struggles we face with our mortal bodies. He created us and our bodies and pronounced all that He had made as very good (see Moses 2:31).

If your struggle is particularly significant and you have a problem such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, morbid obesity, or substance addiction, you may require assistance from mental health or medical professionals. However, seeking to understand the divine nature of the body and accepting the healing that comes from that understanding are the most powerful means by which you can overcome worldly weight associated with the body—whether that weight is physical, ideological, emotional, or behavioral.

As Satan would conspire to have you be discontent with and disrespectful of your own and others' bodies, God will inspire a different view. Through the Atonement, Jesus Christ can heal your mind and heart concerning your body, if you so choose. As you treat your own and

in these principles about the body shall help make you whole. ■

Diane L. Spangler is a member of the Cedar Hills Fifth Ward, Cedar Hills Utah Stake.

NOTES

1. See AnnMarie Carroll and Diane L. Spangler, "A Comparison of Body Image Satisfaction among Latter-day Saint and Non-Latter-day Saint College-Age Students," *Journal of the Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists*, fall 2001, 6–18.
2. See *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 181.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

These suggestions can aid you in helping your children develop a healthy body image:

- Teach your children that God values us because of who we are, not how we look.
- Help your children understand the differences between the worldly perspective on the body and the gospel perspective.
- If your children criticize another's appearance, teach them that this behavior is inconsistent with gospel teachings.
- Teach your children that God created our bodies to help us be able to progress and become like Him. Ask them to identify what their bodies allow them to learn and do.
- Teach your children that we can show God we appreciate our bodies by caring for them and using them as they were intended.



THREE GREEN BEANS AND ME

BY ROSEMARIE DEPPE

HOW COULD TENDING A GARDEN TEACH ME ABOUT GOD?



As a young girl, I spent my summers with my grandma, and she spent her time in her garden. She didn't have a nice, small garden like other grandmas. She had a "work-hard-and-eat-well" garden. We would get up before the hot California sun and spend hours weeding, watering, and eventually picking. The only thing that kept me going was that once in a while, a fresh breeze rejuvenated us.

My grandma talked a little and worked a lot. I followed her around the garden, but my mind was usually somewhere else. Gardening was for grandmas, I thought. But her smile told me she was pleased as she surveyed our work. She made me promise that I would follow the counsel of President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) and plant my own garden someday.

Sowing Seeds of Obedience

Eventually I had a family of my own, and I decided to plant

a garden—admittedly not out of excitement but at least out of a desire to obey the prophet and to keep my promise to Grandma. As soon as I dug up a small area of ground, however, I realized I hadn't paid very close attention in my youth. What had come so easily for Grandma now seemed impossible for me. Did I pick a good location? How should I arrange the rows? How close should I plant the seeds?

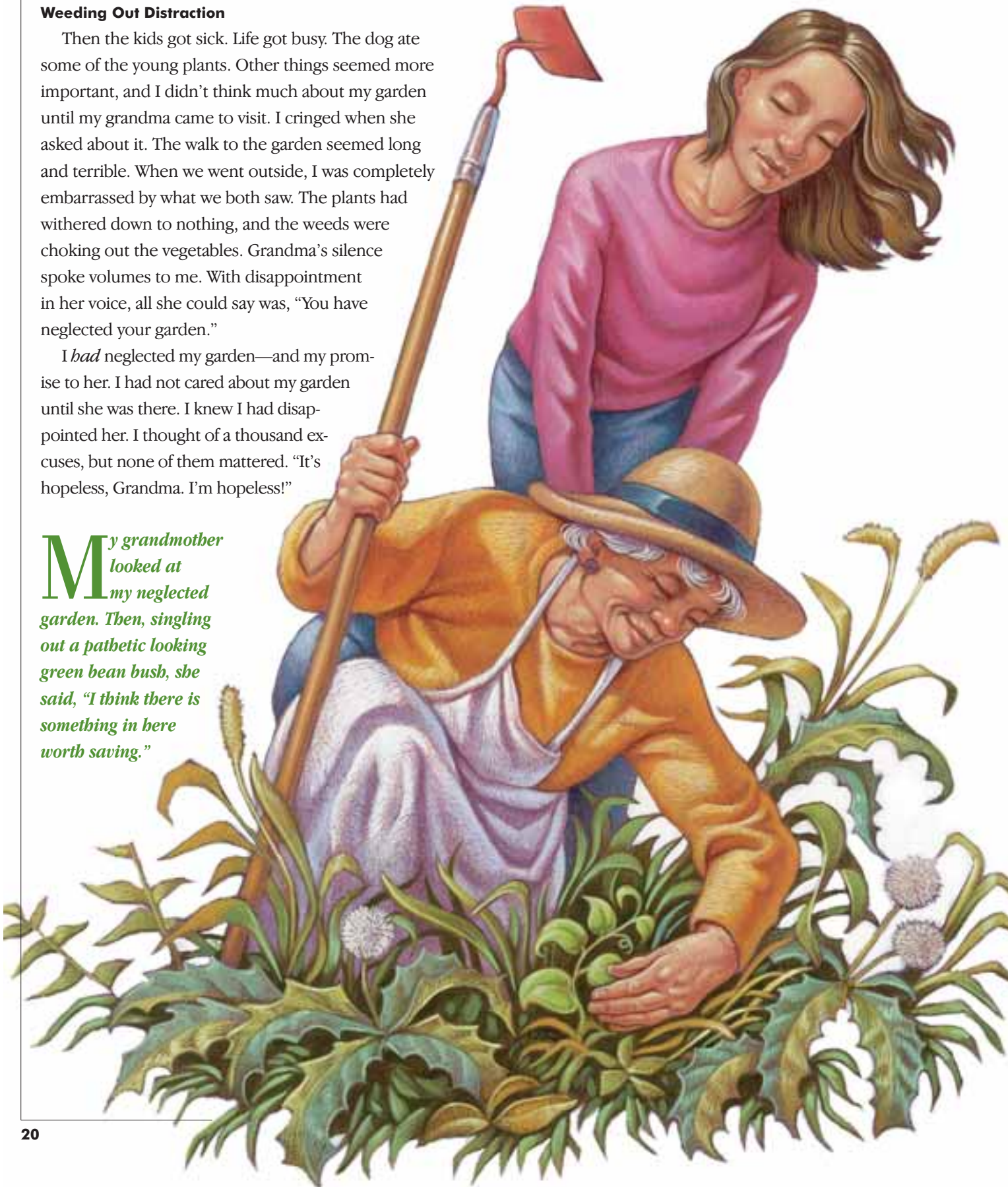
I tried to dismiss the need to plant a garden. "What's the big deal, anyway? I can just buy this stuff from the store and save myself all of this work," I thought. But I had made a promise. I called Grandma for reminders and tips, and I began to have a fresh remembrance of our summer days together in the garden. At first, nothing happened—all that work and nothing. But finally, after several weeks, a few plants struggled through the ground and began to grow.

Weeding Out Distraction

Then the kids got sick. Life got busy. The dog ate some of the young plants. Other things seemed more important, and I didn't think much about my garden until my grandma came to visit. I cringed when she asked about it. The walk to the garden seemed long and terrible. When we went outside, I was completely embarrassed by what we both saw. The plants had withered down to nothing, and the weeds were choking out the vegetables. Grandma's silence spoke volumes to me. With disappointment in her voice, all she could say was, "You have neglected your garden."

I *had* neglected my garden—and my promise to her. I had not cared about my garden until she was there. I knew I had disappointed her. I thought of a thousand excuses, but none of them mattered. "It's hopeless, Grandma. I'm hopeless!"

My grandmother looked at my neglected garden. Then, singling out a pathetic looking green bean bush, she said, "I think there is something in here worth saving."



Cultivating Hope

She looked at my garden intently. She looked at me and then looked back at my garden. “No, it’s not hopeless,” she said with a comforting smile. “I think there is something in here worth saving.” Her eyes settled on a scrawny, pathetic-looking green bean bush. I don’t even like green beans very much, but that was the plant she thought would survive.

I would have given up, but Grandma doesn’t give up on anything or anyone. She knelt down beside the little plant and began to clear away the weeds. She instructed me about what I needed to do. This time I listened carefully. Grandma believed that this green bean bush had value. It was important that it lived. I began to care about it too. I did not want to disappoint her again.

It took days to bring that little plant back to life and weeks of nurturing and care to keep it going. I’ll never forget the day I picked three green beans from that bush—I was thrilled!

Learning about Gardening—and God

Now, many gardens later, I understand what my grandma told me after that experience: “You will understand more about God if you tend your garden.”

I wondered what she meant by that. But then I remembered back to a time in college when

THE LAW OF THE HARVEST



“If a seed can multiply thirty, sixty, or even a hundred-fold, what then is my potential if I would but cast out the stones, clean out the thorns, cultivate deeply into the soil for a good seedbed, irrigate, and nourish? It is then that I realize there is no limit to my potential so long as I conform my life to the Lord’s law of the harvest. Let me encourage you to draw close to the soil. Have your own experience in planting a garden. Then make application in your own life of this great principle of the law of the harvest.”

Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Law of the Harvest,” *New Era*, Oct. 1980, 4.

my life looked like my neglected garden. I was withering. My gospel roots were not very deep. In the garden of my life, weeds were growing everywhere because I had neglected scripture study and prayer and had let other things become more important. I went to church, but I didn’t really listen. I made some mistakes, and I knew I needed help.

The walk to the bishop’s office—like the walk to the garden with my grandma—seemed long and terrible. I was embarrassed by what my life had become. I felt I was hopeless.

My bishop listened. He looked at me intently. Finally, with a comforting smile, he said, in effect, “No, it’s not hopeless. I see something in you that is worth saving.”

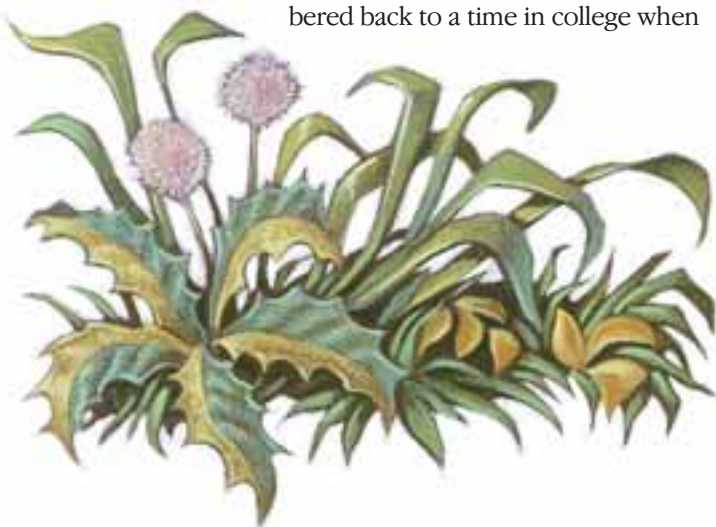
I began to understand that the power of the Atonement could restore my withered life. I came to know that Heavenly Father doesn’t give up on anybody, and I determined to try my best to not disappoint Him.

Just like the revitalizing breeze I had felt in my grandmother’s garden, the repentance process restored me. Through the blessings of the Atonement, my withered hopes slowly came back to life. It was a blessing—a blessing just for me.

I now realize that I am responsible for my garden—the garden of my life. It takes daily effort to grow closer to the Lord, just as it takes daily effort to keep a garden. Repentance repairs our mistakes, and the Atonement allows us to keep trying. I have learned that the fruits of the Spirit cannot be purchased from a store; we have to grow them ourselves by following Him.

I have never forgotten how pleased I was to see those three green beans on that scraggly bush long ago. But more important than saving the plant, I came to understand that the Lord sees someone worth saving in me. ■

Rosemarie Deppe is a member of the Jennings Lane Ward, Centerville Utah North Stake.





*Go to the scriptures
with a question.*

A DISCUSSION ON SCRIPTURE STUDY

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shares thoughts and insights about the importance of scripture study in individual spiritual growth.

How has scripture study benefited you personally?

Elder Eyring: Throughout my life, the scriptures have been a way for God to reveal things to me that are personal and helpful. When I was a little boy, I was given a small Bible. If I remember correctly, it was only the New Testament. For some reason, I was drawn to 1 Corinthians 13, which is about charity. Somehow, even in my childhood, I knew that for me that chapter was about the family I would have someday. Years later, before I was married, I received a patriarchal blessing. In that blessing, the patriarch described the feeling that would be in the home I would someday have. He described exactly what I had felt years before when I read 1 Corinthians 13.

The scriptures were one of the ways God spoke to me—even when I was a child—about my needs, my situation, and my life. They still are. Since our needs change over a

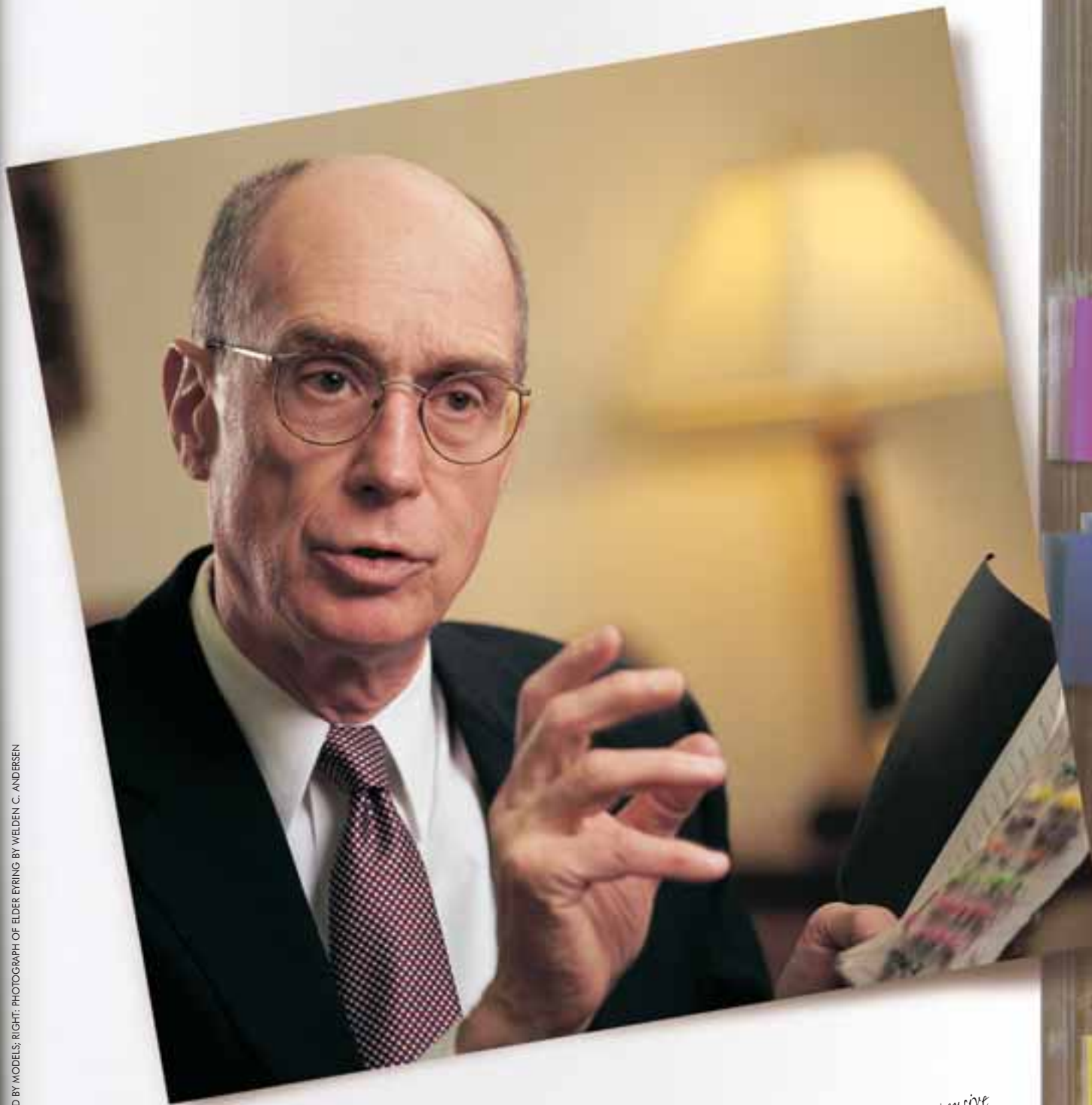
lifetime, God has different things to tell us at different times.

Sometimes I go to the scriptures for doctrine. Sometimes I go to the scriptures for instruction. I go with a question, and the question usually is “What would God have me do?” or “What would He have me feel?” Invariably I find new ideas, thoughts I have never had before, and I receive inspiration and instruction and answers to my questions.

Why should we read the Book of Mormon on an ongoing basis?

Elder Eyring: The Book of Mormon is another testament of Jesus Christ, and we learn about Him in its pages. We know that it has great power. It has the power to change lives. It has the power to convert. If you read it with an open heart, you will know that it is the word of God and that it is true.

Through the Book of Mormon the Lord can also teach us about being with and serving people. This book reveals the will of the Lord for family life in a way that the other scriptures don’t even approach. I believe that is largely because of its interesting structure. It’s about families; it’s about people’s relationships. It starts with families, it ends with families, and we come to love these families.



Another reason to study it regularly, for me at least, is that I can pick up the Book of Mormon, open to any page, read, and the Holy Ghost bears personal witness to me that it is the word of God. I know the Lord is speaking. I know the Book of Mormon is what it claims to be.

What have you done to make your own scripture study meaningful?

Elder Eyring: When I came into the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Elder Richard G. Scott suggested I buy an inexpensive set of scriptures and mark the insights and revelations I would gain in my new calling.

Buy an inexpensive set of scriptures and mark insights.

So I did. But I went a little further.

I asked Heavenly Father what He would have me do as an Apostle. I wrote down what I felt His answers were. I typed, color coded, and pasted those answers in the front of my scriptures. For example, the first one was “I am to be a witness that Christ is the Son of God.” Then I read my scriptures looking for ideas that taught me how to witness that Christ is the Son of God. Every time I came to something, I marked it in blue. Soon I developed my own topical guide around what I thought the Lord wanted me to do. I have learned much through this process.

Going to the scriptures to learn what to do makes all the difference. The Lord can teach us. When we come to a crisis in our life, such as losing a child or spouse, we should go looking in the scriptures for specific help. We will find answers in the scriptures. The Lord seemed to anticipate all of our problems and all of our needs, and He put help in the scriptures for us—if only we seek it.

How can Latter-day Saints make scripture study a priority?

Elder Eyring: The only way you can be sure that a busy schedule doesn’t crowd out scripture study is to establish a regular time to study the scriptures. I have found that the beginning of the day and the end of the day are mine. Those are times I can usually control. So my pattern since I was a boy has been to read my scriptures at the beginning and end of the day. I read the Book of Mormon many times before I was 18 because of that pattern.



When I am in situations where I break out of the pattern, it’s hard on me. Once you get used to regular scripture study, you miss it if you don’t have it. It’s like food—you have to have it. I know that I need the scriptures like I need food. I don’t miss a regular meal, and I don’t miss regular scripture study.

What role do fasting and prayer play in scripture study?

Elder Eyring: We need to approach a fast by asking to be taught; we should be humble and eager like a child. That’s how we fast if we do it right. If we just miss meals, it’s not the same.

Likewise, we need to go to the scriptures humbly and eagerly, as we do when we fast. When I go to the scriptures asking to be taught, then adding fasting helps tremendously.

For instance, just before general conference, I fast to find out what the Lord wants me to speak about. I can’t prepare a conference talk until I know what He wants. Fasting helps me focus on the one thing the Lord needs me to know. That same focus carries over as I read the scriptures. Fasting and prayer work together with scripture study, making it easier for the Lord to teach us.

Family scripture study works well only if your children know you love them and the scriptures.

How can parents help their children love the scriptures?

Elder Eyring: All of us have had various experiences and success with family scripture study, particularly as our children become teenagers. When they're little, gathering them around and reading the scriptures together is easier. As they get a little older, it can sometimes be harder to do. I know many families are very successful in getting their family up at some very early hour and they read the scriptures and then they read at night. But there are many patterns.

For me at least, and I think my six children would agree, scripture study works well only if your children know you love the scriptures and they also know as individuals that you love them. Then whatever pattern you have will work. If scripture study is forced for either them or you, if your children feel pushed, or if you don't really love the scriptures yourself, then scripture study doesn't have as much power.

It's important to read the scriptures together in a way that lets your children know you include them because you love them. However, reading together may break down during the teenage years. Teens may say, "I'd rather read on my own." My encouragement to families in that situation is to see that as victory, not defeat. Your child may be saying, "I'm getting something when I'm alone that I don't get when we're all here together." Take that as a wonderful sign that scripture study is beginning to take hold in your teen's heart. The main purpose is to fall in love with the scriptures and feast upon them, whether we are alone or together.

You have to be realistic. Let teens know you love them. Make sure they know you

love the scriptures. However, if they want to go to their rooms and read, let them. They'll find their own pattern and fall in love with the scriptures.

I'm blessed with a wife who absolutely loves the scriptures. If I ask her, "What would you like to do?" she says, "Oh, read me the scriptures." I think our children have sensed that it wasn't a duty for us to read the scriptures—it was a pleasure.

How can seminary help young people learn to love the scriptures?

Elder Eyring: I served as Commissioner of Church Education for a number of years, so I've had a chance to see that there are three powerful things seminary can do. First, it puts young people together who share the same values. Youth like to be with others who share their faith and who love the scriptures. Second, it puts youth together with a teacher who has a testimony, and they can feel the fire of it when it is borne. Third, seminary gets young people into the scriptures.

Seminary teachers have tried all sorts of methods—scripture chases, assignments, and scripture mastery. Success varies from student to student, but when seminary works, you find a teacher who has a testimony and who loves the young people.

Why is it important for us as teachers in our wards and branches to teach using the approved curriculum?

Elder Eyring: Church curriculum is scripture based, so a teacher who follows the curriculum will be taking the students to the scriptures. The greatest teachers I have known introduce a scripture during class discussion that speaks to the need or the

When seminary works, you find a teacher who has a testimony and who loves the young people.

interest of the student who has just spoken. There is tremendous power in doing that. The moment a young person actually sees a teacher using the scriptures to clarify and to help in a very personal way—oh my, that is a great moment.

I taught with a wonderful professor at Ricks College (now Brigham Young University—Idaho). I would turn to him and say, “How do you know where those scrip-

tures are?” I wanted to be like him in the sense of having scriptures at my fingertips. I could do that with a few scriptures, but he could do it with many. It is a great blessing for a teacher to have

the Lord draw out of his or her memory the very scripture that will help a student.

Remember that a short scripture can be more powerful than a lengthy one. It can respond directly to the question or interest of someone in the room. That’s powerful because it teaches students by example. It says, “Someday when you have a problem, the answer will be in the scriptures.”

What is the role of the Holy Ghost in scripture study?

Elder Eyring: The Holy Ghost confirms to us the word of God when we read it. That confirmation, repeated often, strengthens our faith. And it is by faith that we overcome obstacles and resist temptation.

I’ve taught deacons. I’ve been an assistant Scoutmaster. I found that if the boys began to

get restless, I would, just for a moment, read a scripture or two. There is a peaceful effect in a classroom when you read the word of God. The words of the scriptures themselves bring the Holy Ghost. And you can feel the difference. So I would say to a teacher, if you’re having a little trouble with unruliness in the classroom, find a way to read a scripture or to have one of the students read a scripture. It has a calming effect because it invites the Spirit.

What can we look forward to as we consistently study the scriptures?

Elder Eyring: In time, if you truly begin to feast upon the scriptures, you will find that they become a part of you. I remember that with Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who was as familiar with the scriptures as anyone I know. I would sometimes listen to him and say to myself, “Now is he quoting the scriptures, or are those his own words?”

President Gordon B. Hinckley is the same way. His ordinary speech is scriptural prose, and even in his pleasant, easy moments, that prose is a part of him. I think he has a great literary gift, in part because of his knowledge of the scriptures. I was with him just the other day when he very casually pulled a scripture into the conversation and it fit perfectly. Obviously the scriptures are in him; they’re part of him.

We all can have the dream of someday having the word of God be so much a part of us that the Lord can draw upon it and we can learn to think as He does. And in the process we can come unto Him. ■

This interview was conducted by LaRene Porter Gaunt, Church Magazines.



Wilford Woodruff (1807–98)**Fourth President of the Church**

“I read these—the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and I regard them as eternal truths. . . . I consider that the Doctrine and Covenants, our testament, contains a code of the most solemn, the most godlike proclamations ever made to the human family” (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, sel. G. Homer Durham [1946], 47–48).

Heber J. Grant (1856–1945)**Seventh President of the Church**

“My brethren and sisters, if we will study the scriptures, the plan of life and salvation, keeping the commandments of the Lord, all the promises that have been made will be fulfilled upon our heads. And we will grow and increase in light, knowledge and intelligence” (*Gospel Standards*, comp. G. Homer Durham [1941], 43).

George Albert Smith (1870–1951)**Eighth President of the Church**

“The Book of Mormon contains evidence of the importance that our Heavenly Father attaches to reading the scriptures. He sent the sons of Lehi back to Jerusalem to recover the Old Testament scriptures, in order that they might retain the teachings of the Prophets. The Lord would not take [Lehi’s family] into a new country without preserving to them the privilege of reading his teachings to their forefathers” (*Sharing the Gospel with Others*, comp. Preston Nibley [1948], 43–44).

Harold B. Lee (1899–1973)**Eleventh President of the Church**

“The scriptures, particularly, after one’s prayerful and diligent study, will serve as the safest guide in the discovery of the true church, for the gospel the Savior taught has not changed. It is the same today as it was

when He dwelt upon the earth” (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 315).

Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)**Twelfth President of the Church**

“Scripture study is a family responsibility. Scripture study as individuals and as a family is most fundamental to learning the gospel. Daily reading of the scriptures and discussing them together has long been suggested as a powerful tool against ignorance and the temptations of Satan. . . . Home is where we become experts and scholars in gospel righteousness. . . .

“ . . . We shall indeed find answers to our problems and peace in our hearts. We shall experience the Holy Ghost broadening our understanding, find new insights, witness an unfolding pattern of all scripture; and the doctrines of the Lord shall come to have more meaning to us than we ever thought possible” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 129, 135).

Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)**Thirteenth President of the Church**

“I urge you to recommit yourselves to a study of the scriptures. Immerse yourselves in them daily so you will have the power of the Spirit to attend you in your callings. Read them in your families and teach your children to love and treasure them” (“The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 82).

Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–)**Fifteenth President of the Church**

“I promise you that if you will read the words of that writing which we call scripture, there will come into your heart an understanding and a warmth that will be pleasing to experience. ‘Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.’ (John 5:39.)” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 572). ■

PLEASE SHOW ME MY WEAKNESS

BY LAVONDA R. JOHNSON

While teaching early-morning seminary one day, I was especially frustrated with my seeming inability to reach my students. If only I had Sister Hamlin's gift of gab or my husband's warm sense of humor! A few more skills in the entertainment area would certainly be helpful in trying to motivate and keep the attention of 17 teenagers. Something was wrong, and I had no idea what it was.

At home later that day, I decided to listen to a talk tape while I tackled my ironing. I prayed I might choose a tape that would help me know what I needed to do.

I was surprised at the directness with which my prayer was answered. The speaker on the tape mentioned the adverse effects of contention, and I suddenly realized that although I had not even recognized its presence, I was churning inside with resentment toward a student who skillfully counteracted my hours of preparation each day. That subtle, simmering bit of ill will had hardened my heart to the promptings of the Spirit.

I knew from past experience that Heavenly Father can replace anger and hurt with love and understanding if we ask Him earnestly. I therefore pleaded with Him to change my feelings toward this student, and He answered my petition. Rising from my knees overcome with the joy of having a new heart, I could hardly wait to begin preparing my lesson on Ether 12 for class the next morning.

As I read verses 23–24 I could picture Moroni expressing



his feelings of inadequacy as he translated from the powerful language of the Jaredite records: "Lord, the Gentiles will mock at these things, because of our weakness in writing. . . . Behold, thou hast not made us mighty in writing like unto the brother of Jared, for thou madest him that the things which he wrote were mighty even as thou art, unto the overpowering of man to read them." How often I too had felt inadequate because I lacked someone else's obvious gift!

The Lord gave the solution to Moroni's problem: "And if men come unto me I will show unto them their weakness. I give unto

men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them" (v. 27).

I had never noticed the process in this verse before, but because of the morning's events, it stood out plainly:

1. Come unto Christ. I had previously wondered how anyone could consider it a blessing to have a weakness revealed to him or her. As it was, I had always felt painfully aware of mine. But now I realized that my weakness was the very thing I had been seeking to know that morning. I had reached out to say, "What am I doing wrong?" or in essence, "Please show me my weakness."

I had to come to Christ before He showed me my weakness. And the instruction I received was a blessing. Without the knowledge I was given, I would have continued to

have the problem and frustration with no idea as to how to overcome it.

2. Humble yourself before

Christ. Why had I not received an answer to my problem much earlier? Could it have been because I wasn't humble enough to get the kind of answer I needed? I was trying to improve the situation on my own by using this technique or that: more visual aids, more class involvement, more preparation. But the mornings were no better. Not until I felt the full effect of the principle taught in John 15:4–5 was I humble enough to receive the answer I needed. In these verses the Savior said, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. . . . Without me ye can do nothing."

3. Have faith in Christ. "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). That includes softening hard hearts. The peace and love that came into my heart that day were truly a gift. As well as I knew that I could not overcome my problem alone, I also knew that the Savior is the source of all strength and light.

4. He will make weak things strong. As we met in seminary the next morning, the Spirit of the Lord was freely felt. The students recognized it and expressed appreciation for what they had learned from Ether 12. The grace of God, that enabling power, had been not only

Christ reaches out to us and strengthens us when we reach out to our Father in prayer.

sufficient but ample, and I was reminded of the words of a hymn, "My weakness in mercy he covers with pow'r, and, walking by faith, I am blest ev'ry hour" ("The Lord Is My Light," *Hymns*, no. 89). ■

Lavonda R. Johnson is a member of the Burkburnett Ward, Lawton Oklahoma Stake.

Believe

ALL THINGS



*The more we believe,
the easier faith-
based obedience
becomes.*

BY ELDER ROBERT C. OAKS

Of the Presidency of the Seventy

Several years ago I was discussing the origin of the Book of Mormon with a friend. When I had finished explaining the role of the golden plates in Joseph Smith's translation work, my friend asked the understandable question, "Where are the golden plates now?" After I told him the angel Moroni had taken the plates back following the completion of the translation, my friend quickly lost interest in any further religious discussion. It was apparent that for my friend, seeing is believing.

Unfortunately, people commonly say: "Show me. If I can't see it, it doesn't exist." Believing in that which is beyond the reach of the five senses is not the inclination of today's society. But the Lord has in mind for us a better way.

The Apostle Paul tells us that charity, that most important of all virtues, "believeth all things" (1 Corinthians 13:7; see also Moroni 7:45). For us, to "believe all things" means to believe the doctrine of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ as well as the words of the Latter-day prophets. It means to successfully erase our doubts and reservations. It means that in making spiritual commitments, we are prepared to hold nothing back. It means we are ready to consecrate our lives to the work of the kingdom.

The Thinking of the "Natural Man"

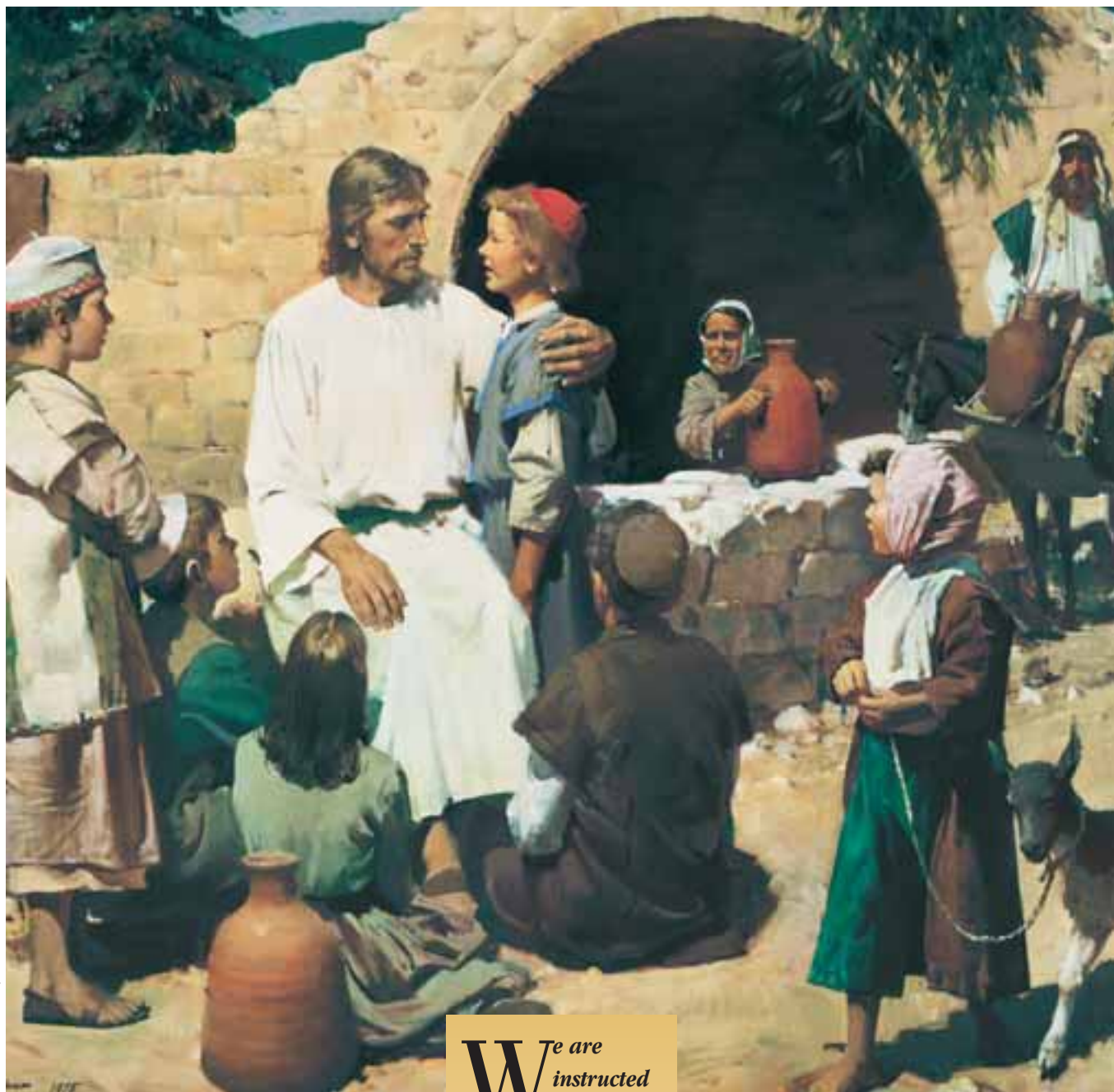
This is certainly not the normal, "natural man" way of thinking (see Mosiah 3:19). The

natural man may believe carefully selected points of doctrine, he may even believe a majority of the doctrine, but he will always have some reservations (see 1 Corinthians 2:11–14).

These reservations may be intellectually based. Some members are constantly evaluating the gospel by the standards of the world. They may think, "That is not how I think the Lord would want it done," or, "Based on my understanding of the scriptures, the Church position should have been . . ."

Many of these reservations are driven by pride. For example, Laman and Lemuel received numerous, powerful spiritual manifestations certifying Nephi's divine calling, but their pride would never let them submit to the leadership of their younger brother. Contrast their reservations with the unwavering support Hyrum Smith gave his younger brother, the Prophet Joseph Smith. According to President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945), his mother, Rachel Ivins Grant, said that "of all the men she was acquainted with in her girlhood days in Nauvoo, she admired Hyrum Smith most for his absolute integrity and devotion to God, and his loyalty to the prophet of God," his brother Joseph Smith Jr.¹

Some Church members may have reservations because of a physical appetite they are not quite willing to surrender. In an effort to justify their behavior and to avoid facing the challenge of keeping their appetites within heavenly bounds, they may say, "Surely the Lord will not keep me out of the celestial kingdom over a cup of coffee every once in a while."



**We are
instructed
to be like
children, who are
willing to be taught
and then to act
without first
demanding full
knowledge.**

Other common reservations are flagged by words such as “yes, but . . .” when scriptures or prophets are quoted. Or we may hear, “I am not going to let the Church make my decisions for me,” implying that Church leaders do not understand the central role of agency in the plan of salvation.

“I can’t accept that because I don’t understand it” is another philosophical impediment to believing all things. But if we have spent any time considering the nature of faith, we

must realize that “believing all things” is the equivalent of full faith, not full knowledge. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has quoted President Harold B. Lee (1899–1973) as saying, “You must learn to walk to the edge of the light, and perhaps a few steps into the darkness, and you will find that the light will appear and move ahead of you.”² We develop our faith in the word of God through our experience.



When the angel Gabriel announced to Mary her divine calling, Mary offered no words of reservation or restraint. Her response reflected her willingness to believe.

In Malachi 3:10, as the Lord is instructing Israel regarding tithing, He states His willingness to have His doctrine tested through experience: “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and *prove me* now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, 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” (emphasis added). As we pay our tithing and see the blessings flow—and they surely will—we grow in our faith. The Lord will always pass the test of reliability and dependability. As we continually see Him keep His promises, we continue to grow in faith. The more we believe, the easier this faith-based obedience becomes. Hence the value of “believing all things.”

Obedience

Obedience is a fundamental law of the gospel. It is not only the demonstration of our faith but also the foundation of our faith. But the philosophical standard of the world holds that unquestioning obedience equals blind obedience, and blind obedience is mindless obedience. This is simply not true. Unquestioning obedience to the

Lord indicates that a person has developed faith and trust in Him to the point where he or she considers all inspired instruction—whether it be recorded scripture, the words of modern prophets, or direct inspiration through the Holy Ghost—to be worthy of obedience.

The standard of the world is “I will move on a course only when its truth has been proven to me.” This standard contradicts the admonition to believe all things. Unfortunately, we are too often content to live with our reservations, assuming that believing *most* things is good enough.

At some point in our quest for perfection and eternal life, we may come to have perfect faith and eventually perfect knowledge. But between now and then, there will certainly arise intriguing questions with answers reaching beyond our capacity to comprehend. Such questions can drive the prideful person to conclusions such as “Given the constraints of Christian doctrine, there is no possible answer to this question; therefore, a thinking person cannot be a Christian.” Such pride and arrogance must greatly offend the heavens.

Childlike Submissiveness

The scriptures support the importance of believing all things rather than waiting to know all things. For example, we are instructed to be like children, who are willing to be taught and then to act without first demanding full knowledge. In Matthew 18:3 Christ taught, “Except ye . . . become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” King Benjamin taught that a disciple should become “as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father” (Mosiah 3:19).

It is interesting that as children we believe in and respond to the instructions of our earthly fathers, with their limited vision and understanding. But as we get older, despite our avowed testimonies of an eternal, all-knowing Heavenly Father, we may shy away from rendering Him that same trust and obedience we afforded our earthly fathers.

One who powerfully exemplified childlike submissiveness was Mary, the mortal mother of Jesus Christ. After the angel Gabriel told her of her divine calling, she replied, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38). Mary knew the potential impact of Gabriel’s message. Her neatly planned life—with its future marriage and family in a familiar village, surrounded by her lifelong friends—was not to be. The laws of the day would demand that she be stoned for expecting a child in her current circumstances. Yet she offered no words of reservation or restraint. Her response reflected her willingness to believe all things. Certainly her rewards for her faith are rich and eternal.

Fourteen-year-old Joseph Smith also stands as a powerful example of a believing spirit. Had he been proud or prone to intellectualization, these words in James 1:5 would not have entered deeply into his heart: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” Pride would have prevented him from retreating to the woods to pray regarding which church he should join. But his believing heart led him to accept the words of this scripture, and he sought the Lord’s guidance. His faith was rewarded by a divine vision that changed the course of his life and would change the lives of those who seek to know the truth of his story.

The three young Israelites Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego each revealed a similar childlike faith and trust when they were thrown into a fiery furnace for refusing to worship the gods of Babylon. Their words reflect their faith in the power of their God, even Jehovah: “Our God . . . is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, . . . *but if not*, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods” (Daniel 3:17–18; emphasis added). Their God was able to, and did, deliver them from the furnace. Full faith, or a willingness to “believe all things,” is a remarkable power.

The greatest of all examples of submissiveness is that of the Savior in Gethsemane as He prayed, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” He went on to signal the depths of His character, love, and submissiveness

as He declared, “Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39). Everything about His life reflects His childlike submissiveness to the will of His Father.

Unquestioning Faith

In our quest to “believe all things,” we may discover questions that are not easily answered. But we can have faith and peace of mind because we know that God is just. One day there will be answers to all our questions, and they will be based on divine fairness and love. The Lord will not hold people accountable for factors over which they have no control.

Let us believe all things. Let us have unquestioning faith in all of the doctrines and truths of the restored gospel. The virtue of charity will then be embedded more deeply in our character, and we will be more receptive to the counsel and guidance of the Lord. I pray that we each may conduct our lives to this end. ■

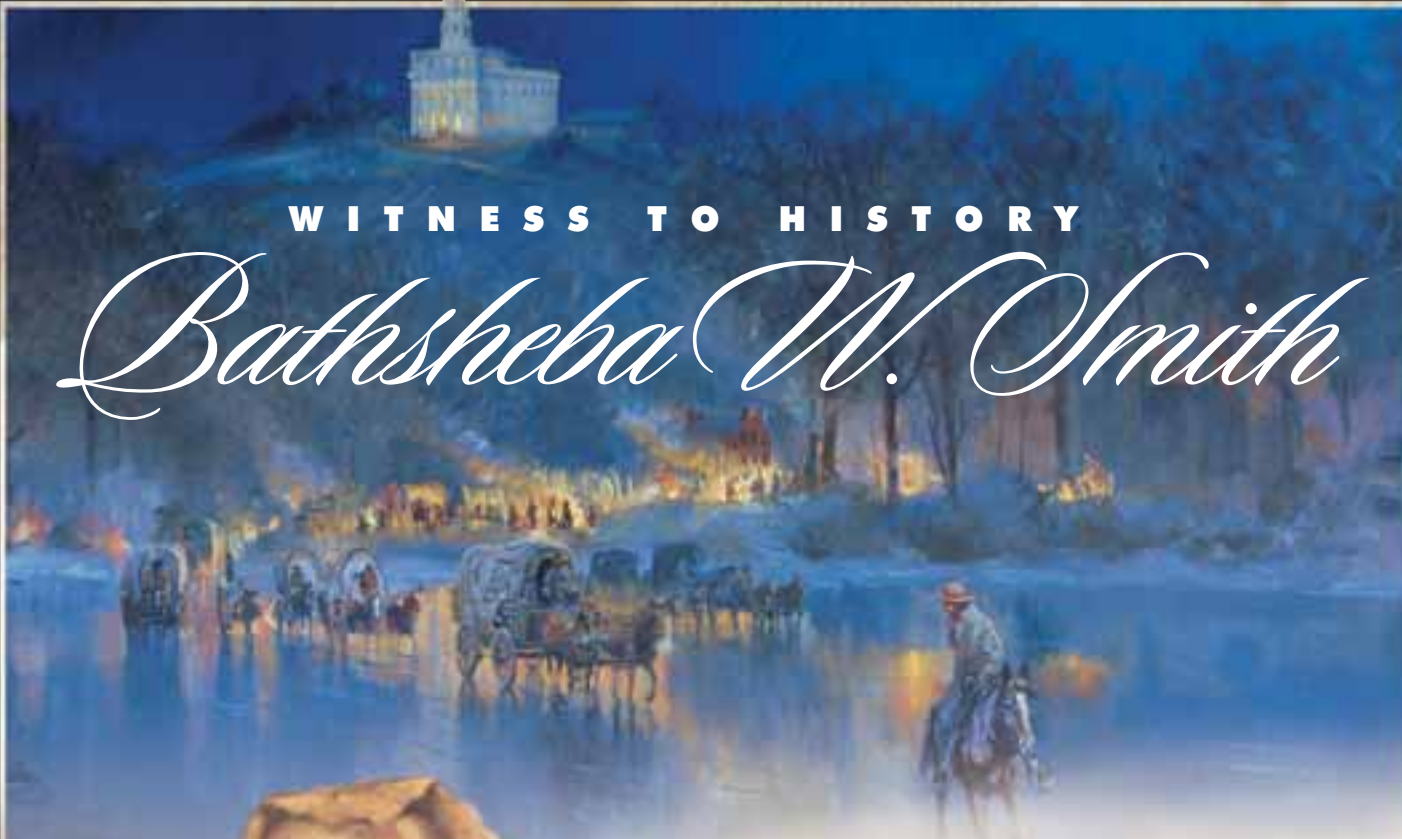
NOTES

1. In Conference Report, Oct. 1920, 84.
2. Howard W. Hunter and Boyd K. Packer, *That They May Be Redeemed* (address delivered at regional representatives’ seminar, Apr. 1, 1977), 8.



HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Blindfold one family member. Have a parent guide him or her through a set of obstacles. Compare this activity to the doctrines presented in this article.
2. Wrap something worthless in an attractive package and wrap something valuable in an ugly package. Ask family members to choose which they prefer and why. After opening the packages, discuss why some people have reservations about believing all things. (See the first two sections.) How can we develop our trust in God? (See the last two sections.)
3. Show pictures that illustrate the scripture stories found in this article. How and why were the people in these stories blessed by the Lord? What are some blessings you would like to receive from the Lord? How can obedience and childlike submissiveness be helpful in this quest?



WITNESS TO HISTORY

Bathsheba W. Smith

BY LARENE PORTER GAUNT
Church Magazines

The powerful story of the Latter-day Saint migration to the Salt Lake Valley is captured in the life of the fourth Relief Society general president.



On a cold February morning in 1846, Bathsheba W. Smith watered her potted flowers for the last time. She looked around the room. Only a few months earlier, she and her sister Melissa had spent happy afternoons sewing curtains. But more recently, as part of the Saints' preparation to leave Nauvoo, Illinois, Bathsheba had willingly cleared her parlor so it could be used as a paint shop for the wagons. And now, pregnant with her third child, she was getting ready to leave Nauvoo with her husband, George A. Smith; their three-year-old son, George Jr.; and their one-year-old daughter, Bathsheba.

Bathsheba's exodus with the Saints from Nauvoo was part of a pattern of sacrifice and

Top: Bathsheba joined other Saints as they fled Nauvoo. **Left:** Bathsheba in her later years.

**Sixteen-year-old
Bathsheba Bigler
had a strong
testimony of the
Book of Mormon
when she was
baptized on
August 21, 1837.**



**In fall 1837, the
Bigler family
decided to join the
Saints in Far West,
Missouri. Bathsheba
wrote that these
were “distressing
times.”**



**In 1840, the
Bigler family
settled in
Nauvoo, Illinois,
after fleeing
Missouri with
thousands
of others.**



obedience that characterized the 88 years of her life. Her strongest talents lay in her abilities at the loom and with the needle, and her strongest character traits lay in her devotion to husband, family, and the gospel.

Bathsheba witnessed many remarkable events in the early history of the Church. For example, not long after her family’s arrival at Far West, a battle occurred at nearby Crooked River. Elder David W. Patten of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was mortally wounded and was brought to the house where her family was staying. She witnessed his death a few days later.

At age 19, in Nauvoo, Bathsheba was among the youngest present at the organization of the Relief Society in March 1842. She also attended the laying of the cornerstone of the Nauvoo



Joseph and Emma Smith at the organization of the Relief Society on March 17, 1842, in Nauvoo.

Temple. Bathsheba and her husband, George A. Smith, were among the first to receive their temple endowments and be sealed together. After the Prophet Joseph Smith was martyred, Bathsheba was present when the mantle of the presidency fell upon Brigham Young. Having experienced these and so many other landmark events, she lived, appropriately enough, in the Historian’s Office in Salt Lake City. Her husband was Church historian.

A friend described Bathsheba as “a tall, stately woman, with an abundance of beautiful brown hair, dark eyes, smooth fair complexion. . . . I noted her superiority, her dignity of carriage, yet, with all that, she was easy to approach, lovable in manner, for she ever gave a sweet smile and a word of encouragement to little children

and young people, also care and tenderness to the sick or aged. She was artistic in temperament, loved the beautiful, appreciated refinement, and always dressed in good taste.”¹

Joys and Persecutions

Bathsheba’s conversion to the gospel was the pivotal point between the stability of her refined southern childhood and the sacrifices required of her as a Latter-day Saint. Born May 3, 1822, near Shinnston, Virginia (now West Virginia), she was the eighth of nine children of Mark and Susannah Ogden Bigler. A cheerful child, Bathsheba loved to spin, weave, and embroider with her mother and to go horseback riding with her father over their 300-acre

plantation. Religiously inclined, Bathsheba was careful to say her “secret prayers,” as she called them. When Latter-day Saint missionaries knocked on the Biglers’ door, they found the entire family spiritually ready for the message of the restored gospel.

“I believed the Book of Mormon to be a divine record,” wrote Bathsheba, “and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God. I knew by the spirit of the Lord, which I received in answer to prayer, that these things were true. On the 21st of August 1837, I was baptized.”²

One of the missionaries was George A. Smith, a cousin of the Prophet Joseph Smith. During the next six months, Bathsheba and George became friends and agreed to marry when she was older.

As children, Bathsheba and a friend traded names as a symbol of their friendship. She used “W” as her middle initial for Wilson, her friend’s surname.



On July 25, 1841, Bathsheba Bigler married George A. Smith.



The Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were martyred in Carthage Jail on June 27, 1844.



spirit of the Lord was with us to comfort and sustain us.”⁵

The Biglers stayed only a short time in Missouri. In

February 1839 they departed with thousands of other Saints for Illinois. Bathsheba gave up her seat on the wagon to those who were sick, and she walked most of the way.

Once in Illinois, the Biglers stayed in Quincy. Bathsheba and her father both became ill with malaria. She recovered, but to her great sorrow her father died. In 1840, the family moved to Nauvoo.

On July 11, 1841, George A. Smith, who was now serving as the youngest member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, returned from a mission to England. He and Bathsheba married 14 days later.

A Devoted Homemaker

Bathsheba had grown up in a beautiful home where she learned the art of southern hospitality from her mother, who had come from a well-to-do family. After her marriage, Bathsheba set up housekeeping five different times that first year in dwellings that were shabby compared to her childhood home. Nevertheless, the newlyweds knelt by their bed and dedicated themselves to God and thanked Him for bringing them together after being separated so long. Their love was warm, but the house “smoked and was open and cold.”⁶

Eventually George built a comfortable, two-story home. He and Bathsheba were so anxious to move in before the birth of their first child that they set up their bed in an unfinished room. Twelve days later, on July 7, 1842, their son George Jr. was born.

Two months later, George Sr. was called on a mission to the eastern states. Bathsheba’s words to George in one letter were typical: “I look at your portrait which I never

Bathsheba took art lessons in Nauvoo. This picture of Apostle Willard Richards is among the drawings she made. Other drawings fill her sketchbook.



The Biglers’ neighbors ridiculed them for joining the Church. In the fall of 1837, Bathsheba’s family decided to join the Saints in Far West, Missouri. “On our journey the young folk of our party had much enjoyment,” wrote Bathsheba. “It seemed so novel and romantic to travel in wagons over hill and dale, through dense forests and over extensive prairies . . . and camping in tents at night.”³

Though the journey seemed exciting to young Bathsheba, once they were in Missouri the Biglers found that bands of angry men frequently gathered around their wagons. Bathsheba reported that they usually said, “As you are Virginians, we will let you go on, but we believe you soon will return for you will quickly become convinced of your folly.”⁴

But Bathsheba and her family didn’t think of their new life as folly. “In these distressing times,” wrote Bathsheba, “the

George and Bathsheba Smith's two children were sealed to them on January 25, 1846, in the Nauvoo Temple.



In February 1846, the Smiths left Nauvoo, crossed the Mississippi River, and regrouped with other Saints at Sugar Creek for the trek west.



Memorial, right, remembers the suffering of Saints at Winter Quarters, Nebraska. In April 1847, Bathsheba gave birth to a son, John, who died a few hours later.



forget. It hangs back of my bed and is the last thing I see and the first in the morning. Oh, it is such a comfort to me. It always looks pleasant and kind as you do and seems to say when I feel bad, 'Cheer up, all is well.' . . . When the shades of night fall upon it, it does look so much like you that it makes the tears fall fast."⁷

In 1844, Bathsheba heard the Prophet Joseph's stirring words during his visit to a Relief Society meeting. "His voice trembled very much," she wrote. "He said: 'According to my prayer I will not be with you long to teach and instruct you.'"⁸

On June 27, a mob killed him and his brother Hyrum. Bathsheba wrote to her husband of the event: "It

pains me to write such a painful tale, but the Lord has comforted our hearts in a measure."⁹

After the Martyrdom, the Apostles, including George, returned to Nauvoo. On August 14, 1844, Bathsheba gave birth to their daughter, Bathsheba.

Again the Saints knew they would need to leave their homes. They worked frantically to complete the Nauvoo Temple. From December 1845 to February 1846, Bathsheba served as a temple worker while thousands of Saints received their endowments. On January 25, 1846, George and Bathsheba's two children were sealed to them. Two weeks later, the Saints began leaving Nauvoo—The City Beautiful.

Moving West

"We crossed the Mississippi River to seek a home in the wilderness . . . taking with us but a few things such as

clothing, bedding, and provisions, leaving every thing else for our enemies," wrote Bathsheba. "We were obliged to stay in camp for a few weeks on Sugar Creek because of the weather being so very cold. The Mississippi froze over so that hundreds of families crossed over on the ice."¹⁰

The Saints then crossed Iowa to the Missouri River,

where they created a temporary refuge called Winter Quarters. "I will not try to describe how we traveled through storms of snow wind and rain, how roads had to be made, bridges built, and rafts constructed; how our poor animals had to drag on day after day with scanty food; how our camps suffered from poverty, sickness and death," wrote Bathsheba of the Iowa trek.

" . . . The Lord was with us, and his power was made manifest daily in our journey."¹¹

While they were in Winter Quarters, death struck Bathsheba's family more than once. On March 11, 1847, her mother died. Three weeks later, on April 4, Bathsheba gave birth to a son, John, who lived only four hours.

In June 1847, many Saints left Winter Quarters for the Salt Lake Valley. George and Bathsheba followed a different course. Bathsheba remained in Winter Quarters to help others while George traveled back and forth to the Salt Lake Valley helping Saints migrate west.

Two years later, it was finally time for George to lead his family west. He widened and heightened Bathsheba's wagon substantially. She carpeted the floor, put four chairs in the center in which to ride, and hung a looking glass, candlestick, and pincushion. Once, while fording a stream, Bathsheba's awkward wagon threatened to wash downstream. Unruffled, she yelled, "Behold, Noah's Ark!"¹²



During the Smiths' migration to Winter Quarters, the winds had literally blown their tents to shreds. They were glad to get into a sod-roofed cabin like one shown here.

The Smiths left Winter Quarters in June 1849 and traveled west to the Salt Lake Valley.



In 1866 President Brigham Young reorganized the Relief Society, and Eliza R. Snow (right) became the second general president.



From 1888 to 1901, Bathsheba served as second counselor to Zina Young (right), third general president of the Relief Society.



After months of traveling, including a 36-hour snowstorm and a cattle stampede, the Smiths arrived in the Salt Lake Valley.

Family Life in the Valley

George was often away with Church responsibilities, but Bathsheba's younger sister Melissa lived nearby, and Melissa's daughter Julina spent many hours playing with Bathsheba's daughter. Melissa considered Bathsheba's caring for Julina as a great help to her. By the time Julina was seven, she lived with her aunt but went daily to see her mother.

In 1854 George was called to be Church historian, and the family moved into the Historian's Office—a duplex with half serving as an office and the other half as a residence. In the evenings, the family enjoyed entertaining visitors, reading, singing, playing musical instruments, and dancing. George Jr. played the flute and fife, and he and his sister played the drums. Bathsheba wrote, "They made our homes joyous with song and just their pleasure was mine; I was so proud of them and so happy with them."¹³

Six years later, Bathsheba's life was shattered

when she received news that Indians had killed her son George Jr. Only three bones and a lock of hair were found to bring home for burial. Two months later her daughter married. Still deeply grieving over her son's death, Bathsheba experienced a profound sense of loss when her daughter left home. Happily for Bathsheba, Julina still lived with her.

In time, Bathsheba's daughter had 14 children, and Julina had 10. Bathsheba made mittens, dresses, and coats for her grandchildren. When Grandma Bathsheba came to visit carrying her flower-covered carpetbag filled with gifts, the grandchildren ran to her, shouting "Hurrah!"

In these later years of their lives, George and Bathsheba traveled together to various branches of the Church throughout the territory, where bands and children carrying banners frequently met them. This was a sweet culmination of their 34-year marriage. Bathsheba wrote: "I love my husband dearly. I believe but few in this wide world have been as happy as we have been."¹⁴



Inset: Bathsheba W. Smith. Right: The Church Historian's Office, about 1869, was a duplex located on South Temple Street across from the Beehive House. George, as Church historian, had his office in the right side of the building, and the family lived in the left side.



On April 6, 1892, exactly one year before the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated, the capstone was put into place.



In 1905, nursing classes were started in the LDS Hospital for selected Relief Society sisters.



Bathsheba W. Smith died in Salt Lake City on September 20, 1910.

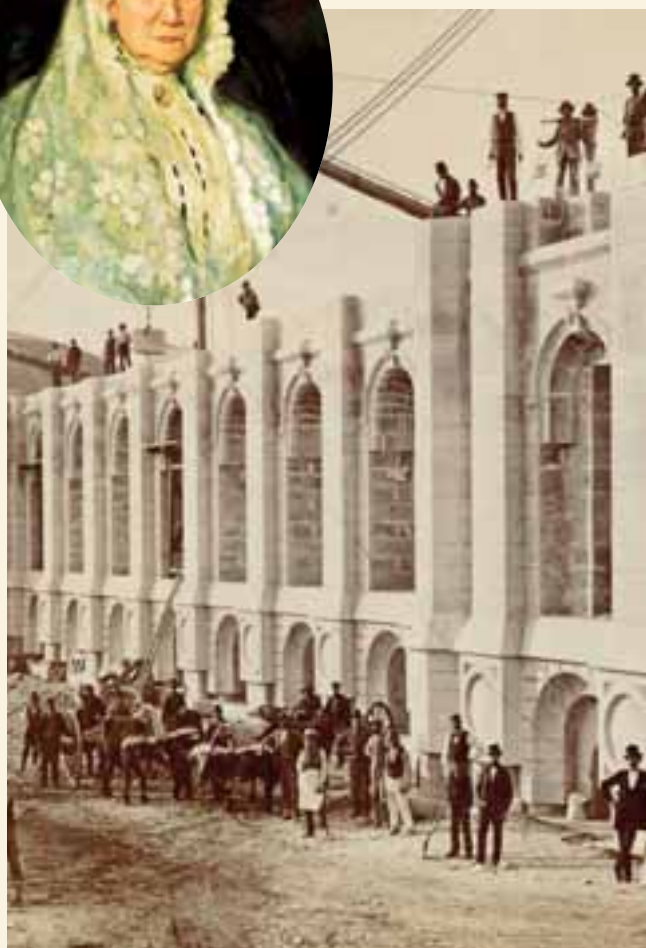


George A. Smith died in September 1875. Bathsheba wrote of his death: "His head lay . . . against my bosom, good angels had come to receive his precious spirit, . . . but he was gone my light my sun my life my joy."¹⁵

Called to Serve

Bathsheba's remaining years were filled with her grandchildren and with renewed service in Relief Society. In October 1888, general Relief Society president Zina D. H. Young selected Bathsheba as her counselor. When beloved "Aunt Zina" died in August 1901, Bathsheba was called as president.

Bathsheba believed that one of the most important things she could do as president was to serve in the temple. A friend wrote of her: "It is a lovely and an inspiring sight to see [her] arrayed in her simple white gown of home-made silk, her dark eyes still bright, her fair, delicate face crowned with lustrous bands of shining white hair, her finely-shaped head, with its rich, white lace draping, held erect."¹⁶



Inset: Bathsheba W. Smith as Relief Society general president. Above: The partially finished Salt Lake Temple.

Bathsheba died September 20, 1910, at the age of 88.

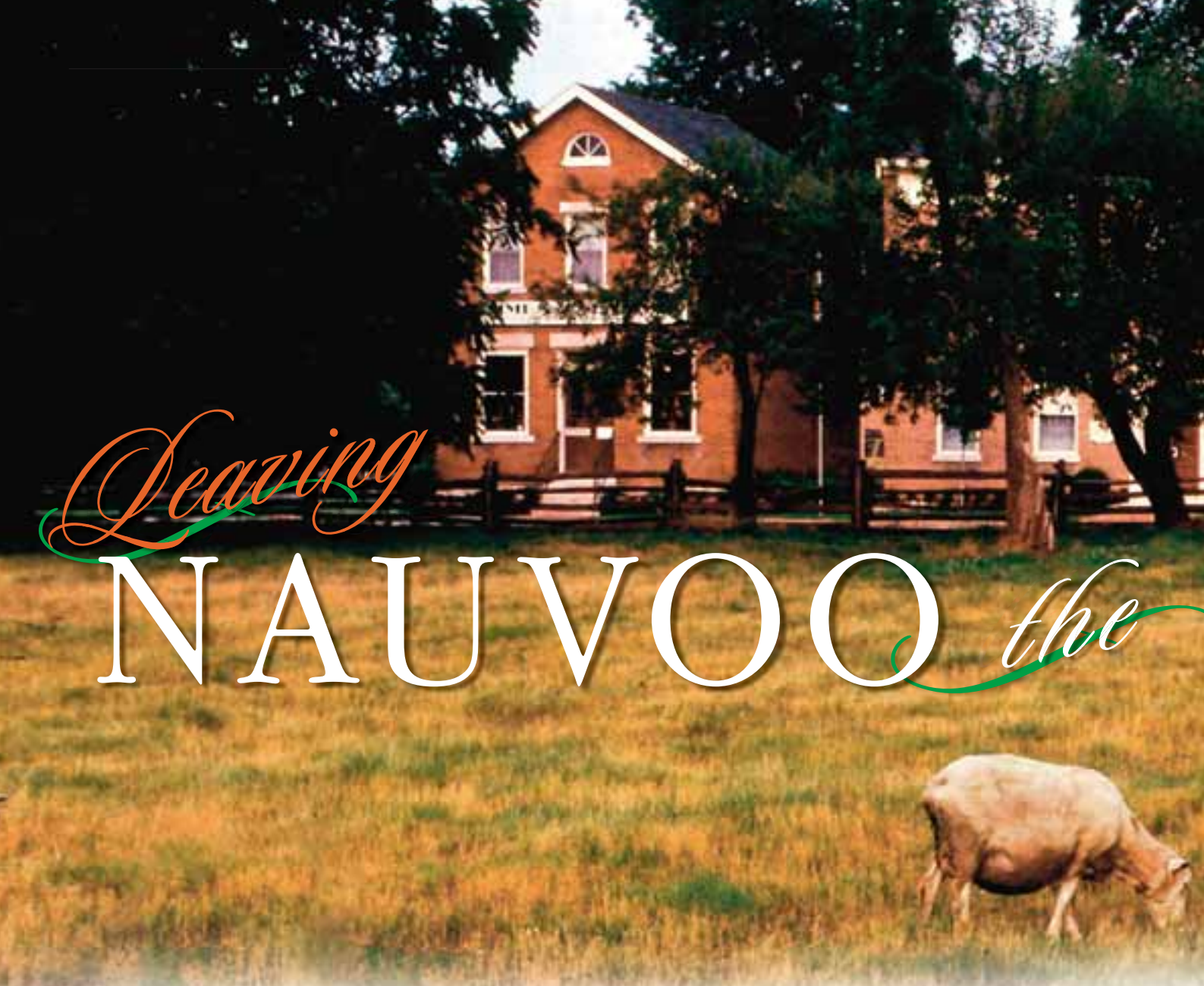
"When I heard the Gospel I knew it was true," Bathsheba once wrote. "When I first read the Book of Mormon, I knew it was inspired of God; when I first beheld Joseph Smith I knew I stood face to face with a prophet of the living God."¹⁷

Bathsheba's testimony remained strong throughout her life. Her unfailing devotion to her husband and family served as an example to others, and her singular opportunities made her a witness to the unfolding history of the Church. ■

A longer version of this article appeared as a chapter in Elect Ladies (1990), 60–76.

NOTES

1. Julia P. M. Farnsworth, "A Tribute to Bathsheba W. Smith," *Young Woman's Journal*, Nov. 1910, 608–9.
2. Bathsheba W. Smith, Autobiography, typescript, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2. Hereafter cited as Autobiography.
3. Autobiography, 3.
4. Autobiography, 3.
5. Autobiography, 5.
6. George Albert Smith, Journal, Aug. 25, 1841, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
7. Bathsheba W. Smith to George A. Smith, Feb. 14, 1851, holograph, George A. Smith Collection, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
8. Preston Nibley, "She Knew the Prophet Joseph Smith: Part III—Bathsheba W. Smith," *Relief Society Magazine*, June 1962, 410–11.
9. Bathsheba W. Smith to George A. Smith, July 6, 1844, holograph, George A. Smith Collection, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
10. Autobiography, 9.
11. Autobiography, 10.
12. Mary Isabella Horne, "Migration and Settlement of the Latter-day Saints," dictated memoir, microfilm of holograph, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
13. Autobiography, 23–24.
14. Autobiography, 24.
15. Autobiography, 31–32.
16. Susa Young Gates, ed., *History of the Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association* (1911), 27–28.
17. Lucy Woodruff Smith, "Past Three Score Years and Ten," *Young Woman's Journal*, Oct. 1901, 440.

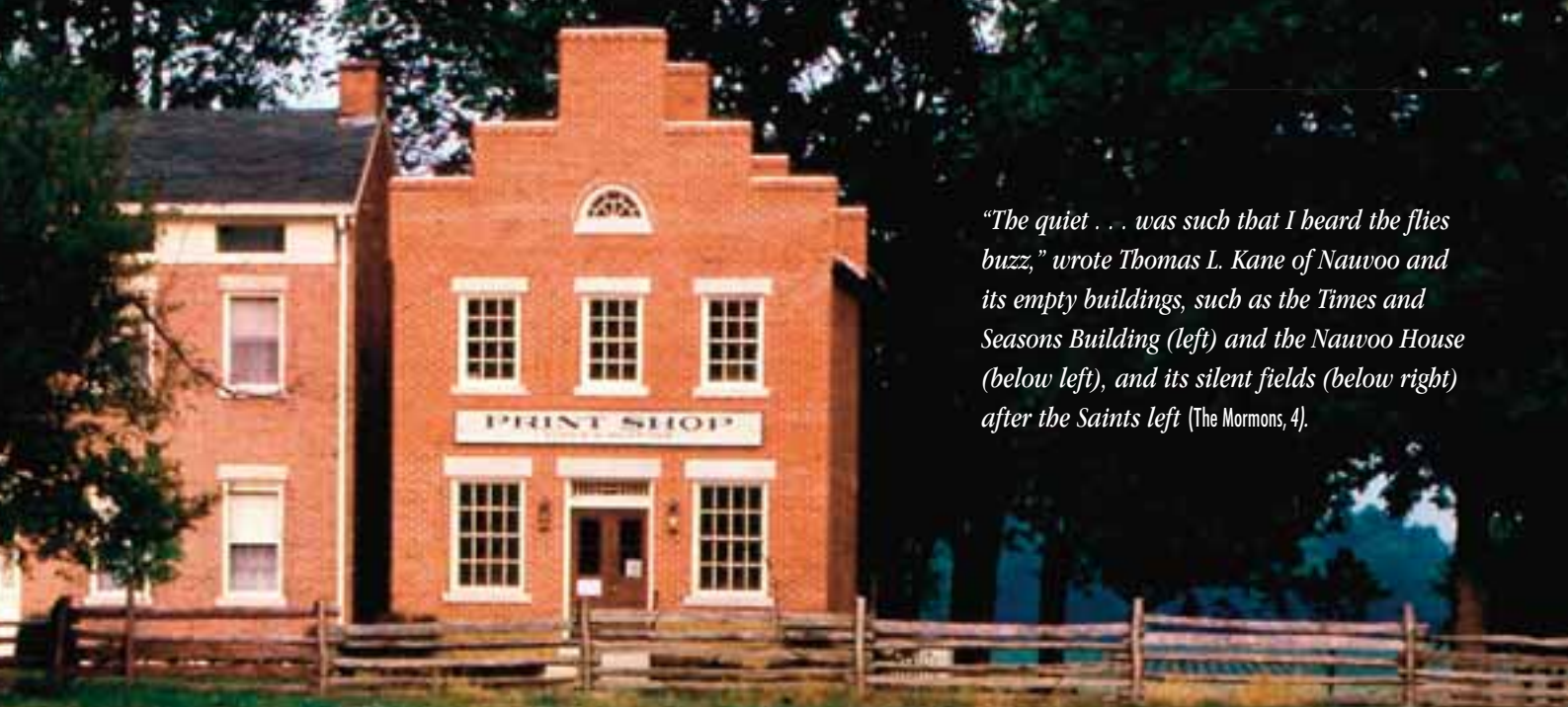


Leaving NAUVOO the

The last Saints were driven from Nauvoo, Illinois, in the fall of 1846. Among them were young Joseph F. Smith and his mother, Mary. Joseph wrote: “My mother and her family were compelled to take all that they could move out of the house—their bedding, their clothing, the little food they possessed, leaving the furniture and everything else standing in the house, and fled across the river, where we camped without tent or shelter until the war was over. The city was conquered” (Gospel Doctrine, 5th ed. [1939], 500).

Soon after this final exodus, Colonel Thomas L. Kane visited Nauvoo and described the abandoned city: “The town lay as in a dream, under some deadening spell of loneliness, from which I almost feared to wake it. For plainly it had not slept long. There was not grass growing up in the paved ways. Rains had not entirely washed away

the prints of dusty footsteps. . . . The spinner’s wheel was idle; the carpenter had gone from his work-bench and shavings . . . as if he had just gone off for a holiday. No work people anywhere looked to know my errand. If I went into the gardens, clinking the wicket-latch loudly after me . . . and draw a drink with the water sodden well-bucket and its noisy chain . . . no one called out to me from any open window, or dog sprang forward to bark an alarm. I could have supposed the people hidden in the houses, but the doors were unfastened; and when at last I timidly entered them, I found dead ashes white upon the hearths, and had to tread a tiptoe, as if walking down the aisle of a country church, to avoid rousing irreverent echoes from the naked floors” (The Mormons: A Discourse Delivered before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, March 26, 1850 [1850], 4–5).

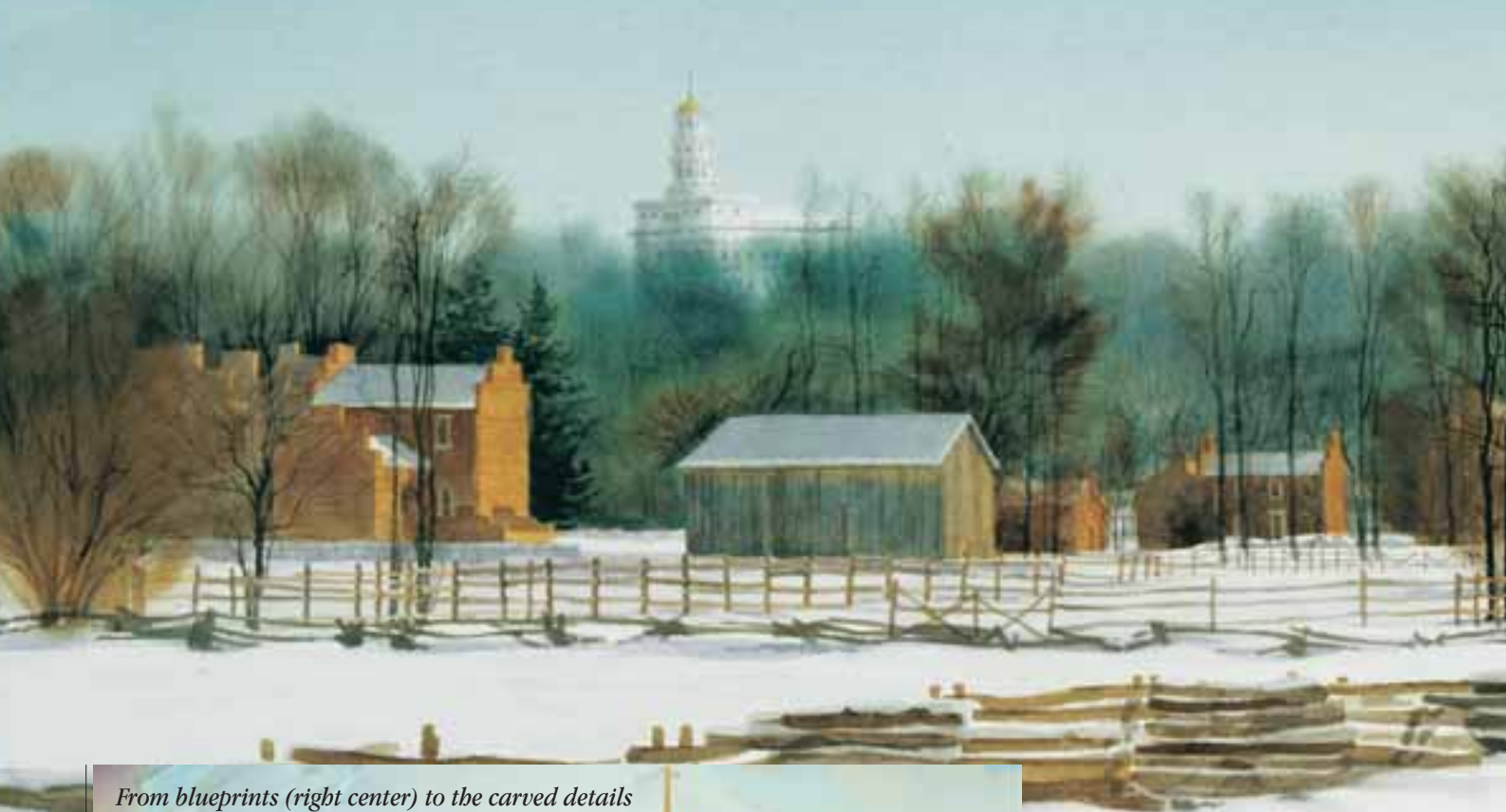


"The quiet . . . was such that I heard the flies buzz," wrote Thomas L. Kane of Nauvoo and its empty buildings, such as the Times and Seasons Building (left) and the Nauvoo House (below left), and its silent fields (below right) after the Saints left (The Mormons, 4).

BEAUTIFUL



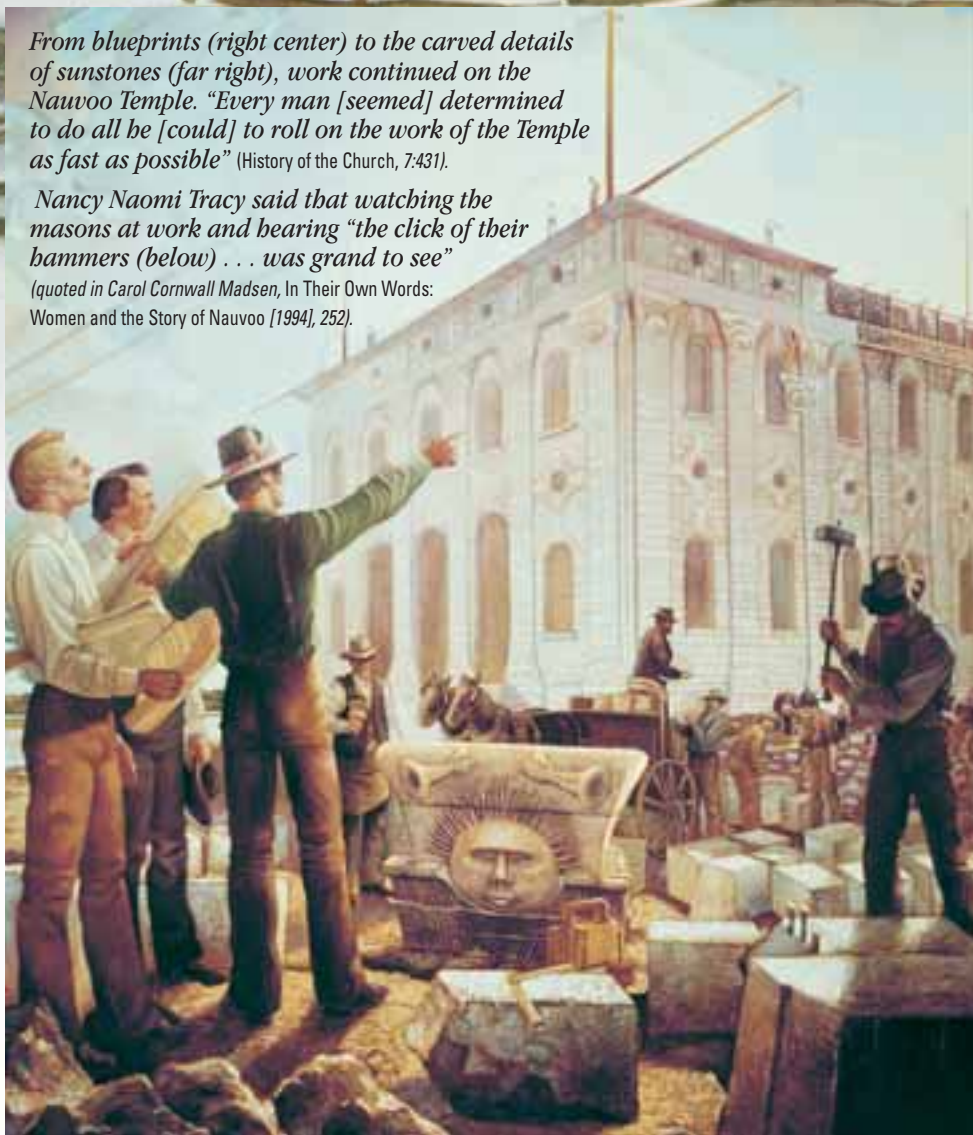
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DON THORPE, EXCEPT AS NOTED



From blueprints (right center) to the carved details of sunstones (far right), work continued on the Nauvoo Temple. "Every man [seemed] determined to do all he [could] to roll on the work of the Temple as fast as possible" (History of the Church, 7:431).

Nancy Naomi Tracy said that watching the masons at work and hearing "the click of their hammers (below) . . . was grand to see"

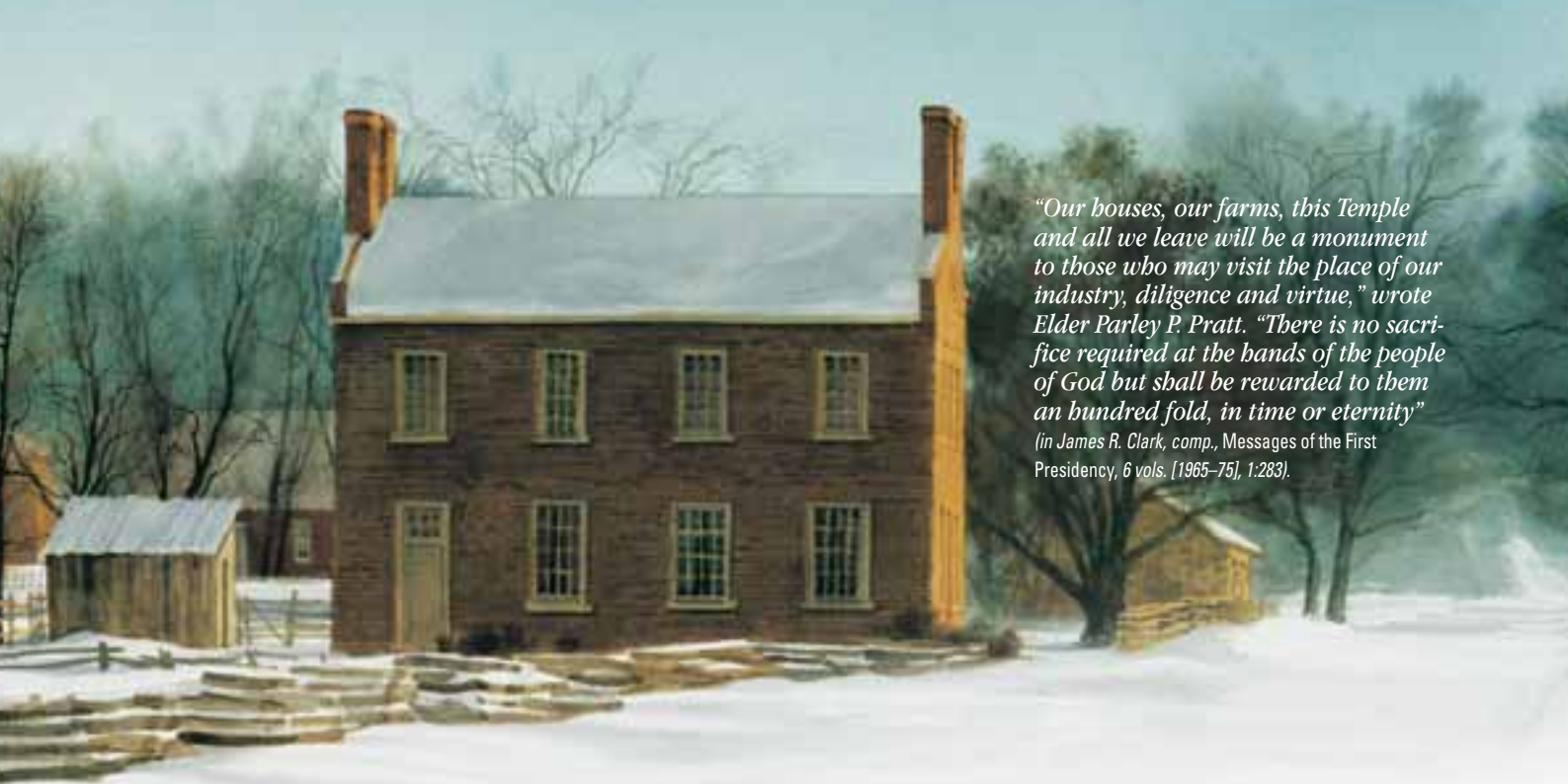
(quoted in Carol Cornwall Madsen, In Their Own Words: Women and the Story of Nauvoo [1994], 252).



JOSEPH SMITH AT THE NAUVOO TEMPLE, BY GARY E. SMITH, MAY NOT BE COPIED



Elevation of the Temple, Now in Erection at Nauvoo.



"Our houses, our farms, this Temple and all we leave will be a monument to those who may visit the place of our industry, diligence and virtue," wrote Elder Parley P. Pratt. "There is no sacrifice required at the hands of the people of God but shall be rewarded to them an hundred fold, in time or eternity" (in James R. Clark, comp., Messages of the First Presidency, 6 vols. [1965–75], 1:283).

Sarah Rich, wife of Charles C. Rich, wrote: "Mr. Rich and myself . . . were to be there at 7 in the morning and remain until work was done at 10 or 12 o'clock at night, if necessary. . . . Many were the blessings we had received in the House of the Lord" (Reminiscences of Sarah Pea Rich, 1885–93, holograph, LDS Church Archives, 65; spelling standardized).

Helen Mar Whitney wrote that it was only "through the united faith and prayers of the faithful few" that the Saints "were permitted to

remain there long enough to finish that Temple" ("Scenes in Nauvoo after the Martyrdom of the Prophet and Patriarch," Woman's Exponent, Apr. 15, 1883, 170).

"Thanks be to God for the holy ordinances of His house," wrote Eliza R. Snow, "and how cheerfully grateful we ought to be that we are the happy participants of these great blessings" (quoted in Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective, ed. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson [1987], 90).



PHOTOGRAPH OF NAUVOO TEMPLE BY JOHN LUKE



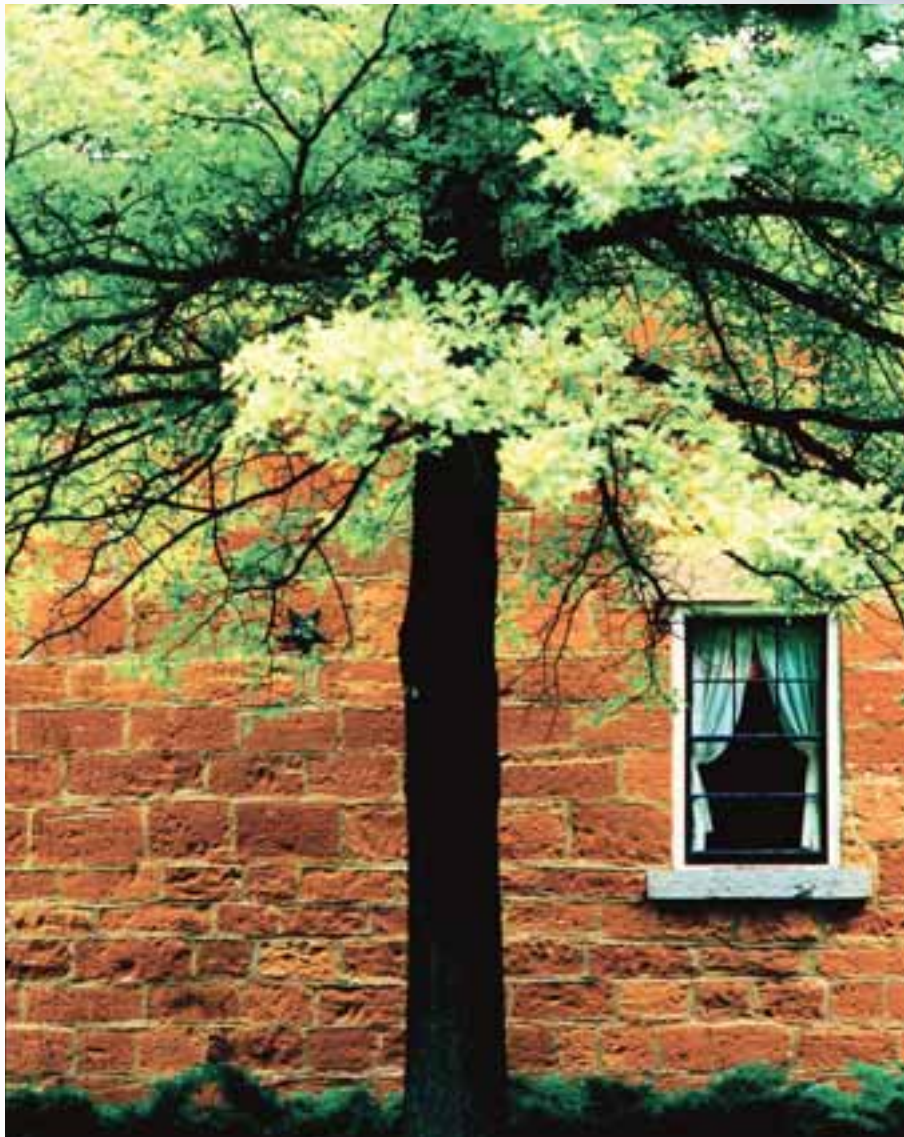
PHOTOGRAPH OF NAUVOO TEMPLE DETAIL BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN



PHOTOGRAPH OF NAUVOO TEMPLE SUNSTONE ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL BY MATTHEW REIER



ABOVE: FAREWELL, NAUVOO. THE EXODUS BEGINS. BY FRANK THOMAS



After the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were taken to Carthage Jail (left), then shot and killed on June 27, 1844 (above), Vilate Kimball wrote to her husband, Heber C. Kimball, "Every heart is filled with sorrow, and the very streets of Nauvoo seem to mourn" (Vilate Kimball to Heber C. Kimball, June 30, 1844, photocopy of original letter, Vilate Kimball Papers, LDS Church Archives).



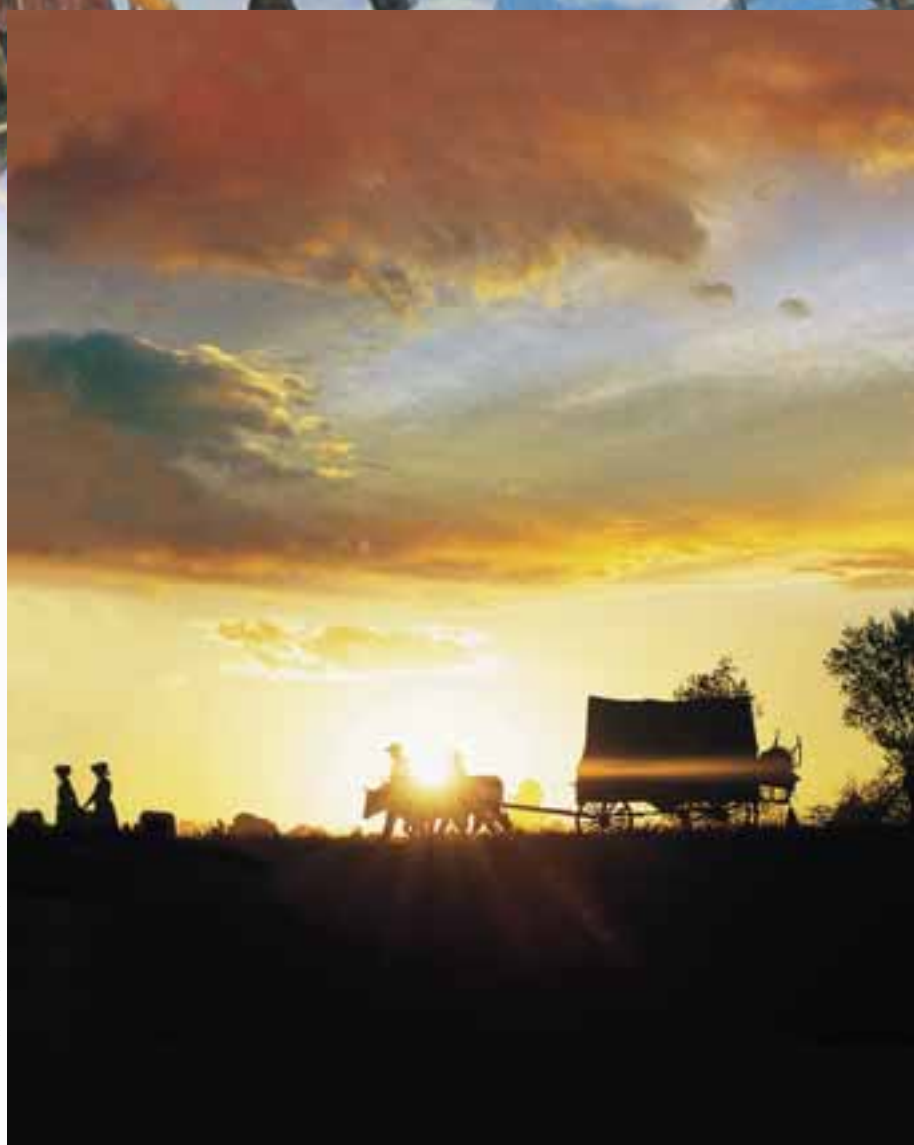
Young Joseph F. Smith, who fled Nauvoo in September 1846, witnessed the first exodus in February: “The [Mississippi] river froze within a day or two, . . . which enabled them to cross as they did, and thus the first real marvel and manifestation of the mercy and the power of God was manifest” (Gospel Doctrine, 5th ed. [1939], 499).

Sarah Rich expressed the feelings of nearly all the recently endowed Saints when she wrote: “If it had not been for the faith and knowledge that was bestowed upon us in that temple by the influence and help of the Spirit of the Lord our journey would have been like one taking a leap in the dark” (Reminiscences).

Eliza R. Snow wrote this poem in her diary at the time of the February 1846 exodus:

Let us go—let us go to the wilds
for a home
Where the wolf and the roe
and the buffalo roam
.
Where beneath our own vines,
we may . . . enjoy,
The rich fruits of our labors,
with none to annoy.

(Diary of Eliza R. Snow,
Feb. 1846, LDS Church Archives) ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN C. ANDERSEN

The Presiding Bishopric



The sixth in a series of articles about priesthood and its purposes.

BY BISHOP KEITH B. McMULLIN

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

Not long ago I was presiding at a stake conference. It was a new stake, organized just six months before, and this was the stake's first conference after being constituted out of a district. The new stake president and I had our interview, and at the conclusion of our time I asked if he had any questions he would like to ask. His first question was "What is the Presiding Bishopric?" He added, "I didn't even know there was a Presiding Bishopric until I received a letter indicating that you would be presiding at our conference." This is not an uncommon question.

I proceeded to explain to this stake president what the Presiding Bishopric is, to whom we report, and what our responsibilities entail. I explained that under the direction of the First Presidency the Presiding Bishopric serves as the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood of the Church (see D&C 107:15) and that the Presiding Bishopric also administers the Church's temporal affairs (see D&C 107:68).

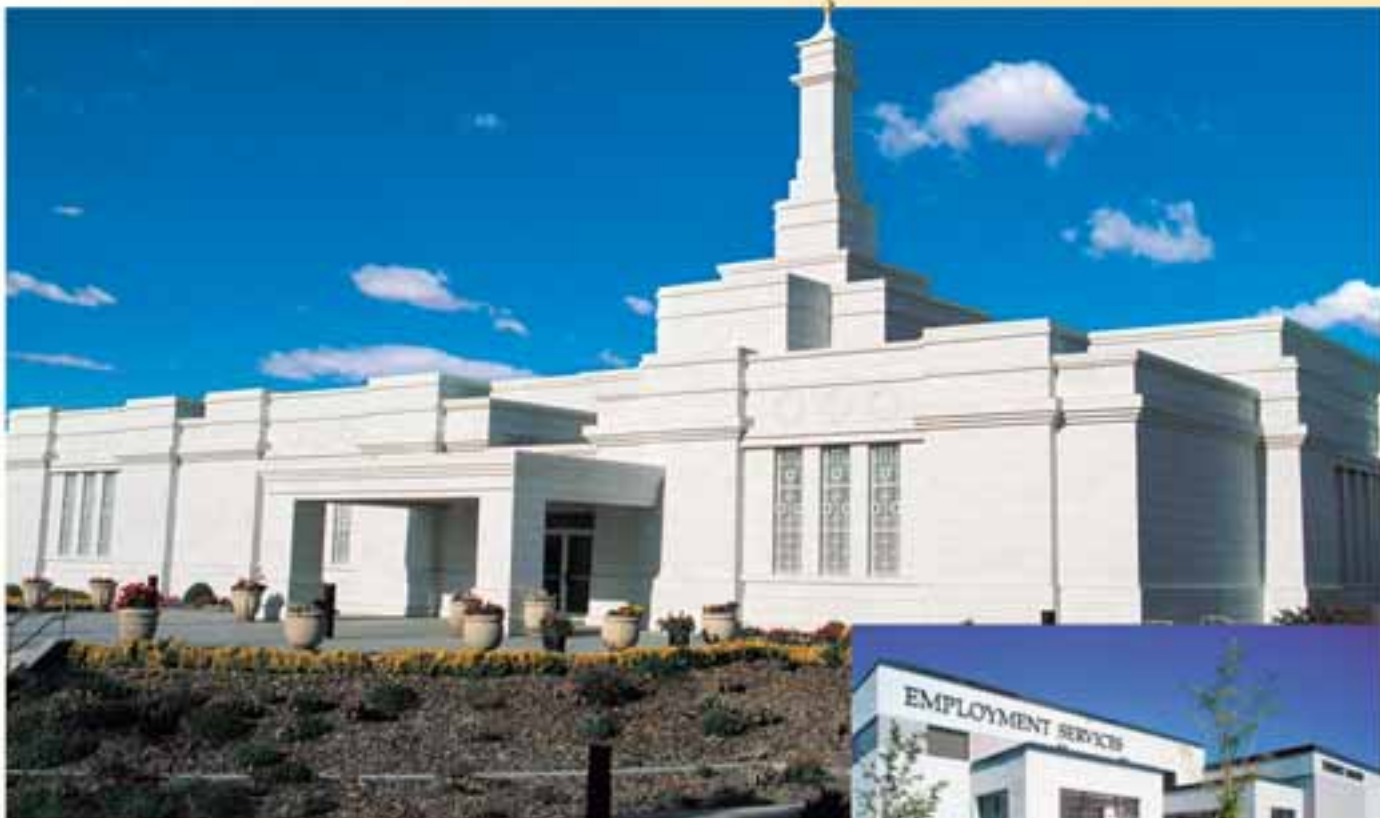
Presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood

The Presiding Bishop of the Church—Bishop H. David Burton—holds the keys as president of the Aaronic Priesthood. He exercises those keys as directed by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Bishop Burton serves as a member of the Priesthood Executive Council, which includes members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and other General

Authorities. This council hears and evaluates proposals from the Young Men general presidency and gives counsel and direction regarding the Young Men program.





The Presiding Bishopric serves as the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood and also administers the earthly, or temporal, operations that help Saints worldwide to obtain the blessings of the everlasting gospel. Above left: Bishop Richard C. Edgley, First Counselor; Bishop H. David Burton, Presiding Bishop; Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second Counselor.

In this way, the Presiding Bishopric is kept abreast of the work of the Young Men general presidency and the young men's activity program in the Church.

Administration of Temporal Matters

The Presiding Bishopric is also the channel through which temporal matters of the Church are carried out. These temporal matters include issues that deal with tithes; fast offerings; the recording, disbursement, and management of funds; and the welfare program of the Church and its humanitarian efforts. The Presiding Bishopric is also responsible for Church buildings; for membership records; for the production of temple clothing; and for the translating, printing, binding, and distributing of materials that are used in support of proclaiming and teaching the gospel. These materials include the scriptures, curriculum materials, posters,



DVDs, videos, teaching aids, and the Church magazines—all in support of the spiritual purposes of the Church. All members of the Presiding Bishopric are General Authorities and as such can do whatever the First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve Apostles asks of us. And so it was that I was on assignment to preside over a stake conference when this question came to me.

In most people's minds, the temporal affairs for which the Presiding Bishopric is responsible are the business aspects of the Church. But in the 29th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord says, "Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; . . . for my commandments are spiritual" (vv. 34–35).

The Lord does not look at things the way we do. And so it is with the temporal affairs of the Church. Because a copy of the Book of Mormon is a printed book, to the unknowing eye it may appear to be like any other book. But this book is produced to introduce to the world the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ. And so the "temporal affairs" that bring about the translating, printing, binding, and distributing of the Book of Mormon are rife with spiritual implications. This

principle is true for everything "temporal" the Church does.

In a very real way our purpose as the Presiding Bishopric is to help bring about all that Heavenly Father's children need to obtain the blessings of the everlasting gospel. We help provide the earthly, or temporal, support in order for that to happen.

There are wonderful scriptures in the 78th section of the Doctrine and Covenants in which the Lord talks about His storehouse. In the broadest terms, this storehouse could be described as the time and resources Church members make available for the building up of the kingdom of God. Herein we learn about the harmony between earthly and heavenly things:

"It must needs be that there be an organization of my people, in regulating and establishing the affairs of the storehouse for the poor of my people. . . .

"For a permanent and everlasting establishment and order unto my church, to advance the cause, which ye have espoused, to the salvation of man, and to the glory of your Father who is in heaven" (vv. 3–4).

In my capacity as a member of the Presiding Bishopric, I have come to know that the mantle of the priesthood and the spirit of prophecy and revelation are vital and alive in these temporal aspects of the Lord's work. ■



BY MAX STANLEY CHARTRAND

Some years ago an insightful branch president was troubled over the growing list of “do not visits” reported by the branch’s home teachers. He called me in and asked if my companion and I would take the families on that list and see if we could build some goodwill with them. After prayerful consideration, we visited each family, expressing love and concern for their well-being and, with their permission, leaving a blessing on the home.

One by one, walls of resistance melted, and we made friends with each of these families, except one. The mother and two children of this particular family were members but were forbidden to attend church by the father. We were not allowed to even come to the home when the father was there for fear of stirring dissension in the family.

After considerable fasting and prayer about this family, we were prompted to do something we had already done for the others: send a gift subscription for the *Ensign*. More than a year passed, and we heard no more from that family until one day a man I vaguely remembered meeting came by my office.

“You probably don’t remember me,” he said as he shook my hand and proceeded to introduce himself. He was the father of the family we had not seen in more than a year.

“I just wanted to thank you for sending your Church magazine to my home.”

Then, with a reflective sigh,

he went on, “At first I was kind of offended that someone would be so assuming without knowing whether I wanted it or not.

“When it came in the mail I’d just toss it aside, but somehow it would end up on the coffee table in the living room. After a while, I couldn’t help but pick it up and read a little here and there, until eventually I found myself reading every page of it.

“I just wanted you to know that it has brought about a better feeling in my home and that I appreciate your thoughtfulness.”

Hardly containing my emotions as we shook hands again, I thanked him for coming by and asked him to let me know if we might be of service to his family in any way.

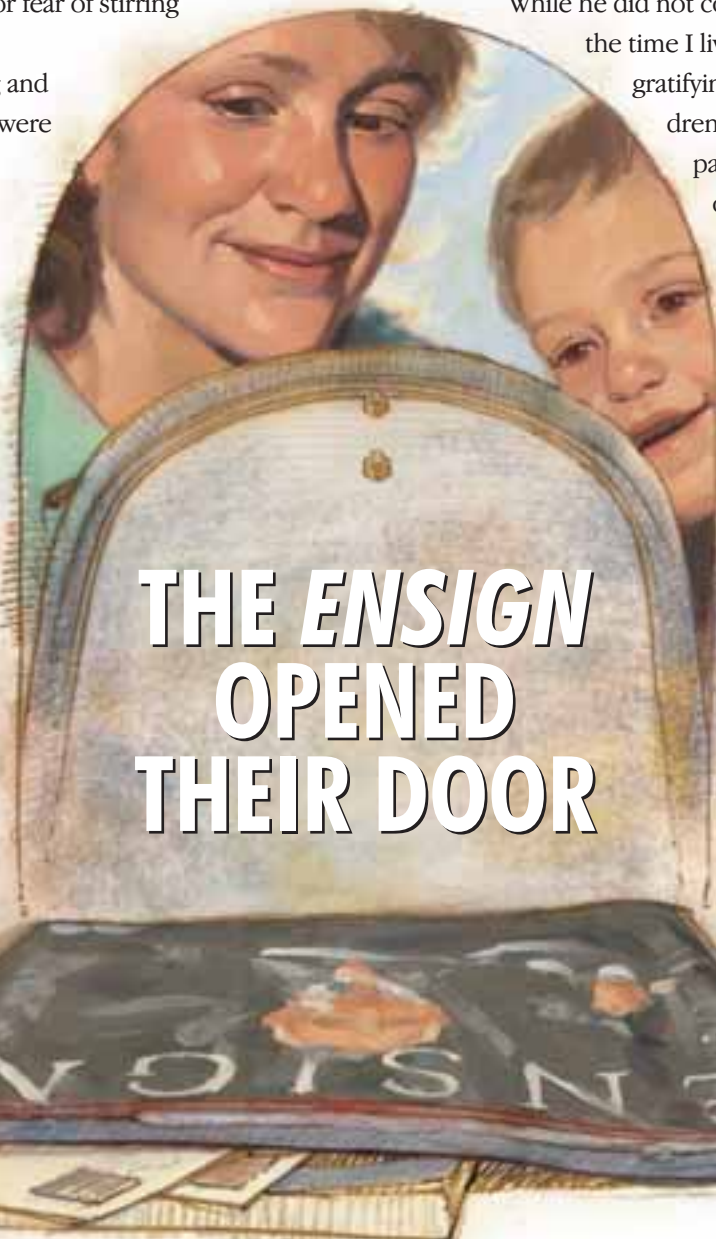
While he did not come into the Church during the time I lived in that area, it was most gratifying to see his wife and children once again actively participate with the other members of the branch.

It was a lesson to me that the Lord can soften even the most entrenched of hearts. It also testified to me that those who would resist the love and service of home teachers often do so out of a lack of understanding of what we represent.

Certainly the inspired messages contained in the *Ensign* can touch hearts, increase understanding, and bring positive change when conventional means of doing so fail. ■

Max Stanley Chartrand is a member of the Rye Ward, Pueblo Colorado Stake.

If you would like to give a gift subscription for the Ensign, please see the information on page 80.



THE *ENSIGN* OPENED THEIR DOOR

ILLUSTRATED BY BJORN THORNELSON

This article was adapted from an address delivered at the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah, on June 6, 2004, while the author's husband was serving in the MTC mission presidency. Though its message applies specifically to those who are either serving or preparing to serve as missionaries, it may provide all readers with valuable insights into obtaining joy in everyday living, especially as they seek to share the gospel's glad tidings with others.

BY BARBARA WORKMAN

Enoch saw in vision the wickedness of our day and was brought to tears. Then the Lord told him He would cause truth and righteousness “to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth” (Moses 7:62). My husband, Dan, serves as a counselor in the mission presidency at the Provo Missionary Training Center, and every

Wednesday we see a wave of that flood as 300 to 500 missionaries begin their service. They are clean, happy, and strong, eager to get to those four quarters, to one of 337 missions in 165 countries. When Enoch saw the end result of this flood—the redemption of the righteous—he received a fulness of joy (see Moses 7:67). At the MTC it is impossible not to feel joy in the presence of these elders and sisters. Lehi said, “Men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25). Missionaries are, that they might *share* joy.

Choosing Joy and Sorrow

The quest for joy in mortality began with Adam and Eve. They chose sorrow and death so they could also choose joy and exaltation. Eve said to Adam, “Were it not for our transgression we . . . never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient” (Moses 5:11).

THE QUEST FOR JOY

Our Savior's Atonement was a choice for joy. Not long after Gethsemane He gathered the little children on the American continent around Him, blessed them, prayed for them, and invited angels to encircle them. Observing the faith of the people, He said, “My joy is full” (3 Nephi 17:20). He had come from the ultimate agony in Jerusalem to a fulness of joy in the Americas. We will never know His agony, but He

chose to accomplish the Atonement so we could eventually experience a fulness of joy.

Joy is an emotion of the spirit. It comes through righteous living. It is not a casual or shallow feeling, ever. If we equate fun and pleasure with happiness, we may think pain must always be equated with unhappiness. But that is not true. Joy is not a stranger to pain. We may not feel deeply enough to know joy unless our hearts have been hollowed out by sorrow. A heart may not be big enough to know real joy until it has been stretched and pulled by trials and hard things. In 2 Nephi 2:23 we find this phrase: “having no joy, for they knew no misery.” Our capacity to feel joy actually increases as we righteously endure our pain.

As missionaries go out to serve, they taste the same mixture of emotions almost every day. The deeper their joy in the message and the more intense their desire to share it, the greater their sorrow when it is rejected. Often when

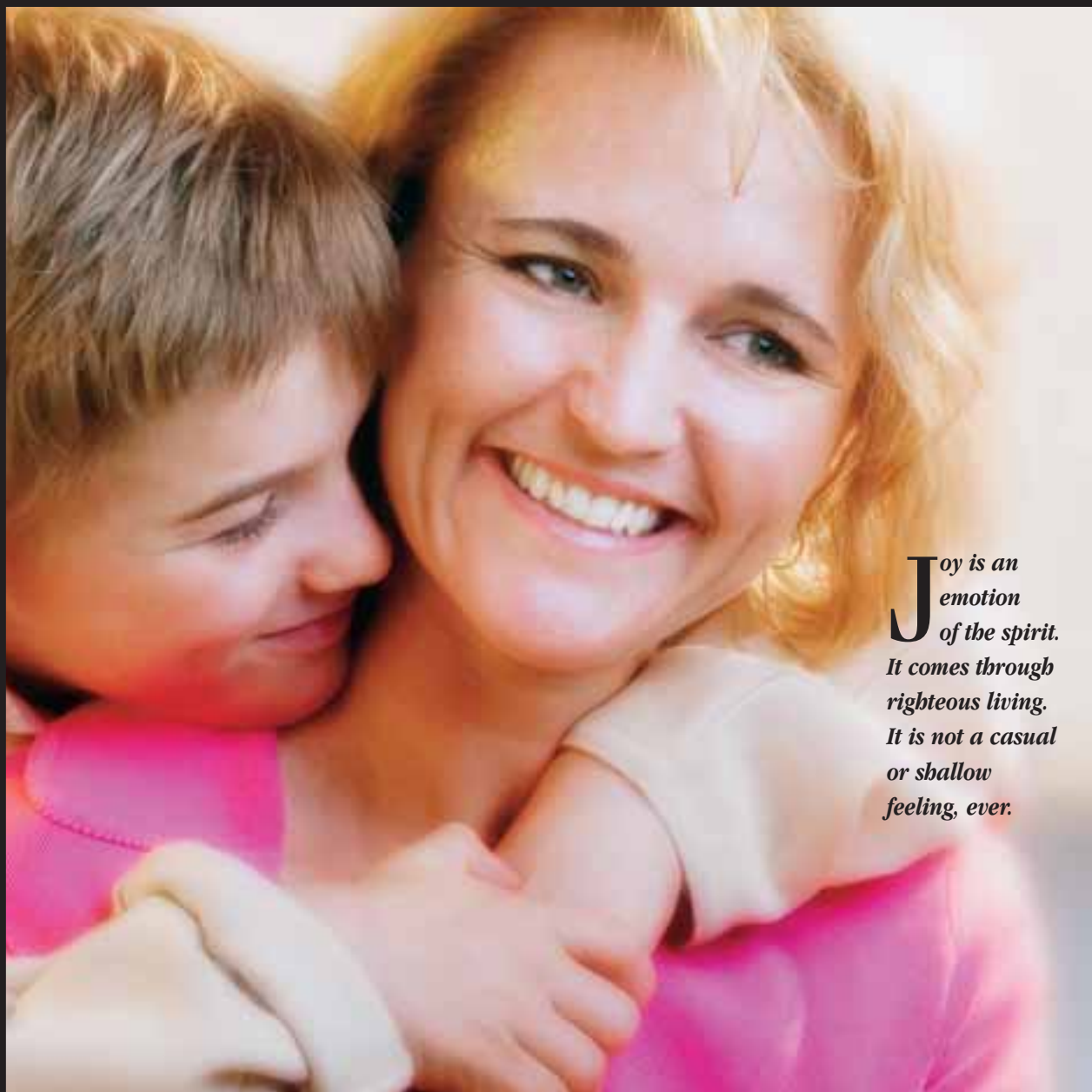
the scriptures talk about joy and sorrow, they are referring to missionary work. In Alma 28:8 we read, “And this is the account of Ammon and his brethren, their journeyings in the land of Nephi, their sufferings in the land, their sorrows, and their afflictions, and their incomprehensible joy.” These four terms often describe a mission: sufferings, sorrows, afflictions, and incomprehensible joy.

If a missionary has had a largely pain-free existence to this point, perhaps the experience of deep joy still lies ahead. One missionary who described premission life as

being pretty easy told about teaching a discussion in which the whole family, especially the father, was very responsive. Afterward, as he and his companion pedaled their bicycles toward their apartment, he thought: “So this is what joy feels like. I guess I’ve never known until now.”

What Joy Is and What It Is Not

Joy is learning to “make friends with mortality.” That’s a phrase my sister taught me long ago to help me endure when cars break down and bills pile up. She was trying to



Joy is an
emotion
of the spirit.
*It comes through
righteous living.
It is not a casual
or shallow
feeling, ever.*

Missionaries choose effort over ease. Serving a mission is a choice, and every elder and sister can choose to make that mission glorious.



help me make the best of a terrestrial world, much as an aunt of President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) did many years ago in Whitney, Idaho. Seeds were scarce, and she had just finished planting her peas when she looked out the kitchen window to see a rooster going down the row, scratching out her peas, and eating them. She ran outside, grabbed him, chopped off his head, opened him up, took out her peas, replanted them, and cooked him for supper.

Making friends with mission mortality means accepting slammed doors and canceled appointments, the blazing sun or freezing cold. You just smile and say, “This is a mission.” Your heart won’t let you quit or even slow down. You think of President Hinckley, who has the weight of the world on his shoulders, and try to stay as positive as he is.

Missionaries may not wake up each morning bursting with joy, but they are out the door on time anyway. “Hard” isn’t negative when you are a missionary. Why? Because when your feet hurt and you’re really hungry and the dogs are especially vicious and you are surprised to discover that you are happy anyway, you accept that gift of joy as a blessing from your Heavenly Father, thanking you for doing His work.

Missionaries choose effort over ease. They choose the sorrow of rejection without losing the hope of bringing people to Christ. Serving a mission is a choice, and every

elder and sister can choose to make that mission glorious.

Joy is not about having things. Not focusing on money, earning it or spending it, is one of the blessings of a mission. The things of God replace the things of the world. Discovering that having “things” has little to do with having happiness can be a lifelong mission blessing. Some have more worldly possessions, some have fewer, and it doesn’t matter. Missionaries who ask their parents *not* to send extra money, who want to live on what their leaders say is adequate, have the best missions.

Joy is not about being in the limelight. It is about changing lives, one at a time. When my husband was president of the New Jersey Morristown Mission, a struggling elder confided in me. He wanted so much to be a good missionary—some of the time. The rest of the time he was just homesick and discouraged. He was up and down, up and down. Reading was a challenge; he could not seem to learn the discussions. Solid Elder Brown,* with only two months left to serve, was made his companion. I was concerned that this might mean a difficult and disappointing conclusion to Elder Brown’s mission. But on his last night as a missionary, he wept in gratitude for those two months. We soon learned, not from him, that a miracle had occurred. The two missionaries had read the entire Book of Mormon together. Our struggling elder could now

teach the first two discussions, and he never talked about going home again. When they came to see us after our mission was over, they came together. Missionaries can strengthen and be strengthened by every companion.

The great thieves of joy are envy (why can't I be like you?) and pride (why can't you be like me?). A measuring tape is not on the list of missionary supplies. Comparing is measuring, and it destroys joy. And to mock another's weaknesses cannot be acceptable to the Lord.

Joy is not about looks or personality or a fluent tongue.

It is about having the image of God in your countenance and the power of God in your testimony. It is about loving to be on the Lord's errand. King Lamoni asked Ammon if he was the Great Spirit. Ammon said just what our elders say today: "I am a man; and . . . I am called by his Holy Spirit to teach these things unto this people" (Alma 18:34). Great missionaries are too focused on the work to dwell on their own imperfections; thus their strengths come to the fore. They discover that testimony, preparation, and love bring conversion, not looks or personality or the gift of fluency.

New Jersey is the home of Princeton University. We were told that an English professor there had invited two of our missionaries in to visit him. One of them used such poor grammar that it was painful for the professor even to listen. But he could not turn them away because the power of that elder's testimony encircled this brilliant man. He had to learn more.

Joy is not about leadership positions. If it is a missionary's companion who is called to be the zone leader instead of himself, and he can rejoice for his companion, then he is a commendable missionary. And if a

missionary is called to be a leader and is a humble servant-leader, he is also a commendable missionary. Either way, the missionary doubles his joy.

Joy is about faith in the cause of Christ. Our missionary daughter in Taiwan was having a very bad day. None of her investigators had come to church. There was contention in the branch. Her Chinese companion, full of faith, would not join in her discouragement but said to her, "Every dispensation for 6,000 years has ended in apostasy. Not this one. We are preparing for the Second Coming, and we're not going to fail." So much for Sister Workman's very bad day.

Joy comes from being trusted. Trying to cut corners and get around rules makes any missionary miserable. When you "make yourself mind yourself," when you know you are going to do what you say you will do, you will know joy. President Workman had only two rules, and if missionaries would keep them he promised a successful mission: "Work really hard and obey." The praise of the president, as sweet as it is, is not the driving force behind a great missionary. Just doing the work, far from the scrutiny of the mission

Joy is not about looks or personality or a fluent tongue. It is about having the image of God in your countenance and the power of God in your testimony. It is about loving to be on the Lord's errand.





HELPS FOR HOME EVENING

1. Take family members on a tour of your home or neighborhood. As you walk, point out various objects, such as a kitchen stove or telephone pole, and discuss the potential for each to bring joy or sorrow. Discuss why we must experience sorrow to know joy (see pages 50–51). Decide what the family needs to do in its quest to find joy.

2. Write the bold paragraph headings on pages 51 to 54 on strips of paper. Invite family members to choose a strip of paper and share what the article teaches about that idea. Ask them to share an experience that illustrates why the idea they taught is true.

office, is its own exhilarating reward.

Joy comes from seeing the fruits

of your labor. One day we were working with our Spanish zone. President Workman was tracting with elders and I with sisters. The plan was for several companionships to meet at a little pizza shop for lunch. I can still see one of our sisters as she burst through the door of the shop. Absolutely brimming with joy, she put her hands to her cheeks and said over and over, “She prayed, she prayed.” We saw pure joy over one investigator’s prayer.

Joy is about overcoming. The Spirit moves missionaries to struggle against laziness, anger, and disobedience. The smallest improvement brings courage, and missionaries keep trying. They learn to forgive each other and work through problems because they learn early that hard feelings drive the Spirit away.

Joy comes from teaching the plan. A sister from Jamaica was being taught at the mission home. The elders would begin to read a scripture, and almost before they could finish she would take the book from them so she could read it herself, exclaiming, “Oh my!” The promise “how great will be your joy” (D&C 18:16) filled the room as we watched her learn. President Workman asked a tall, strongly built elder what he had learned in his few months as a missionary. He said: “Before I came on a mission I knew that there was no greater thrill in life than football. Now I know that is nothing compared to seeing someone taught by the Spirit.”

Joy comes from building the kingdom. As an Apostle, President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98) established the Spring Garden Branch in Newark, New Jersey, on October 11, 1848. It was closed, reopened, and closed again. Newark was not a family town. Crime was rampant. President Workman shared with me his misgivings about sending Elder Smith* as a district leader there. Could he take it? But he went

willingly, and the work progressed. On Easter morning, 1990, the Spring Garden Branch was to be organized again. The Brethren wanted it to carry the same name. We met in the YMCA building in the center of Newark. The large room was packed and infused with joy. We sustained leaders who were Latino, Asian, African-American, and Caucasian. Several African brethren came in the colorful dress of their tribes. Young

girls wore bright Easter dresses. A gray-haired man in a gray suit and a gray felt hat came in, somberly putting his hat above the coat rack. Following him was a young man, maybe 12, dressed just the same and doing the same thing. I thought to myself, “Newark is going to be OK.” Indeed, they now have a lovely building and missionaries teaching in several languages. But that Easter Sunday Elder Smith was beaming and crying harder than anyone. He said, “This is the happiest day of my life.”

Ultimately, joy is in Jesus Christ. Unbearable pain turned Alma to the Savior and thus to joy. Perhaps that experience prompted him to say, “May God grant unto you that your burdens may be light, through the joy of his Son” (Alma 33:23). The “joy of his Son” is found in every corner of every mission, indeed within every valiant elder and sister. Since the day on the Mount of Olives when the Savior gave charge to take His message to the world, He has loved His messengers. His promise for their times of trial is very tender: “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). His gift to those who testify of Him is not freedom from hard work or sorrow or stretching but the surety that every ounce of effort in His name is an investment in joy. ■

Barbara Workman is a member of the Park First Ward, Orem Utah Park Stake.

** Name has been changed.*

Rejoice in Missionary Work



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

The Prophet Joseph Smith: “What if all the world should embrace this Gospel? They would then see eye to eye, and the blessings of God would be poured out upon the people, which is the desire of my whole soul” (*History of the Church*, 5:259).

Why Do We Rejoice in Sharing the Gospel?

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “The restored gospel of Jesus Christ has within it the power to bring deep and abiding happiness to the human soul—something that will be valued and cherished for the rest of time and for all eternity. We are not just trying to get people to join our Church; we are sharing with them the fulness of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ” (“The Essential Role of Member Missionary Work,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, May 2003, 40).

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “You never can foretell the consequences of that which you do when you talk about the Church with another. . . . Try it. Taste the sweet and wonderful joy of sharing your

testimony of this work with others” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 373–74).

How Can I Prepare the Way for a Gospel Discussion?

Alma 17:11: “Go forth . . . that ye may show forth good examples unto them in me, and I will make an instrument of thee in my hands unto the salvation of many souls.”

President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency: “No matter what circumstances you sisters experience, your influence can be marvelously far-reaching. I believe some of you have a tendency to underestimate your profound capacity for blessing the lives of others. More often than not, it is not on the stage with some public pronouncement but in your example of righteousness and the countless gentle acts of love and kindness done so willingly, so often on a one-to-one basis” (“You Are All Heaven Sent,” *Liabona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 111–12).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “Pray daily for [your] own personal missionary experiences. Pray that under the divine management of such

things, the missionary opportunity you want is already being prepared in the heart of someone who longs for and looks for what you have” (“Witnesses unto Me,” *Liabona*, July 2001, 16; *Ensign*, May 2001, 15).

Bonnie D. Parkin, Relief Society general president: “Too often we allow inhibitions and fears, unexpected obstacles, uncertainty, tenacious distractions, misinformed others—the list is endless—to inhibit our sharing of the truths we hold so dear. . . . [But] we can remember that all of us who lose our lives for Jesus’ sake shall find them” (“Bearing Record: Nothing Compares to It,” in *Ye Shall Bear Record of Me: Talks from the 2001 BYU Women’s Conference* [2002], 21–22). ■



How Could We Go to the Temple?

By Marina Timofeeva

I was baptized on December 5, 1993, in the city of Minsk. At that time, it was the only city in Belarus with a branch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I attended worship services there, but I lived in Borisov, 40 miles (70 km) away. I was 17 years old, and there was sharp opposition in my family. But because of the trials I had at that time, my faith and testimony of the truth were strengthened. I was even fortunate enough to go to the temple twice in Freiberg, Germany, to perform baptisms for the dead. I impatiently awaited the time when I could receive my endowment.

In 1996 I began dating my

future husband. Igor gladly accepted the news of the Restoration and was baptized on February 23, 1997. On March 1 we were married. Having a strong testimony of temple work, I wanted more than anything to go to the temple as soon as possible.

In September 1997 we moved

to St. Petersburg, Russia, where Igor studied at the university. Our daughter Nelly was born there. Even after Igor had

***The day we
were sealed
in the
temple was the
most wonderful
day of our lives.***

been a member for a year and a year had passed since our marriage, we still couldn't go to the temple because we didn't have visas and couldn't get exit papers.

When Nelly was six months old, I became pregnant. It seemed to me we were in a hopeless situation. Igor couldn't find steady work because he didn't have a visa. He was holding down three jobs, but it wasn't enough money for us to live on. Igor's parents helped by sending money and food from time to time, but I was practically in despair because of our financial struggles. I felt even worse because we couldn't go to the temple. In August 1998, after the exchange rate rose sharply, we decided to return to Belarus.

Our second daughter, Yelyena, was born in Minsk on January 6, 1999.



Igor had a steady job now, but we still didn't have enough money to go to the temple. Gradually we saved, however, and at the end of August 2000, we took the children to Germany. Igor has relatives in Kaiserslautern, and we stayed with them.

Early on the morning of September 2, we began our journey to the temple in Frankfurt. Although the trip was very tiring and included two transfers, we were full of enthusiasm and joy. We are grateful to all the temple workers, the temple president, and also the sisters who watched our daughters while we went through the endowment session. That was an unforgettable day! It is difficult to put into words the feelings we experienced there, but they were very good.

After the endowment session, we went into the sealing room, where Yelyena was already crying (it was her nap time). I hardly heard any of the sealing ceremony because of the crying, but we were very happy anyway. That was the most wonderful trip of our lives because we were in the house of the Lord.

We even managed to return to the temple. In February 2001 a group of members from Minsk went to Freiberg. I wanted to participate in the ordinance of sealings for the dead, since I had heard so little during our own sealing. I was grateful when Igor and I were invited to participate.

We now have a son, Robert, and as a family we attend the Minsk Second Branch (or, as it is known in Belarus, the Second Religious Community of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Minsk). And while we have overcome several difficulties, we now have new ones. I am very grateful for all of these trials. No matter

what happens to us on this journey, Heavenly Father wants only good for us. No one else can help us in our most difficult hour. If we reject Him because of some difficulties, it would be like throwing away a life preserver because it did not keep us from falling into the river.

The burden is easy and the yoke light when we are with the Lord. He will not give us trials we cannot bear. ■

Marina Timofeeva is a member of the Minsk Second Branch, Russia Moscow South Mission.

We Had No Food

By Adam N. Ah Quin

As missionaries in the Canada Winnipeg Mission, my companion and I were serving in the beautiful city of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. I had grown up in Laie, Hawaii, in the shadow of the Laie Hawaii Temple. My companion, Elder Larmour, came from Belfast, Northern Ireland. Our families and wards back home supported us, but at times our monthly allotment of funds was held up en route. Such was the situation that brought about this experience.

At the beginning of one month, after I received my check, we waited for Elder Larmour's to be forwarded from the mission office. As usual, our rent was due and the cupboards were getting bare. We had to decide



whether we should pay the rent with my check or buy food. We paid the rent.

A few days passed and we still hadn't received Elder Larmour's money. We had eaten all the food in our apartment, except for half a bag of frozen mixed vegetables and an old freezer-burned soup bone that took some effort to pry loose from its icy confines. With these ingredients I cooked a vegetable soup. It wasn't much, but we were grateful for what we had.

The next day we decided to tract in an area not too far from home. The street seemed endless, and no one was interested in our message. Hunger pangs tormented us, and we were both getting faint from lack of

food. As we came to the end of the street, we decided to take a break. We found a bench in a park at the end of this street and tried to recover our strength. My companion said in a sincere plea, "I'm hungry." My heart went out to him as we sat there. I was twice his size. I knew I would be able to endure for quite a while, but I did not think he'd be able to go on for long if he didn't get something to eat.

I was the senior companion, so

in my heart I pleaded with Heavenly Father to provide the means we needed to get us through. I looked across the park and noticed a short street with about five homes on it. It was a continuation of the long

street we had just tracted. I turned to my companion and said, "Come on, let's finish this street." He turned to me and said, "Let's just go home." We came to an agreement that if we finished the street and no one was interested, we would then head home.

As we walked past the first home, a couple was busy in the driveway doing some work on their car. A call of "Not today, guys" kept us moving to the next home. As we approached the door, we could smell the wonderful aroma of home cooking. Suddenly the door opened wide, and a smiling,

middle-aged woman greeted us with "Come in, boys. I hope you're hungry!"

As we sat on the park bench, trying to recover our strength, my companion said in a sincere plea, "I'm hungry."



A Symbol of His Love

By Freddy W. Carreño

As I was leaving one of our Church buildings in Montevideo, Uruguay—10 minutes away from the temple construction site—I received a call from my wife telling me that soon the statue of the angel Moroni would be placed on the spire of the temple. Many feelings came into my heart as I listened to the anxious voice of my wife asking me to come get her and our son so we could witness this event. There wasn't much time left. I had to travel to the other end of the city and then return to the temple.

Our hearts beat rapidly and the minutes seemed like hours as we traveled. The heavy traffic almost wouldn't let us through, but we finally arrived, thanks to the Lord's help.

The weather had been gray, rainy, and moderately windy for several days. But this afternoon the sky was a clear, calm blue, and the sun's rays fell upon our heads like the blessings of heaven.

When we arrived we found several other members who had also come to witness this important milestone

in the history of the Church in Uruguay. Several members, among them my wife's mother, were Church pioneers in our country. Their eyes filled with tears as they enjoyed the blessing—so long awaited—of seeing the construction of a temple here.

The sacrifice of many people who had spread the gospel was given symbolic expression in the brilliant sheen of the angel Moroni as he seemed to fly through the sky and then come to rest in a place of honor. There he announced to the world the Restoration of the everlasting gospel and the opening of the doors of a country that needed the Lord's helping hand to progress.

We saw the statue, straight and majestic, reach its intended place, reminding us of the love of the Eternal Father, which would soon allow us to be sealed together in love in our own land. We hope that our children and grandchildren will go into the temple and make sacred covenants and be a blessing to the country.

We knew that there was much left to do—both before and after the temple's dedication in March 2001. We needed to prepare for the times

still to come, and above all else, we needed to remember our ancestors, because they also would be blessed by this holy house. But we will never forget that beautiful September day. Our hearts overflowed with gratitude that we were allowed to witness the placing of a symbol of our Heavenly Father's love. ■

Freddy W. Carreño is a member of the Buceo Ward, Montevideo Uruguay East Stake.



With hesitation we entered her home, not knowing what to expect. She led us to the dining room, where two places were already set. We sat down and she busied herself with serving us. I started to get a lump in

my throat, anticipating a feast fit for kings. Or perhaps we would be thrown out when she finally came to her senses and realized who we were.

After filling the table with pork chops, mashed potatoes, gravy, and

all the fixings, she said, "I don't know why I cooked all this food, but something told me to do it. I wasn't expecting company, and I live here alone. I'm sure glad you boys happened by. You haven't eaten, have you?"

I replied, “No, but do you know who we are?”

“You’re Mormon missionaries, aren’t you?” she answered. “So don’t you say a blessing on the food before you eat?”

We did bless the food and give thanks for the many blessings the Lord had given us. And to this day I cannot think of a better meal than that meal the Lord provided in our time of need.

For the Lord has said, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19–20). ■

Adam N. Ab Quin is a member of the Villa Bonita Ward, Las Vegas Nevada Paradise Stake.

My Wallet Was Gone

By Héctor Castellanos Turcios

I have had many blessings from paying tithing and have come to understand that when we pay our tithing, whether it’s a little or a lot, it’s the same to the Lord.

Once when I received my pay at work, I cashed the check and headed home to pay some bills and to help my wife, who was expecting our first child. I got on the bus and put my money in my wallet. Then I hid the wallet in a pouch that was part of my

shoulder bag, where it would be safer. I was quite surprised when I got home, looked for my wallet, and wasn’t able to find it. I was very worried. It was my whole two-week salary, and losing it would cause us many problems.

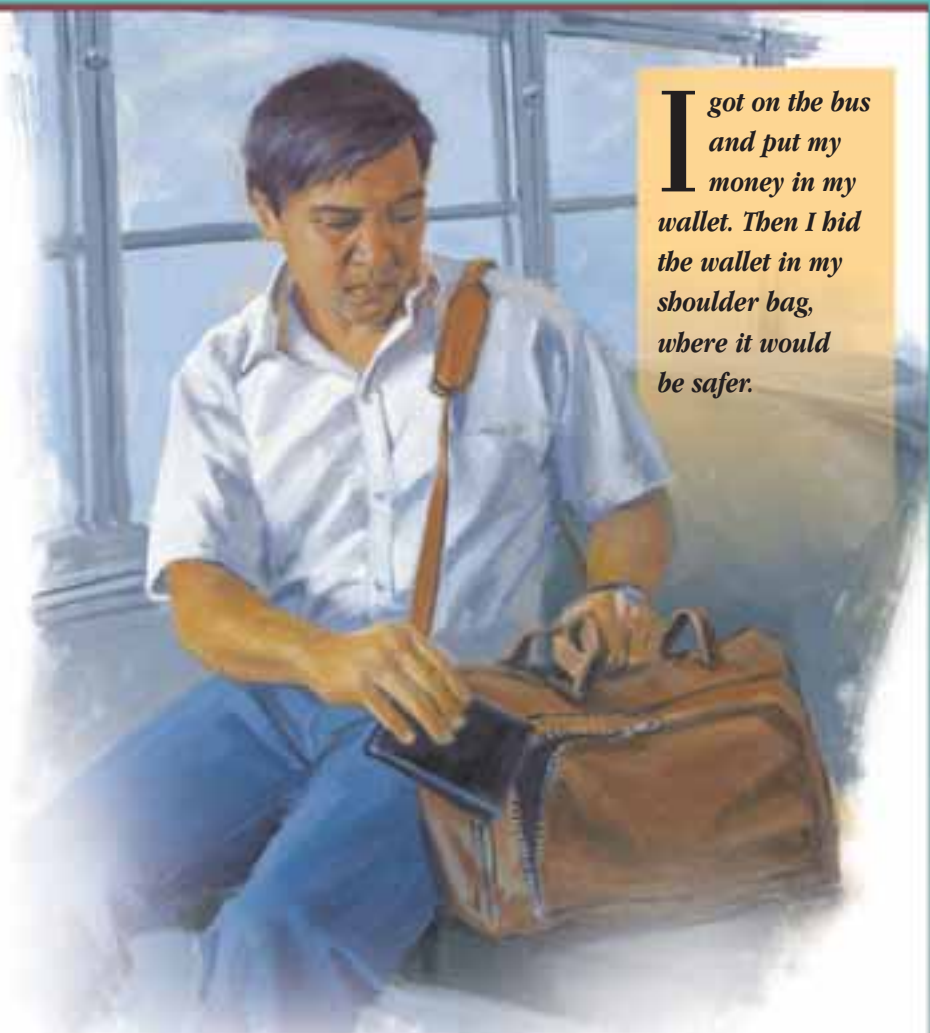
I looked diligently for my wallet, and when I couldn’t find it I decided to go back to the bus that had brought me home. I couldn’t find it there either.

After some time I went home, feeling very frustrated. I went into my room and knelt down. With a sincere heart and in tears, I lifted my prayer up to God and asked Him to help me. I told Him I paid a full tithing and now I needed a blessing. I know that the Lord doesn’t always answer our

prayers in the way we desire, but on this occasion He did bless me in a wonderful way.

Later that night the bishop knocked on our door and asked me if I had a social security card. I told him I did, but it had been lost with my wallet that very day. He showed me a wallet and asked if it was mine. I saw that it was and that all of my money was still there. The bishop explained that a friend, who was not a member of the Church, had found it outside her house. When she saw the temple recommend in it, she took it to him. He told me this was nothing less than a miracle and it had happened because I faithfully paid tithing. ■

Héctor Castellanos Turcios is a member of the Amatitlán Ward, Amatitlán Guatemala Stake.



I got on the bus and put my money in my wallet. Then I hid the wallet in my shoulder bag, where it would be safer.



Growing AS A STEPFAMILY

BY BARBARA JONES BROWN

Becoming a stepfamily is a process, not an event. The following ideas may help as you seek to build a strong stepfamily.

Our wedding photos aren't exactly what you'd call typical. Scattered among the quintessential pictures of bride and groom are photos of me with *four* handsome men in tuxedos—my husband and his three boys.

When I married my sweetheart, Matt, I realized I wasn't just gaining a husband. I was joining a family. On our wedding day we became one of more than 5.3 million stepfamilies in the United States—families in which at least one spouse brings a child or children into the marriage. As any parent can attest, raising a family is challenging. Raising a stepfamily—whether the stepfamily



After President Gordon B. Hinckley's mother died of cancer in November 1930, his father married May Green in early 1932. Although Gordon was upset at first over his father's decision, he and his brothers and sisters grew to love May Green Hinckley. "I don't know that it was easy for her to step into our family," said President Hinckley, "but she did it well. We all respected her. We all loved her" (in Sheri L. Dew, *Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1996], 55).

has its origins in the death of a parent, divorce, or a previously unwed parent—is especially challenging because of the complex dynamics involved. We can say thankfully that blessings can come with the challenges.

My purpose in writing this article is not to suggest that my husband and I are perfect parents or that we have all the answers for every situation stepparents may find themselves in. I simply want to share a few things we've learned through our experience—supported by the wisdom of Church leaders and family counselors—in the hope that some of it might be helpful to others in similar situations.

Courtship—Again

Looking back, we realize that the formation of a strong stepfamily begins long before the wedding day. Dating when either person in the relationship has children is very different from typical dating. At every stage of the courtship, the couple must give consideration not only to their own relationship but also to the children.

Based on advice he had received earlier from a divorce counselor, Matt did not introduce me to his boys until we both agreed our relationship was exclusive and likely headed for an eventual engagement. Matt didn't want his boys to form relationships that would later be broken. He had been counseled that a breakup with someone his children had become attached to could be painful for them and could make them reluctant to form attachments with anyone else he decided to date, including the person who would eventually become his wife—and their stepparent. We waited until the right time, and it worked out that I was Matt's only dating partner his children ever met. We feel this made it much easier for his boys and me to form a relationship.

For me, it was important to understand and accept that if I decided to marry Matt, I would be committing myself to more than just a marriage. I would be committing to a family—my husband and his children. This was the most difficult part of my decision. Could I simultaneously commit to being a

While it is important to make time for each of your children, it is even more important for stepparents to take time for each other.



wife and a stepmother of three? Could I accept the corresponding sacrifices? For example, I knew that if I married Matt we would never experience that “newlywed stage” of marriage before children became part of our family. I knew that a major amount of Matt’s time and emotional energy would be devoted to his children. I knew that child support obligations would bring significant financial sacrifices. Committing myself before we were married to accept these sacrifices and to support my spouse through them has given me the foundation I’ve needed to carry on as the challenges of stepparenting have come.

Engaged to Be a Family

When both of you are certain that your courtship will soon become an engagement, take time to give your children as many opportunities as possible to strengthen their relationship with your future partner. “Remarriage and efforts to create a successful blended family can be frustrated without proper preparation by both parties,”¹ says Elder Robert E. Wells, formerly of the Seventy, who grew up in a stepfamily and later raised a stepfamily. Proper preparation includes taking enough time to get to know your intended well and allowing your children that same opportunity. After all, they will be living, at least part-time, with your future spouse, too.

When our relationship was at this stage, Matt invited me to his home for Sunday dinner each weekend he had the children. As a group we’d prepare and share the meal, do the dishes, then have family home evening and play games or make treats. Soon, every Sunday the boys started asking when I was coming over, which made me feel wanted and a part of their family.

Matt and I also started taking the boys with us on many of our dates, to sporting events, arts festivals, family

movies—any activity we could all enjoy together. During these “group dates” Matt and I focused our attention on the children, rather than on each other, so they wouldn’t feel threatened or jealous. We wanted the boys to feel they were getting twice as much love and attention—rather than half as much—because I was there.

Rather than detracting from our developing relationship, my directing attention and love to Matt’s boys actually

strengthened his love for me.

“Love feelings are enhanced when parents see their partners treating their children well,” confirms Brent Scharman, a psychologist with LDS Family Services. Brother Scharman and his wife, Jan, a psychologist and vice president of Student Life at Brigham Young University, have a stepfamily of 10 children and are former board members of the Stepfamily Association of America.

If both dating partners have children, as the Scharmans did, the children from both families also need opportunities and time

to form relationships with each other. The more this can be done before the wedding day, the less difficult the adjustment will be afterward, says Sister Scharman. But at the same time, she says, “allow your children to choose not to be a constant companion or best buddy to a stepsibling.”

After your children have formed a relationship of trust with your intended, let them be the first to hear of your engagement. Realize that no matter how much your children may have come to love your fiancé, your announcement might still be quite difficult for them.

After we announced our engagement to Matt’s boys, we were surprised when his youngest son, with whom I had grown particularly close, broke out in tears. When Matt asked him why, he explained that he wanted to always be the



Matt’s youngest son wanted to always be the “baby” of the family, but now he adores his new little sister.

“baby” of the family, and now that was probably going to change because Matt and I hoped to have children together.

Encouraging your children to talk about concerns such as this while expressing your understanding and love will help them come to an eventual acceptance. Today this youngest son—and his older brothers—absolutely adore their new little sister.

As you prepare for your wedding, says Brother Scharman, remember that while this may be the happiest time of your life, it can be a difficult time for children whose parents have divorced, because it marks the end of any dreams they may have had of their biological parents getting back together. Rather than expecting your children to be as excited as you are, you will better serve them by acknowledging that this might be a difficult time for them while assuring them you love them and always will.

In all the hustle and bustle of your wedding preparations and wedding day, remember to show extra sensitivity, love, and attention to your children. To help our boys feel included, we explained to them beforehand the significance and meaning of the sealing ceremony. On our wedding day we met them outside the temple immediately following the ceremony. With all our loved ones waiting there to greet us, our boys were the first ones we embraced and expressed our love to. We also let them invite some of their friends to our wedding reception so they would feel the celebration was for them as well as for us.

After the Wedding

After the wedding, recognize and respect the fact that, when divorce is involved, children have two immediate families. Make it a point to never say anything derogatory

to the children or even in front of the children about their other parents or family. Don't try to replace your stepchildren's parent or ask them to call you “mom” or “dad” if they aren't comfortable with that. “Rather than compete with a relationship between a child and a parent . . . stepparents

need to concentrate on building a new relationship with the child,”² says Elder Wells.

Establishing family traditions will help build these new relationships. Traditions have a great power to bond, unite, and help new family members feel welcome, all of which are especially needed in stepfamilies. Traditions should include some established customs from both families and some that are new to the entire stepfamily.

“The Family: A Proclamation to the World” provides spiritual principles on which to base family traditions: “Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”³ In our family, spiritual traditions of family prayer, Church activity, temple attendance (including baptisms for the dead with

our children who are old enough), and family home evening have strengthened us. As a stepfamily, we've made adjustments where needed so that we can carry on these traditions. For example, because we don't have the boys in our home on Monday nights, we hold family home evenings on the Sunday evenings they are with us. Traditions of working together, community service, and playing together have also unified us. An annual vacation to the beach with my extended family has become something we all look forward to.

Along with having family activities, Matt and I also spend individual time with each child. This has helped our children to feel secure in their relationship with their dad



Establishing emotional attachments between stepparents and stepchildren requires time, perhaps years. The goal is a united and harmonious blended family.

and to strengthen their new relationship with me. For example, when I've felt tension between myself and one of my stepsons, I've invited him to choose something fun for the two of us to do together. Invariably, he chooses basketball. Now, I'm really awful at basketball, but I've humored him by agreeing to a little one-on-one, in which he always soundly defeats his stepmom. I don't know if it's just because he enjoys beating me, but I've been amazed afterwards at how much better our relationship feels.

In developing these relationships, "stepparents need to be patient," says Elder Wells. "Because emotional attachments between stepparents and stepchildren require time, it sometimes may take years to establish a united and harmonious blended family."⁴

While it is important to make time for each of your children, it is even more important for stepparents to take time for each other. "View time alone together as a necessity rather than a luxury," says Brother Scharman. To meet the many challenges of forming a strong stepfamily, the couple must develop an especially strong relationship. For Matt and

me, doing things we enjoy together and communicating frequently and openly about family issues have strengthened our resolve and commitment to each other and to our family.

Along with relying on each other, don't be afraid to seek help when necessary from a professional who has experience in counseling stepfamilies. Such counselors are available through LDS Family Services.

Most important, seek support from Heavenly Father through temple and church attendance, fasting, prayer, and scripture study. At a time when I was struggling and praying over my role as a stepparent, it struck me that I have been entrusted with a sacred role in our boys' lives. I shed tears of gratitude.

Such are the blessings that can come with raising a stepfamily. ■

Barbara Jones Brown is a member of the Wasatch Ward, Salt Lake Hillside Stake.

NOTES

1. "Uniting Blended Families," *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 26.
2. *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 27.
3. *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
4. *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 27.





STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

A SOLEMN RESPONSIBILITY TO LOVE AND CARE

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

“Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. . . . Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God and to be law-abiding citizens wherever they live.”¹

Love and Unity

“I have long felt that happiness in marriage is not so much a matter of romance as it is an anxious concern for the comfort and well-being of one’s companion,” said President



Gordon B. Hinckley. “That involves a willingness to overlook weaknesses and mistakes.”²

“The secret of a happy marriage is to serve God and each other,” taught President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994). “The goal of marriage is unity and oneness, as well as self-development. Paradoxically, the more we serve one another, the greater is our spiritual and emotional growth.”³

Unity in marriage does not come automatically or without effort. Romantic love must mature into a commitment to seek and sustain spiritual harmony in marriage. “Achieving marital unity takes tremendous patience and persistence and a clear vision of what our

priorities are in this life,” explains marriage counselor Victor B. Cline. “Spousal love is a wonderful gift, but we have to learn to give it fully in order to receive it in full measure.”⁴

None Else

In 1831 the Lord declared, “Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else” (D&C 42:22). Of this commandment, President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) taught: “The words *none else* eliminate everyone and everything. The spouse then becomes preeminent in the life of the husband or wife, and neither social life nor occupational life nor political life nor any other interest nor person nor thing shall ever take precedence over the companion spouse.”⁵ A husband or wife who places children, friends, careers, hobbies, or Church callings before the marital relationship is in direct violation of the commandment “none else.”

Satan is determined to drive wedges of discord between marriage partners. If he can convince one partner or the other that something else should take precedence over this central relationship of both time and eternity, he has won a battle in his war against the family and against God’s plan. We must therefore take special care to build, nurture, and deepen the marriage relationship.

A Balancing Act

Being a devoted marriage partner and a loving, dutiful parent is a delicate balancing act. Parents have a divine charge “to bring up [their] children in light and truth” (D&C 93:40). But that responsibility can become so time-consuming and emotionally demanding that at times, if mothers and fathers are not watchful, it can supersede or even impede the marriage relationship. To help marriage partners keep their familial priorities in order, President David O. McKay (1873–1970) and other Church leaders have quoted this wise counsel from Theodore Hesburgh, president of the University of Notre Dame: “The most important



Praise your children more than you correct them. Praise them for even their smallest achievement.”

thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother.”⁶ Children who grow up in the reflected glow of a loving marriage enjoy a sense of security that is often absent when other concerns are allowed to eclipse that primary relationship. “Husbands and wives who love each other,” said President Benson, “will find that love and loyalty are reciprocated. This love will provide a nurturing atmosphere for the emotional growth of children.”⁷

Children Need Love and Praise

“Our young people need love and attention, not indulgence,” taught President Benson. “They need empathy and understanding, not indifference, from mothers and fathers. They need the parents’ time. A mother’s kindly teachings and her love for and confidence in a teenage son or daughter can literally save them from a wicked world.”⁸ “Praise your children more than you correct them,” he counseled. “Praise them for even their smallest achievement. . . . Encourage your children to come to you . . . with their problems and questions by listening to them every day.”⁹

“My plea . . . is a plea to save the children,” President Hinckley has said. “Too many of them walk with pain and fear, in loneliness and despair. Children need sunlight. . . . They need kindness and refreshment and affection. Every home, regardless of the cost of the house, can provide an environment of love which will be an environment of salvation.”¹⁰ ■

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liabona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.
2. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 325.
3. “Fundamentals of Enduring Family Relationships,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 60.
4. “Healing Wounds in Marriage,” *Ensign*, July 1993, 16.
5. *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 311.
6. In “Quotable Quotes,” *Reader’s Digest*, Jan. 1963, 25; see also Gordon B. Hinckley, “Reach Out in Love and Kindness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 77.
7. *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 59.
8. *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (1988), 497.
9. “The Honored Place of Women,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, 107.
10. “Save the Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 54.

The Testimony I Tried to Resist

In May 1987 my wife and son were about to be baptized in our native county of Kent, England. Despite the best efforts of the missionaries and members over a number of years, I had resisted the gospel—indeed, I had fought it tooth and nail. Although I had been asked for and had given permission for my wife and son to be baptized, it had been on condition that nobody would try to involve me. It was even doubtful whether or not I would actually attend the baptismal service.

However, my wife had a way of ensuring that I would be there. She asked me to sing a solo at the service. She knew I loved singing too much to resist. We looked through the unfamiliar hymnbook to find a suitable song, and she chose “I Stand All Amazed” (*Hymns*, no. 193) because she had heard it the previous Sunday and had felt something while singing it. I took a cursory look at the notes and decided they presented no problem. I did not look at the words.

The day came, and we had reached the point in the service when I was to sing. The first verse went fine, but then something—which I now know to be the Spirit—hit me very hard.

THE POWER OF THE HYMNS



*Members share how
music of the Church has
blessed their lives.*

I became acutely aware, as I sang the words “I marvel that he would descend from his throne divine / To rescue a soul so rebellious and proud as mine,” that *I* was that rebellious soul and that the Savior had descended to rescue *me*. I somehow managed to finish the hymn, despite almost choking with tears, but the rest of the service was a blur. When it was over, the full-time missionaries asked about my reaction. I agreed to take the discussions and was baptized some five and a half months later by our son, who by that time had been ordained a priest.

Since that happy day, I have had the great privilege of serving the Lord in many callings, including bishop, and of working for the Church in Frankfurt, Germany, for five wonderful years before moving to Canada and preparing to serve a mission. My wife and I recently completed two years of service in the Canada Edmonton Mission. All of this and countless other blessings can be traced back to that one line in that one hymn on that one day. The Lord knew that was the way to reach through my stubborn resistance and touch my heart.

*David L. Tyler, Cimarron Ward, Calgary
Alberta Foothills Stake*

“Would You Like Me to Sing to You?”

On August 1, 1989, while bodysurfing at Laguna Beach, California, I hit my head on a submerged rock and was instantly paralyzed from the neck down. Lifeguards and paramedics kept me alive until I was transported to the regional trauma center. Extensive tests showed the prognosis was not good. I was to be paralyzed from the neck down and breathing on a ventilator for the rest of my life.

While I was in the intensive care unit, brethren from the ward and stake volunteered to sit with me through the night. Being unable to move or speak, I felt very vulnerable, and their presence was a great comfort to me.

However, late one night I was having difficulty sleeping and was feeling fretful and uneasy.

A young man in the stake, whom I as stake president had recently called to the high council, was sitting with me that night. He

sensed that all was not well, and he said softly, “President, would you like me to sing to you?” I blinked my eyes once—my signal for *yes*. Taking out his little hymnbook, he commenced singing the hymns to me. He had a beautiful baritone voice, and with the familiar melodies and words came the unmistakable peace, comfort, and warmth of the Spirit.

On another occasion, at a rehabilitation center where I spent six months following the accident, I was suffering from anxiety again and didn’t know how I would make it through the night. As I lay there in the dark, unable to move



The young man took out his hymnbook and started singing.

and praying for relief, the thought came to me that I could sing the hymns in my mind. I began with “I Stand All Amazed” and then “I Know That My Redeemer Lives” (*Hymns*, nos. 193, 136). Other hymns began

flooding into my mind, the spirit of peace and comfort gradually descended upon me, and I soon fell into a deep sleep.

I have had an extremely rewarding life in the 16 years since my injury. Still, I have spent many hours lying in bed in the dark of night or early morning hours unable to sleep and have been blessed with a calm and peaceful feeling that eliminates anxiety and restlessness as I sing the hymns in my mind. The singing of hymns invites the Spirit into my life as nothing else can. What would I do without the hymns of this Church?

Jack L. Rushton, Tustin Fourth Ward, Orange California Stake

“You’re the One Who Plays the Piano!”

A few months before my 17th birthday, my family left our hometown in Alberta, Canada, and moved to Salt Lake City. It was a wrenching experience to leave my close circle of friends, my many Canadian relatives, and the prospect of a senior year filled with ball games, musical performances, and dances.

I would be the new girl who had no friends, was not involved in any activities, and was simply a nobody.

My first day at West High School was overwhelming. The number of students enrolled was greater than the population of my entire hometown! Just walking through the crowded corridors, being pushed on every side by the mass of humanity, was intimidating.

In my homeroom class, the teacher instructed me to go directly to the office because there was a problem with my registration. There, I was told I needed to go to the seminary building to get a signature from my teacher, authorizing me to leave the building every day for released-time religious instruction.

I had to ask for directions to the seminary building, and two students who heard me ask said: “Follow us. We’re going over there right now. Everybody who has seminary first hour meets in the foyer for an opening devotional.”

There must have been a hundred students jammed into the foyer of the building. I received a jovial handshake and a big smile from a gentleman in a suit and tie who was greeting at the door. “Welcome,” his voice boomed, followed immediately by the exclamation, “You’re the one who plays the piano!”

Startled, I said, “Well, yes I am, but how did you know that?”

“We’ll sort all of that out later,” he replied. “Just sit down and play this hymn.”

“I can’t,” I protested. “I need a signature, and then I have to get back to my class.”

“Just play the hymn,” he insisted. “It’s ‘Sweet Is the Work.’” He propelled me toward the piano and pulled out the bench. “Then I’ll sign your card.”



“Just sit down and play this hymn,” the man encouraged.

Playing the piano didn’t frighten me. I had taken lessons for 12 years, and the piano bench was one place where I felt completely comfortable. So I sat down and played “Sweet Is the Work” (*Hymns*, no. 147), amazed to hear a hundred teenage voices singing together. The only time I’d had that experience previously was at regional conferences. I could hear all four parts as their voices blended on “My heart shall triumph in my Lord / And bless his

works and bless his word.” At the end of the hymn I had tears in my eyes, realizing that the seminary building was one place where I would find friendship and acceptance.

Throughout that first day at school, I kept passing people in the halls who would call out, “Hey, you’re the one who played the piano in seminary!” The great majority of my friendships during my senior year came as a result of that one morning in the seminary building. Playing that simple hymn changed my life at a time when I was feeling lonely, vulnerable, and anonymous.

I have often thought back on that day and laughed about Brother Jackson’s response when I inquired later, “How did you know I played the piano?”

“I didn’t,” he replied. “I had asked that same question of every single person who came through the door. You were the first one who said yes!”

Helen Walker Jones, Ensign First Ward, Salt Lake Ensign Stake

Could a Children's Song Help?

In 2003 my husband learned that he would be deployed to Iraq for a year, leaving me alone to care for our four young children. In the weeks after he left, my frustration was sometimes overwhelming as I tried to assuage my own fears and comfort my children, who could not understand why their father was not there. Each night I looked forward to a short respite after the children were asleep.

My oldest son, Patrick, had just turned four and had a hard time adjusting to the changes in our home. He often stayed up late with me, following me around and clinging to me. I struggled to find a way to calm his fears and find that precious time I needed for myself.

One night I was especially frustrated that Patrick was still awake. I stomped through the house, getting him a drink of water, finding his favorite toy, trying everything I could think of to get him to sleep. I silently prayed, asking Heavenly Father what else I could do.

As I passed the bookshelf on my way to Patrick's room, I saw the *Children's Songbook* where it had lain untouched since I bought it several months earlier. A thought entered my mind: "You bought it for the children. Don't you think it's about time you used it?"

I took the book and returned to Patrick's bedroom, wondering if I was about to waste my time on another fruitless effort. I told Patrick to lie down while I sang him a song. I started with the first song in the book, "I Am a Child of God" (pp. 2–3; see also *Hymns*, no. 301), and sang every verse. Patrick was quiet the

whole time. I

continued on to the next song

I recognized. After only three or four songs, Patrick was asleep.

I realized that I was also feeling calmer and comforted by the messages of the songs.

The next night, Patrick asked me to sing to him again. This became our nightly routine. Over the next few months I sang through the *Children's Songbook* many times, singing every verse of every song I knew. I even learned a few that were unfamiliar to me.

I began to notice a change in our home. There was an atmosphere of love instead of frustration and anger. The children were more obedient and respectful, and they were kind and loving to one another. I

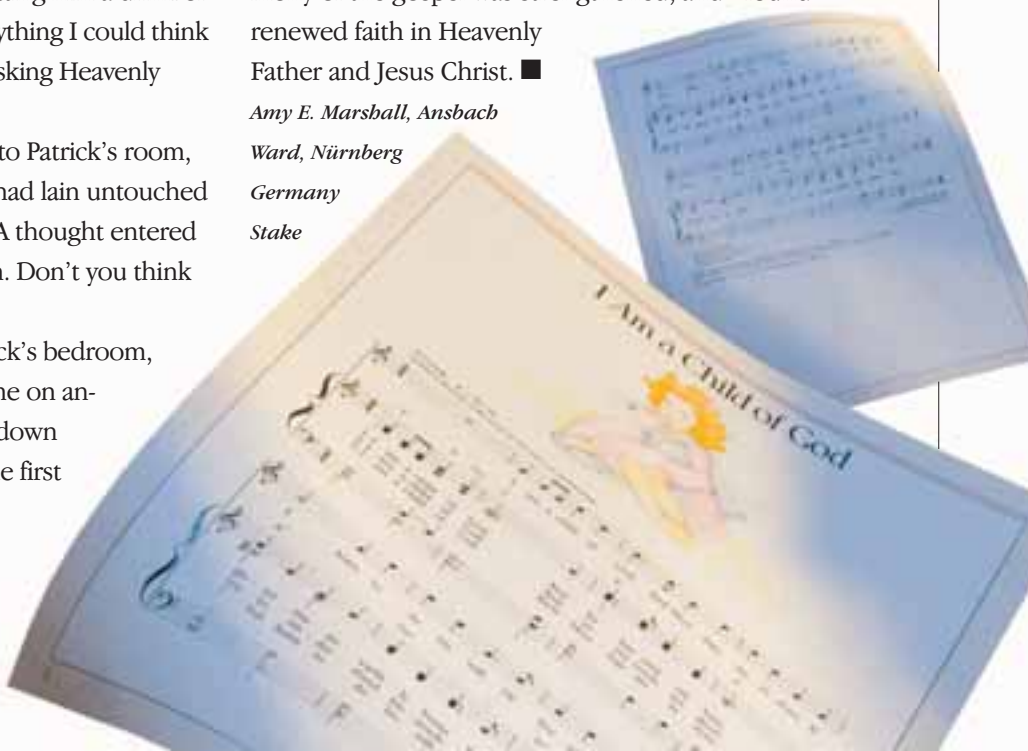
felt I could handle the many chal-

lenges I faced during my husband's deployment. My testimony of the gospel was strengthened, and I found renewed faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. ■

Amy E. Marshall, Ansbach
Ward, Nürnberg
Germany
Stake



My son and I were comforted by the messages of the songs.



Church Resources for Hearing Loss

Do you have difficulty participating in Church meetings because of hearing loss? Depending on how long you've experienced diminished hearing, you may not be aware of Church resources available to you. Many Latter-day Saint meetinghouses are equipped with listening devices (small remote receivers connected to the speaker system). They allow you to sit anywhere you desire and still hear the speaker. Contact a member of the bishopric if you would like to use them. If you are having trouble hearing in classes, see if the teacher will use a microphone. To further assist you, Church videos and satellite broadcasts are available with closed captioning. Also, closed captioning is available at many temples. Simply call ahead to inquire and make arrangements.

Marlene B. Sullivan, Orchard Fifth Ward, Bountiful Utah Orchard Stake

Sharing Family History

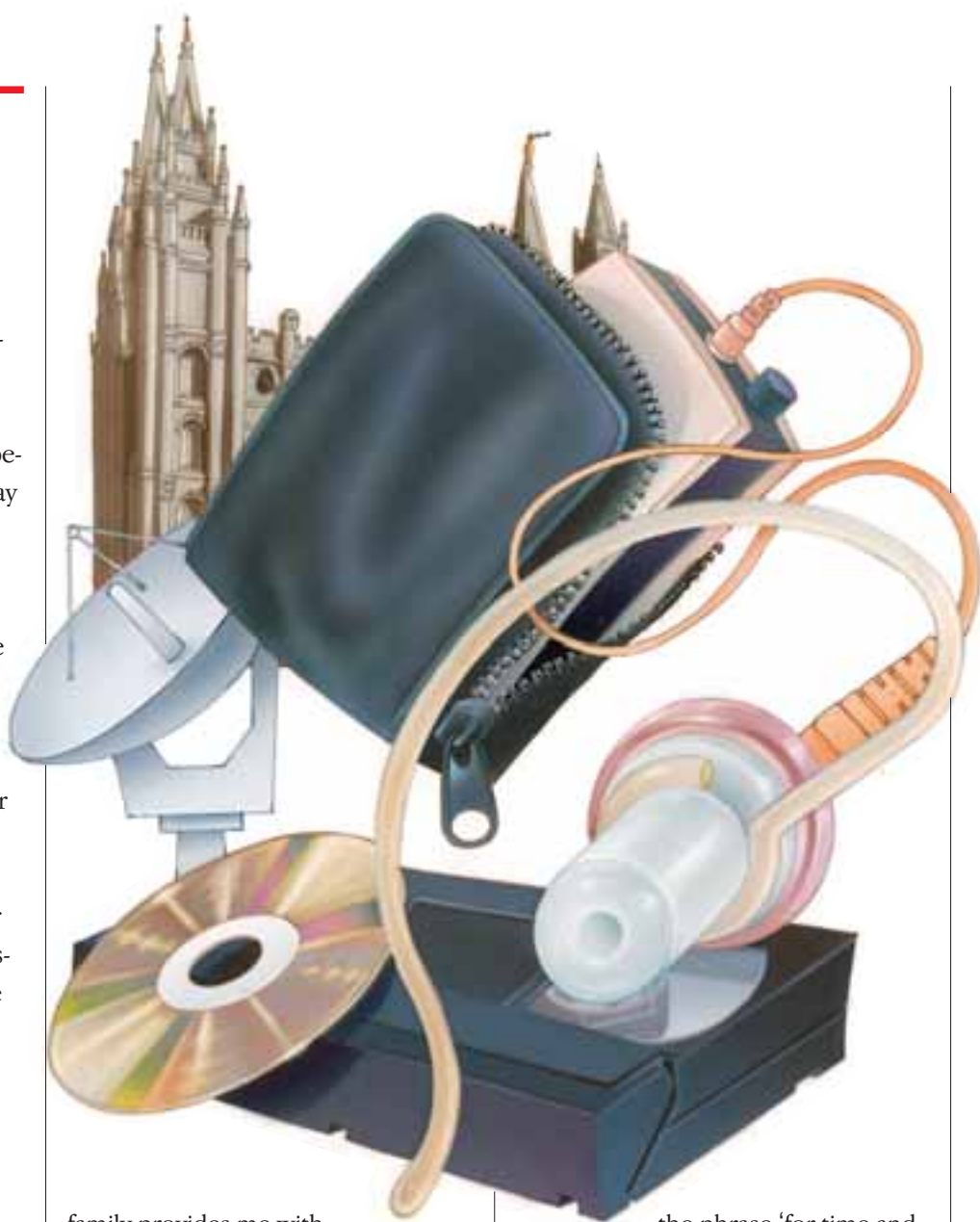
I joined the Church more than 30 years ago, but to date only immediate family members have also been baptized. My extended

family provides me with many missionary opportunities, and the most well-received approach has involved family history. Here are two ideas that I have found helpful:

Scrapbooks. After I married, I showed my extended family our wedding album. It proved to be a useful tool for sharing my beliefs about the importance of temple marriage. One family member commented, "I like

the phrase 'for time and all eternity.' " Sharing photo journals that highlight milestones such as baptisms and missions is a way to share beliefs. You might send duplicate pictures or an annual family letter with the photos to extended family members.

Family history information. At family reunions, ask who is also doing research and offer to share findings.



Suggest using a family history center in their area or offer personal assistance. If you have a laptop computer, show them how they can organize their records on Personal Ancestral File. Even without a laptop, you can still tell them about this and other free resources at **familysearch.org**.

Alison Affeltranger, Sego Lily Ward, Sandy Utah Granite South Stake

Scripture Study with an Ancestor

If you are fortunate enough to inherit a family Bible that belonged to your ancestors, look for any scriptures they may have marked. My paternal grandfather loved writing small notations in the margins: "I have finished the N.T. This is the 5th time I have read the N.T." Sometimes he counseled his sons: "So read it, my sons. It will give life and joy to you." Reading his notes has prompted me to do the same in my own set of scriptures.

Of course, some family Bibles contain valuable family history information or other mementos, such as antique bookmarks, a favorite poem, or photos. So don't let an old family Bible continue to collect dust on an forgotten shelf. Peruse its pages to discover treasured information for your family today.

Marlene Cameron Thomas, Pellissippi Ward, Knoxville Tennessee Stake



Picture a Song

When our children were small, we often taught them songs from the *Children's Songbook* for family home evening. We would first explain a song, then invite the children to illustrate the lyrics. After learning several songs this way, our children soon had their own illustrated versions of the songbook. Even our smallest

children who couldn't yet read could easily follow and understand the songs because of the pictures they'd made. As a family, we enjoyed singing the songs around the house or while traveling. When our children hum or sing Church songs, we feel blessed that they

are choosing to "seek the Lord early while in [their] youth." Our hope is that as they grow older, "He will help [them] to know the truth" ("Seek the Lord Early," *Children's Songbook*, 108).

Mark and Cindy Smith, Grays Harbor Ward, Elma Washington Stake



Our Mission Mats

As my husband and I were preparing to serve a mission, I realized that I would miss my friends and family very much—especially my children and grandchildren. I knew that mealtimes on certain occasions would especially remind us of family back home. Since I knew I could not pack many extras to remind me of my loved ones, I decided to make some picture place mats. Two of my daughters-in-law helped me gather some of my favorite photos, both recent and old. They then copied the images in color,

cut them, and glued them to durable place-mat size paper, available at craft or paper goods stores. We then laminated them for durability and easy cleanup.

At packing time, my set of 10 place mats fit neatly into the bottom of my suitcase without taking up much space. During our mission, we had dinner with our family, although we were nearly halfway around the world! Those who visited our apartment enjoyed seeing our collection of photos. Now that we have returned home, we are making another set featuring our wonderful brothers and sisters in the Philippines.

Jeanne Huff, West Point 12th Ward, West Point Utah Stake



The geographic areas covered by the Third and Fourth Quorums of the Seventy have been divided to create the new Seventh and Eighth Quorums of the Seventy.

Seventh and Eighth Quorums of the Seventy Announced

Policies and Announcements

A recent letter from the First Presidency to priesthood leaders reads:

“With the additional members of the Fourth Quorum of the Seventy approved at a recent general conference, the

Seventh Quorum of the Seventy has been organized from a division of the Fourth Quorum.

“Members of the Seventh Quorum are drawn from the Brazil North, Brazil South, Chile, and South America South Areas. The Fourth

Quorum is composed of brethren serving in the Central America, Mexico North, Mexico South, South America North, and South America West Areas.

“In addition, the large geographic area covered by the Third Quorum of the Seventy

has made it advisable to create the Eighth Quorum of the Seventy. The new quorum is composed of Area Seventies from the Asia, Asia North, Australia, New Zealand/Pacific Islands, and Philippines Areas. The Third Quorum consists of brethren serving in the Africa Southeast, Africa West, Europe Central, Europe East, and Europe West Areas.” ■

New Church History Library to Be Constructed

More than 3.5 million Church records, manuscripts, publications, photographs, and audiovisual items of historical value will soon find a new home in Salt Lake City thanks

to the announcement of plans for a new Church History Library.

The library, which will be built across the street to the east of the Conference Center, will be a five-story, 250,000-

square-foot (23,000-m²) building that will visually complement the Conference Center. Because the new library will be much larger than the existing one, the Church will have more archival space to which it can add more materials.

The new library, which will replace the library currently located inside the Church

Office Building, will include reading rooms and a special collections area that will be open to the public.

“The new Church History Library will be a welcome resource for those who wish to learn more about Latter-day Saint history,” said Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy, who serves



The new Church History Library will be a five-story, 250,000-square-foot (23,000-m²) building constructed to the east of the Conference Center.

as Church historian and recorder.

Construction on the building is scheduled to begin later this year. The Church expects the building to be completed by late

2007. The library will be built on a site that is currently a 272-space parking lot. Bill Williams, the Church's director of architecture and engineering, said the Church will create interim parking

during construction.

Brother Williams also said the library will have a similar feel to the Main Street Plaza and that it will have "the same kind of character" as Temple Square. ■

New Mission Presidents Begin Service

More than one-third of the missions worldwide will receive a new mission president this year. One hundred and twenty-two mission presidents will begin their new assignments on or around July 1. The total number of missions worldwide is now 339, the newest being the Mozambique Maputo Mission, which was created on January 1, 2005. ■

Alaska Anchorage
Randy C. Lewis
Albania Tirana
Paul D. Clayton
Argentina Buenos Aires West
Alfonso Ramos
Argentina Mendoza
Juan C. Ávila
Argentina Resistencia
Donald V. Shakespear
Argentina Rosario
Richard C. Hutchison
Argentina Salta
Israel Rubalcava
Arizona Phoenix
C. Scott Gill
Arizona Tucson
Douglas F. Higham
Arkansas Little Rock
Gary N. Batchelor

Baltic
Russell N. Watterson
Bolivia Cochabamba
Ronald E. Dalene
Brazil Brasília
Marcos A. Aidukaitis
Brazil Florianópolis
Lamonte J. Dansie Jr.
Brazil Fortaleza
Victor A. da Silva
Brazil Maceió
B. Bruce Muir
Brazil Manaus
Paulo H. Itinose
Brazil Recife
Mark B. Woodruff
Brazil Ribeirão Preto
R. Blair Condie
Brazil Rio de Janeiro
Milton H. Brinton

Brazil Rio de Janeiro North
João L. Oppe
Brazil Salvador
Jarbas F. Souza
Brazil São Paulo Interlagos
Dale H. Bradford
Brazil São Paulo North
Michael J. Bertasso
Brazil São Paulo South
Jose A. Teixeira
California Anaheim
Randall G. Harmsen
California Arcadia
Stephen W. Owen
California Fresno
John C. Beck
California Riverside
Robert A. Ewer
California Roseville
Lee T. Perry
California Sacramento
R. Randall Huff
California San Diego
Robert N. Packer
California San Jose
Oscar W. McConkie III
California Ventura

Richard M. Ellsworth
Canada Montreal
Alain A. Petion
Canada Toronto East
Tad R. Callister
Canada Vancouver
Anthony W. Middleton Jr.
Chile Osorno
Carl R. Faulkner
Chile Santiago North
Kevin R. Duncan
Colombia Cali
Horacio J. Nieto
Colorado Colorado Springs
Robert S. Fotheringham
Colorado Denver North
W. Dea Montague Jr.
Connecticut Hartford
Van R. Johnson
Croatia Zagreb
Douglas L. Weight
Dominican Republic Santo Domingo East
Juan A. Garcia
Dominican Republic Santo Domingo West
Larry K. Bair
Democratic Republic of Congo Kinshasa
William W. Maycock
Ecuador Guayaquil North
Randall L. Ridd
Ecuador Quito
Jose F. Lara
El Salvador San Salvador East
Ricky D. Jones
El Salvador San Salvador West
Robert D. Call
England Manchester
Theodore M. Jacobsen
Fiji Suva
Ian S. Ardern
Finland Helsinki
Phillip Estes
Florida Fort Lauderdale
Noel B. Reynolds
France Paris
Steven H. Pond
France Toulouse
J. Craig Merrell
Georgia Macon
R. Brent Evanson

Germany Frankfurt
K. Eugene Webb
Germany Munich/Austria
Holger D. Rakow
Guatemala Guatemala City
Central
Hugo E. Martínez
Guatemala Guatemala City
North
Thomas R. Coleman
Guatemala Guatemala City
South
Ronald R. Bennion
Guatemala Quetzaltenango
César A. Morales
Honduras Tegucigalpa
Scott D. Farrell
Italy Catania
W. Bryan Colton
Ivory Coast Abidjan
Lindsay T. Dil
Japan Hiroshima
Akira Yafuso
Japan Sapporo
Yoshikazu Yokoyama
Japan Sendai
Asao Miyashita
Japan Tokyo South
Valten J. Tucker
Kentucky Louisville
Dennis C. Brimhall
Korea Busan
Pyung-Jong Song
Louisiana Baton Rouge
Douglas H. Patterson
Mexico Guadalajara
Gary L. Heaton
Mexico Mexico City North
Ricardo E. Castillo
Mexico Oaxaca
Jesús A. Ortiz
Mexico Puebla
J. Phil Freestone
Mexico Tijuana
Brian B. Carmack
Mexico Torreón
Richard J. Hogan
Mexico Tuxtla Gutiérrez
Clifford L. Whetten
Mexico Veracruz
Lester F. Johnson
Michigan Lansing

Dean C Edwards
Minnesota Minneapolis
R. Lloyd Smith
Missouri Independence
James L. Hacking
Mozambique Maputo
Lynn P. Wallace*
Nevada Las Vegas
John J. Wadsworth
New Jersey Morristown
Stephen K. Parkinson
New Zealand Auckland
Carl B. Cook
New Zealand Wellington
G. Michael Finnigan
Nigeria Port Harcourt
Edgar L. Stone
Ohio Columbus
Russell S. Gilliland
Oregon Eugene
Daniel B. Fugal
Oregon Portland
Van C. Gessel
Pennsylvania Harrisburg
Jerrald M Jensen
Pennsylvania Pittsburgh
Jay K. Francis
Peru Lima East
Michael R Lindstrom
Philippines Angeles
Robert J. Stringham
Philippines Cebu
Leonard M Anderson
Philippines Davao
Moises M. Mabunga Jr.
Philippines Manila
David E. LeSueur
Philippines Olongapo
Craig A. Burtenshaw
Philippines San Pablo
Gerald E. Mortimer
Philippines Tacloban
Richard J. Trask
Romania Bucharest
John H. Ashby
Russia Yekaterinburg
Gregory A. Schwitzer
Samoa Apia
Paul B. Price
South Africa Cape Town
John C. Nelson
South Africa Johannesburg

James A. Bowden
South Carolina Columbia
Kenneth E. Brailsford
Sweden Stockholm
Jan Åke Karlsson
Tahiti Papeete
T. Marama Tarati
Tennessee Knoxville
Ronald S Godfrey
Tennessee Nashville
Mark O. Lords
Texas Dallas
Bart C. Warner
Texas Houston
Travis L. Steward
Texas Houston East

Michael S. Lake
Texas Lubbock
D. Brent Rose
Ukraine Donetsk
Dale E. Andersen
Ukraine Kiev
R. Kim Davis
Venezuela Caracas
Danilo A. Paredes
Washington Tacoma
Kevin W. Pearson
West Virginia Charleston
Joseph F. Cowley Jr.

*Began service on January 1, 2005, when mission was created.

Home Evening Blessing Families for 90 Years

By Adam C. Olson, Church Magazines

Ninety years ago, President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) and his counselors in the First Presidency announced the commencement of the family home evening program. Since that time, the program has become an institution in Latter-day Saint households around the world, blessing families in countless ways.

A Good Monday Night Model

It was Monday night, and seven-year-old María Fernanda Fernández of the Loma Nueva Ward, San Miguelito Panamá Stake, was in charge of her family's home evening. María Fernanda (Marifer to her friends and family) had chosen the topic of prayer.

After leading the singing and asking her two-year-old brother, Roberto, to say the prayer with a little help from their mother, Marifer told a

story her mother had helped her memorize from the *Family Home Evening Resource Book*, using pictures from the Gospel Art Picture Kit. Then she related a personal experience: "At the beginning of the school year, a classmate always fought with me. One day, I went to the bathroom crying after a fight and prayed that she wouldn't fight with me anymore."

Marifer said after that prayer, their relationship changed. "We invited her to my house and gave her mom a couple of issues of the *Liabona*. My friend liked them so much that she asked for more." Marifer said she and her friend have talked a lot about the Church.

She ended with her testimony: "I know that Jesus Christ lives, that the Book of Mormon and the Bible are true, and that Jesus lived and died for us."

Her mother, Marisol, and



Marifer Fernández leads the singing during family night.

her father, Luis, bishop of the Loma Nueve Ward, shared their testimonies about prayer as well. Then Bishop Fernández offered the closing prayer, and it was time for treats.

Family Night Blessings

President Gordon B. Hinckley, who was a young boy when family home evening was instituted, has said that although it was a struggle at times, his parents

always held family home evening, and he and many others were blessed for their diligence.

"I see the fruits of it in my own family and in the families of my grandchildren and in the families of my great-grandchildren," he said. "The principle of family solidarity carries with it a conviction of its truth" ("Inspirational Thoughts," *Ensign*, June 1999, 4).

In order to receive the blessings promised to those who hold family home evenings, it is important to realize that these blessings are reserved not only for couples with children, but for all members of the Church.

President James E. Faust,

Second Counselor in the First Presidency, said love will abound in any home that has family home evening, regardless of how many people live there. "One of the most important ways to foster unity in the home is holding family home evening regularly," he said. "Whether we are young or old, single or married, whether we have children at home or have become empty nesters, family home evening can increase unity and love in our homes. Family home evening is for everyone" ("Enriching Our Lives through Family Home Evening," *Ensign*, June 2003, 3).

To help members have more meaningful family home evenings, the Church

Family Home Evening Help Online

Recently, in an effort to help families plan more meaningful family home evenings, the Church added a link to its Web site that gives families hundreds of ideas for lessons, activities, games, and topics of conversation.

Ideas listed on the Church's Home and Family site (www.lds.org/hf) are taken from the *Family Home Evening Resource Book*, Church magazines, and various other sources. While the site has been operational for about two years, additions and changes are constantly being made to allow even those who use the site often an opportunity to come across new material.

Prophets and apostles have stressed the importance of family home

evening since it was instituted. In a letter dated February 11, 1999, the First Presidency counseled members on the importance of the responsibilities of parents and family in the home.

"The home is the basis of a righteous life, and no other instrumentality can take its place or fulfill its essential functions in carrying forward this God-given responsibility," the statement said. "We counsel parents and children to give highest priority to family prayer, family home evening, gospel study and instruction, and wholesome family activities" (see *Ensign*, June 1999, 80).

In order to encourage these activities, the Web site includes tips that can

help families with varying circumstances understand the best ways to make family home evenings memorable. The site includes tips on how to involve teenagers in family home evening, keep the

attention of younger family members, and create your own lessons.

While the site is currently only in English, plans are being made to broaden the number of languages available to aid more members. ■



Family home evening help can be found online at www.lds.org/hf.

offers many resources that can help families have uplifting experiences. Along with the *Family Home Evening Resource Book* (item no. 31106), the Gospel Art Picture Kit (item no. 34730) is also available. This can be particularly useful with young children. Online resources are also now available that give tips and suggestions on how to make the evening special (see sidebar on p. 77).

Families are encouraged to plan family home evening together. If all members of the family have a responsibility for family home evening, each person can feel that he or she is contributing to the success of the gathering.

Together Again on Monday Night

It was Monday again, and the Veras family of the Gazcue Ward, Santo Domingo Dominican Republic Stake, was learning about the importance of listening to the prophet. Eight-year-old Shantalle led the singing. Four-year-old Yeraly helped her mother, Awilda, tell the story of Noah and the ark. Aaliya, two, was content sitting with her father, Nelson, as he bore testimony of President Gordon B. Hinckley.

Brother Veras's rendition of "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" sent the three girls into peals of laughter. A prayer followed, then treats.

Family home evening had turned the Veras family's cramped downtown Santo Domingo apartment into a peaceful haven five stories above the busy street. "I

love being with my family," Shantalle says of family night. ■

Chad Phares of the Church magazines also contributed to this article.

Saints in Central America Organize Day of Service

By Don Searle, Church Magazines

Members of the Church throughout Central America spent Saturday, April 9, working to improve their communities. Before the day was over, they and some of their neighbors who worked with them had donated more than 166,000 hours of service—the equivalent of one person working 24 hours per day, 365 days a

year, for just under 19 years.

More than 22,000 Church members, along with some 1,800 friends of other faiths, carried out service projects in 258 locations spread through Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama.

The projects not only contributed to improving communities, they also helped make friends for the Church

and its members, commented Elder W. Douglas Shumway of the Seventy, First Counselor in the Central America Area Presidency. "It was most gratifying to see so many members of the Church as well as others participating hand in hand cleaning, painting, and repairing as they enjoyed each other's company throughout the day."

Elder Shumway noted that the diligence and the spirit felt among members made an impact on leaders in the communities. He cited as an example a visit by the mayor of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala's second largest city, to Latter-day Saint Church services on Sunday, April 10, the day following the service projects. The mayor had been so impressed by the LDS young people involved in the projects that he said in a Sunday School class, "I congratulate your youth for having principles that help them maintain their moral cleanliness and purity. As you continue to uphold these standards, you will continue to build our community."

In other areas, some residents who saw what the Latter-day Saints were doing joined in the work spontaneously or helped by bringing water or refreshment. In Nicaragua, there were reports that some citizens who joined in the projects were so impressed by the Latter-day Saints that they asked to have missionaries visit them at home. But most simply expressed gratitude for what the Church members had contributed. One man, a member of a community improvement committee in Chalchuapa, El



PHOTOGRAPH BY DON SEARLE

Members of the San Salvador El Salvador Soyapango Stake bag garbage collected along the freeway.

Salvador, explained that a local public park had been allowed to run down badly and that the municipal government had not had funds or manpower to save it. "But now, thanks to the help that the Latter-day Saints have given on this day of service, we've been able to improve it, to make it beautiful again."

It was easy to identify the workers involved in the projects. Throughout Central America they wore white vests with the words "Hands That Help" on the front, along with the letters "SUD," which stand for Latter-day Saint in Spanish. On the back, the vests identified the wearers as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or the Mormons. The identifying vests were an idea that has worked well during similar service projects in other areas, notably Brazil.

Local residents were not the only ones who noticed the work going on in their communities. The news media, alerted by LDS public affairs representatives, paid attention too. News stories appeared afterward in papers in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Six television channels in El Salvador produced stories about the day of service, as well as one channel each in Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In San Salvador, El Salvador, one local radio station, alerted while the work was being done, had a news story on the air within an hour.

Undoubtedly one of the more lasting effects of the day

of service will be the strengthening of ties between Latter-day Saints and community leaders. For many of the projects, local governments furnished materials and supervision while Church members and others offered their labor. Projects were planned in cooperation with local government leaders. In one municipality of San Salvador, for example, a member who has

quietly worked with local government over a period of years arranged, at the mayor's request, for a group of volunteers to clean up and paint in and around a community theater. In Santa Ana, El Salvador, the stake Relief Society president is employed at an elder care center operated by an order of Catholic nuns. At the request of the nuns, she arranged for volunteers not

only to perform physical labor outside, but also to offer personal grooming and care to the residents of the home.

Many members spoke afterward of the joy they felt in serving. Many said also that they felt the service would help change perceptions of the Church. One said, "It is said that words convince people, but actions pull them in." ■

Comment

Testimony in the Magazine

I just finished reading, from the picture on the front cover to the picture on the back cover, the April 2005 *Ensign*, and I must tell you that it is exceptional. The articles, the photographs, the paintings, and even the comment letters are exemplary and edifying. This issue stands as a beautiful and timeless testimony of our Church.

Franklin E. Walker, Lone Peak Ward, Alpine Utah West Stake

Grateful for Balance

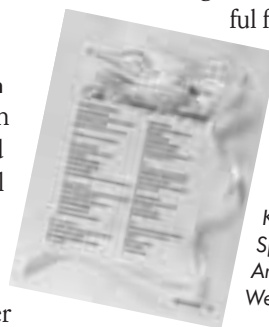
Thank you for your article, "A Balanced Life" (*Ensign*, April 2005, 26). What a breath of fresh air in the polluted rhetoric of "do more," "try harder," "more is expected of you." I have been trying to live a more balanced life after my own bout with depression. I don't remember ever reading an article that expressed those sentiments quite that way. I truly believe we need to try our best, but some people's best is better than others.' We need to stop comparing ourselves with

others and just work on ourselves. Sometimes it is not about praying harder and having more faith. Sometimes it is about relaxing with our family.

Name Withheld

Touched by a Poem

As a mother with young children and the wife of a dutiful priesthood holder, I was touched by "The Wedding Reception" by Sister



Martha Taysom in April's *Ensign*. I was filled with emotion the first time I read it earlier in the month. Today I reread the tender poem and was again moved and grateful for the beautiful

words she expressed in her heartfelt poem. Thank you.

Kim Mantz Swallow, Spring Hollow Ward, American Fork Utah West Stake

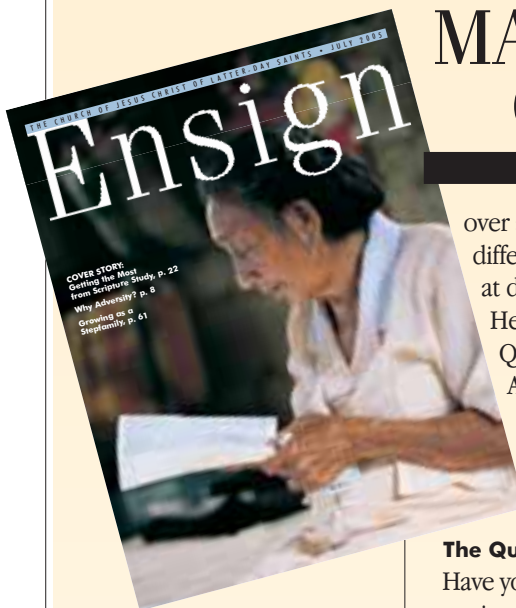
Call for Articles

The *Ensign* is seeking helpful tips for use in the Random Sampler department. Please share with us your ideas that pertain to the following: *What was your best family home evening lesson or activity? How do you plan and organize family nights? How have you successfully maintained a budget? Do you have a helpful, unique parenthood tip to share?*

Send responses by August 15, 2005, to cur-editorial-ensign@ldschurch.org or to *Ensign* Editorial, 50 E.

North Temple St., Rm. 2420, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-3220, USA. Clearly mark your submission "Random Sampler," and at the top of your submission, write your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and ward and stake (or branch and district).

While we cannot acknowledge receipt of individual responses, authors whose submissions are selected for publication will be notified. If you would like your manuscript returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope and allow up to a year. ■



MAKING THE MOST OF THIS ISSUE

J U L Y 2 0 0 5

over a lifetime, God has different things to tell us at different times,” Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles teaches. To read more of his insights, see page 22.

The Quest for Joy

Have you ever yearned to experience more joy? Or do you want to understand what joy really is and what it is not? Barbara Workman views joy through the lens of missionary service, but her insights can apply to us all. See page 50.

Why Adversity?

• “It has been said that into every life a little rain must fall,” writes Elder D. Allen Andersen of the Seventy. “But why does it sometimes seem that it pours?” If you have ever asked yourself this question, you’ll be interested in his answers. See page 8.

• A related article, “Growth through Setbacks,” by Elder James M. Dunn of

the Seventy gives added insight. See page 12.

The Presiding Bishopric

Have you ever wondered what the Presiding Bishop of the Church does? Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, continues the series on priesthood quorums. See page 46.

The Ensign Opened Their Door

When a father wouldn’t let the home teachers visit his family, they sent the *Ensign* instead, and the magazine opened the way. See page 49. You can also send a gift subscription to the *Ensign*. Please see the box, right column.

Home Teachers, Visiting Teachers

Find the monthly messages on pages 2 and 55.

Leaving Nauvoo

About a year and a half after the mob martyred the Prophet Joseph Smith, enemies of the Church drove the Saints from Nauvoo, their “City Beautiful.” This month’s



arts package features the exodus from Nauvoo, page 40.

Family Matters

• “The secret of a happy marriage is to serve God and each other,” taught President Ezra Taft Benson. To learn more about the responsibility spouses have to love and care for each other and for their children, see page 66.

• Stepfamilies can create some unique challenges. If you are a parent in a stepfamily, see page 61 for some wise counsel.

The Blessing of a Body

When you look in the mirror, what do you feel about the physical part of you? A healthy view of our physical bodies is important to our spirituality in a society that preaches a distorted perspective about this fundamental blessing of mortality. See page 14.

Elder Eyring on Scripture Study

“The scriptures were one of the ways God spoke to me—even when I was a child—about my needs, my situation, and my life. They still are. Since our needs change



Growing as a Stepfamily, p.61

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GOSPEL TOPICS

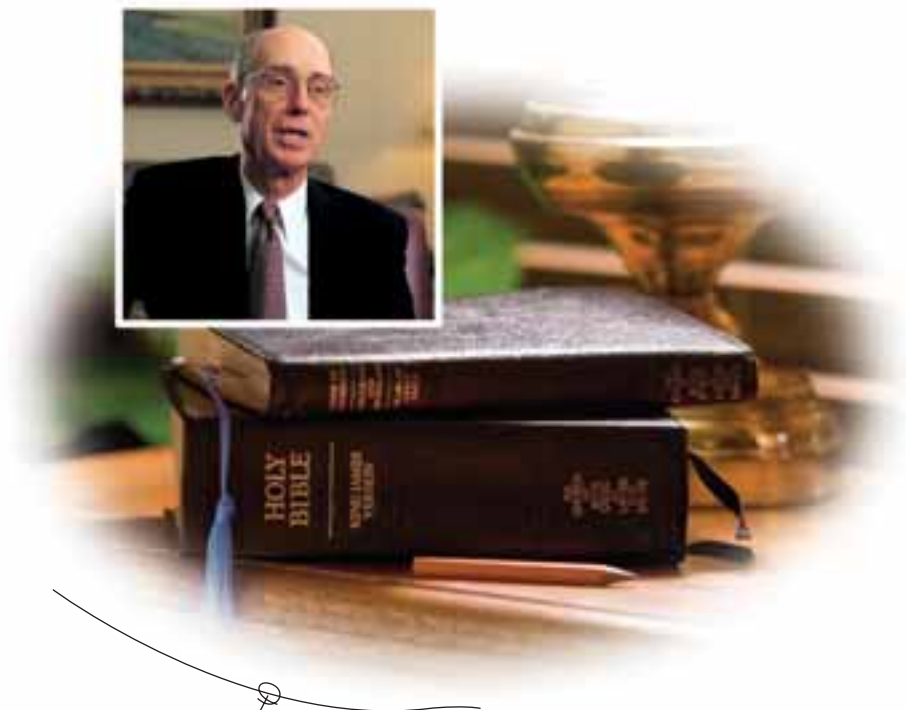
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MAY NOT BE COPIED

The McKay Farmhouse, Huntsville, Utah, by Cynthia M. McKay

David O. McKay (1873–1970), ninth President of the Church, was born and reared in this home in Huntsville, located in a picturesque valley in the mountains near Ogden, Utah. On this farm, young David learned to work hard as he helped with the crops and farm animals. The artist, who is the wife of David O. McKay's grandson Robert, featured President McKay's large horse Sonny Boy on the right.



"Sometimes I go to the scriptures for doctrine. Sometimes I go to the scriptures for instruction. . . . Invariably I find new ideas, thoughts I have never had before, and I receive inspiration and instruction and answers to my questions." See "A Discussion on Scripture Study: An Interview with Elder Henry B. Eyring," p. 22.