

## Helaman 4-10: Some Areas of Focus

- I. What is the most important thing you have ever forgot?  
(Temple Recommends near Flagstaff)

What did President Kimball say was the most important word in the dictionary?  
(Remember)

What are some reminders we have in the Church?  
CTR rings, scriptures, “fridge” quotes, garments (Brinley story, Jolley Story)

### **Lion King: Remember**

We must “remember [Christ] more often than we remember him” (President Howard W. Hunter, *CR*, April 1994, pp. 83-84).

## **II. Helaman 5:**

- 1-3 *Corruption of the Nephite government*

“If television viewing choices serve as a valid measure of our society, they who choose evil surely are more numerous than they who choose good.” (Joseph B. Wirthlin, *Finding Peace in Our Lives*, p. 218)

- 4-20 *Nephi and Lehi devote themselves to preaching*

“Christ is the only sure foundation upon which man must build his life in order to withstand the powers of the adversary. Helaman reminds his sons, and us, that if we are solidly built upon Christ we cannot fall” (Millett & McConkie, p. 355).

“Helaman tells his sons he wishes them to be righteous and that this is why he gave them the names of their ‘first parents who came out of the land of Jerusalem’ (vs. 6), Lehi and Nephi. **President George Albert Smith** was similarly named. His grandfather, known as George A. Smith, was an apostle and a counselor to Brigham Young in the First Presidency of the Church. This fact had a great influence upon young George Albert Smith. Once when ill he had a dream in which his grandfather appeared to him. He reports:

“When you look in the dictionary for the most important word, do you know what it is? It could be ‘remember.’ Because all of you have made covenants-you know what to do and you know how to do it-Our greatest need is to remember. That is why everyone goes to sacrament meeting every Sabbath day-to take the sacrament and listen to the priests pray that they . . . may always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them. . . . Nobody should ever forget to go to sacrament meeting. ‘Remember’ is the word. ‘Remember’ is the program.” (President Spencer W. Kimball, as cited in *Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, Helaman 3 – 3 Nephi 8, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 243).

“Just as ships need anchors to keep them from drifting away on the open seas, people need spiritual anchors in their lives if they are to remain steadfast and not drift into the sea of temptation and sin. Faith in God and in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the main anchor we must have in our lives to hold us fast during times of social turbulence and wickedness that seem to be everywhere today...Our faith, for it to be meaningful and effective and to hold us fast, must be centered in Jesus Christ, in his life, in his atonement, and in the restoration of the Gospel to the earth in the last days” (M. Russell Ballard, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, “Anchor to the Soul,” 6 September 1992, p. 2).

### **Story: Anchor hooking on to ship, being drug out to sea in the Gulf of Mexico**

Links on the Chain: Prayer, Word of Wisdom, Tithing, Honesty, Moral Purity, Service, Church Attendance, & Scripture Study.

- 6 Keep the commandments

“A number of years ago I was seriously ill. In fact, I think everyone gave me up but my wife. With my family I went to St. George, Utah, to see if it would improve my health. We went as far as we could by train, and then

continued the journey in a wagon, in the bottom of which a bed had been made for me. In St. George we arranged for a tent for my health and comfort, with a built in floor raised about a foot above the ground, and we could roll up the south side of the tent to make the sunshine and fresh air available. I became so weak as to be scarcely able to move. It was a slow and exhausting effort for me even to turn over in bed. One day, under these conditions, I lost consciousness of my surroundings and thought I had passed to the other side. I found myself standing with my back to a large and beautiful lake, facing a great forest of trees. There was no one in sight, and there was no boat upon the lake or any other visible means to indicate how I might have arrived there. I realized, or seemed to realize, that I had finished my work in mortality and had gone home. I began to look around, to see if I could not find someone. There was no evidence of anyone living there, just those great, beautiful trees in front of me and the wonderful lake behind me. I began to explore, and soon I found a trail through the woods which seemed to have been used very little, and which was almost obscured by grass. I followed this trail, and after I had walked for some time and had traveled a considerable distance through the forest, I saw a man coming towards me. I became aware that he was a very large man, and I hurried my steps to reach him, because I recognized him as my grandfather. In mortality he weighed over three hundred pounds, so you may know he was a large man. I remember how happy I was to see him coming. I had been given his name and had always been proud of it. When Grandfather came within a few feet of me, he stopped. His stopping was an invitation for me to stop. Then— and this I would like the boys and girls and young people never to forget— he looked at me very earnestly and said: ‘I would like to know what you have done with my name.’ Everything I had ever done passed before me as though it were a flying picture on a screen— everything I had done. Quickly this vivid retrospect came down to the very time I was standing there. My whole life had passed before me, I smiled and looked at my grandfather and said: ‘I have never done anything with your name of which you need be ashamed.’ He stepped forward and took me in his arms, and as he did so, I became conscious again of my earthly surroundings. My pillow was as wet as though water had been poured on it— wet with tears of gratitude that I could answer unashamed. I have thought of this many times, and I want to tell you that I have been trying, more than ever since that time, to take care of that name. So I want to say to the boys and girls, to the young men and women, to the youth of the Church and of all the world: Honor your fathers and your mothers. Honor the names that you bear, because some day you will have the privilege and the obligation of reporting to them (and to your Father in heaven) what you have done with their name” (George Albert Smith, *Improvement Era*, March 1947, p. 139).

“You got it from your father, its all he had to give.  
 It’s yours to use and cherish for as long as you may live.  
 You may lose the watch he gave you; it can always be replaced.  
 But, a black mark on your name son can never be erased.  
 It was clean the day you took it, a worthy name to bear.  
 When he got it from his father there was no dishonor there.  
 So always guard it wisely after all is said and done;  
 So there will be no dishonor when you give it to your son.”

“Those who know him understand that President [James E.] Faust will not yield to mere pleasure.... [His] son Robert... relates his father’s integrity to the motto ‘To thine own self be true,’ citing how his father regularly counseled, ‘The most important thing is your name and reputation’” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, August 1995, p. 12).

### **What Have I Done With His Name?, Especially for Youth “Return with Honor”**

Father named me after Grandpa.  
 He said he hoped that I would one day  
 Be the man that he was.  
 But Grandpa died when I was five year old,  
 And so he hasn’t been around to know  
 What his namesake has done.

But what if he’s watching,  
 What if Grandpa’s seen all I’ve become.  
 What have I done with his name?  
 I’m hoping he won’t be ashamed;  
 The right or the wrong, I’ve done it all  
 With his name.

Someone named us after Mormon,  
Trying to turn the world against us  
Because of faith etched in gold.  
But that name has stood for goodness,  
And its fame now floods the nations  
By the words Mormon wrote.  
What if he's watching?  
Have we been true to what Mormon made known.

What have we done with his name?  
I'm hoping he won't be ashamed.  
The right or the wrong,  
We've done it all, with his name.

There's a name above all others;  
It's the only one that saves.  
So Grandpa, me, and Mormon,  
We love this name.  
We know he's watching,  
Jesus sees all of our faith.

What will we do with his name?  
He's hoping we won't be ashamed;  
The right or the wrong,  
We do it all, with his name.

But he can catch us when we fall,  
Cause that's what he does, with his name.  
That blessed name.  
I love his name.

8 Don't boast or brag

"The stories of our early Church leaders really began to live for me when I was a young missionary... There was one episode depicted on the records that would always bring tears to my eyes as my companions and I listened to it. It was the account of Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, who left their wives, children, and humble homes to journey to Great Britain in response to their calls to serve in that faraway land. Elder Orson F. Whitney quotes **Heber C. Kimball's** record of the event:

"September 14<sup>th</sup>... President Brigham Young left his home at Montrose to start on the mission to England. He was so sick that he was unable to go to the Mississippi, a distance of thirty rods, without assistance. After he had crossed the river he rode behind Israel Barlow on his horse to my house, where he continued sick until the 18th. He left his wife sick with a babe only three weeks old, and all his other children were sick and unable to wait upon each other. Not one soul of them was able to go to the well for a pail of water, and they were without a second suit to their backs, for the mob in Missouri had taken nearly all he had. On the 17th, Sister Mary Ann Young got a boy to carry her up in his wagon to my house, that she might nurse and comfort Brother Brigham to the hour of starting.

"September 18th, Charles Hubbard sent his boy with a wagon and span of horses to my house; our trunks were put into the wagon by some brethren; I went to my bed and shook hands with my wife who was then shaking with a chill, having two children lying sick by her side; I embraced her and my children, and bade them farewell. My only well child was little Heber P., and it was with difficulty he could carry a couple of quarts of water at a time, to assist in quenching their thirst.

"It was with difficulty we got into the wagon, and started down the hill about ten rods; it appeared to me as though my very inmost parts would melt within me at leaving my family in such a condition, as it were almost in the arms of death. I felt as though I could not endure it. I asked the teamster to stop, and said to Brother Brigham, 'This is pretty tough, isn't it; let's rise up and give them a cheer.' We arose, and swinging our hats three times over our heads, shouted: 'Hurrah, hurrah for Israel.' Vilate, hearing the noise, arose from her bed and came to the door. She had a smile on her face. Vilate and Mary Ann Young cried out to us: 'Goodbye, God bless you.' We returned the compliment, and then told the driver to go ahead. After this I felt a spirit of joy and gratitude, having had the satisfaction of seeing my wife standing upon her feet, instead of leaving her in bed, knowing well that I should not see them again for two or three years.'

"I have often wondered how these brethren, as valiant as they were, could do what they did. Truly they

were willing to make any sacrifice asked of them to build the kingdom of God. Truly they were laying up 'treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt' (Matthew 6:20)." (L. Tom Perry, *Living With Enthusiasm*, p. 36 – 37)

9        There is only one way - Jesus  
10       From their sins, not in them  
12       Jesus is the Rock   XR Matthew 7:24-27

"Every person builds a house of faith. We do so knowingly or unknowingly. And every builder soon learns that a good building with bad foundations is worse than useless; it is dangerous. As one Christian writer has observed, 'If the stability of buildings depends largely on their foundations, so does the stability of human lives. The search for personal security is a primal instinct, but many fail to find it today. Old familiar landmarks [will be] obliterated. Moral absolutes which were once thought to be eternal are being abandoned' (Stott 22). Thus our house of faith can be no more secure than the foundation upon which it is built. Foolish men build upon the shifting sands of ethics and the marshlands of human philosophies and doctrines. The wise build upon the rock of revelation, heeding carefully the living oracles, lest they be 'brought under condemnation ... and stumble and fall when the storms descend, and the winds blow, and the rains descend, and beat upon their house' (D&C 90:5). All that we do as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints must be built upon a foundation of faith and testimony and conversion. When external supports fail us, then our hearts must be riveted upon the things of the Spirit, those internal realities which provide the meaning, the perspective, and the sustenance for all else that matters in life.

"... Surely the supreme challenge of this life for those of us who aspire to Christian discipleship is to build our lives on Christ, to erect our house of faith, a divine domicile in which he and his Spirit would be pleased to dwell. There is safety from Satan and his minions only in Christ. There is security only in his word and through his infinite and eternal power.

"How, then, do we build on Christ? In a day when the winds are blowing and [the waves are] beating upon our ship, how do we navigate our course safely into the peaceful harbor? What must we do to have our Savior pilot us through life's tempestuous seas? Amidst the babble of voices-enticing voices which threaten to lead us into forbidden paths or which beckon us to labor in secondary causes-how do the Saints of the Most High know the Way, live the Truth, and gain that Life which is abundant? The revelations and the prophets offer us some simple yet far-reaching suggestions: (the author goes on to describe four steps: 1) Treasure up his word, 2) Teach his doctrine, 3) Sustain his servants, and 4) Trust in and rely upon the Lord.)" (Robert L. Millet, *Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, Helaman 3 – 3 Nephi 8, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, pp. 26-8)

A few years ago the Church aired a Satellite Broadcast hosted by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Elder Ballard interviewed prominent members of the Church regarding their testimonies of the gospel, personal experiences with the scriptures, and their feelings about the Savior. One of the experiences shared that evening came from the life of Wayne Osmond.

Wayne explained that he had been recently diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor. Although the prognosis was grim, his faith, his wife's faith, and his children's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is what pulled them through. Wayne further related to Elder Ballard that when he was on the Gurney, about to be wheeled into surgery, he held his wife Kathy's hand and said "I love you honey. Don't you worry; the Lord is with us." Wayne then shared this testimony: "If we didn't have that rock to hold on to, where would we be? We'd just be floundering. We'd have nothing."

Think of that statement. "If we didn't have that rock to hold on to, where would we be?" Here was a man who some might think had it all— fame, fortune, and family. Yet, when it came right down to the bottom line, Wayne Osmond was saying that the most important thing in his life, and in the life of his family, was the Savior, Jesus Christ. Moreover, if his family did not have that *rock*, they would truly be nothing. And so it is with each of us. Like Wayne Osmond, the Savior should be the centerpiece of our lives.

Matthew chapter 7 tells us of two men, one wise and one foolish. The wise man built his house upon a solid foundation, a rock. When the rains fell and the floods came and the winds blew, his house (and his family) stood strong. On the contrary, when the storm came upon the foolish man's household, the one who built his house upon the sand (Babylon), he lost all he had. It is that simple: Put Christ at the center of your life and live — don't and die. It was President Howard W. Hunter who declared "Please remember this one thing. If our lives ...are centered upon Jesus Christ ... nothing can ever go permanently wrong. On the other hand, if our lives are not centered on the Savior and his teachings, no other success can be permanently right" (*Ensign*, April 1995, p. 21).

- In Helaman 5:12, we are taught:

And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation: that when the devil should send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall.

This verse of scripture suggests several things. First, Jesus is the foundation stone that we should build our lives upon; indeed, we should center our lives on the Savior. He should be the focal point of all we say and do (see D&C 6:36).

The majestic Salt Lake City Temple stands squarely in the center of Salt Lake. In fact, the entire city was built around the temple. The streets are numbered according to where they stand in relationship to the temple; in fact, a person's address can tell them where their home stands in relation to the temple. The temple is a symbol of the Savior. Just as Temple Square is the geographic center of Salt Lake City, so should the Savior be at the center of each of our lives.

Each time we drive past the Salt Lake Temple, we can be reminded of that symbol. C.S. Lewis once said "I believe in [Christ] as I believe that the Son has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else" (C.S. Lewis, "Is Theology Poetry?" in *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*, revised and expanded edition [New York: Macmillan, 1980], p. 92; as cited by Stephen R. Covey, "Becoming Christ Centered," *Brigham Young University 1997-1998 Speeches* [Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1998], p.119). To center our lives on the Savior is to see the world through His eyes, to walk in our communities and neighborhoods with His feet, to touch those around us with His hands, to say what He would say and do what he would do.

Another important concept taught from this verse in Helaman reminds us that the devil is after us. It is not a matter of *if*, but *when*. The verse clearly teaches that we will have obstacles in our families. Hail and lightening will most assuredly come as Satan will try to destroy us. President Lee taught

...[T]he storms of adversity, trying in difficulty, are going to descend upon every soul. All of us – the good, the bad, the rich, the poor, the humble, the haughty — are all going to have the rains of difficulty, the floods of disaster, the overhanging clouds testing faith, the winds and blasts of slander, of misrepresentation. Everybody is going to have those things. This is a part of life. The only ones whose houses will not fall will be those who have built their houses upon the rock (Harold B. Lee, "The Glory of God Is Intelligence," *Address at BYU Leadership Week*, 16 June 1953).

As an engaged couple, the devil will seek to destroy you in every conceivable way. He does not want you to be married in the temple; he does not want you to have a happy marriage. Having Christ at the center of your lives will serve as an insulation and protection from Satan and his legions. Elder William R. Bradford once counseled the young adults of the Church: "Resist temptation by building a strong relationship with Jesus Christ. No other relationship will give you greater joy and happiness" (*Ensign*, May 1976, p. 98).

Finally, this passage of scripture also suggests that regardless of what Satan tries to do to us, he will have no power over us if we are centered in the Savior. Joseph Smith taught that "[t]he devil has no power over us only as we permit him" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979], p. 181). Certainly Satan could have no power over us if our lives are built on the rock, which is Christ. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin promised that "If you build your home on the foundation rock of our Redeemer and the gospel, it can be a sanctuary where your family can be sheltered from the raging storms of life" (*Finding Peace in Our Lives* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995], p. 8). This promise is true – we have seen the fruits of it in our own families.

"...the storms of adversity, trying in difficulty, are going to descend upon every soul. All of us - the good, the bad, the rich, the poor, the humble, the haughty - are all going to have the rains of difficulty, the floods of disaster, the overhanging clouds testing faith, the winds and blasts of slander, of misrepresentation. Everybody is going to have those things. This is a part of life. The only ones whose houses will not fall will be those who have built their houses upon the rock. What is the rock? Listening to the words of God as they come from his own mouth or from the mouths of His prophets" (Harold B. Lee, "The Glory of God Is Intelligence," *Address at BYU Leadership Week*, 16 June 1953).

"The place to cure most of the ills of society is in the homes of the people. Building our homes as fortresses of righteousness for protection from the world takes constant labor and diligence. Membership in the Church is no guarantee of a strong, happy family. Often parents feel overwhelmed. Many must accomplish the whole job single-handedly while bearing all of the emotional pain of divorce. The Lord has provided a plan that will help us to be successful in meeting every challenge that may confront us.

"In the plan of salvation, all families are precious instruments in the Lord's hands to help direct His children toward a celestial destination. The righteous molding of an immortal soul is the highest work we can

do, and the home is the place to do it. To accomplish this eternal work, we should make our homes gospel centered. When peace and harmony abound, the Holy Spirit will ever be present. The storms of the evil one can be stopped at the very entrance of our homes.

“Let us be sure the spiritual foundation of each home is the rock of our Redeemer, as Helaman taught his sons: [Hel. 5:12].

“The Lord’s standards for building a temple apply also to building spiritual strength in our homes: “Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God.” (D&C 88:119.) Do we heed this counsel from the Lord? Do we do what He asks? We would do well to build our homes according to this plan or they are destined to fail” (Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Spiritually Strong Homes and Families,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 69).

“Now, the most important principle I can share: Anchor your life in Jesus Christ, your Redeemer. Make your Eternal Father and his Beloved Son the most important priority in your life—more important than life itself, more important than a beloved companion or children or anyone on earth. Make their will your central desire. Then all that you need for happiness will come to you” (Richard G. Scott, “The Power of Correct Principles,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 34).

Centering your lives on Christ is not as simple as it sounds. There will always be distractions. There will always be different forces pulling at you and trying to keep you away from the Savior. Sometimes, your own choices will keep you away from him. In Stephen R. Covey’s book, *The Divine Center*, he speaks of some of these distractions, or as he labels them, distortions. These distortions, ironically, are the very things from which we seek happiness, security, wisdom, guidance, and power.

Brother Covey contends that some people are work or making-money centered, which suggests that they gain their personal sense of worth from their incomes and assets. Others are possession centered, which implies that these individuals find meaning in life from the things which they have acquired. Still, others are pleasure-centered. These are the people whose central focus in life is having fun, no matter what the cost. They want immediate gratification, and they will most often do whatever it takes to obtain it. Some individuals are friend-centered, which describes those who derive purpose and meaning in their lives from their social relationships. Another “center,” self-centeredness, is the foundation for each of the previous “centers” mentioned, and is the plaguing sin of our culture. Elder Richard G. Scott warned that “...selfishness is at the root of all sin. It leads to unrighteous acts that bring anguish and misery” (*Repentance*, “We Love You – Please Come Back” [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990], p. 106).

Although each of these “centers” can provide temporary satisfaction, they cannot contribute to lasting peace and joy. Some people can see past these distractions and seek a higher plane. They know what is important in life, and their priorities seem to reflect that. These are they who are either spouse centered, or church-centered. Although we only briefly mentioned the previous “centers,” we feel that it would be beneficial to explore *spouse* and *church* centeredness in more detail. These could be the very distractions you deal with “right out of the blocks,” so to speak.

1. ***The Spouse-Centered Life:*** Despite the fact that the husband-wife dyad is one of the central relationships in the Kingdom of God, and that eventually, it will be the focal family relationship in the Celestial Kingdom (our children will be with their spouses), there is a warning regarding over-dependence. “...[W]hen a person’s sense of emotional worth comes primarily from the marriage relationship, then he or she becomes highly dependent upon that relationship. That makes him or her extremely vulnerable to the moods and feelings, the behavior and treatment, of the partner, and to any external event which may impinge the relationship-- a new child, in-laws, economic setbacks, social successes, and so forth” (Stephen R. Covey, *The Divine Center* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], p. 23).

Please do not misunderstand. We are not saying to be careful that you don’t love your future spouse too much. We should love our spouses deeply and do everything in our power to nurture the marriage relationship daily so that our love will continue to grow. Doctrine and Covenants 42:22 states that “Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else.” Cleaving suggests loyalty and faithfulness. However, when some individuals ponder the word “cleave,” they are actually thinking of “clinging,” and that is not what is implied by the verse. In Genesis 2:24 we further learn that “...a man [shall] leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” Once again, the spirit of the verse implies that a husband’s devotion and commitment should be to his wife and no one else. Even his own family should not come before his wife. This is deep and committed love. However, these scriptures are not suggesting that couples should hibernate in their caves and ignore the rest of the world, or that we should be obsessed with, or possessive of each other.

Remember, your future spouse is Heavenly Father’s first before they are yours. It would be wrong of

anyone to think they can keep their spouse all to themselves. Your future spouse is a child of Heavenly Father and has a mission to perform on this earth. No marriage partner should stand in the way of that; instead, they should help their future spouses fulfill their missions however they can. It seems that most people have a similar view. Occasionally, however, we meet brethren in the Church who are possessive of their wives and who seem to feel that their wife's mission in life is to serve them and be there for them, all of the time. We are aware of one man who expects a four-course meal to be served for dinner every night when he comes home from work.<sup>1</sup> If his wife chooses not to do this, or accidentally forgets, or has another commitment, she will pay for her mistake. He gets a little grumpy when he isn't fed. We know of another man who has a very social wife and so she has many friends in her ward. However, he doesn't think that he should have to share his wife with the Church. One day someone asked him who his friends were in the ward and neighborhood. He said that he did not have any. This person then suggested that maybe he should get a few friends. Not that he needs to find a best friend, but that he needed to find someone he could talk BYU football with, someone with whom he could share his dreams about the "perfect sprinkler-system," someone who could understand why he was so depressed when his favorite mechanic moved to Laramie.

It is equally important, if not more important for women to have other friends as well. They need an outlet from raising children and training their husbands all day. They too, need to talk to sisters who can understand what they are experiencing and who can feel what they feel. Understanding these "spatial" requirements should start while courting and during the engagement period.

Another caution when it comes to spouse-centeredness is couples, or at least a spouse who seems to worship the other spouse. We are aware of a husband and wife who could be in danger. This particular couple has been married for some time, and still, like newlyweds, their entire world revolves around each other. In fact, when they are together, they are not even remotely aware of the world, or their surroundings for that matter.<sup>2</sup> Aside from continually talking baby talk to each other, the wife often takes time in fast and testimony meeting to share how her husband is the greatest man in the world. She can be found at Church softball games cheering wildly for him as he rounds the bases, while holding up the sign she made at ward homemaking night<sup>3</sup> which says something like "Way to Go \_\_\_\_\_; You Are the Greatest Ball Player in the Church!"<sup>4</sup> Although I think many people would admire this couple's relationship,<sup>5</sup> there are some red flags that concern us. Unfortunately, we do not see these couples professionally as long as they are "little red flags." No, couples usually wait until the red flags become signal flares, and then they seek the help they needed months earlier.

What Brother Covey says is true. When a partner's sense of meaning and worth is derived from their spouse, they become highly dependent on the spouse. It certainly places them in a vulnerable position. For example, when a wife worships her husband, and the husband fails (either he dies or leaves the marriage) — what is there left for the wife? She has put her entire strength and devotion for the last 20 years into a relationship that will not yield dividends. In fact, forget death or an affair. Let's just say he gets busy with work and Church and cannot give her back what she is giving him. He simply becomes apathetic. Eventually she will still feel slighted and unfulfilled.

One man explained to us that if his wife ever bore her testimony in Church and testified that he was the greatest man that she knew, that he would take immediate medical precautions. After she got off the stand, he said he would towel her off, check her pulse and temperature, and then have her lay across the Church pew until the end of the meeting. When she recovered, he said that he would then explain to her that if she thinks he is that great, then she must not be *getting out* that much, and that he would introduce her to a few people. He couldn't entertain the thought of being the greatest man she knew even for a minute. He knew that he wasn't, and that he had a long way to go. He further explained that he and his wife are perfectly aware of each other's weaknesses and strengths, that they love each other very much, and know that they both are still "under construction." This is a healthy perspective.

Doctrine and Covenants 42:22 does say that we should love our *spouses* with all of our hearts. However, there is one higher law that applies, and that is Matthew 22:37, which teaches us that we should love

---

<sup>1</sup> Not just after he gets home from work, but it needs to be on the table when he walks in the door.

<sup>2</sup> We could be invaded by China and they would be the last ones to know.

<sup>3</sup> While all the other women were making baby bibs out of their husbands tube socks, or whatever the craft was that month

<sup>4</sup> Hello, this is the 3rd ward playing the 7th ward for the Fourth of July Picnic — not the world series!

<sup>5</sup> Especially some men.

God with all of our hearts, souls, and minds. When we put God at the center of our lives and love him more than we love anyone else, we increase our capacity to love others. That is, you can love your future spouse more deeply and profoundly when you love God first. The reason why is because God is love (1 John 4:8), and when we love him first he blesses us with an endowment — the gift of charity. Charity is God-like love. When we love God first, he gives us a gift. He places within us a power to love our future spouses, and future children, and neighbors the very way he loves us. Without that gift, we are left on our own to love, and that could be dangerous. We are weak, and those around us are weak. Without God's help, we may be too judgmental, or too darn cranky to love our future families and fellow men on an unconditional or pure basis.

2.

**The Church-centered life:** The “Church is a means to an end, not an end in itself. The Church is the instrument. It is the vehicle, the conveyer, having the three-fold mission and role mentioned above. But by itself it cannot be a person's effective center, because it is itself dependent.... It is of critical importance that we see the Church as a means to an end and not an end in itself. Most members of the Church know in their hearts that there is a very clear and distinct difference between being active in the Church and being active in the gospel.... There are Church-centered people who escape from the more rigorous responsibilities in the marriage and the family by saying, ‘I'm going to do the work of the Church’ (or ‘the work of the kingdom,’ or ‘the work of the Lord’). Attending meetings, interviewing others regarding their own worthiness, or conducting worthwhile programs for others may be much easier than confronting and solving a difficult emotional situation at home with the spouse or the teenage son or daughter. Sometimes such a member, of whatever leadership position, will fully rationalize family neglect on the name of the Church” (Stephen R. Covey, *The Divine Center* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], pp. 52-53).

The warning from Brother Covey is clear. Don't get so caught up in building the kingdom that you neglect the most important people of all — your spouse and children. It is a problem. We see it all around us. Many spouses who do not have their needs met at home often have them fulfilled by serving in the Church. We are aware of men and women in the Church who do not want to come home to their spouses because they either are critical, negative, unhappy, or extremely messy. Instead, they stay away from home and spend more time in their Church callings. We know of a particular man who was having some struggles with his teenagers. Instead of going home after work and helping his wife with their problems, he decided to devote more time to his calling in the Bishopric. Apparently he felt that if he spent his time helping the ward, the Lord would take care of his family. Frankly, he was probably getting more “strokes” from the ward members than his own children. Consequently, he spent his time where he was most appreciated and where his needs were could be met. Meanwhile, the condition of his family became much worse. Regarding this tendency, President Lee declared:

“Sometimes as I go throughout the Church, I think I am seeing a man who is using his church work as a kind of escape from family responsibility. And sometimes when we've talked about whether or not he's giving attention to his family, his children and his wife, he says something like this: ‘Well, I'm so busy taking care of the Lord's work that I really don't have time.’ And I say to him, ‘My dear brother, the greatest of the Lord's work that you and I will ever do is the work that we do within the walls of our own home.’ Now don't you get any misconception about where the Lord's work starts. That's the most important of all the Lord's work. And you wives may have to remind your husbands of that occasionally” (Harold B. Lee, *Address to seminary and institute personell at Brigham Young University Summer School*, BYU, 8 July 1966). Family expert Glen Latham shared the following experience:

Some years ago a prominent Church leader in the area where I lived came to me, simply beside himself over the behavior of two of his children—and he had reason to be concerned.

We grieved together deep into the night and into the early hours of the morning, and though many things were discussed and many feelings shared, nothing made a more lasting impression on me than did this good brother's reflection on his first and fundamental responsibility as a father. “Brother Latham,” he said, “almost from the time I was married I have either been a counselor in a bishopric or a bishop, a counselor in a stake presidency or a stake president. I have spent the better part of my parenting years away from my family in Church service, all the while thinking that if I took care of the Saints, the Lord would take care of my family. But I was wrong. It wasn't until it was too late that I realized that my family was my first responsibility all along.” Then he wept.

As I work with members of the Church far and wide, I am forever amazed at how often parents put other things before parenting, sometimes even Church service—and sometimes even to the point of hiding behind Church callings as a shield from parenting responsibilities! Not infrequently young mothers will take me aside, tears bathing their faces, with the sad lament of that of a mother I recently encountered: “My husband is a good man, but he's never home. He's thirty-four years old and the bishop. He's a wonderful bishop, and the members of the ward love him. I can see why he would give more of his time and attention to his Church calling. Being adored by ward members has got to be more pleasant than dealing with dirty diapers, crying babies, and fighting kids. But they need him more as a father than the ward needs him as a bishop.”

What parents in Zion must understand is that the only unit of society that will outlast mortality is the family. Not even the Church in its exact present form will outlast mortality! Though we certainly should be

active in Church service, we *must* be active in the family, which is the most noble Church service of all. In its finest sense, that means teaching our children what is expected of them” (Glenn I. Lathan, “As Christ Would Parent,” in D.E. Brinley & D.K. Judd (eds.) *Eternal Families* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], pp. 20-21).

There are too many fathers in this church who come home from work, throw some food in their faces, and then run off to a church meeting, leaving their wife with screaming, sick, children to take care of. After all, most men would rather be teaching missionary lessons than changing dirty diapers anyway. As these broken-hearted women watch their husbands leave, they don’t say it, but often think, “if only you could just stay home and help me tonight.” On the other hand, young husbands feel obligated to magnify their callings and are often torn with guilt. There must be a tender balance. Yes, the kingdom needs to be built; yes, the family needs to be taken care of. Both can be done if we have the proper perspective. Humorist Chris Crow explained it this way:

Once you’ve got a child or two, additional church responsibilities start coming your way. A little home teaching at first, then you’re thrown to the Boy Scouts or the Young Men program and the discretionary hours fly away like a pack of ravenous deacons to a buffet table. The elders quorum waits to nab you as soon as you’re turned loose by the youth programs, and after that, well, stake missions, Sunday School, Primary, Cub Scouts, the activities committee, bishoprics, and, for the unlucky few, the big B-job: Bishop. You don’t mind these callings, because you recognize and appreciate the blessings such service brings, but they’re an added and distracting burden to your other duties.

Committed as you are to your church duties, you smack head on unto the first of the married Mormon ... conflicts. Do you spend a jillion hours a week with the teachers quorum and Varsity Scouts, or do you stay home evenings to read with your kids and play a little basketball with them after dinner? Do you go on campouts every month and leave your wife alone with the kids, again and again? Do you spend your one and only precious week of summer vacation chaperoning girls’ camp instead of taking your family on a trip to visit grandparents? And if you choose to spend time with your kids instead of your Church calling, how do you handle the inevitable guilt that follows? When you miss your weeknight church meetings to watch your daughters play soccer, are you a worthless slouch in the eyes of the bishop? Of the Lord?

Of course you know the key is balance, that it’s not one without the other but both together. Planning helps. So does a good attitude. And often you strike that happy balance and life seems good (*Fatherhood, Football, and Turning Forty* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995], pp. 3-4).

13 Helaman taught  
14 His sons remembered  
16-20 Thus, they taught with great power

“‘Remember’ is the most important word in the English language” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Charge to Religious Educators*, 28 June 1968).

“When you look in the dictionary for the most important word, do you know what it is. It could be ‘remember.’ Because all of you have made covenants . . . our greatest need is to remember” (Spencer W. Kimball, “Circles of Exaltation” [Brigham Young University devotional address, 28 June 1968], 8).

“If you love the truth you can remember it” (Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 10).

“That is the real purpose of the sacrament, to keep us from forgetting, to help us to remember. I suppose there would never be an apostate, there would never be a crime, if people remembered, really remembered, the things they had covenanted at the water’s edge or at the sacrament table and in the temple.... I guess we as humans are prone to forget. It is easy to forget. Our sorrows, our joys, our concerns, our great problems seem to wane to some extent as times goes on, and there are many lessons that we learn which have a tendency to slip from us. The Nephites forgot. They forgot the days when they felt good. I remember a young Navaho boy returning from his mission... I happened to be present the day he made his report and as tears rolled down his face, he said, ‘Oh, if I could only remember always just how I feel now’” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, pp. 112-113).

“Satan wants us to be slow to remember what we have received and heard. He wants us to minimize and even forget the quiet witnesses of the Spirit that have told us who we really are” (Susan L. Warner, *Ensign*, May 1996, pp. 78-79).

## 21-52 *Miracles attend the ministry of Nephi and Lehi*

“Now God will not permit America, His base of operations, to be destroyed. He has promised protection to this land if we will but serve the God of the land. He has also promised protection to the righteous even, if

necessary, to send fire from heaven to destroy their enemies. No, God's base of operations will not be destroyed. But it may be weakened and made less effective" (Ezra Taft Benson, *A Nation Asleep*, p. 11).

"When messengers are sent to minister to the inhabitants of this earth, they are not strangers, but from the ranks of our kindred, friends, and fellow-beings and fellow-servants. The ancient prophets who died were those who came to visit their fellow creatures upon the earth. They came to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; it was such beings - holy beings if you please - who waited upon the Savior and administered to him on the Mount. In like manner our fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters and friends who have passed away from this earth, having been faithful, and worthy to enjoy these rights and privileges, may have a mission given them to visit their relatives and friends upon the earth again, bringing from the divine Presence messages of love, of warning, of reproof and instruction, to those whom they had learned to love in the flesh" (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 435-437).

**Look for the steps to Repentance or change in verses 40-52. How do we remove clouds of darkness from our own lives?**

### **Helaman 7-10**

- I. A. If you could live anywhere, anyplace, anytime, where and when would it be?
- B. Media Series Video

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote of this period of Nephite history: "As the advent of Christ approached, social disorder increased, with burgeoning warfare, murder, and political disarray. To counter this trend and give hope, Nephi invoked the ancient teachings his people knew so well, testifying of these problems and the coming of the Messiah who would resolve them" (*Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [1997], 129).

#### II. Helaman 7:

1-9 *Nephi laments the wickedness of his people*

"Wickedness and righteousness have no tolerance for each other. Like light and darkness, they cannot share the same space at the same time. If light is to shine, darkness must flee; if darkness is to reign, the light must give way" (Millett & McConkie, 367).

"We live in trying times. We are surrounded by gross wickedness - indecency, immorality, abuse, harshness, crudeness, and insensitivity to the things of God. To keep us from yielding to the persuasions of the worldly, the Lord has provided a sacred institution we call the Church. Attending Church meetings focuses our minds, for at least three hours a week, on things that matter. Attending church meetings puts us in contact with people of goodwill, people who have the same desires for time and eternity that we do. Attending Church meetings allows us to learn and grow and develop; it also allows us to give and share and strengthen others. I have been surprised and somewhat disappointed by how many Latter-day Saints choose not to attend Sunday School or Priesthood or Relief Society, how many leave the building instead of going to Young Men of Young Women classes. Do we honestly feel we are strong enough on our own to make it without all the reinforcement and inoculation we can receive in our Church meetings?" (Robert L. Millett, *Alive in Christ*, p. 140).

"Wishing one had lived in another age, though sometimes understandable, is not usually helpful. One person in Book of Mormon times wrote, "Yea, if my days could have been in those days, then would my soul have had joy" (Hel. 7:8). Yet that leader came to see how God's call to serve in a particular period of time is as much a part of His call as to perform certain duties during our days. Thus, youth of the Church, by Divine appointment, these are your days! You will live in a time of prophecy in fulfillment, of history converging, of special promises, of stark contrasts, and of blessed reassurances" (Neal A. Maxwell, "These Are Your Days," *New Era*, Jan.-Feb. 1985, 4).

"I am a sister missionary serving in my own country, Jamaica. Recently, I felt a great depression come over me. I felt alone, and I felt I had had no achievement as a missionary.

"Then I heard two sister missionaries talking about a passage of scripture where angels are sent to bear us up. I quickly turned to the Doctrine and Covenants and read this passage, 'for I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels

round about you, to bear you up' (DC 84:88). I learned that Heavenly Father knew how depressed I felt and how important my calling was as a missionary, that I am called of God." (C. Meikle, *Church News*, 11/12/94).

"I have come to believe that this is worth knowing, not only for teachers, but for everyone. If you get a little depressed during those dreary days, do not begin to think that you're psycho-something-or-other.

"For missionaries, this was well worth knowing. Occasionally a missionary told me in an interview, 'I'm not doing very well. I just seem to be depressed and discouraged.' Unless there was an unusual reason for these feelings, my answer was, 'Well, I'm glad to hear that. At least now we know that you're normal. Enjoy the feeling—it probably won't last. And the first sunny day will do wonders for it.'

"We know from the Book of Mormon that there must be opposition.

"For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, my first-born in the wilderness, righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad.' (2 Nephi 2:11.)

"It helps a great deal if we realize that there is a certain healthy element in getting the blues occasionally. It is quite in order to schedule a good, discouraging, depressing day every now and again just for contrast." (Boyd K. Packer, *Teach Ye Diligently*, p. 101–2).

"Like Alma, who wished for a trumpet-like voice of an angel (see Alma 29:1), we too need to understand our motivations and limitations. Even so, let us use well the season in which we serve. Tolkein put it eloquently:

'Yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule.'

"Nephi wished, nostalgically, he'd lived in a different time, yet finally concluded, 'But behold, I am consigned that these are my days' (Helaman 7:9). Like Alma, he no doubt realized that he should not 'desire more than to perform the work to which [he had] been called' (Alma 29:6). Faith in God includes faith in His wisdom in placing us in our particular time and place, 'those years wherein we are set.'" (Neal A. Maxwell, *That Ye May Believe*, p. 156)

#### 10-19 *Nephi declares repentance from the tower*

"It is well to know that prayer is not compounded of words, words that may fail to express what one desires to say, words that so often cloak inconsistencies, words that may have no deeper source than the physical organs of speech, words that may be spoken to impress mortal ears. The dumb may pray, and that too with the eloquence that prevails in heaven. **Prayer is made up of heart throbs and the righteous yearnings of the soul, of supplication based on the realization of need, of contrition and pure desire.** If there lives a man who has never really prayed, that man is a being apart from the order of the divine in human nature, a stranger in the family of God's children. Prayer is for the uplifting of the suppliant. God without prayers would be God; but we without prayer cannot be admitted to the kingdom of God" (James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 238, emphasis added).

#### 20-29 *The promises of God unto the Lamanites/More "rip" on Nephites* XR I Timothy 6:10

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" (Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities* [1997], 1).

- What makes our day "the worst of times"?
- What makes it "the best of times"?

"The plan of happiness is available to all of [God's] children. If the world would embrace and live it, peace, joy, and plenty would abound on the earth. Much of the suffering we know today would be eliminated if people throughout the world would understand and live the gospel" (M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, May 1995, 23).

"One of Satan's clever tactics is to tempt us to concentrate on the present and ignore the future. The Lord warned Joseph Smith that 'Satan seeketh to turn their hearts away from the truth, that they become blinded and understand not the things which are prepared for them' (D&C 78:10). The 'things which are

prepared for them' are the promised rewards of eternal life, which come as a result of obedience. The devil attempts to blind us to these rewards. President Heber J. Grant said that 'if we are faithful in keeping the commandments of God His promises will be fulfilled to the very letter. . . . The trouble is, the adversary of men's souls blinds their minds. He throws dust, so to speak, in their eyes, and they are blinded with the things of this world' (Gospel Standards, comp. G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1941], pp. 44–45). He tempts us with the transitory pleasures of the world so that we will not focus our minds and efforts on the things that bring eternal joy. The devil is a dirty fighter, and we must be aware of his tactics" (M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 36).

"I do not find fault with riches. The gold and silver are the Lord's. We want houses building and we must cultivate the earth. This is all right. I do not find fault with a man getting rich. I find fault with a man getting rich, I find fault with our selling the kingdom of God, our birthright, selling the Gospel and depriving ourselves of eternal life, for the sake of gratifying the lusts of the flesh, the pride of life and the fashions of the world; and setting our hearts upon these things" (Wilford Woodruff, *JD* 18:121).

"I felt as though I was not qualified to stand before the people, and tell them that the Book of Mormon was a divine revelation, and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, unless I had a stronger testimony than that afforded by ancient prophets. However great my assurance might be, it seemed to me, that to know for myself, it required a witness independent of the testimony of others. I sought for this witness. I did not receive it immediately, but when the Lord saw the integrity of my heart and the anxiety of my mind--when He saw that I was willing to travel hundreds of miles for the sake of learning the principles of the truth, He gave me a testimony for myself, which conferred upon me the most perfect knowledge that Joseph Smith was a true prophet, and that this book, called the Book of Mormon, was in reality a Divine revelation, and that God had once more, in reality, spoken to the human family. What joy this knowledge gave me! No language that I am acquainted with could describe the sensations I experienced when I received a knowledge from Heaven of the truth of this work." (Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 12, p. 85).

"I received a testimony for myself from the Lord of this work, and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God before I ever saw him, while I resided in the state of New York, given in answer to prayer. I knew him in his lifetime and know him to have been a great, true man, and a servant of God." (Joseph F. Smith, *Collected Discourses 1886-1898*, ed. by Brian Stuy, vol. 5, Dec. 23, 1894)

#### Helaman 8:

##### 1-10 *Corrupt judges incite the people against Nephi*

"Nephi's little sermon received more than a cool reception. Some judges who happened to be card-holding members of the Protective Association were in the crowd and they immediately demanded that Nephi be brought into court and charged with the crime of '[reviling] against this people and against our law' (Helaman 8:2). And indeed if contempt of institutions was a crime, Nephi was guilty, for he 'had spoken unto them concerning the corruptness of their law' (Helaman 8:3). Still, the judges had to proceed with some care, since they were supposed to be administering justice (Helaman 8:4), and could not be too crude and obvious in their attack, for even among the exceedingly wicked and depraved Nephites the feeling of civic virtue was perhaps as alive as it is in America today; instead of trying to lynch Nephi in fact, the crowd actually protected him from the treatment the judges would have liked to give him (Helaman 8:4)." (Hugh Nibley, *An Approach To The Book of Mormon*, p. 387).

"The only safety we have as members of this church is to do exactly what the Lord said to the Church in that day when the Church was organized. We must learn to give heed to the words and commandments that the Lord shall give through his prophet, 'as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me; ...as if from mine own mouth in all patience and faith' (D&C 21:4-5). There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that '...the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his names glory.' ...Your safety and ours depends upon whether or not we follow the ones whom the Lord has placed to preside over his church...Let us keep our eye on the President of the Church" (Harold B. Lee, *CR*, 1970, pp. 152-153).

"If we are not careful, today's secret combinations can obtain power and influence just as quickly

and just as completely as they did in Book of Mormon times. Do you remember the pattern? The secret combinations began among the ‘more wicked part’ of society, but eventually ‘seduced the more part of the righteous’ until the whole society was polluted [Helaman 6:38].”

“As a Church, we recognize that the gospel of Jesus Christ, with its saving truths and teachings, provides the most effective preventative and rehabilitative assistance in overcoming criminal behavior. Parents bear the first and greatest responsibility to teach their children principles of gospel living and good citizenship. . . .

“We should also support the efforts of individuals, organizations, communities, and governments to assist them and help prevent crime. We should work within our respective legal and judicial systems to enact and enforce laws that provide necessary protection against criminals while ensuring essential rights and freedoms. And we should volunteer to support and assist government leaders in promoting programs designed to protect and strengthen families and communities. . . .

“I know it is sometimes hard to stand for truth and right. Yet we need to be positive examples if we are to help others find a better way. Thankfully, we can draw strength from those who have gone before us. While the road they walked may have been different from the road we walk today, the courage required to be faithful is similar, and their experiences are instructive” (M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 38-39).

“As we search for the shore of safety and peace, whether we be individual women and men, families, communities, or nations, Christ is the only beacon on which we can ultimately rely. He is the one who said of his mission, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6).

“In this age, as in every age before us and in every age that will follow, the greatest need in all the world is an active and sincere faith in the basic teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the living Son of the living God. Because many reject those teachings, that is all the more reason why sincere believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ should proclaim its truth and show by example the power and peace of a righteous, gentle life” (Howard W. Hunter, *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 18).

- Read or sing “Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee” (Hymns, no. 141). Have students write on a piece of paper how they can make Christ more of a beacon in their life. Invite those who would like to share their testimony of Jesus Christ to do so.
- Act 1: The Murder (Helaman 8:27–28)
- Act 2: The Test (Helaman 9:1–4)
- Act 3: Prophecy Verified (vv. 5–9)
- Act 4: The Innocent (vv. 10–15)
- Act 5: The Accusation (vv. 16–24)
- Act 6: The Conviction (vv. 25–38)

11-15 *Moses testified that the Messiah would be God’s son*

16-24 *All prophets testify of Christ*

“‘The soul of people hungers for an ideal.’ I was impressed that it may be that same hunger that prompts us to believe in God. There are so many evidences, the mystery to me is not that men may believe in God, but as Ballard once wrote, ‘the great miracle of mankind is the miracle of unbelief.’

“Dinmore has put it beautifully: ‘If no help had ever come from God, the impulse to pray would have died out long ago.’” (Adam S. Bennion, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1955, p. 116).

25-28 *Sustaining vs Rejecting the prophet*

“Let me give you a crucial key to help you avoid being deceived. It is this - learn to keep your eye on the prophet. He is the Lord’s mouthpiece and the only man who can speak for the Lord today” (Ezra Taft Benson, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, 1966, p. 13).

“Do the people of the church want a safe guide to what is well for them to do? It is this: Keep in harmony with the Presidency of this Church. Accept and follow the teachings and advice of the President. At every

Conference we raise our hands to sustain the President as prophet, seer, and revelator. Is it inconsistent to do this and then go contrary to his advice? Is anyone so simple as to believe he is serving the Lord when he opposes the President” (Joseph F. Merrill, *CR*, April 1941, p. 51)?

“What we need today is not more prophets. We have the prophets. But what we need is more people with listening ears. That is the great need of our generation” (J. Reuben Clark, *CR*, October 1948, p. 82).

“You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. But, if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that ‘the gate of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name’s glory (D&C 21:6)’”(Harold B. Lee).

### **What does it take to be a prophet? Story by President Lee**

After Joseph Fielding Smith was sustained to be the prophet, shortly after the death of David O. McKay, “One of the Church brethren approached Elder Lee and asked, “Is it correct what I have heard that they’re going to make Joseph Fielding Smith the President of the Church?”

“That wasn’t a very good question to ask of Elder Lee at that time. Elder Lee answered politely and confirmed that he thought that would be the case.

“But the man persisted and said, “How can that be? I can’t believe that. How can we sustain Joseph Fielding Smith? He’s ninety-three years old. Why, he’s so old I’m not sure he is really quite with it.” The man continued developing this point—how could a man at that age, his body weak and worn down, still direct this Church?

“President Lee listened for a while, but his sharp mind was spinning. He responded, ‘My good brother, do you know what it takes to be a prophet of the Lord?’

“The man said, ‘Well, I guess I really don’t know exactly.’

“‘Well,’ said Elder Lee, ‘what do you think it would take?’

“The fellow then said, “Well, I suppose he’d have to know all about genealogy, the missionary program of the Church, and the missionaries and what they’re doing and how to supervise them. He would need to know about the Primary and the Relief Society and the building and construction programs.’ He named quite a few other major functions of the Church.

“When he finished Elder Lee said, ‘That’s all wrong.’ He could sometimes say that quite pointedly. The man was taken back a bit. Then Elder Lee answered his question by stating, ‘Shall I tell you what it takes to be a prophet? There’s only one capacity; just one. And that is to be able to hear the voice of the Lord. That’s all. He’s got all the rest of us to do the work. He just has to do one function. Do you suppose that this great living Apostle, who has been sustained a prophet for six decades, longer than any other man on earth, might be able to do that?’

“The brother was feeling a little low by then, But Elder Lee continued, ‘Do you suppose that Joseph Fielding Smith, who was a home teaching companion of President Wilford Woodruff, might know something about that?’

“By this time the man, in some humility, was on the retreat?” (As Told by Gene R. Cook, in *He Changed My Life: Personal Experiences with Harold B. Lee* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1989], pp. 32-33).

### III. Helaman 10:

1-10 *Nephi is granted the Sealing Power*

1-3 Nephi is depressed

“We all do a lot of studying, but most of us don’t do much meditation. We don’t take time to think. I’d like to suggest that next fast day . . . everybody in this hall set aside an hour or two. Sit by yourself. Go in the bedroom and lock the door. Go out in the yard under a tree. Go in your study if you have one and shut the door, and think about yourself and your worthiness. Read from this great book [Book of Mormon]...There’s a great word that’s used, ‘ponder.’

“‘Ponder.’ What do we mean by ‘ponder’? Well, I think it simply means kind of quietly thinking things through. Ponder what you have read. Ponder your life. Are you worthy, are you living the commandments...?” (*Church News*, 01/06/96)

“One on God’s side is a majority” (Wendell Philips, quoted in *Civil War*, Burns, Burns, and Ward, p. 399).

"I solemnly testify that Jesus Christ guides this, His church. He knows and loves you personally" (Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, November 1993, p. 88).

"[B]e sure you understand that God will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability to resist. (See 1 Cor. 10:13.) He does not give you challenges that you cannot surmount. He will not ask more than you can do, but may ask right up to your limits so you can prove yourselves. The Lord will never forsake or abandon anyone. You may abandon him, but he will not abandon you. You never need to feel that you are alone" (Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Running Your Marathon," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 75).

"There are times when we are growing up when we feel alone or left out. Times of change are growing-up times: things like moving, changing schools, going on a mission, having a baby, having your baby go on a mission, a serious illness, losing someone you love. I believe that there are some things that help in these growing-up times so we don't feel so alone. Spend more time talking to Heavenly Father and reading the scriptures. Listen to the still, small voice. In the words of a young woman of Beehive age: "At first when I would say my prayers and read scriptures, I would never get a good feeling about it. But after about two months of my scriptures and prayer, I began to feel very happy, and I loved my family, and I felt like being nice to everyone" (Janette C. Hales, "You Are Not Alone," *Ensign*, May 1992, 79-80).

"Man does not stand alone, or at least, he need not stand alone. Prayer will open doors; prayer will remove barriers; prayer will ease pressures; prayer will give inner peace and comfort during times of strain and stress and difficulty. Thank God for prayer" (Ezra Taft Benson, *CR*, October 1956, p. 104).

"While President Faust has spent so much of his life serving others in group situations, yet he has also known what it is like to be alone. His loyalty and integrity were operative then, too. Though the only Church member on a transport ship in the South Pacific in World War II (which for eighty-three long days towed a larger vessel to port), he nevertheless worshipped alone on Sundays. Searching out places where he could sing alone from a pocket-sized hymnal, he would read the scriptures, meditate, and pray in private. Often this meant going up to the front of the ship, where the waves would drown out his singing. Such steady, spiritual discipline reflects, of course, special training by his parents" (Neal A. Maxwell, "President James E. Faust: 'Pure Gold,'" *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, 14).

"The power of one person is apparent throughout the scriptures as we see the influence of an Abraham, of a Joseph, a Moses, of Peter and Paul, of a Nephi, of Abinadi, Alma, and Ammon, and of Mormon and Moroni. There were Sarah and Rebekah and Esther and Hannah, and Sariah and Mary and so many more—even Joseph and Emma. Yes, these were mighty men and women of God; but they were often alone, standing as one, even as each of us on occasion must stand alone in a sometimes hostile world. Yet as these valiant servants of the Lord were not entirely alone, neither will we be, if we are worthy of His companionship and the companionship of the Holy Spirit. The Lord gave this promise to His faithful servants: "For I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up" (D&C 84:88). We may be one, but we need not be entirely alone.

"The power and influence one person can have is enormous. It was one Sarah Ann Meeks who paid what seemed to be her ultimate sacrifice as she stood alone on the doorstep of her home in far-off England nearly a century and a half ago. Her father met her there with a small bundle containing a few of her belongings and with these words, "You join that church and you must never set foot in my home again." Unfortunately that was the last she saw of her family. Alone? Very much alone! She could have bowed to that impossible, heart-wrenching rejection. But no—she loved the Lord. She had been touched by the Spirit and knew that the gospel of Jesus Christ had been restored to the earth in its fulness. She knew that she must stand as a witness to the truthfulness of this message. She knew that she could make a difference" (Wm. Rolfe Kerr, "Behold Your Little Ones," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 81).

#### 4-11 Nephi's blessing

"The wicked heap scorn when they have no other weapons to use - and too often the righteous run for cover - especially if the mocker can run fast or jump high or sing well or has high profile degrees or a great deal of money, even if each or all have nothing to do with the subject at hand" (L. Aldin Porter, *BYU 1994-1995 Devotional and Fireside Speeches*, p. 117).

"We simply must not be afraid to stand, even if it is quietly, in defense of virtue. We must understand that there really are two forces warring for mankind and that we cannot be in both camps. You cannot be

popular with everybody. You can't have one foot in each camp" (L. Aldin Porter, *BYU Speeches*, p. 118).

"Because Nephi had stood for truth and virtue, without fear of the world, the Lord told him that he would bless him forever; that he would make him mighty in words, deeds, faith, and works. *No blessing that came to Nephi will be denied anyone in this dispensation who will give the same devotion, the same commitment, to the Lord and to his work*" (L. Aldin Porter, *BYU Speeches*, p. 118).

"Sometimes, too, we underestimate the Lord's willingness to hear our cry, to confirm our wish, to declare that our will is not contrary to his and that his help is there only for the asking. Note this example taken from Elder F. Burton Howard's biography of President Marion G. Romney. I quote Elder Howard generously in summarizing this story.

In 1967 Sister Ida Romney suffered a serious stroke. The doctors told then-Elder Romney that the damage from the hemorrhage was severe. They offered to keep her alive by artificial means but did not recommend it. The family braced for the worst. Brother Romney confided to those closest to him that in spite of his anguished, personal yearning for Ida's restored health and continued companionship, above all he wanted "the Lord's will to be done and to take what he needed to take without whimpering."

As the days wore on, Sister Romney became less responsive. She had, of course, been administered to, but Elder Romney was "reluctant to counsel the Lord about the matter." Because of his earlier unsuccessful experience of praying that he and Ida might have children, he knew that he could never ask in prayer for something that was not in harmony with the will of the Lord. He fasted that he might know how to show the Lord he had faith and would accept God's will in their lives. He wanted to make sure he had done all he could do. But she continued to fail.

"One evening in a particularly depressed state, with Ida unable to speak or recognize him, Brother Romney went home and turned, as he always had, to the scriptures in an effort to commune with the Lord. He picked up the Book of Mormon and continued where he had left off the night before. He had been reading in Helaman about the prophet Nephi, who had been falsely accused and unfairly charged with sedition. Following a miraculous deliverance from his accusers, Nephi returned home pondering the things he had experienced. As he did so he heard a voice.

"Although Marion Romney had read that story many times before, it now struck him this night as a personal revelation. The words of the scripture so touched his heart that for the first time in weeks he felt he had tangible peace. It seemed as if the Lord were speaking directly to him. The scripture read: "Blessed art thou, . . . for those things which thou hast done; . . . thou hast not . . . sought thine own life, but hast sought my will, and to keep my commandments. And now, because thou hast done this with such unwearyingness, behold, I will bless thee forever; and I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will." (Helaman 10:4-5.)

"There was the answer. He had sought only to know and obey the will of the Lord, and the Lord had spoken. He fell to his knees and poured out his heart, and as he concluded his prayer with the phrase "Thy will be done," he either felt or actually heard a voice that said, "It is not contrary to my will that Ida be healed."

"Brother Romney rose to his feet quickly. It was past two o'clock in the morning, but he knew what he must do. Quickly he put on his tie and coat, then went out into the night to visit Ida in the hospital. He arrived shortly before three o'clock. His wife's condition was unchanged. She did not stir as he placed his hands upon her pale forehead. With undeviating faith, he invoked the power of the priesthood in her behalf. He pronounced a simple blessing and then uttered the incredible promise that she would recover her health and her mental powers and would yet perform "a great mission" upon the earth.

"Even though he did not doubt, Elder Romney was astonished to see Ida's eyes open as he concluded the blessing. Somewhat stunned by all that had happened, he sat down on the edge of the bed only to hear his wife's frail voice for the first time in months. She said, "For goodness' sake, Marion, what are you doing here?" He didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. He said, "Ida, how are you?" With that flash of humor so characteristic of both of them, she replied, "Compared to what, Marion? Compared to what?"

"Ida Romney began her recovery from that very moment, soon left her hospital bed, and lived to see her husband sustained as a member of the First Presidency of the Church, "a great mission upon the earth" indeed. (F. Burton Howard, *Marion G. Romney: His Life and Faith* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], pp. 137-42.) (As cited in *On Earth as it is in Heaven*, p. 134).

"President Spencer W. Kimball exhibited the same 'unwearyingness' as the Lord commended in Nephi (Helaman 10:4-5). One of the author's last real conversations with President Kimball included his wistful

comment concerning his ministry: 'I should have done more!' How he could have done more none of us knows, but this comment is indicative of his unwearyingness. He endured so well the unusual number of afflictions life placed upon him while serving so many so incessantly." (Neal A. Maxwell, *A Wonderful Flood of Light*, p. 124)

"Nephi had not selfishly sought his 'own life,' but rather had sought to do God's will. This gave him the extra and undivided energy which made his striving with unwearied diligence possible. Nephi knew in which direction he faced: toward God.

"In contrast, and to be pitied, are the ambivalent, forever pivoting as between looking toward God or man. With all the incessant pivoting, no wonder some grow so weary! Instead, if we let our own wills be swallowed up in the will of the Lord, there is a more holistic deployment of our talents (see Mosiah 15:7). Like Nephi, we are not to pursue our own wills." (Neal A. Maxwell, *If Thou Endure It Well*, p. 116).

"After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized...then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God...When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure." (Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 150).

"The story goes that someone once asked Michelangelo how he could transform ordinary rock into his marvelous statues. Reportedly, the artist replied that he just chiseled until everything that wasn't the statue wasn't there. To be spiritual means to have a sense of who we truly are and then to be that person.

"Eventually, spirituality becomes such an integral part of our being that we can follow our heart's true desires without doing anything wrong. Nephi, the son of Helaman, reached that point where there was no conflict between what he wanted and what was right...This kind of spirituality requires that we consciously move away from all that is unkind, unholy, impure, or unchristian. It requires that we let go of anger and revenge. And it yields a peace of heart and soul. It makes us able to find good things to do without constantly being asked, pushed, or reminded." (Mary Ellen Edmunds, *Ensign*, Oct. 1985, p.14).

#### 11-19 *Nephi is led by the Spirit from congregation to congregation*

"The singular strength of Nephi's character is revealed by how he responded to the singular blessings which came because Nephi was willing to subject his will to the will of his Father and because of his determination to keep the commandments of God. The Lord clarified that He could trust Nephi with this extraordinary power because he would not ask that which was contrary to His will. That is, he would use the power only as directed by the Spirit. The next verse depicts the extraordinary, willing obedience of Nephi at a time when his life had been threatened; he had been bound, been falsely accused, and suffered enough to have certainly earned a rest:

'And now behold, I command you, that ye shall go and declare unto this people, that thus saith the Lord God, who is the Almighty: Except ye repent ye shall be smitten, even unto destruction.

'And behold, now it came to pass that when the Lord had spoken these words unto Nephi, he did stop and did not go unto his own house, but did return unto the multitudes who were scattered about upon the face of the land, and began to declare unto them the word of the Lord which had been spoken unto him, concerning their destruction if they did not repent.' (Helaman 10:11-12)

"Oh, that we could be that obedient, setting aside our own convenience, when necessary, for the benefit of others!

"Thus began another series of Nephi's valiant missionary efforts, with the obedient testifying of truth against a hardened nation that rejected him, caused him great suffering, and even sought to take his life." (Richard G. Scott, *Heroes From The Book of Mormon*, p. 153).

#### III. The need to follow the prophet:

- Story B. Scott Anderson
- Story by Loren C. Dunn

"I was talking to a priesthood leader just last weekend. We had finished our Saturday night leadership meeting, which was on missionary work, and he said to me, "You know, you are really a missionary General Authority." And I said, "No, I don't consider myself a missionary General Authority."

If I can be remembered for anything (and I hope that somehow, somewhere I can), I would settle for that which my father taught me and for which I feel he was known, and that is one who is willing to give allegiance to and follow a prophet of God. And if that can be my lot, then I feel I will have accomplished the thing the Lord has sent me to do.”

“It’s not the program, it’s not the activities, but in the final analysis it is our loyalty to him whom God has called and the offering of our prayers on his behalf.

“There is a scripture that goes this way: “He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward.” (Matt. 10:41.) I have come to realize the literalness of that promise. I have seen those blessings in the life of my father because of his loyalty. I would like those blessings for my family and myself, and I would like to see those blessings in the life of every Latter-day Saint.

“May I end where I began. God does live. Jesus is the Christ. Joseph Smith is a true prophet, and we are led by a prophet of God today. The prophet has my loyalty and he has my love, because how can I uphold the Lord unless I uphold him? In the name of Jesus Christ, amen” (Loren C. Dunn, “Receiving a Prophet,” *Ensign*, May 1983, 30).

“I do not believe members of this Church can be in full harmony with the Savior without sustaining his living prophet on the earth, the President of the Church. If we do not sustain the living prophet, whoever he may be, we die spiritually. Ironically, some have died spiritually by exclusively following prophets who have long been dead. Others equivocate in their support of living prophets, trying to lift themselves up by putting down the living prophets, however subtly” (James E. Faust, *Ensign*, November 1989, p. 9).

“We have the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants; but all these books, without the living oracles and a constant stream of revelation from the Lord, would not lead any people into the Celestial Kingdom” (George Q. Cannon, as cited by James E. Faust, *Ensign*, November 1989, p. 10).

“...when compared with the living oracles those books [Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants] are nothing to me; those books do not convey the word of God direct to us now, as do the words of a Prophet or a man bearing the Holy Priesthood in our day and generation. I would rather have the living oracles than all the writing in the books” (Brigham Young, as cited by Ezra Taft Benson, *BYU Speeches of the Year*, “Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet,” 26 February 1980).

“Among the requirements God has laid upon us is to pay heed to His living prophets. In our dispensation this has been described as ‘following the Brethren.’ It is a dimension of obedience that has been difficult for some in every dispensation. It will be particularly hard in ours, the final dispensation...It is exceedingly important for members of the Church to get experience following the prophets in little things, so that they can follow in large matters. By following the prophets in fair weather we become familiar with their cadence, so that we can follow them in stormy times too, for then both our reflexes and our experience will need to combine to help us; the stresses will be so very real” (Neal A. Maxwell, *All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, pp. 101-102).

“Our relationship to living prophets is not one in which their sayings are a smorgasbord from which we may take only that which pleases us. We are to partake of all that is placed before us, including the spinach, and to leave a clean plate!” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Things As They Really Are*, p. 74).

### **Story of Ephraim Hanks, saving the Handcart companies:**

“Elder Neal A. Maxwell wrote: “A lack of obedience to the leaders will, therefore, mean that we will not have the precious promptings of the Spirit, which we need personally— so much and so often. This potential loss would be reason enough for us to be obedient to the prophets, for apparently we cannot have one without the other. Vital as the words of the prophets are, these come to us only periodically. We need the directions of the Spirit daily, even hourly” (*All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, p. 104).

“A poignant example from Church history portrays the spiritual power that attends one who follows the counsel of prophets. Ephraim Hanks had known Brigham Young since the Nauvoo days. Eph’s loyalty to the Brethren and his willingness to obey strictly the counsel of the prophet on any matter caused him to be much beloved and trusted by President Young, by whom Eph had been tested on more than one occasion.

“On a fall morning in 1848, President Young drove to where Eph was building an adobe house inside the Old Fort. Looking over the completed foundation, he inquired as to the thickness of the rock wall. ‘Eight inches,’ replied Eph. ‘Tear it down and build it twice as

thick,' suggested Brigham, who then promptly drove away before Eph could answer. To rebuild meant hauling more rock and doing twice the work as they thought was necessary.... Nevertheless, they widened the foundation to sixteen inches according to the leader's instruction. Eph was fitting the rafters on the house a month later when a heavy rain began falling, ultimately causing widespread flooding and considerable damage in parts of the valley. Eph's reinforced walls stood firm against the resulting deluge, however, thus preventing a possible collapse of the entire structure. Others were not so fortunate. From then on when Brigham talked, Eph listened.

"Not long following this incident with Brigham Young, Eph met the Mormon leader at a dance in Salt Lake City. Again he counseled Eph. This time Eph was to go home and shave his face. Like many men of his day, Eph wore a beard almost to his waist. Somewhat puzzled, he left the social and rode home, pondering the unusual request. In an hour, however, he returned to the dance without a beard, but still wearing a mustache which he hadn't shaved. Still not satisfied with his appearance, Brigham Young indicated with a sweep of the hand across Eph's face that he wanted a clean shave. Excusing himself a second time, Eph complied by shaving his entire face. It was perhaps this type of obedience to counsel that prompted the Mormon Church President to later say of Eph that 'Here was a man always ready to lay down his life for the authorities of the Church as well as for the cause of Zion and her people'" (Richard K. Hanks, "Eph Hanks, Pioneer Scout," unpublished master's thesis, BYU, 1973, pp. 26-27).

"Because of his obedience to counsel and his loyalty to the Brethren, Eph Hanks became a spiritual giant in his own right and was able to render significant service to the Church and to his fellowmen. One experience in his life seems to epitomize the blessing of spiritual guidance with which those who hearken to prophetic counsel are endowed. Because of this gift, Eph Hanks was able not only to serve but also to actually save lives that would have been lost had he not been able to discern the workings of the Spirit. In his own words he tells the story:

"In the fall of 1856, I spent considerable of my time fishing in Utah Lake; and in traveling backward and forward between that lake and Salt Lake City, I had occasion to stop once overnight with Gurney Brown, in Draper, about nineteen miles south of Salt Lake City. Being somewhat fatigued after the day's journey, I retired to rest quite early, and while I still lay wide awake in my bed I heard a voice calling me by name, and then saying: 'The hand-cart people are in trouble and you are wanted; will you go and help them?' I turned instinctively in the direction from whence the voice came and beheld an ordinary-sized man in the room. Without any hesitation I answered, 'Yes, I will go if I am called.' I then turned around to go to sleep, but had laid only a few minutes when the voice called a second time, repeating almost the same words as on the first occasion. My answer was the same as before. This was repeated a third time.

"When I got up the next morning I said to Brother Brown, 'The hand-cart people are in trouble and I have promised to go out and help them;' but I did not tell him of my experience during the night.

"I now hastened to Salt Lake City, and arrived there on the Saturday, preceding the Sunday on which the call was made for volunteers to go out and help the last hand-cart companies in. When some of the brethren responded by explaining that they could get ready to start in a few days, I spoke at once saying, 'I am ready right now!' The next day I was wending my way eastward over the mountains with a light wagon all alone.

"The terrific storm which caused the immigrants so much suffering and loss overtook me near the South Pass, where I stopped about three days with Reddick N. Allred, who had come out with provisions for the immigrants. The storm during these three days was simply awful. In all my travels in the Rocky Mountains both before and afterwards, I have seen no worse. When the snow at length ceased falling, it lay on the ground so deep that for many days it was impossible to move wagons through it.

"Being deeply concerned about the possible fate of the immigrants, and feeling anxious to learn of their condition, I determined to start out on horseback to meet them; and for this purpose I secured a pack-saddle and two animals (one to ride and one to pack), from Brother Allred, and began to make my way slowly through the snow, alone. After traveling for some time I met Joseph A. Young and one of the Garr boys, two of the relief company which had been sent out from Salt Lake City to help the companies. They had met the immigrants and were now returning with important dispatches from the camps to the headquarters of the Church, reporting the awful condition of the companies.

"In the meantime I continued my lonely journey, and the night after meeting Elders Young and Garr, I camped in the snow in the mountains. As I was preparing to make a bed in the snow with the few articles that my pack animal carried for me, I thought how comfortable a buffalo robe would be one such an occasion, and also how I could relish a little buffalo meat for

supper, and before lying down for the night I was instinctively led to ask the Lord to send me a buffalo. Now, I am a firm believer in the efficacy of prayer, for I have on many different occasions asked the Lord for blessings, which He and His mercy has bestowed upon me. But when I, after praying as I did on that lonely night in the South Pass, looked around me and spied a buffalo bull within fifty yards of my camp, my surprise was complete; I had certainly not expected so immediate an answer to my prayer. However, I soon collected myself and was not at a loss to know what to do. Taking deliberate aim at the animal, my first shot brought him down.... I was soon busily engaged skinning my game, finishing which, I spread the hide on the snow and placed my bed upon it. I next prepared supper, eating ... to my heart's content. After this I enjoyed a refreshing night's sleep, while my horses were browsing on the sage brush.

"Early the next morning I was on my way again, and soon reached what is known as Ice Springs Bench. There I happened upon a herd of buffalo and killed a nice cow. I was impressed to do this, although I did not know why until a few hours later, but the thought occurred to my mind that the hand of the Lord was in it, as it was a rare thing to find buffalo herds around that place at this late part of the season. I skinned and dressed the cow; then cut up part of its meat in long strips and loaded both of my horses with it. Thereupon I resumed my journey, and traveled on till towards evening. I think the sun was about an hour high in the west when I spied something in the distance that looked like a black streak in the snow. As I got near to it, I perceived it moved; then I was satisfied that this was the longed for hand-cart company, led by Captain Edward Martin. I reached the ill-fated train just as the immigrants were camping for the night. The sight that met my gaze as I entered their camp can never be erased from my memory. The starved forms and haggard countenances of the poor sufferers, as they moved about slowly, shivering with cold, to prepare their scanty evening meal was enough to touch the stoutest heart. When they saw me coming, they hailed me with joy inexpressible, and when they further beheld the supply of fresh meat I brought into camp, their gratitude knew no bounds. Flocking around me, one would say, 'Oh please, give me a small piece of meat;' another would exclaim, 'My poor children are starving, do give me a little;' and children with tears in their eyes would call out, 'Give me some, give me some.' At first I tried to wait on them and handed out the meat as they called for it; but finally I told them to help themselves. Five minutes later both my horses had been released of their extra burden—the meat was all gone, and the next few hours found the people in camp busily engaged cooking and eating it, with thankful hearts.

"A prophecy had been made by one of the brethren that the company should feast on buffalo meat, when their provisions might run short; my arrival in their camp, loaded with meat, was the beginning of the fulfillment of that prediction; but only the beginning, as I afterwards shot and killed a number of buffalo for them as we journeyed along....

"Soon more relief companies were met and as fast as the baggage was transferred into the wagons, the handcarts were abandoned one after another, until none were left.

"I remained with the immigrants until the last of Captain Martin's company arrived in Salt Lake City on the thirtieth of November, 1856." (Andrew Jenson, "Church Emigration: Ephraim K. Hank's Narrative," Contributor, XIV (1893): 202-5; cited in Richard K. Hanks, "Eph Hanks, Pioneer Scout," pp. 77-79).

"As we follow the counsel of living prophets, whether gentle or direct, we will be filled with the Spirit and be magnified, as Eph Hanks was, in our ministry in the Lord's kingdom and our service to others (see *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 332). Untold blessings, both here and hereafter, await those who seek counsel from the Lord's servants and faithfully follow it" (B.L. Top, L.E. Dahl, & W.D. Bowen, *Follow the Living Prophets* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1998], pp. 156-160).

"Murmering against priesthood and auxiliary leadership is one of the most poisonous things that can be introduced into the home of a Latter-day Saint" (David O. McKay, *Improvement Era*, March 1969, p. 3).

"No man can be more happy than by obeying the living prophet's counsel. You may go from east to west, from north to south, and tread this footstool of the Lord all over, and you cannot find a man that can make himself happy in this Church, only by applying the counsel of the living prophet in this life; it is a matter of impossibility for a man to receive a fulness who is not susceptible of receiving and carrying out the living prophet's counsel. An individual that applies the counsel for this Church is bound to increase in all that is good, for there is a fountain of counsel which the Lord has established. He has made it, has deposited that counsel, that wisdom and those riches, and it will circumscribe all that pertains unto good, unto salvation; all things that pertain to glory and to the exaltation of the Saints in this world and in the world to come" (Lorenzo Snow, *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, pp. 86-87).