

they are studying and following the teachings of the Book of Mormon as the prophet has admonished us to do. There are thousands who feel they have received a special personal message from the prophet as he has spoken to the young men of the Church, the young women of the Church, the children, the elderly, the parents. There are thousands who are better people today because they have stripped themselves of pride, as counseled by this great prophet. Yes, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet to guide us in these latter days" (*Hymns*, no. 19).

I bear witness that Ezra Taft Benson was born to be a prophet, has lived so he could be a prophet, and has been called of God to be a prophet in our day. He has set a pattern of service and endurance that each of us should seek to follow.

We ever pray for thee

In closing, may I read the words of a song that were sung this afternoon by the young ladies' chorus that express our feelings for our prophet.

We ever pray for thee, our prophet dear,
That God will give to thee comfort and cheer;
As the advancing years furrow thy brow,
Still may the light within shine bright as now.

We ever pray for thee with all our hearts,
That strength be given thee to do thy part,
To guide and counsel us from day to day,
To shed a holy light around our way.
We ever pray for thee with fervent love;
And as the children's prayer is heard above,
Thou shalt be ever blest, and God will give
All that is meet and best while thou shalt live. [*Hymns*, no. 23]

May God bless and sustain his prophet, and may we follow him, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

We have listened to Elders Marion D. Hanks and J Ballard Washburn of the Seventy.

The choir and congregation will join in singing "High on the Mountain Top," following which we shall hear from Elder Durrel A. Woolsey, also sustained as a member of the Seventy at the April conference.

The choir and congregation sang "High on the Mountain Top."

Elder Durrel A. Woolsey

The patriarchal key

My beloved brethren of the priesthood, the Lord Jesus Christ said, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). Could we add, "lose his own soul, and his family"?

As I left California, bound for Salt Lake City to receive training and be set apart for a mission in Arizona, I experienced for a moment an alarming feel-

ing. I had lost all of my keys. The keys to the cars, home, business, and Church calling had been left behind. I had the depressing feeling that I no longer had any keys; even my pockets seemed empty.

Then came the exhilarating thought that I still had the most important key of all, a key that I will hold eternally, if I remain worthy. That key, of course, is the patriarchal key with my family.

I became aware of how temporary most other keys are, especially keys that control material things that will one day become victims of moth and rust. Priesthood keys of leadership and other keys of presidency are extremely vital; but for the most part, even they are temporary in nature. Eventually, after faithfully serving, you will then relinquish those keys to someone else.

We will, however, be blessed to continue to hold our patriarchal key. Fathers, you hold the key to accomplish the work stated by several of the prophets as vitally important. President Harold B. Lee said the most important work you will ever do "will be done within the walls of your own home," and President David O. McKay cautioned that "no other success can compensate for failure in the home."

Importance of honorable fathers

Many in the world are alarmed, and with some justification, at the plight and deteriorating condition of families. The most powerful thrust toward a resolution of this significant problem would be an honorable father, full of integrity and fidelity, giving righteous leadership to his family. That joyful work and calling is to do whatever is necessary to chart a course for you and your family to unitedly return and live with Heavenly Father.

We likely will not be called upon to endure the great physical hardships suffered by so many of our pioneer forefathers. Ours is a much more sinister and demoralizing challenge. Often this challenge will approach cloaked in confusing masks of misunderstood rights and agency or the enticements and allurements of a misguided world. We daily face the "anything for a thrill" crowd or the "What's in it for me?" society.

The anti-Christ Korihor, in the Book of Mormon, taught a similar type of damaging doctrine when he said, "There could be no atonement made for the sins of men, but every man fared in this life according to the management

of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength; and whatsoever a man did was no crime" (Alma 30:17). This rhetoric could blend into much of the accepted doctrine of the world today.

Fathers should become heroes

So where is safety? How does a father go about safely guiding his most priceless possession through the reefs and shoals?

Dad, you need to be a hero in your family. They need a hero. They will have strong peer pressure and temptation to adopt the so-called heroes of today who are not worthy of their attention and most certainly not their emulation. The heroes or superstars in the sports and entertainment world, and there are many, frequently become examples of dishonesty, instability, and infidelity. They flagrantly and indifferently flaunt those weaknesses of character and immorality before a doting and accepting world, as Korihor said, "according to the management of the creature" (Alma 30:17).

Could not, should not, Father become the hero to his family? A father worthy of attention, worthy of emulation? Most certainly, but how?

Commit a generous amount of time

First of all, a generous amount of your time is required—not a superficial moment here and there, not the tired and worn-out phrase, "We'll talk about that later," but an honest, generous piece of your day on a continuing basis, even at the sacrifice of things social, things personally entertaining, or even things financially rewarding. All of the money in the world, significant worldly accomplishments which may include the upper rungs of the success ladder, or the personal enjoyment of athletic and sporting activities, will not return you and your family intact to live with Heavenly Father.

President Joseph F. Smith quoted from the Savior, as stated in Mark: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). Then President Smith continued: "What would it profit me, though I should go out into the world and win strangers to the fold of God and lose my own children? Oh! God, let me not lose my own. I can not afford to lose mine, whom God has given to me and whom I am responsible for before the Lord, and who are dependent upon me for guidance, for instruction, for proper influence" (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939], p. 462).

The salvation of our families will require all that we have to save all that we have. So you will make the time commitment. Great! Positive, wonderful benefits will begin to flow to you and your family almost immediately.

"Love thy wife with all thy heart"

So what next? I mentioned fidelity. It is absolutely essential that you set an undeviating course of loyalty and faithfulness to your companion, to whom you have previously made these very commitments and promises. The example of your great love and respect for her, the two of you being as one, will establish a singular guiding strength that your children will desire to follow. Your voices and actions blending together in a united front as you teach and lead your little family will be the trumpet with a certain sound of strength and unity leading to safety. Synonyms of *fidelity* are *allegiance* and *devotion*. They will be critical supports to your foundation of fidelity. "Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else" (D&C 42:22).

Search the scriptures daily

Father, one of your greatest resources will be the scriptures. You

would not consider making a large investment in a rather complicated and technical piece of equipment, then begin its operation, without an involved study of the handbook of instruction. Further, you would likely reference that handbook often. The handbook of instructions for your somewhat complicated, very sizable investment called family is certainly the original handbook of instruction—that being our beloved scriptures. They are complete with instructions and examples. Often, you will find the answer before the question is asked. Daily research is required. It is also vital to maintain open communication lines with the Fountainhead of all wisdom and truth through your daily family and personal prayers.

Follow the prophet

Finally, what better resource for direction could we have than a living prophet? A great safety net can envelop you and your family as you follow the Brethren. How blessed you are, Dad, to have living oracles of God to update you with current instruction to guide your family through modern-day challenges. To not hear, or ignore them, to not understand and heed those instructions would be like beginning a trip across the sea in a small boat without a compass.

Well, that's it, Dad. You must become the family hero, worthy of not only their attention but their emulation. This will require your constant investment of sufficient time, complete emotional and physical fidelity, with unity of purpose between you and your eternal companion. This will require your constant dependency upon the Lord, demonstrated through scripture study and prayer. This will require that you follow the Brethren in every sense of the word—hearing, understanding, and doing. This simple formula will unite and strengthen your beloved family and bring countless blessings from our Father.

May God bless all fathers to righteously obtain and maintain this patriarchal key to the blessing of families throughout the Church. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder Durrel A. Woolsey of the Seventy has just spoken to us.

President Thomas S. Monson, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will now address us.

President Thomas S. Monson

Come, all ye sons of God

One of my most vivid memories is attending priesthood meeting as a newly ordained deacon and singing the opening hymn, "Come, All Ye Sons of God Who Have Received the Priesthood." Tonight, to this capacity audience assembled in the Tabernacle and in chapels worldwide, I echo the spirit of that special hymn and say to you, Come, all ye sons of God who have received the priesthood; let us consider our callings, let us reflect on our responsibilities, let us determine our duty, and let us follow Jesus Christ, our Lord.

While we may differ in age, in custom, or in nationality, we hold membership in the same church and are united as one in our priesthood callings.

Two weeks ago I attended a sacrament meeting where the children responded to the theme, I Belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These boys and girls demonstrated they were in training for service to the Lord and to others. The music was beautiful, the recitations skillfully rendered, and the spirit heaven-sent. My eleven-year-old grandson had spoken of the First Vision as he presented his part on the program. Afterward, as he came to his parents and grandparents, I said to him, "Tommy, I think you are almost ready to be a missionary."

He replied, "Not yet; there is much I have to learn."

For the strength of youth

To help him and all youth prepare for their service to God, a new booklet, entitled *For the Strength of Youth*, has

been published under the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve. The booklet features standards from the writings and teachings of Church leaders and from scriptures, adherence to which will bring the blessings of our Heavenly Father and the guidance of His Son to each of us.

May I share with you, as I shared with the sisters in the women's meeting held last week, portions of the introduction to this new guide to your mortal journey, this new road map to help you chart an undeviating course toward eternal life. The statement by the First Presidency begins:

"Our beloved young men and women,

"We want you to know that we love you. We have great confidence in you. . . .

"We desire everything in this world for you that is right and good. . . . You are choice spirits who have been held in reserve to come forth in this day when the temptations, responsibilities, and opportunities are the very greatest. You are at a critical time in your lives. . . .

"We counsel you to [be] morally clean. . . .

"You cannot do wrong and feel right. It is impossible! Years of happiness can be lost in the foolish gratification of a momentary desire for pleasure. . . .

"You can avoid the burden of guilt and sin and all of the attending heartaches . . . as you keep the standards outlined in the scriptures and emphasized in this pamphlet.

"We pray that you—the young and rising generation—will keep your bodies and minds clean, free from the con-