

Alma 56**1** *Introduction*

Combat makes bad men worse and good men better...

We know not of the future, and cannot plan for it much. But we can hold our spirits and our bodies so pure and high, we may cherish such thoughts and such ideals, and dream such dreams of lofty purpose, that we can determine and know what manner of men we will be whenever and wherever the hour strikes, that calls to noble action...no man becomes suddenly different from his habit and cherished thoughts.

Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, *Medal of Honor recipient, Battle of Little Round Top, Gettysburg.*

Alma 56:11**2** *Death*

Another question often asked is, When death from war occurs, what of the promised blessings of the patriarch upon that person's head? Why are his blessings not permitted to be realized? I think now of a distraught father and mother who had just received that ominous and tersely worded telegram from the government, informing them of the death of their son. They came seeking an interview to see if some light and understanding could be given to ease their aching hearts and to bolster their faith. Just home from a mission for the Church, he'd been inducted into military service. Before leaving, he had received a patriarchal blessing in which he was promised that he would have a posterity of sons and daughters. Had the patriarch's words been inspired? Why did this promise fail? Asked the parents, since to their knowledge their son had lived worthy of every blessing promised to the faithful.

Akin to this is another incident of a sister who had filled a mission and had contracted tuberculosis. Shortly after she returned home, she passed away. I was asked to speak at her funeral service. She had received a patriarchal blessing in which she had been promised that she would be a mother in Israel. The family said that certainly no one had lived a more saintly life than had she. I spoke of this, as it troubled me. The patriarch of the stake spoke at the funeral also. He said, "When a patriarch pronounces an inspired blessing, such a blessing encompasses the whole of life, not just this phase we call mortality."

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable," said the apostle Paul. If we fail to understand this great truth, we will be miserable in time of need, and then sometimes our faith may be challenged. But if we have a faith that looks beyond the grave and trusts in divine providence to bring all things in their proper perspective in due time, then we have hope, and our fears are calmed.

Harold B. Lee, "From the Valley of Despair, p. 7.

3 To you whose lives may be taken in war and to you who may mourn the loss of loved ones so taken, may I bring you again the comfort of the words of Moroni, the captain of the guard: “For the Lord suffereth the righteous to be slain that his justice and judgment may come upon the wicked; therefore ye need not suppose that the righteous are lost because they are slain; but behold, they do enter into the rest of the Lord.”

Harold B. Lee, *Decisions for Successful Living*, p. 187.

Alma 56: 16

4 *Depressed in body and spirit*

At some time in our lives, each of us needs to be lifted from a depression, from a sense of foreboding or inadequacy, or just from a plateau of spiritual mediocrity. Because the feeling of uplift raises our spirits and helps us resist evil and seek good, I believe that the uplift communicated by reading the scriptures and enjoying wholesome music, art, or literature is a distinct purpose of revelation.

Dallin H. Oaks, *With Full Purpose of Heart* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002], 152.

5 When you go to a multi-screen theater, you select a movie that will help you to feel what you want to feel. If you want to cry and feel sad, you will select a “tearjerker.” If you want to laugh, you will go to a comedy. Likewise, you can select the internal movies you view... If you want to intensify anger, guilt, shame, and/or depression.... you will choose to select movies that will reinforce your negative judgment of self (for guilt, shame, and depression) or of others (for anger)...

Suppose that you have just completed an abominable game of golf, and you tell yourself: “I really screwed that up! Once again, I didn’t do it well enough. The harder I try, the worse I get. I keep failing, and I guess that I’m just a failure!” This internal expression....generates shame (I’m a failure”) and contributes to depression...

Unfortunately, people who specialize in anger have impressive [internal] movie collections of examples of other people’s wrongdoings and few—if any—movies of being treated well by others. People who specialize in depression, on the other hand, have massive movie collections of personal inadequacies and misdeeds and few—if any—movies of personal successes and validation by other people. It may be difficult, therefore, for such people to select positive [internal] movies, since they may not have collected them.

Philip Roos, *The Osiris Factor* [Springville, Utah: Bonneville Books, 2002], 49.

6 I know of nothing that Satan used quite so cunningly or cleverly in his work on a young man or woman. I speak of doubt (especially self-doubt), or discouragement, and of despair....

I wish at the outset, however, to make a distinction that F. Scott Fitzgerald once made: “Trouble has no necessary connection with discouragement—discouragement has a germ of its own, as different from trouble as arthritis is different from a stiff joint.” We all have troubles, but the “germ” of discouragement, to use Fitzgerald’s word, is not in the trouble, it is in us—or to be more precise, I believe it is in Satan, the prince of darkness, the father of lies.... It’s frequently a small germ, hardly worth going to a doctor for, but it will work and it will grow and

it will spread. In fact, it can become almost a habit, a way of living and thinking, and there the greatest damage is done. Then it takes an increasingly severe toll on our spirit.... We turn inward and look downward.... We become unhappy and soon make others unhappy, and before long Lucifer laughs.

Jeffrey R. Holland, *However Long and Hard the Road* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985], 1-2.

7 On that Friday the Savior of mankind was humiliated and bruised, abused and reviled. It was a Friday filled with devastating, consuming sorrow that gnawed at the souls of those who loved and honored the Son of God.

I think that of all the days since the beginning of this world's history, that Friday was the darkest.

But the doom of that day did not endure.

The despair did not linger because on Sunday, the resurrected Lord burst the bonds of death....

Each of us will have our own Fridays—those days when the universe itself seems shattered and the shards of our world lie littered about us in pieces. We all will experience those broken times when it seems we can never be put together again. We will all have our Fridays.

But I testify to you in the name of the One who conquered death—Sunday will come....

No matter our desperation, no matter our grief, Sunday will come. In this life or the next, Sunday will come.

Joseph B. Wirthlin, *Ensign*, Nov. 2006 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006], 29-30.

Alma 56: 47-48

8 *A Blessing of Divine Protection*

The Lamanite converts of the sons of Mosiah....took on the name of Anti-Nephi-Lehies. Some 2,000 of their sons became the “stripling warriors” when they enlisted in the Nephite army. These youthful patriots were untested in battle yet they illustrated no fear at the prospect of death. The reason for this being that “they had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them” (Alma 56:47). Notice if they did not doubt *something* then God would deliver them. What was it that they were not to doubt? That their mothers were telling the truth? That the gospel was true? Not to doubt Helaman their military leader, and obey with exactness? (see Alma 57:21). No to doubt the oath they had taken to defend the freedom of their fathers and the Nephites? (see Alma 53: 17; 56:47). Not to doubt that God would deliver them? Yes, perhaps the answer encompasses all of these—but there is more.

Remember, that at an earlier time their parents were a part of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, many whom were slaughtered by their brethren, the Lamanites, because they would not take up arms to defend themselves (see Alma 24:13-23). Those who lived through the slaughter eventually went to Ammon and asked him to “inquire of the Lord” as to what to do (see Alma 27:10). The Lord responded to his inquiry by giving a blessing of protection to the parents of these stripling warriors: “Blessed are this people...I will *preserve* them” (Alma 27:12; italics added). In this context *preserve* meant to deliver or to protect. And that was just what he did. The text records

no more slaughter among these newly converted Lamanites. This became the same promise given to the stripling warriors by their mothers that “God would deliver them” (Alma 56:47). This promise was not new to the stripling warriors when they went to battle for the first time; they grew up with it because it was the promise given to their parents by the Lord. It was not hard for them to believe in “deliverance” in battle because *this promise of “preservation” had been true in their families long before they became warriors....* Ammon, the missionary who had received the revelation giving the Anti-Nephi-Lehi’s their blessing of “preservation” (see Alma 27:12), received the same blessing from the Lord many years earlier when he and the other sons of Mosiah inquired of their father if they could preach the gospel to the Lamanites. The Lord spoke these words to Mosiah: “I will deliver thy sons out of the hands of the Lamanites” (Mosiah 28:7). The sons of Mosiah received the same blessing given later to their converts the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, which naturally carried over to their sons, the stripling warriors. The faith of these youthful sons mirrors the faith of their parents and the missionaries who taught them. Jack R. Christianson and K. Douglas Bassett, *Life Lessons from the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], 80-81.

Alma 56: 44-48

9 *Righteous Mothers*

Every woman gives her life for what she believes. Sometimes people believe in little or nothing. Nevertheless, they give up their lives to that little or nothing. One life is all we have. And we live it as we believe in living it, and then it’s gone.
Joan of Arc

10 The homemaker has the ultimate career. All other careers . . . exist for one purpose only—
and that is to support this ultimate career.
C. S. Lewis

11 As daughters of Eve, we are all mothers and we have always been mothers. And we each
have the responsibility to love and help lead the rising generation.
Sherri Dew

12 No dear sisters, you have a far greater influence as mothers and grandmothers, sisters, aunts,
teachers, and friends than you may realize. You have an irreplaceable and an unparalleled
influence with our children and youth because you have such a natural propensity for the things
of the spirit.
Elder Ballard

13 In life all must choose at times. Sometimes, two possibilities are good; neither is evil.
Usually, however, one is of greater import than the other. When in doubt, each must choose that

which concerns the good of others—the greater law—rather than that which chiefly benefits ourselves—the lesser law. The greater must be chosen whether it be law or thing. That was the choice made in Eden.

John A. Widstoe

14 To be a righteous woman is a glorious thing in any age. To be a righteous woman during the winding up scenes on this earth, before the second coming of our Savior, is an especially noble calling.

Spencer W. Kimball

15 You are the keepers of the hearth. You are the managers of the home. I charge you to stand tall and be strong in defense of those great virtues which have been the backbone of our social progress. When you are united, your power is limitless.

. . . You have nothing in this world more precious than your children. When you grow old, when your hair turns white and your body grows weary, when you are prone to sit in a rocker and meditate on the things of your life, nothing will be so important as the question of how your children have turned out. It will not be the money you have made. It will not be the cars you have owned. It will not be the large house in which you live. The searing question that will cross your mind again and again will be, How well have my children done?

. . . God bless you, dear friends. Do not trade your birthright as a mother for some bauble of passing value. Let your first interest be in your home.

President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Walking in the Light of the Lord”

16 Motherhood is the greatest potential influence either for good or ill in human life. The mother’s image is the first that stamps itself on the unwritten page of the young child’s mind. It is her caress that first awakens a sense of security; her kiss, the first realization of affection; her sympathy and tenderness, the first assurance that there is love in the world. True, there comes a time when Father takes his place as exemplar and hero of the growing boy; and in the latter’s budding ambition to develop manly traits, her outwardly seems to turn from the more gentle and tender virtues engendered by his mother. Yet that ever-directing and restraining influence implanted during the first years of his childhood linger with him and permeate his thoughts and memory as distinctively as perfume clings to each particular flower.

David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, p. 452.

17 If I were asked to name the world’s greatest need, I should say unhesitatingly wise mothers.
David O. McKay, in Jeanette McKay Morrell, *Highlights in the Life of President David O. McKay*, 34

18 The noblest calling in the world is motherhood. True motherhood is the most beautiful of all arts, the greatest of all professions. She who can paint a masterpiece, or who can write a book that will influence millions, deserves the admiration and plaudits of mankind; but she who rears successfully a family of healthy, beautiful sons and daughters whose immortal souls will exert an

influence throughout the ages long after paintings shall have faded and books and statues shall have decayed or have been destroyed, deserves the highest honor that man can give, and the choicest blessing of God. In her high duty and service to humanity in clothing with mortality eternal spirits, she is co-partner with the Creator Himself.

David O. McKay, *Pathways to Happiness*, 116

19 When the real history of mankind is fully disclosed, will it feature the echoes of gunfire or the shaping sound of lullabies? The greatest armistices made by military men or the peacemaking of women in homes and in neighborhoods? Will what happened in cradles and kitchens prove to be more controlling than what happened in congresses? When the surf of the centuries has made the great pyramids so much sand, the everlasting family will still be standing, because it is a celestial institution, formed outside telestial time.

Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1978, 10-11.

20 You sisters....belong to the great sorority of saviorhood. You may not hold the priesthood. Men are different; men have to have something given to them to make them saviors of men, but not mothers, not women. You are born with an inherent right, an inherent authority, to be saviors of human souls. You are the co-creators with God of his children.

Matthew Cowley Speaks [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954], 109.

21 Recently I reviewed the history of many missionaries and found a powerful correlation between exceptional missionaries and mothers who chose to remain home, often at great financial and personal sacrifice.... President Benson has taught that a mother with children should be in the home. He also said, "We realize...that some of our choice sisters are widowed and divorced and that others find themselves in unusual circumstances where, out of necessity, they are required to work for a period of time. But these instances are the exception, not the rule." (Ezra Taft Benson, *To the Mothers in Zion*, pamphlet, 1987, 5-6). You in these unusual circumstances qualify for additional inspiration and strength from the Lord. Those who leave the home for lesser reasons will not.

Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, May 1993 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter--day Saints, 1993], 33-34.

22 Put your homes in order. If Mother is working outside of the home, see if there are ways to change that, even a little. It may be very difficult to change at the present time. But analyze carefully and be prayerful (see D&C 9:8-9).... Expect intervention from power from beyond the veil to help you move...to what is best for your family.

Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 2004 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2004], 79.

23 As young mothers...evaluate the cost of working outside the home, I deeply hope they will not sell themselves short. I am so proud of those who clearly see the importance of their role. Mothers who make the choice to stay home with their children, teaching by precept and example, make lasting investments in eternal accounts. Their preparation and education does so much more than draw a paycheck. It enriches the whole family and shapes the lives of their children. Such mothers become refined by their righteous choice. They love and serve and sacrifice, and

they are blessed in ways that they could not otherwise be. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation.

Mary Ellen Smoot, "Everything Money Cannot Buy," Satellite Broadcast, 3 Feb. 2002, Brigham Young University [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2002], 2.

24 It is the mothers of young children I would like to address first... These are years when you will probably do the most important work of your lives. Don't wish away your years of caring for small children. Life is what happens to you while you are making other plans. This is a time of great opportunity for you to build the Kingdom. When you teach children to love their Heavenly Father, you have done one of the greatest things you will ever do. If you can be a full-time homemaker, be grateful. If not, you must do what is best... I for one have never felt a need to apologize for my role as a full-time homemaker.

Marjorie Hinckley: as quoted in *Ensign*, May 1995 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1995], 74.

25 Government and social plans will not effectively correct [violence],.... nor can the best efforts of schools and churches fully compensate for the absence of the tender care of a compassionate mother and wife in the home... As a mother guided by the Lord, you weave a fabric of character in your children from the threads of truth through careful instruction and worthy example....No day-care center can do that. It is your sacred right and privilege. Of course, as a woman you can do exceptionally well in the work-place, but is that the best use of your divinely appointed talents and feminine traits? As a husband, don't encourage your wife to go to work to help in you divinely appointed responsibility or providing resources for the family, if you can possibly avoid it... Don't be lured away from the plan of our God to the ways of the world, where motherhood is belittled, femininity is decried, and the divinely established role of wife and mother is mocked. Let the world go its way. You follow the plan of the Lord...

Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, Nov, 1996 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1996], 74-75.

26 Some years ago President Benson delivered a message to the women of the Church. He encouraged them to leave their employment and give their individual time to their children. I sustain the position which he took. Nevertheless, I recognize, as he recognized that there are some women (it has become very many in fact) who have to work to provide for the needs of their families. To you I say, do the very best you can. I hope that if you are employed full-time you are doing it to ensure that basic needs are met and not simply to indulge a taste for an elaborate home, fancy cars, and other luxuries... It is well-nigh impossible to be a full-time homemaker and a full-time employee. I know how some of you struggle with decisions concerning this matter. I repeat, do the very best you can. You know your circumstances, and I know that you are deeply concerned for the welfare of your children.

Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Nov. 1996 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1996], 69.

27 Mothers have no more compelling responsibility, nor any laden with greater rewards, than the nurture given their children in an environment of security, peace, companionship, love, and motivation to grow and do well....

My life has been influenced in a profound and penetrating way by good, talented, faithful, devoted women. Though my mother died when I was twenty, her influence and even the feeling of her presence have stayed with me to the present day....

In anyone can change the dismal situation into which we are sliding, it is the good women of this country....

The nurture and upbringing of children is more than a part-time responsibility. It is a fact of life that some mothers must work, but far too many do so only to get the means for a little more luxury and a few fancier toys—all at the sacrifice of their children. Mothers who must work have an increased load to bear. Nevertheless, they cannot afford to neglect their children. Children need a mother’s supervision in studying, in working inside and outside the home, in the nurturing that only she can adequately give—the love, the blessing, the encouragement, and the closeness of a mother....

Although the contributions of women in all walks of life are respected, I hope we will never look down on a homemaker.

Gordon B. Hinckley, *Standing for Something* [New York: Times Books, 2000], 150-151.

28 [To the young women] Becoming like men is not the answer. Rather, the answer lies in being who you are and living up to your divine potential by fulfilling eternal commitments. You cannot trust the many conflicting voices that clamor about what women should or should not do in today’s society. Some of the loudest voices are echoes of those others who are out of harmony with themselves and out of tune with life in general rather than being unhappy with their role as women....

Entreating voices may tell you that what you have seen your mothers and grandmothers do is old-fashioned, unchallenging, boring, and drudgery... Homemaking is whatever you make of it. Every day brings satisfaction along with some work which may be frustrating, routine, and unchallenging. But it is the same in the law office, the dispensary, the laboratory, or the store. There is, however, no more important job than homemaking. As C.S. Lewis said, “A housewife’s work... is the one for which all others exist.”... Women today are encouraged by some to have it all: money, travel, marriage, motherhood, and separate careers in the world. For women, the important ingredients for happiness are to forge an identity, serve the Lord, get an education, develop your talents, serve your family, and if possible to have a family of your own. However, you cannot do all these things well at the same time... You cannot be a 100-percent wife, a 100-percent mother, a 100 percent Church worker, a 100 percent career person, and a 100-percent public-service person at the same time. How can all of these roles be coordinated? I suggest that you can have it sequentially. *Sequentially* is a big word meaning to do things one at a time at different times. The book of Ecclesiastes [3:1] says: “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under...heaven.”

James E. Faust, *Ensign*, May 1998 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998], 96.

29 [Referring to the stripling warriors and their mothers] I think that is one of the greatest tributes that has ever been paid to motherhood—that in circumstances such as they were experiencing, when they were surrounded by enemies, they could train their children to have that

faith in God that would carry them through and would bring them home without losing their lives... I realize that there is a force in the Latter-day Saint homes where our wives and mothers and daughters are, and when it comes to faith in God and prayer it is equal to anything that the men may be able to muster. I fear that sometimes we neglect them... [Speaking to the Priesthood] I am asking myself the question, “How many of you who are here tonight, before you came here to wait upon the Lord, put your arms around the woman who stood by your side, the mother of your children, and told her that you were grateful that she would keep the home-fires burning when you couldn’t be there?” I wonder if we appreciate them. Do we treasure their virtues and their faith and their devotion and their motherhood as our Heavenly Father does?

George Albert Smith, in Conference Report, Apr. 1943 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1943], 89-90.

30 I was talking the other day to one of my friends,...who was drunk for twenty-seven years, and then finally turned his life back to God. He is now active in the Church and has not had a drink for fifteen years. I asked him how he was able to overcome that habit... He said to me: “Matt, if I had not had the fortification which came to me in my childhood from a righteous mother, I never would have been able to overcome this terrible habit. The influence of that mother in my home is what has given me the courage and the strength and the fortitude to overcome this drinking habit.”

What a tribute to a mother! Now, you sisters, you are the mothers of men, and you may not live to see the fruits of your teaching in the lives of your children.... You may not see them turn their lives back to God, but the day will come, if you give them the fortification in their childhood, in those years when their souls and minds are pliable, the day will come when they will have the strength, because of you, to turn their lives and their characters back to God and be influenced by him.

Matthew Cowley Speaks [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954], 108-109.

31 Our wives are often inspired but sometimes in counterintuitive ways—a reality, young men, which your fathers may be brave enough to explain to you sometime.

Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, may 2004 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2004], 46.

32 I, of course, owe everything to my mother, because my father died when I was only nine days of age; and the marvelous teachings, the faith, the integrity of my mother have been an inspiration to me. Referring to his decision to marry in the temple, he said: “I was very grateful for the inspiration and determination I had to start life right. Why did it come to me? It came to me because my mother believed in the gospel, taught me the value of it, gave me a desire to get all of the benefits of starting life right and of doing things according to the teachings of the gospel....

Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels.

Teachings of President of the Church—Heber J. Grant [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2002], 199. 203.

33 Some mothers seem to have the capacity and energy to make their children's clothes, bake, give piano lessons, go to Relief Society, teach Sunday School, attend parent-teacher association meetings, and so on. Other mothers look upon such women as models and feel inadequate, depressed, and think they are failures when they make comparisons.

We should not allow ourselves to be trapped into such damaging inferiority feelings. This is another tool of Satan. Many seem to put too much pressure on themselves to be a "supermom" or "superwoman."

Sisters, do not allow yourselves to be made to feel inadequate or frustrated because you cannot do everything others seem to be accomplishing. Rather, each should assess her own situation, her own energy, and her own talents, and then choose the best way.... Only you and your Father in Heaven know your needs, strengths, and desires. Around this knowledge your personal course must be charted and your choices made.

Marvin A.J. Ashton, in Conference Report, Apr. 1984 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1984], 11

34 In ten years, one-half of all children born in America will be illegitimate. More and more children have no functioning fathers. Already 70% of our juvenile criminals come from fatherless homes. Less than half of the children born today will live continuously with their own mother and father throughout childhood. One-fourth of all adolescents contract a sexually transmitted disease before they graduate from high school. Fifty-five percent of American children under the age of six have both parents or their only parent working in the labor force.... Annually in America there are four million reports of domestic violence, rivaling the number of births in America! Violence in America now kills "the equivalent of a classroomful" of children "every two days." In the face of such challenges, we need more mothers who know the truth, whose children do not doubt their mothers know it (see Alma 56:48).

Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1994 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1994], 88-90.

35 A man who holds the priesthood does not have an advantage over a woman in qualifying for exaltation. The woman, by her very nature, is also co-creator with God and the primary nurturer of the children. Virtues and attributes upon which perfection and exaltation depend come naturally to a woman and are refined through marriage and motherhood.... During World War II, men were called away to fight. In the emergency, wives and mothers worldwide were drawn into the work force as never before. The most devastating effect of the war was on the family. It lingers to this generation. In the October 1942 general conference, the First Presidency delivered a message to the Saints in every land.

"...This divine service of motherhood can be rendered only by mothers. It may not be passed to others. Nurses cannot do it; public nurseries cannot do it; hired help cannot do it—only mother, aided as much as may be by the loving hands of father, brothers, and sisters, can give the full needed measure of watchful care.... The mother who entrusts her child to the care of others, that she may do non-motherly work, whether for gold, for fame, or for civic service, should remember that *a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame* (Prov. 29:15). In our day the Lord has said that unless parents teach their children the doctrines of the Church *the sin*

be upon the heads of the parents (D&C 68:25). Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels.

That message and warning from the First Presidency is needed more, not less, today than when it was given. Any soul who... must act alone in rearing children, working to support them will not be denied in the eternities any blessings—provided they keep the commandments.

Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, Nov. 1993 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1993], 22-23.

36 Women of God can never be like women of the world. The world has enough women who are tough; we need women who are tender. There are enough women who are coarse; we need women who are kind. There are enough women who are rude; we need women who are refined. We have enough women of fame and fortune; we need more women of faith. We have enough greed; we need more goodness. We have enough vanity; we need more virtue. We have enough popularity; we need more purity.

Margaret D. Nadauld

37 We must not give up. We must not become discouraged. We must never surrender to the forces of evil. We can and must maintain the standards for which this Church has stood since it was organized. *There is a better way than the way of the world. If it means standing alone, we must do it.*

... We call upon the women of the Church to stand together for righteousness. They must begin in their own homes. They can teach it in their classes. They can teach it in their classes. They can voice it in their communities.

... We frequently speak of the strength of the priesthood, and properly so. But we must never lose sight of the strength of the women. It is mothers who set the tone of the home. It is mothers who most directly affect the lives of their children. It is mothers who teach infants to pray, who read to them choice and beautiful literature from the scriptures and other sources. It is mothers who nurture them and bring them up in the ways of the Lord. Their influence is paramount.

President Gordon B. Hinckley, 2004 Worldwide Priesthood Leadership Training

Alma 56:56

38 Imagine that! These inexperienced young men were so spiritually and physically prepared, and so powerful, that they frightened their foes into surrendering! Although all 2,000 of the young men were wounded in battle at one time or another, not one was killed (see Alma 57:25)..

Brethren, today we are fighting a battle that in many ways is more perilous, more frightened with danger than the battle between the Nephites and the Lamanites. Our enemy is cunning and resourceful. We fight against Lucifer, the father of all lies, the enemy of all that is good and right and holy. Truly we live in a time of which Paul prophesied, when “men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of

those that are good,... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Timothy 3:2-5).

Does this sound familiar, brethren? To me it sounds like a night of primetime television.

These are “perilous times.” We battle literally for the souls of men. The enemy is unforgiving and relentless. He is taking eternal prisoners at an alarming rate. And he shows no sign of letting up.

While we are profoundly grateful for the many members of the Church who are doing great things in the battle for truth and right, I must honestly tell you it still is not enough. We need much more help. And so, as the people of Ammon looked to their sons for reinforcement in the war against the Lamanites, we look to you, my young brethren of the Aaronic Priesthood. We need you. Like Helaman’s 2,000 stripling warriors, you also are the spirit sons of God, and you can be endowed with power to build up and defend His kingdom. We need you to make sacred covenants, just as they did. We need you to be meticulously obedient and faithful, just as they were.

What we need now is the greatest generation of missionaries in the history of the Church. We need worthy, qualified, spiritually energized missionaries who, like Helaman’s 2,000 stripling warriors, are “exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity” and who are “true at all times in whatsoever thing they [are] entrusted” (Alma 53:20).

Listen to those words, my young brethren: valiant, courage, strength, active, true. We don’t need spiritually weak and semi committed young men. We don’t need you to just fill a position; we need your whole heart and soul. We need valiant, thinking, passionate missionaries who know how to listen to and respond to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit. This isn’t a time for spiritual weaklings. We cannot send you on a mission to be reactivated, reformed, or to receive a testimony. We just don’t have time for that. We need you to be filled with “faith, hope, charity, and love, with an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 4:5).

M. Russell Ballard, CR, Oct. 2002, 51-52.

39 May we be convinced that Jesus is the Christ. Choose to follow Him, be changed for Him, captained by Him, consumed in Him and born again.
President Hinckley