

# NEW ZEALAND LOCAL PAGES

## AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

### We without Them Cannot Be Made Perfect

By Elder Adolf J. Johansson  
Area Seventy



Elder Adolf J.  
Johansson

As my family accepted the invitation from our Area Presidency to complete “My Family 15 in 15” and take a name to the temple, I personally witnessed and felt the love my ancestors have for one another in the spirit world.

Since moving to Fiji from New Zealand, I have made connections to living relatives in Sweden, who gave me five generations of family names on my father’s side. As we prepared our ancestors for temple ordinances, I could feel the joy of husbands and wives looking forward to their eternal union. I could feel the anticipation of kindred spirits

preparing for their sealing in the Suva Fiji Temple.

I did not realise the reality of being separated as husband and wife after death until I knelt with my wife in the Suva Fiji Temple on behalf of those who have gone beyond the veil.

As my wife and I participated in the sacred sealing ordinance, I saw in my mind the couple embracing each other for the first time after their departure from this mortal life, as husband and wife. I could feel that their longing for one other was now over. Tears filled my eyes as I realised how much this couple had missed each

other while waiting to be married for eternity. In the spirit world, only those who are married by the laws and ordinances of the holy temple can continue the marriage relationship. “Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage.”<sup>1</sup>

We sometimes don’t appreciate the urgency of temple and family history work until we catch a glimpse into the lives of those in the spirit world. There are husbands and wives, parents and children waiting and longing for the promised day of eternal union through temple ordinances.

*Our ancestors are praying for us to take their names to the temple and fulfil our promised obligations in the work of salvation on their behalf.*



The scriptures testify of our duty and obligation to one another in the great latter-day work of temples: “For we without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect.”<sup>2</sup>

There are also those of our ancestors who are repenting and exercising exceeding great faith in the Atonement of Jesus Christ but cannot progress until the ordinances of the temple are complete. The promise of redemption is assured to all who will obey the ordinances of the temple. “The dead who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God.”<sup>3</sup>

Our ancestors are praying for us to take their names to the temple and fulfil our promised obligations in the work of salvation on their behalf.

Our ancestors are waiting, longing, hoping, and praying for you and me to relieve them from their suffering through the sanctifying ordinances of the holy temple.

President Thomas S. Monson shared his gratitude for the blessings of the temple in the April 2015 general conference:

“The blessings of the temple are priceless. One for which I am grateful every day of my life is that which my beloved wife, Frances, and I received as we knelt at a sacred altar and made covenants binding us together for all eternity. There is no blessing more precious to me than the peace and comfort

I receive from the knowledge I have that she and I will be together again.”<sup>4</sup>

I testify of the sealing powers that bind husband and wife, parents and children for time and eternity. These sealing powers and priesthood keys are held by the living prophets and apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I witness that marriage and family relationships will continue as we obey the ordinances of the house

of God. May we find our ancestors, take their names to the temple, and teach others to do likewise. This is the great latter-day work of temples, and the Lord is hastening His work on both sides of the veil, I humbly testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

#### NOTES

1. Doctrine and Covenants 132:16.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 128:18.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 138:58.
4. Thomas S. Monson, “Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign*, May 2015, 93.

#### LOCAL PAGES

## Otara Community Demonstrates How to “Love Thy Neighbour”

“Love Thy Neighbour” was the theme of a weekend of community outreach activities in the Auckland New Zealand Otara Stake at the end of 2016.

The Otara congregations partnered with other community groups to plan and carry out several service projects and host a celebratory awards night.

The projects included food donations from the members of the Church and community that were distributed in cooperation with the Otara Citizens Advice Bureau to 19 needy families and pensioners; Christmas gifts donated in cooperation with the Refugees as Survivors (RASNZ) to children at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre;

and parcels of donated goods delivered to the Manurewa Marae for the Homeless and to the Rawiri Community Centre.

Lin Kaiou of the Otara Citizens Advice Bureau said, “The families were most grateful that someone cares. One man has serious health issues, and a lot of his income is spent on the cost of medical care. He was very grateful. Another family struggles with all sorts of social issues, and Mum is doing her very best to advance her education and relieve the stress on her family. The families that shared in the remainder of the food greatly appreciated what was provided and, as with the others,



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*Otara Papatoetoe Youth Council members with the Honourable Mayor of Auckland, Mr. Phil Goff*

have felt relief from the worries of the day through the food shared with them.”

In addition to the service projects, the Otara Latter-day Saints hosted an awards night to recognize local individuals for their service to those in need. The Otara Papatoetoe Chair, Lotu Fuli, and Fa’anana Efeso Collins were distinguished guests attending that evening.

Karl Tustin-Rex was the master of ceremonies for the evening. Victoria Taupau, the Church’s director of public affairs in Otara and one of the event organizers, introduced the award recipients, and Sione Pulu, president of the Otara stake, presented the awards.

The Church Boiiz, Le Zionite Band, and a group of youth provided several musical numbers for the event.

The recipients of the service awards were Jenny Salesa, Manuaku East MP; Fa’anana Efeso Collins, Manukau Ward, Auckland Council; Nadeen Papali’I, Tangaroa College teacher; Lin Kaiou, Otara Citizens Advice Bureau manager; Fatumata Bah, Sierra Leone refugee, Otara Papatoetoe Youth Council, and Westpac Finalist in Women of Influence; and Denise and Steve Barrett, Otara family.

Each of the award recipients was recognized for his or her outstanding and exemplary service. Salesa was recognised for her service to the community; Collins for his service to youth. Papali'I was recognised for her service in teaching, and Kaiou for her service in supporting vulnerable families. Bah, a Sierra Leone refugee, was recognised for her service in speaking up as a refugee survivor and youth advocate. The Barretts were chosen for helping refugees from Bangladesh, the Shamsul family, settle in Auckland.

The Otago Papatoetoe Youth Council (TOP Squad) were introduced as the new faces of their Local Youth Board. They are Sheralee Patea, public affairs youth council, and Anastasia Matavao, public affairs media specialist, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Fatumata Bah, Auckland University of Technology; Thicityree Gasu and Alexandra Gasu, Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate; Ammon Pulu, Otahuhu College; and Kiu Va, Tangaroa College. Kiu Va is the Chair of TOPs and received a scholarship to study pre-med at Otago University.

The council members also attended the inauguration on the 31st of October for the swearing in of the new Otago Papatoetoe Local Board, where they were introduced to their community leaders and the Honourable Mayor of Auckland, Mr. Phil Goff. ■

## Kiwi Youth Encouraged to Record Elderly Relatives' Visual and Oral Histories

At a recent gathering in Porirua, New Zealand, historian Rangi Parker encouraged young people to talk with elderly family members about their lives and record what they say.

"You have phones with video cameras. You can do a great work to preserve your family's history," Mrs. Parker said.

For the last 26 years—via artefacts, photographs, films, videos, journals and oral histories—Rangi Parker has collected family and New Zealand

stories as far back as the 1800s.

In their retirement years, she and husband Vic Parker are full-time missionaries preparing for the opening of the Pacific Church History Centre in Temple View, Hamilton, in 2017.

Her desire to search for photographs and stories began after she and her family moved to Australia. When she returned home to Porirua to visit, she says there was always someone missing.

"One or more family members had passed away, and there was little photographic memory of their lives





**Front row, left to right: Lillian Nicholls, Elder Victor Parker, Sister Rangi Parker. Middle row: Haidee Roberts, stake president Paul Roberts, Jane Edwards, Myra Wineera. Back row: Nelson Solomon.**

## Am I Good Enough?

By Karina Burt

At some point most of us have questioned whether we are good enough. I can think of many times in my life when I have. A few months ago, my boss resigned unexpectedly. While the company was recruiting for a replacement, I was asked to cover her role on the executive team as well as my own. The new role was one that I felt I was still a few years away from achieving. I didn't feel I was good enough, and I was not convinced I would make it through.

Another executive team member pulled me aside one day, and I voiced my doubts. I am a single mum, already struggling to fit in work and kids. My life consists of running from one thing to another, always late, always tired. But I make it work because I have to. I told him I didn't want this; I had not asked for this. How could I possibly be more, when I already felt pushed beyond my limits?

His answer made me pause and think. He said opportunities don't come on a silver platter with a nicely tied bow. They are usually a big mess that you need to sort through and make into an opportunity. He encouraged me, saying I was already doing it, that I could succeed. He promised

I would look back at the end and see how much I had grown.

Those four months were tough. I was pushed beyond my limits. I worked till midnight most nights. My children and I sacrificed much but gained a lot.

In a recent conference talk, Elder J. Devn Cornish reminded us we must stop comparing ourselves to others. He said: "We torture ourselves needlessly by competing and comparing. We falsely judge our self-worth by the *things* we do or don't have and by the *opinions of others*. If we must compare, let us compare how we were in the past to how we are today—and even to how we want to be in the future. The only opinion of us that matters is what our Heavenly Father thinks of us." He encouraged us to sincerely ask Heavenly Father what He thinks of us. "He will love and correct but never discourage us; that is Satan's trick."<sup>1</sup>

I thought about the scriptures and examples of people doubting they were good enough. I can only imagine how Nephi felt, being asked to build a ship to cross a great sea, or what ran through Ether's head when he needed to move a bureaucratic mountain, or how Moses felt when trapped between the Egyptians and a great body of water, needing to provide a way to save his people. Would I have doubted whether I was good enough in those situations?

because at the time they did not have the technology that others had."

But many of her family had converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, so she turned for stories and photos to Mormon missionaries from the United States who had lived in New Zealand.

Her search for visual, written, and oral histories included trips to America.

"The past slips away forever when our loved ones die, if they or we don't take the opportunity to document the stories of their rich lives," said Tania Torea, who lives in Porirua and is the director of public affairs for the Church from Hastings to Invercargill.

"It doesn't have to be that way. It takes little effort to record their memories, which will be cherished by family forever." ■

Amulek was another who may have questioned if he was good enough. He admitted to seeing many of the mysteries of God but had hardened his heart and continued rebelling against God.

After numerous attempts to reach Amulek, the Lord sent an angel who appeared to Amulek as he was traveling. The angel instructed him to return to his house and to feed a prophet of the Lord, who had been hungering for many days.

Amulek decided to be obedient. As he returned, he met Alma, took him home, and fed him. Alma stayed with Amulek for a while, during which time the people became even more wicked.

Alma commanded the people of Ammonihah to repent, but they would not believe in his words. Amulek told his story, providing a second witness to the things which the Lord had instructed them to teach. Amulek was questioned by lawyers and judges who tried to entrap him with his words. During his response, his words were so strong and plain that the people were offended and accused him of breaking their law. One particularly cunning lawyer, Zeezrom, began to believe Alma and Amulek. However, most of the people sought their destruction.

The wives and children of those who did believe were cast into a fire. Alma and Amulek were taken to watch. “And when Amulek saw the pains of the women and children who were consuming in the fire, . . . he

*We don't have to “earn” or “deserve” our salvation. We just need to consistently work to be on God's side.*

said unto Alma: How can we witness this awful scene? Therefore let us stretch forth our hands, and exercise the power of God which is in us, and save them from the flames.

“But Alma said unto him: The Spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand. . . .

“Now Amulek said unto Alma: Behold, perhaps they will burn us also.”<sup>2</sup>

I wonder what was going through Amulek's head at this point. Did he really think this was what the Lord had intended? Or did he think that he had failed, that he was not good enough?

Five years ago, I found myself alone with a baby, a toddler, and bills to pay. I had to make decisions on how I would get through. I cannot compare the atrocity that Alma and Amulek had to witness to my situation, but I, like Amulek, questioned the Lord as to whether I had to endure this and asked why He could not save me from my trials, for they were too hard and painful to bear.

I was strong in the Church. I had a good relationship with Heavenly Father and was obedient. Yet there have been many moments where I have felt that I was not good enough,

that I may not make it, or if I did, I questioned at what cost.

Elder Cornish tells us that we are going to be good enough. As long as we don't rationalize or rebel, and if we really try, repent often, and plead for the grace of Christ, we will “receive the blessings and glory and joy that God desires for each of His precious children.”<sup>3</sup>

The thing that these great men in the scriptures all have in common is that they are examples of what really trying is. They did not give up when it got hard. They did not rebel or rationalize but continued to humble themselves and turn to the Lord, and I am sure they found themselves on their knees repenting of their weaknesses.

The Lord has given me some challenges in my life that I don't want, that I am not grateful for yet. However, instead of focusing on whether I feel good enough, or if I will make it, it helps me to look back to the person I was and compare it to the person I am today.

I feel the constant need to use the Atonement in my life. It is how I receive the strength and assistance to do all that I need to. We don't have to “earn” or “deserve” our salvation. We just need to consistently work to be on God's side. ■

#### NOTES

1. J. Devn Cornish, “Am I Good Enough? Will I Make It?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2016, 33.
2. Alma 14:10–12.
3. J. Devn Cornish, “Am I Good Enough?” 34.

# The Unexpected Things I Learnt from Reading the Book of Mormon

By Catherine Vaughan

In August 2005, President Gordon B. Hinckley challenged the members of the Church to read the Book of Mormon right through, before the end of the year.

For some reason, I missed the initial challenge, so by the time it came to my attention as I sat in a devotional at the end of September, there were only three months left to accomplish the task. I spent the rest of that meeting trying to figure out how many pages I would need to read each day to achieve the goal. I have often struggled with consistent scripture study, so I decided this was my opportunity to get back into it, and if I stuck to almost six pages a day, I would have the whole book completed by the end of the year.

The next day I began to read from 1 Nephi, and each day continued with the assigned reading I had set myself. There was the occasional day that I missed, but I managed to keep up with my schedule. By the beginning of November I was just over a third of the way through and enjoying the peace that I received as I read the sacred words of the prophets.

I looked forward to that brief interlude that I had set aside daily. Then as the month went on, I began to feel an urgency to read more and more, which

often resulted in my completing two or three times the scheduled amount for each day. I became consumed with the words of counsel contained in the Book of Mormon, as I felt the need to study and ponder what I was reading. Soon I was reading my scriptures several times throughout the day, and I realised that I was going to finish much earlier than originally anticipated.

On Thursday 24th November I triumphantly finished reading Moroni, feeling pleased with myself that I could cross “Read the Book of Mormon by the end of the year” off my to-do list.

Very early the next morning, as I was preparing for work, I received the type of phone call that no one ever wants to get. My 82-year-old father had been killed in a hit-and-run accident the previous night while crossing the road outside his house.

The next few weeks were hectic with travelling out of town to organise his funeral, meeting with police to be updated on the manhunt for the person who had killed him, and the eventual court case once the offender was caught.

During that time, the scriptures that were so fresh in my memory gave me peace and comfort. And I realised that there are no coincidences in Heavenly



Father’s plan. Following the promptings regarding the feeling of urgency I had felt in studying the last part of the Book of Mormon meant that I was able to finish the assigned reading despite the world falling apart around me—and then draw on the strength of those scriptures to help me through the dark days.

It also emphasised to me that we are not alone. Our Heavenly Father knows the paths that life will take us down and constantly provides opportunities to help us to deal with the challenges we may face.

I thought I was being obedient to the challenge of our prophet and dutifully set about reading the number of pages of scripture required to help me reach that goal. It was a task that I accepted. But there was a deeper purpose at hand. Heavenly Father had provided a way for me to feel closer to the Spirit, a way to be reminded of the eternal nature of His counsel. He had provided a way for me to cope with the chaos around me and gain an understanding of life and death and being together as a family forever. He was reminding me that there is a purpose in all things—and that He is always aware of us individually. ■

## TIP OF THE MONTH

# Problem Solving

By LDS Family Services

"In 1936 the First Presidency outlined a welfare plan for the Church. They said: 'Our primary purpose was to set up . . . a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift and self respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as the ruling principle of the lives of our Church membership.'"<sup>1</sup>

Since the aim of the Church is to help people help themselves, then one essential skill needed to obtain self-reliance is problem solving. This same principle of self-reliance has application in emotional and spiritual things.

The Lord said to Oliver Cowdery, and it has meaning for all of us:

"Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

"But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right."<sup>2</sup>

To study it out in our minds is to problem solve; to problem solve is to initiate; to initiate is to do something intentionally. To do something intentionally bears credence to the admonition of the Lord to act and not be acted upon.<sup>3</sup> To act is to take control, to use the faculties the Lord has blessed us with to govern our lives. President Boyd K. Packer said: "When you have a problem, work it out in your own mind first. Ponder on it and analyze it and meditate on it. Pray about it."<sup>4</sup>

See tools on how to problem solve at:

- [www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/docs/ACF3B8C.pdf](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/docs/ACF3B8C.pdf)
- [www.getselfhelp.co.uk/docs/ProblemSolvingWorksheet.pdf](http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/docs/ProblemSolvingWorksheet.pdf)
- [www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/docs/ACFE1D3.pdf](http://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/docs/ACFE1D3.pdf) ■

### NOTES

1. *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), 6.1.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 9:7–8.
3. See 2 Nephi 2:26.
4. Boyd K. Packer, "Self Reliance" (Brigham Young University fireside, Mar. 2, 1975), 8, [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu).

