

## Raising Latter-day Stripling WARRIORS in the Latter-day WAR YEARS!

Richard K. Robbins

### **\* *The Book of Mormon Was Written for Our Day:***

(Mormon 8:34-35; 9:30)

President Ezra Taft Benson: “The Book of Mormon was written for us today . . . God, who knows the end from the beginning, told [Mormon] what to include in his abridgment that *we would need for our day*” (CR, April 1975, p. 94). Because the Book of Mormon prophets “saw our day and chose those things which would be of greatest worth to us, is not that how we should study the Book of Mormon? We should constantly ask ourselves, ‘*Why did the Lord inspire Mormon (or Moroni or Alma) to include that in his record? What lesson can I learn from that to help me live in this day and age?*’” (Conference Report, October 1986, p. 5). “In the Book of Mormon we *find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming* . . . The record of the Nephite history just prior to the Savior's visit *reveals many parallels to our own day as we anticipate the Savior's second coming*” (CR, October 1986, p. 5; and CR, April 1987, p. 3).

### **\**The Great Latter-day War:***

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “There is another war that has gone on since before the world was created and which is likely to continue for a long time . . . That war, so bitter, so intense, has gone on and . . . has never ceased. It is the war between truth and error, between agency and compulsion, between the followers of Christ and those who have denied Him . . . [This war] *is waged across the world in our own lives . . . day in and day out... in our homes, in our work, in our school associations*; it is waged over questions of love and respect, of loyalty and fidelity, of obedience and integrity [and] we are all involved in it . . . a great eternal struggle that concerns the very souls of the sons and daughters of God” (CR, October 1986, p. 57).

### **\* *The Armor of God Can Protect Us in Our Daily Battles with Unrighteousness:*** (Alma 43:19-22; D&C 27:15-18)

President Boyd K. Packer: “[The] shield of faith is not produced in a factory but at home. . . . Our Father's plan requires that, like the generation of life itself, *the shield of faith is to be made and fitted in the family*. No two can be exactly alike. Each must be handcrafted to individual specifications. The plan designed by the Father contemplates that man and woman, husband and wife, working together, fit each child individually with a shield of faith made to buckle on so firmly that it can neither be pulled off nor penetrated by those fiery darts. It takes the steady strength of a father to hammer out the metal of it and the tender hands of a mother to polish and fit it on. Sometimes one parent is left to do it alone. It is difficult, but it can be done. In the Church we can teach about the materials from which a shield of faith is made: reverence, courage, chastity, repentance, forgiveness, compassion. In church we can learn how to assemble and fit them together. But *the actual making of and fitting on of the shield of faith belongs in the family circle*. Otherwise it may loosen and come off in a crisis” (CR, April 1995, p. 8).

### **\* *Following the Counsel of Living Prophets Provides Additional Protection:*** (Alma 43:23-24; D&C 21:4-7)

Elder Neal A. Maxwell: “Now we are entering times wherein there will be for all of us as church members . . . some special challenges which will require of us that we follow the Brethren. *All the easy things that the Church has had to do have been done*. From now on, it's high adventure. And followership is going to be tested in some interesting ways” (BYU/CES Symposium, August 16–18, 1979, p. 12).

President Spencer W. Kimball: “If we will live the gospel and follow the counsel of the leaders of the church, we will be blessed to *avoid many of the problems that plague the world*” (CR, April 1980, p. 128).

### **\* *The Lord Empowers and Protects Those Who Make and Keep Sacred Covenants.*** (Alma 46:13-23)

Elder M. Russell Ballard: “I know that if you, the youth of the Church, will have the courage to *keep your covenants* and follow the counsel of your parents and Church leaders, you will have the desire and the strength to live worthy lives. You then will be prepared for your responsibilities in your homes, in the Church, and in your communities and will be prepared to return to your Heavenly Father” (CR, April 1993, p.7).

President Ezra Taft Benson: “Be faithful to the Church. Be strong in your callings. *Keep your covenants* and God will bless you *and preserve you* in the trying days ahead” (CR, April 1980, p. 47).

Elder Boyd K. Packer: “*Keep your covenants* and you will be safe. Break them and you will not” (CR, October 1990, p. 107).

### **\* *Our Commitment is Strengthened as We Follow Appropriate Role-Models in Our Lives.*** (Alma 48:11-17)

\* *The Lord Will Fortify and Strengthen Us as We Fortify Our Homes and Strengthen Our Weaknesses.* (Alma 49:1-14)

President Spencer W. Kimball: “We need continually to *fortify our homes and families and defend them against the onslaught of evils . . .* We need to constantly guard against immorality, pornography, and sexual permissiveness that would destroy the purity of the family . . . Such evils are very real and very threatening! . . . Perhaps I sound like an alarmist. If so, it is because *I am alarmed. I am greatly concerned, and so are my Brethren in the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles . . .* If we could but suggest you go home and lock these evils out by closing and bolting the windows and locking the doors of your homes securely, it would be a simple matter. However, such security would be ineffective against the evils of which we speak. They come into our homes on [invisible] waves by radio and the television screen . . . We track them into the home from the school . . . the playground . . . the theater, the office, and the marketplace . . . What must we do? We must be constantly alert to their evil presence in our homes and destroy them as we would the germs and filth of disease. We must hunt them from the closets of our minds, freeing ourselves of such worldliness, quenching the embers of wickedness before they become destructive flames. How do we do this? If we would escape those deadly thrusts of the evil one and keep our homes and families free *and solidly fortified against all destructive influences* so rampant about us, we must have the help of the very founder and organizer of this family plan—the Creator himself. There is only one sure way and that is through the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and being obedient to its profound and inspired teachings. *Surely we must be made to realize that the purchase price of a family hearth free of such evil influences is the keeping of the commandments of God*” (CR, April 1979, p. 5).

President Harold B. Lee: “*The most important of all the commandments of God is that one that you are having the most difficulty keeping today.* If it is one of dishonesty, if it is one of unchastity . . . today is the day for you to work on that until you have been able to *conquer that weakness . . .* Then you start on the next one that is most difficult for you to keep” (Church News, 5 May 1973, p. 3).

President Heber J. Grant: “*I have found nothing in the battle of life that has been of more value to me than to perform the duty of today to the best of my ability...*I do not believe that any man lives up to his ideals, but if we are striving, if we are working, if we are trying, to the best of our ability, to improve day by day, then we are in the line of our duty. If we are seeking to remedy our own defects, if we are so living that we can ask God for light, for knowledge, for intelligence, and above all, for His Spirit, *that we may overcome our weaknesses,* then, I can tell you, *we are in the straight and narrow path that leads to life eternal. Then we need have no fear*” (Gospel Standards, Deseret Book Company, p.184).

President Spencer W. Kimball: “When Satan is bound in a single home—when Satan is bound in a single life—the Millennium has already begun in that home, in that life” (Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, p. 172).

\* *We must Teach/Train Our Children to Become Valiant and Obedient Latter-day Stripling Warriors.* (Alma 53-56)

Elder Neal A. Maxwell: “When the real history of mankind is fully disclosed, will it feature the echoes of gunfire or the shaping sound of lullabies? . . . 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 . . . The women of God know this. No wonder the men of God support and sustain you sisters in your unique roles, for the act of deserting home in order to shape society is like thoughtlessly removing crucial fingers from an imperiled dike in order to teach people to swim.” (CR, April 1978, p. 14).

F. M. Bareham: “A century ago [in 1809] men were following with bated breath the march of Napoleon and waiting with feverish impatience for news of the wars. And all the while in their homes babies were being born. *But who could think about babies? Everybody was thinking about battles.* In one year between Trafalgar and Waterloo there stole into the world a host of heroes: Gladstone was born in Liverpool; Tennyson at the Somersby Rectory; and Oliver Wendell Holmes in Massachusetts. Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky, and music was enriched by the advent of Felix Mendelssohn in Hamburg. But nobody thought of babies, everybody was thinking of battles. Yet which of the battles of 1809 mattered more than the babies of 1809? *We fancy God can manage His world only with great battalions, when all the time he is doing it with beautiful babies. When a wrong wants righting, or a truth wants preaching, or a continent wants discovering, God sends a baby into the world to do it*” (In Spencer W. Kimball, Faith Precedes the Miracle, p. 323-324.)