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"I, Johnny, Parent-to-be"

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Abstract: This article discusses how, although being born of “goodly parents” (1 Nephi 1:1) is an ideal situation, not all children have this opportunity and privilege. However, everyone may become “goodly parents” to their own children in ways that the Book of Mormon teaches.



A Book of Mormon Lesson for Life

“I, Johnny, Parent-to-be . . .”

BY PRESIDENT MARION D. HANKS
OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF THE SEVENTY

■ Suppose you were going to teach a lesson or give a talk to a group of young Latter-day Saints on the theme of the very first words in the Book of Mormon: “I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents. . . .” (1 Nephi 1:1.) This wouldn’t be very difficult, would it? After all, there could scarcely be a more universally accepted fact—it is a marvelous advantage to be born to good parents and into a home where the child is wanted and will be loved and trained and taught and given good example.

But suppose you were well acquainted with the group you were to teach and knew that among them were at least several young people to whom this lesson, taught in the usual way, would be a heartbreak and a cause of uneasiness and embarrassment? Here is John whose parents have provided an example of a very unexemplary home, who have separated or divorced after bitterness and disloyalty and tragic constant controversy. John is fighting his way to a good life, anxious and determined to make something of himself and to prepare for a happy home of his own. There sits Phyllis whose folks have chosen a course directly opposite from that which they once followed and which she wants to live. Across the room is Robert who loves his dad but is confused because Dad thinks hunting and fishing and ball games, and maybe tobacco and alcohol, are more important than his priesthood opportunities.

How will you teach your lesson with these youngsters in the group?

You will want to face the facts of your situation squarely as you begin, acknowledging that while each of us understands that the enjoyment of a desirable heritage is a great blessing, many parents and homes are not what they ought to be. Frequently and commendably, devoted, courageous young people exert a favorable influence on parents and homes, but it is often true that there is discouragingly little that can

be done to change parents by sons or daughters who themselves are resolutely trying to improve upon their heritage.

What can and should be taught is that though we may not be in a position to do much about improving our parents, *there is everything we can do about deciding what kind of parents our own children will have!* From the great scriptural affirmation “I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents . . .” we can teach with effective emphasis and sincerity, “I, John, desiring earnestly one day to become a goodly parent. . . .”

Someone has said, “It is desirable to be well descended, but the glory belongs to our ancestors.”

To *become* a goodly parent is a challenge and objective fit for the strongest and most determined young person, and the achieving of this goal lies squarely on the shoulders of the individual. One can become what he sincerely desires and wills to be.

There is, of course, much more that must be considered and said while one teaches such a lesson. There is the responsibility of children to parents, of parents to their children, and of prospective parents to their future children, to explore and ponder.

CHILDREN TO THEIR PARENTS

To Moses on the mount (Exodus 20:12) the Lord gave an eternally applicable commandment: “*Honour thy father and thy mother. . . .*” In Proverbs 6:20 it is written: “*My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother.*” Many young persons have the confusing and difficult problem of learning to differentiate between the honor due their parents because they are their parents and have blessed them with the chance to live, and the wrong choices those parents have made and the bad example they have set. No child is bound to follow a parent into degradation or dereliction or untruth, but every child is commanded of (Continued on page 113)

report is supposed to have been said about such happenings.

If other material is to be used, let it be carefully evaluated and used only if it stands the test of historical validity. It is better not to teach something, if we are in doubt about its authenticity, than to run the risk of someone in later years having to "unlearn" the errors we taught.

I, Johnny, Parent-to-be

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God to honor his father and mother. Would not any parent be honored to have his child improve upon his own example and contribution?

Children are responsible for assisting in the temporal welfare of their parents if help is needed. Paul wrote to Timothy, ". . . if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (I Timothy 5:8.) The Book of Mormon provides one of the most sobering and stirring lessons of child-to-parent responsibility in Alma's poignant rebuke to his son Corianton, who had been guilty of immoral conduct in a city where Alma went to teach the gospel: ". . . when they saw your conduct they would not believe in my words." (Alma 39:11.)

PARENTS TO CHILDREN

What does a parent owe a child? King Benjamin taught (Mosiah 4:11-16) that a parent owes guidance, leadership, discipline, and love. Jacob emphasized the importance of example (Jacob 2:35; 3:10), and Mormon of humility and repentance. (Moroni 8:10.)

PROSPECTIVE PARENTS TO FUTURE CHILDREN

The young have in them *now* the seeds of the future. Under normal circumstances and expectations there will one day be those who call them "father" or "mother," and who will be greatly influenced by the kind of mother or father they are. As prospective parents they need to learn the wondrous importance of good heritage, but they can be taught this from the scriptures in a way that will be stimulating and inspiring and that will give them the challenge and incentive to become "goodly parents."

Gold Ribbon Winner at Inter-State Fair gives you her recipe for

"Cinnamon Kucken"

"I read about the contest in our newspaper . . . and it certainly was good news for me!" says Mrs. David Hanna of Coffeyville, Kansas, winner of the Gold Ribbon for yeast baking at the Inter-State Fair. "Now I hope you'll try my winning recipe. But be sure to use Fleischmann's Active Dry Yeast. It's so fast rising and easy to use your baking's *bound* to turn out well."



"CINNAMON KUCKEN"

½ cup milk
¼ cup sugar
½ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons shortening
1 package Fleischmann's Active Dry Yeast

½ cup very warm water
1 egg, beaten
3½ cups sifted flour
¼ cup Fleischmann's Margarine, melted
¾ cup sugar
1 tablespoon cinnamon

Scald milk, add ¼ cup sugar, salt and shortening; cool to lukewarm. Dissolve yeast in very warm water. Add milk mixture and beaten eggs. Gradually beat in enough flour to make soft dough. Knead lightly, about 10 min. Place in greased bowl. Brush top with soft shortening. Cover; let rise in warm place, free from draft, until double in bulk, about 1 hour. When light, punch down; divide into 2 portions. Roll each into 8 x 5-inch rectangle; cut into strips 1 x 8 inches. Shape each strip by hand to form rope. Pinch ends together to form one long rope. Coil into well-greased

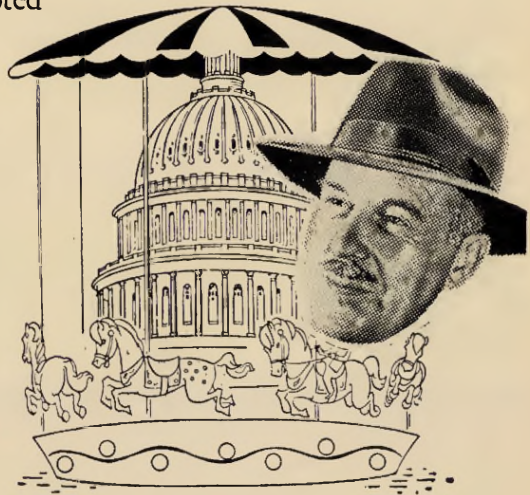
8- or 9-inch layer cake pan, turning to twist, starting at outside and coiling toward center of pan. Brush with melted margarine. Sprinkle with sugar-cinnamon mix. Cover; let rise in warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Bake at 375°F. (mod.) for 25 minutes. Makes 2 cakes.



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