

# AFRICA SOUTHEAST LOCAL PAGES

## AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE



## What Does the Lord Expect of Men Regarding Fatherhood?

By Elder Stanley G. Ellis  
Africa Southeast Area Presidency

“The Family: A Proclamation to the World” answers that question in five steps:

for our marriage sealing so that our families can “be united eternally.”



### 1. Become a father.

The Lord expects men to marry. We are taught “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God” and “is essential to His eternal plan.” Once married, the man and woman should have a family. “God’s commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force,” and “the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.” We are reminded that we all “accepted His plan,” which enables us to eventually “realize [our] divine destiny as heirs of eternal life.” We are directed to the temple



### 2. Be chaste before marriage and totally faithful to your wife after marriage.

“God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife. . . . Children are entitled . . . to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity.”

### 3. Love and care for your wife; treat her as an equal partner.

You have a “solemn responsibility” to love and care for your wife. You are to help her and



allow her to help you, as “equal partners.”



### 4. Raise your children properly.

Raising your children involves a “sacred duty:”

1. “To rear [your] children in love and righteousness.”
2. “To provide for their physical and spiritual needs.”
3. “To teach them to love and serve one another.”
4. “To observe the commandments of God.”
5. “To be law-abiding citizens wherever [you] live.”

You will “be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations” to your wife and children.



### 5. Preside, provide, and protect.

In the Lord’s plan, “Fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness.” They are “responsible to provide the necessities of life,” and to be careful to protect their families.

Having been a father now for 44 years, I know the Lord is serious about this eternal calling He has given us. These are His children as well as ours. He cherishes them and has entrusted them to

us. It is a big and sometimes scary responsibility. But it is worth it! It is a lot of work and can generate some heartache. But it is worth it! The joy from marriage and family is the best there is.

As President Boyd K. Packer, president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, often reminds us, of all God’s titles, He has chosen to be called “Father” (see “The Witness,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 95). In this responsibility especially, He never leaves us alone. The Lord helps us, guides us, comforts us, teaches us, warns us, and forgives us. God expects our very best efforts as husbands and fathers, and our very best is good enough. ■

## LOCAL PRIESTHOOD LEADERS

# Reaching the Highest Peak

By Elder Jacques A. Van Reenen

On August 25th of this year, I climbed the highest mountain in Africa, Mount Kilimanjaro. I felt on top of the world, but at the same time, I felt very small and insignificant. Reaching the summit was the

result of strenuous hiking and climbing over six days. I have never experienced anything like it, and during the climb, I learned a great deal about life and about myself. We are what we think; we achieve or fail



*Jacques A. Van Reenen, Africa Southeast Area Seventy*

according to our goals or lack of them. Although I had decided long before that I would reach the summit of the highest free-standing mountain in the world, it still required my full energy, my undivided focus, and my complete discipline. As I reflected on that experience, I drew many parallels to the gospel and to life in general (see, for example, Philippians 4:13).

On the expedition we had wonderful guides who led us, encouraged us, and warned us of danger. We also had porters who, without complaint, carried everything we could not carry ourselves. In the Church, sometimes we forget how precious our leaders are—leaders who know the way, who know the

dangers ahead, and who encourage us along the way. Sometimes these leaders carry our burdens with us, and they do so without complaint.

At times our guides would encourage us to increase our pace, but at higher altitudes they would remind us to slow down our pace in order to conserve energy and not exhaust ourselves. The air was so thin at high altitudes that breathing normally was difficult. In life, as we reach new heights in spiritual growth and strive to be better, we are exposed to greater hardships and fierce elements.

However, our Heavenly Father wants us to climb higher and higher in our journey called life. He wants us to be a little better every day, a little more perfect every year. He has blessed us with everything we need to return to the highest peak in our existence, eternal glory with Him. He wants us to choose the right. We do not have to undergo elaborate physical endurance tests, but we can and must stay the course of life's journey along the rocky and sometimes mountainous terrain of hardships, keeping the goals and covenants we



*Elder  
Van Reenen  
at the top*

have made to reach the highest peak in the eternal realms (see D&C 58:27–30).

On Kilimanjaro I had varied experiences ranging from elation to downright disappointment. I formed part of a team of six: four men and two women. The flight from Johannesburg to Nairobi and then to Kilimanjaro

went well. Spirits were high and there was excitement in the air. On the first day we had to weigh our equipment. Each of us was allowed 12 kg in addition to what we were carrying ourselves. This additional baggage was carried up the mountain by porters and had to be limited, since the porters also



*Elder  
Van Reenen  
with the  
guides.*



**Elder  
Van Reenen  
with his pack**

had other items to carry. Panic set in as each of us weighed our equipment and realized that we had brought too much baggage. Most of the items we had to get rid of were not really necessary, though. They were simply creature comforts and not essential at all. As we rid ourselves of our excess baggage, we were reassured by our guides that we would be better off without it over the next seven days. We would be lighter and better able to endure our expedition.

As I reflected on this experience, I realized that in life we carry excess baggage too, perhaps as painful experiences and sufferings, or even as unresolved sin. When we make the decision to embrace the Atonement of Jesus Christ, repent and rid ourselves of our heavy burdens, we are better able to soar to greater heights and grow closer to our Heavenly Father (see Matthew 11:28–30).

On the first day of climbing, we quickly learned that we should not exceed the pace set by our guides (see Mosiah 4:27), because by that afternoon there were already some members of other teams on the mountain suffering from altitude sickness and overexertion. There were also those who became fearful because they were not well prepared, and they abandoned the climb even though we were only just above 2.8 km. In the scriptures, we are reminded that if we are prepared, we shall not fear (see D&C 38:30).

Over the next six days, our endurance, strength, and determination were tested to the limit. We experienced severe cold and physical challenges, but most of all we had to fight

the invisible. Our biggest challenges lay in our minds: the will to succeed or succumb. Our unseen enemies were poor discipline, bad judgement, and an unfocused mind. Our thoughts were the catalysts for our actions, just as they are during our lives here on earth (see D&C 88:67).

As we hiked higher up the mountain, it became clear that this was no minor feat. Climbing required hard work, dedication, discipline, unity, and a mighty resolve. On the final day before we reached the summit, we were at an altitude of 4.7 km. It was on my way to this final camp, called Barafu, that I witnessed the epitome of dedication and determination. I met a father and his son who were climbing Kilimanjaro together. This would not seem extraordinary under normal circumstances, but the young boy, age 17, had Down syndrome. I was uplifted as I saw him make his way to Barafu Camp. I later learned that he had not been able to reach the summit, but he was one of many who came close. I was strengthened by the courage of this young man. Although a disabled physical body may have

handicapped him in this life, he was still determined to set an example to many others, with a bright hope of a better world yet to come (see Ether 12:4).

Just as I needed determination, faith, focus, and courage to climb the highest mountain in Africa, we all need those same attributes to climb the great challenge of mortality. Our Heavenly Father has blessed us with inspired leaders, scriptures, and commandments as guides. He has also given us family, friends, and fellow Saints to help carry our burdens. Additionally, through the gift of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can lighten our load and accomplish our missions. Even with the



*Elder  
Van Reenen  
climbing*

weaknesses we have due to mortality, we can move forward with courage and faith.

Our Heavenly Father yearns for our return. He knows we will climb many great, challenging, spiritual mountains in our lives, but He is there, quietly encouraging us, cheering us on

consistently to reach higher and higher, providing us with constant support from the Savior, from the Holy Ghost, and from our fellow Saints.

I bear testimony of Him, the Son of the living God, the Beginning and the End, even Jesus the Christ. Amen. ■

## LOCAL NEWS

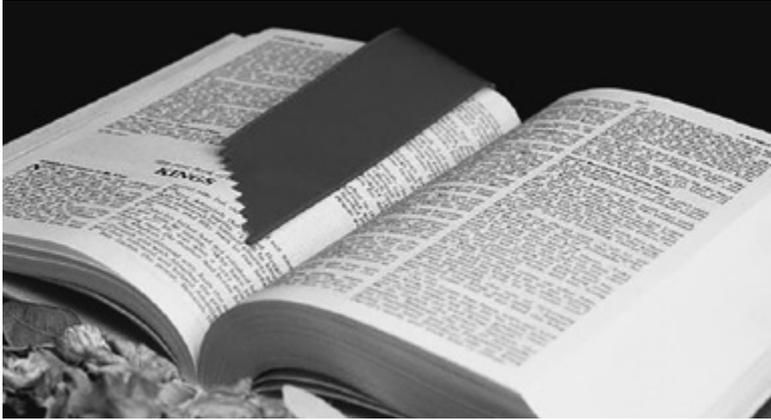
# Searching for the Missing Parts of the Bible

By **Albertina N. Sithole**

**F**requently, people who are most familiar with the Bible easily recognize the teachings of the restored gospel and the truths in the Book of Mormon. These people are familiar with the teachings of Jesus Christ, and they often diligently search for a religion that embraces these teachings and answers the questions which the

Bible seems to leave unanswered.

Sister Albertina Sithole grew up in Ixopo, a small town in the midlands of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Her father was a very busy preacher, but he took the time to teach his children. As Albertina remembers, “Every evening he would sit with us and tell wonderful stories. Sometimes



**Sister Sithole searched for the missing parts of the Bible.**

he would read from the Bible and ask us questions. Then he would go to his room to read the Bible by himself. Without his knowing it, I would follow him and play nearby, not making a noise.

“One evening after watching my father for a long time, I realized that he was not reading. Instead, he was just sitting, looking so sad. I came to him and took his hand gently, just the way he used to take mine. Then I asked if I had made him angry. He smiled at me and said, ‘No, my little one. You did nothing wrong. I am sad because there is

**Albertina N. Sithole**



something I cannot find in the Bible. Something is missing, and I cannot find it.’ Then he took my little hand again and said, ‘You know what, little one? One day you will be the one to find this missing thing from the Bible.’

“I didn’t know what to look for, but every chance I got to be alone in my parents’ room, I’d try to find the missing thing. I didn’t say a word about it to my sisters because I wanted to

find it myself, since my father had said I’d be the one to find it.”

Eventually Albertina gave up her search and forgot about her father’s prediction. It wasn’t until she was a grandmother that she found the missing treasure she had been searching for. She had moved with her daughter and grandchildren to Mayville in 2000, right across the street from Margaret Dlamini, a member of the Church. Albertina recalls, “She told me that she came from Ixopo, and that is where I came from, too. She seemed to be a very good person. I liked her a lot.”

At that time in her life, Albertina spent most of her time reading novels, but because she liked Sister Dlamini, she welcomed her visits. “Sister Margaret came every day to talk to me about this church. She even brought me the booklets and asked me to read them. She said that she would explain anything that I didn’t understand. I had many questions for her, and she gave me good answers. Everything she told me was new, and I liked what she explained. Then one day she told me she was going to give me a book because I liked reading. She said the book was called the Book of Mormon. The next day she brought the book and told me about it. She told me to read the book and pray to God to understand it.

“I told myself that I’d just look at the book for a second or two and then go back to my novel. It was about two o’clock when Margaret left, but the seconds I spent reading the Book of Mormon turned into hours. It got dark, and my supper became cold, but I couldn’t put the book down. I was still reading when the sun came up the next morning. That was the end of reading novels all the time.

“When Sister Margaret gave me the Book of Mormon, I knew that I had found what my father had been searching for—the missing parts of the Bible.”

Sister Sithole was baptized on October 10, 2010, and she discovered she had grandchildren who were already members of the Church. She has experienced miracles as she collects the names of her deceased relatives, especially her parents, and does their temple work. She is sure her father is especially pleased to have found the missing parts of the gospel he had wanted so desperately. ■

*Excerpted by Marnae Wilson*

## And the Rains Came

By E. Dale LeBaron

Julius and Sabina Kasue of Chyulu were two of Kenya’s early converts. They both came from Christian backgrounds and had studied the Bible. In 1981, while living in Nairobi, Julius was introduced to the Church by Dennis Child, a Latter-day Saint working there. Julius frequently read the Book of Mormon and missionary pamphlets and then discussed them with Brother Child. Julius recalls, “It was when I read the Book of Mormon for the second time and then prayed about it that I felt something burning in my heart.” Although Julius had a witness of the truth, he waited four years before being baptized in February 1986. His wife, Sabina, was baptized the following November. Soon after their baptisms, Brother and Sister Kasue left Nairobi and returned to Chyulu, a rural area about 250 km southeast of Nairobi, where they

became the nucleus of a branch. The experience of the Chyulu Saints is representative of the faith found among the new congregations being established throughout Africa.

In order to hold worship services, the members in Chyulu built a small bowery that would accommodate about 40 people. The sides were made from tree branches woven together, and the roof was corrugated tin and palm branches. Each Sunday morning, little children used tree branches to sweep out the building.

Due to the area’s isolation and primitive conditions, special arrangements had to be made for baptisms. A water tank was brought from Nairobi to serve as a baptismal font. It took five hours to pump enough water from a well and haul it six km to the new font. Then ten adults stood inside the font to raise the water level high enough so the candidates could be immersed. In preparation for the first service, 40 people were taught the discussions and interviewed. When they were baptized and confirmed, the branch nearly doubled in membership. By August 1993, there were two

**Early Church  
leaders in  
Chyulu.**





***The Saints in Chyulu prayed for rain.***

branches in Chyulu, with a combined membership of 350.

In 1992 a severe drought brought near-starvation to the Saints in the Chyulu area.

Under the direction

of mission president Larry Brown and Julius Kasue, by then the Chyulu branch president, 3,400 pounds of corn and beans were brought to relieve the suffering Saints. Elder and Sister Ted McNeill, a missionary couple, made the arduous trip from Nairobi to deliver the food.

Elder McNeill recalled, “There were about eight women who came and rolled big lava rocks out from in front of the truck and made a road. I have never seen such hard-working women. I worked construction all my life. I’d like to have a crew like that.”

There was great rejoicing when the truck arrived with its 17 bags of food. President and Sister

Kasue spent the night making porridge and taking servings to the many starving Saints who were too weak to get out of bed. President Kasue visited every family to assess their needs.

To help the Church members prepare for future emergencies, a program was established to raise drought-resistant crops. But even drought-resistant crops require some moisture—and the area had received no rain for nearly two years. On October 21, 1992, 40 members and 60 nonmembers planted a crop and then held a special fast, asking the Lord to bless them with rain. The Church film *The Windows of Heaven* was brought in and shown at one of the few public places with electricity. The audience was clearly touched and continued to pray mightily. In less than a week, the rains came. The crops grew—and so did the faith of the people. There was a bountiful harvest of both. ■

*Excerpted by Marnae Wilson from: E. Dale LeBaron, “Gospel Pioneers in Africa,” Liahona, May 1994, 44–45; “Pioneering in Chyulu, Kenya,” Ensign, Feb. 2001, 30–34.*

***A scene from the Church film, The Windows of Heaven.***

