



By Elder Gary E. Stevenson

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

# What are priesthood keys?

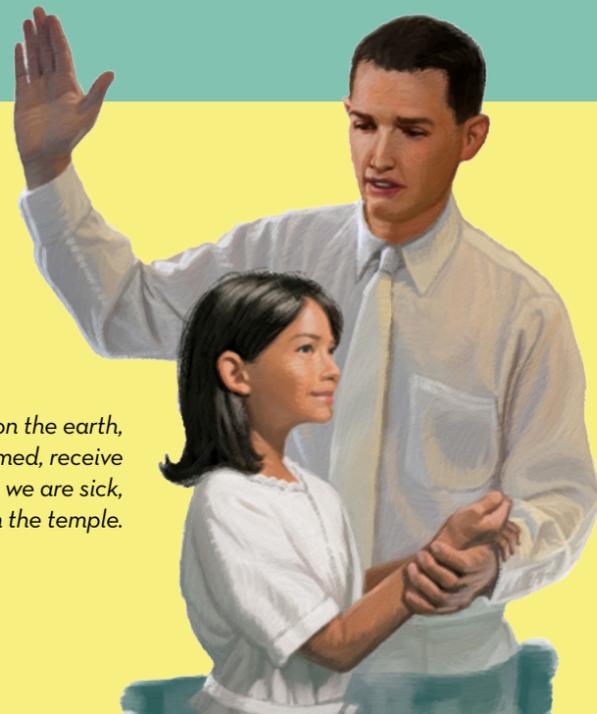
Priesthood keys aren't keys you can touch or hold in your hand, like car keys. A priesthood key is the authority or permission to act in Heavenly Father's name. Priesthood keys let Church leaders direct how the priesthood is used on earth.



The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles direct how the priesthood is used to bless Heavenly Father's children. They delegate, or give, some priesthood keys to bishops and branch presidents.



Jesus Christ has all of the priesthood keys. When the Church was restored, He gave priesthood keys to Joseph Smith to act as His prophet. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles have these keys today.



Because priesthood keys are on the earth, we can be baptized and confirmed, receive a priesthood blessing when we are sick, and be sealed in the temple.

## Locked Out!

It was freezing outside, and the cold air bit the cheeks and noses of the Stevenson family. After a fun day of skiing, they walked through the snow toward their car. They looked forward to getting in the car and warming up with the heater.

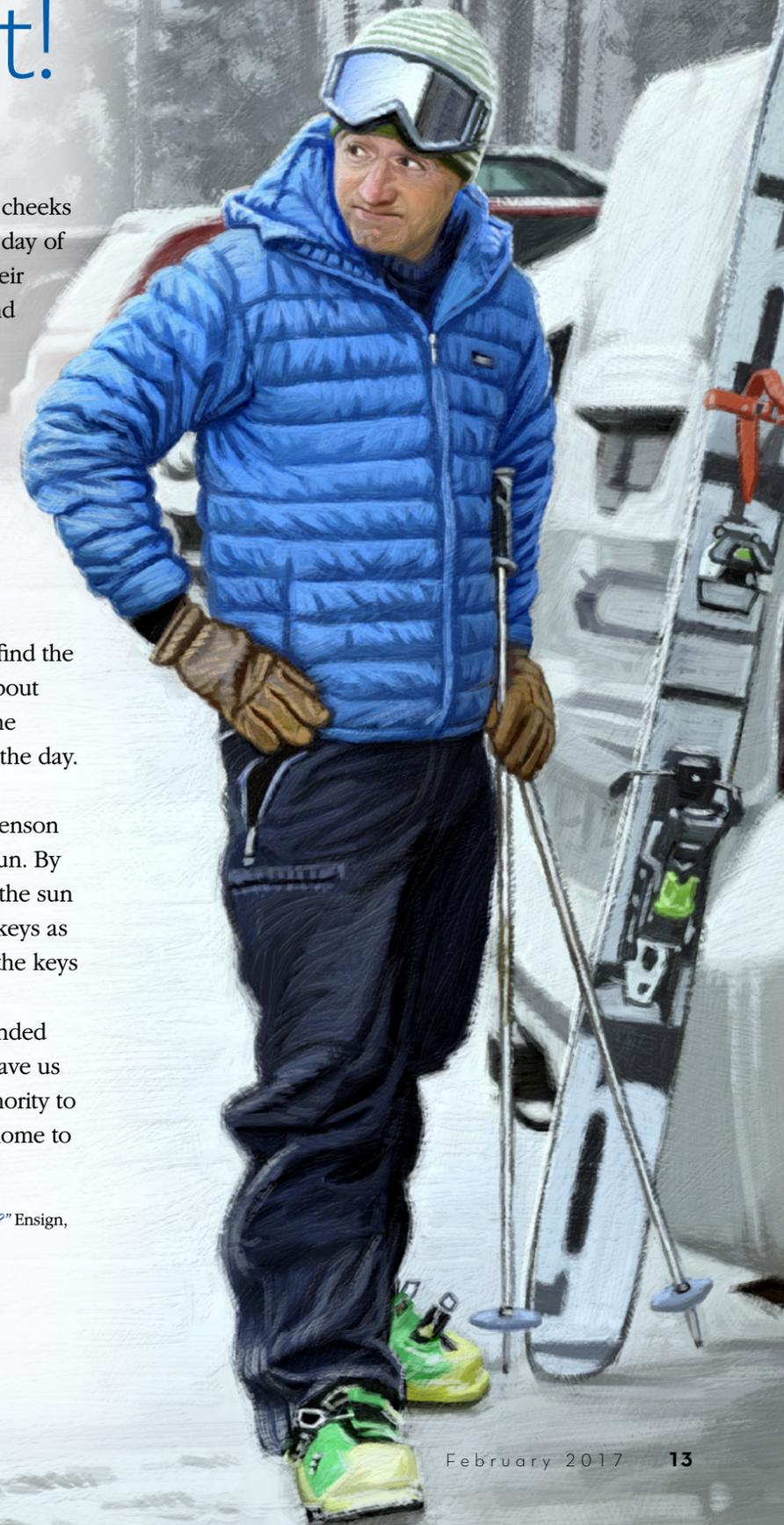
But when Elder Stevenson reached into his pocket, the car keys were gone! *Where are the keys?* he thought. Everyone anxiously waited for him to unlock the car. Without the keys, they were locked out! They couldn't open the door or start the car. They couldn't turn on the heater.

The first thing Elder Stevenson did was say a prayer. He asked Heavenly Father to help them find the car keys. Next he thought as hard as he could about where he might have dropped them. Suddenly he thought of a ski jump he had gone off earlier in the day. Maybe the keys were there in the snow.

Some of the family went back with Elder Stevenson to the top of the ski slope and skied down the run. By the time they got to the bottom of the ski jump, the sun was starting to go down. They searched for the keys as it grew darker. To their amazement, they found the keys just before it got too dark!

Praying and finding the keys to their car reminded Elder Stevenson that Heavenly Father will not leave us without help. He gives priesthood keys and authority to leaders of the Church to help lead us all safely home to Him. ♦

Adapted from "Where Are the Keys and Authority of the Priesthood?" Ensign, May 2016, 29–32.



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