**The Doctrine of Marriage and Parenthood**

- *President Gordon B. Hinckley*: "Never before, at least not in our generation, have the forces of evil been so blatant, so brazen, so aggressive as they are today. Things we dared not speak about in earlier times are now constantly projected into our living rooms. All sensitivity is cast aside as reporters and pundits speak with a disgusting plainness of things that can only stir curiosity and lead to evil. . . . The home is under siege. So many families are being destroyed. . . . Sisters, guard your children. They live in a world of evil. The forces are all about them. ["Walking in the Light of the Lord," Ensign (Nov. 1998), pp.97-100; emphasis added]

- *Robert D. Hales*: "Because of the importance of the family to the eternal plan of happiness, Satan makes a major effort to destroy the sanctity of the family, demean the importance of the role of men and women, encourage moral uncleanliness and violations of the sacred law of chastity, and to discourage parents from placing the bearing and rearing of children as one of their highest priorities." ["The Eternal Family," in Ensign (Nov. 1996), p. 65; emphasis added]

- *Brigham Young*: "The Lord created you and me for the purpose of becoming Gods like Himself; when we have been proved in our present capacity, and been faithful with all things He puts into our possession." [Journal of Discourses, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saint's Book Depot, 1854-86), 3:93; emphasis added]

- *D&C 76:94-95*: "They who dwell in his presence are the church of the Firstborn; and they see as they are seen, and know as they are known, having received of his fulness and of his grace; And he makes them equal in power, and in might, and in dominion."

- *Moses 1:39*: "For behold, this is my work and my glory -- to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."

- *Ezra Taft Benson*: "This life is intended to provide an opportunity to help our Father in Heaven with His great plan, and we do that through honorable parenthood. We cooperate with our Heavenly Father in helping to prepare tabernacles to house spirits of His children. So the matter of marriage, the home, and the family is a vital part of the plan of our Heavenly Father, and by keeping this . . . purpose of life in mind constantly and carrying out these purposes to have a fulness of joy in mortal life, and we prepare ourselves for exaltation in the
celestial kingdom where we will receive a fulness of joy." [The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), pp. 27-28.; emphasis added]

• N. Eldon Tanner: "The whole purpose of the creation of the earth was to provide a dwelling place where the spirit children of God might come and be clothed in mortal bodies and, by keeping their second estate, prepare themselves for salvation and exaltation. The whole purpose of the mission of Jesus Christ was to make possible the immortality and eternal life of man. The whole purpose of mothers and fathers should be to live worthy of this blessing and to assist God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ in their work. No greater honor could be given to [men and] women than to assist in this divine plan, and I wish to say without equivocation that a woman will find greater satisfaction and joy and make a greater contribution to mankind by being a wise and worthy mother raising good children than she could make in any other vocation." [Conference Report, Oct. 1973, 126, or "No Greater Honor: The Woman's Role," in Ensign (Jan. 1974), pp. 8, 10; emphasis added.]

• The Family: A Proclamation to the World: "We, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of his children." ["The Family: A Proclamation to the World," in Ensign (Nov. 1995), p. 102; emphasis added]

• The Family: A Proclamation to the World: "Marriage between man and woman is essential to [God's] eternal plan . . . fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners." ["The Family: A Proclamation to the World," in Ensign (Nov. 1995), p. 102; emphasis added]

• First Presidency Message (Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., David O. McKay)
In the October, 1942 General Conference, J. Reuben Clark, Jr. read a message from the First Presidency to the general Church membership. Under the title of PARENTHOOD, the following was said [The numbering is NOT original]:

[1] Amongst His earliest commands to Adam and Eve, the Lord said: "Multiply and replenish the earth." He has repeated that command in our day. He has again revealed in this, the last dispensation, the principle of the eternity of the marriage covenant. He has restored to earth the authority for entering into that covenant, and has declared that it is the only due and proper way of joining husband and wife, and the only means by which the sacred family relationship may be carried beyond the grave and through eternity. He has declared that this eternal relationship may be created only by the ordinances which are administered in the holy temples of the Lord, and therefore that His people should marry only in His temple in accordance with such ordinances.
[2] The Lord has told us that it is the duty of every husband and wife to obey the command given to Adam to multiply and replenish the earth, so that the legions of choice spirits waiting for their tabernacles of flesh may come here and move forward under God's great design to become perfect souls, for without these fleshy tabernacles they cannot progress to their God-planned destiny. Thus, every husband and wife should become a father and mother in Israel to children born under the holy, eternal covenant.

[3] By bringing these choice spirits to earth, each father and each mother assume towards the tabernacled spirit and towards the Lord Himself by having taken advantage of the opportunity He offered, an obligation of the most sacred kind, because the fate of that spirit in the eternities to come, the blessings or punishments which shall await it in the hereafter, depend, in great part, upon the care, the teachings, the training which the parents shall give to that spirit.

[4] No parent can escape that obligation and that responsibility, and for the proper meeting thereof, the Lord will hold us to a strict accountability. No loftier duty than this can be assumed by mortals.

[5] Motherhood thus becomes a holy calling, a sacred dedication for carrying out the Lord's plans, a consecration of devotion to the uprearing and fostering, the nurturing in body, mind, and spirit, of those who kept their first estate and who come to this earth for their second estate "to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them." (Abraham 3:25) To lead them to keep their second estate is the work of motherhood and "they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever." (op. cit.)

[6] This divine service of motherhood can be rendered only by mothers. It may not be passed to others. Nurses cannot do it; public nurseries cannot do it; hired help cannot do it--only mother, aided as much as may be by the loving hands of father, brothers, and sisters, can give the full needed measure of watchful care. The mother who entrusts her child to the care of others, that she may do non-motherly work, whether for gold, for fame, or for civic service, should remember that "a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." (Prop. 29: 15) In our day the Lord has said that unless parents teach their children the doctrines of the Church "the sin be upon the heads of the parents." (D. & C 68:25)

[7] Motherhood is near to divinity. It is the highest, holiest service to be assumed by mankind. It places her who honors its holy calling and service next to the angels. To you mothers in Israel we say God bless and protect you, and give you the strength and courage, the faith and knowledge, the holy love and consecration to duty, that shall enable you to fill to the fullest measure the sacred calling which is yours. To you mothers and mothers-to-be we say: Be chaste, keep pure, live righteously, that your posterity to the last generation may call you blessed. (Conference Report, October 1942, p.12-13)