

Importance of Mothers

Happy Mother's day to all. When I found out that I would be talking on Mother's Day, I had to have a few chuckles with my own mother- you see my mother's least favorite Sunday ALL YEAR is Mother's Day. Every year the speakers would get up and talk about their one eyed, one legged mothers who'd walk them to school every day on a peg leg and then play catch with them after school, catching most of the throws with her face because the mother's depth perception was gone, only to spend the rest of her waking hours cooking, cleaning, and making all of the children's clothing by hand, etc. etc. etc. By the end of the talks my mother would feel like crap; a lesser mother to these clearly "super mothers". I told my mother not to worry, I'd give a talk about how horrible my mother was to make sure all the mothers went home happy. She chuckled and then reminded me that she still knows where I sleep...

I don't believe that there has ever been a time when real mothers, real motherhood has ever been so discouraged, so belittled- by the end of my talk I hope that we all will have a better understanding of just how crucial mothers/motherhood is and a stronger appreciation for the strong women in our lives.

In learning history we can identify eternal truths, and with eternal truths on a timeline we start to see patterns. This is the primary reason for the recording of scriptures, so we can learn history, identify eternal truths, see the patterns and then liken them unto ourselves for our salvation. One such pattern that is talked about a lot with regards to The Book of Mormon is the "pride cycle". The "pride cycle" is as follows:

1. Hard times create humble obedient people
2. God blesses humble obedient people creating good times
3. Good times create prideful disobedient people
4. God curses prideful disobedient people creating hard times

Eternal truths and patterns can be and are identified in history regardless of the lens of faith, historians and professors have noted many patterns with regard to the rise and fall of civilizations. Such patterns when heard will sound eerily familiar to spiritually taught patterns such as "the pride cycle" when they are grounded in eternal truths. One such pattern, that you most likely have heard of (or at least a version of) at some point or another, is as follows:

1. Hard times create strong women
2. Strong women create strong men
3. Strong men create good times
4. Good times create weak women
5. Weak women create weak men
6. Weak men create hard times

The eternal truth in this cycle is that women raising children have the potential to create strong children or weak children and those children will shape the future. This eternal truth is obviously known to God and those who follow Him and His teachings, but it is also known by Satan and those than follow him as well as many people in between the extremes. One such example of a group of people who understood this eternal principle is that of the Romans. The Roman civilization were masters at conquering civilizations, making them subservient, absorbing the remnants, rinse and repeat. How did they do this so successfully? Because the Romans knew the eternal truth of motherhood. When the Romans finished killing the nation's men they would find a child who had broken Roman law and then take the child out and make all the women watch as they killed the child. They would then tell the women to control their children and teach them Roman law/culture/gods so that their children would be saved. The women would then raise weak, subservient children who feared death, the mothers would abandon their gods, culture, way of life, etc. for security. This made absorption of the newly conquered peoples into Rome easy. They knew that if they got the women, they'd teach their children, doing their work for them. In a very similar story in The Book of Mormon, a group of Lamanite men went out to battle to protect their nation, but instead of taking up arms they prostrated themselves on the ground and prayed to God. When the conquering army was finished killing the men and left and/or were converted, what did the now husbandless mothers do with their children? Did they teach their children to fear death? To give up their God? No. They taught their children to be strong. These hard times created strong mothers, mothers that "did not doubt", strong mothers that created strong men. These strong men became to be known as the "stripling warriors", who went on to pave the way for the prosperity and survival of the Anti-Nephi-Lehi's. Another example (there are countless) being that of the Spartans in Greece, the mothers telling their sons to "come home carrying your shield, or come home on it son" during the time period that Greece was dominant while mothers romancing and glorifying in their effeminate men took place during its decline and eventual destruction. A well versed modern feminist named Camille Paglia has written on this historical phenomenon, warning that western culture is on the verge of collapse because of it. The Mongols also warned their children, "I hate luxury. I exercise moderation...It will be easy to forget your vision and purpose once you have fine clothes, fast horses and beautiful women. [In which case], you will be no better than a slave, and you will surely lose everything...Although you inherited the Chinese Empire on horseback, you cannot rule it from that position."

In modern times we learn about an extremely difficult time period, so difficult in fact that they refer to it as "the Great Depression", this time period created some of the strongest women of multiple generations. This group of strong women created a generation of men that is to this day still referred to as "the Greatest Generation". This group of men paved the way for a time period in the west that saw the highest levels of invention, luxury, prosperity, wealth, etc. that the world has literally ever seen. "Good Times". These "good times" in the west gave birth to some of the most evil and vile designs to destroy strong women/mothers and turn them into weak women/mothers the world has ever seen. The sexual liberation, destruction of the family unit, mass materialism, consumerism, and addictive social mediums to name just a few. It has never been harder to be a strong, valiant women/mother in the history of this earth, and we have never needed strong mothers more desperately. Isaiah saw this time period and described it thus:

ISAIAH CHAPTER 3

5. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

9 ¶ The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

12 ¶ As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

16 ¶ Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon,

19 The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

21 The rings, and nose jewels,

22 The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

24 And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.

25 Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.

26 And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

Elder M. Russell Ballard in his talk “Women of Righteousness” said:

There is nothing a woman can do that has more far-reaching, eternal impact than to rear her children to walk in righteousness... Some women do not have the privilege of marrying or rearing children in this life. Yet if they are worthy, these blessings will come later. Women who do have the privilege of rearing children will of course be held accountable for that priceless, eternal stewardship. There is simply not a more significant contribution [women] can make to society, to the Church, or to the eternal destiny of our Father’s children than what [they] will do as a mother. For that reason I am concerned about what I see happening with some of our young women. Satan would have you dress, talk, and behave in unnatural and destructive ways...The adversary is having a heyday distorting attitudes about gender and roles and about families and individual worth. He is the author of mass confusion about the value, the role, the contribution, and the unique nature of women. Today’s popular culture, which is preached by every form of media from the silver screen to the Internet, celebrates the sexy, saucy, socially aggressive woman. These distortions are seeping into the thinking of some of our own women.

Remember, Satan wants us to “be miserable like unto himself” (2 Ne. 2:27), His plan is to get [women] so preoccupied with the world’s glitzy lie about women that [they] completely miss

what [they] have come here to do and to become. Remember and never lose your precious identity... Your influence on families and with children, with youth, and with men is singular. We don't need women who want to be like men, sound like men, dress like men, drive like some men drive, or act like men. We do need women who rejoice in their womanhood and have a spiritual confirmation of their identity, their value, and their eternal destiny.

END QUOTE

President Russell M. Nelson said in his talk “A Plea to My Sisters”:

Fifty-eight years ago I was asked to operate upon a little girl, gravely ill from congenital heart disease. Her older brother had previously died of a similar condition. Her parents pleaded for help. I was not optimistic about the outcome but vowed to do all in my power to save her life. Despite my best efforts, the child died. Later, the same parents brought another daughter to me, then just 16 months old, also born with a malformed heart. Again, at their request, I performed an operation. This child also died. This third heartbreaking loss in one family literally undid me.

I went home grief stricken. I threw myself upon our living room floor and cried all night long. Dantzel stayed by my side, listening as I repeatedly declared that I would never perform another heart operation. Then, around 5:00 in the morning, Dantzel looked at me and lovingly asked, “Are you finished crying? Then get dressed. Go back to the lab. Go to work! You need to learn more. If you quit now, others will have to painfully learn what you already know.”

Oh, how I needed my wife's vision, grit, and love! I went back to work and learned more. If it weren't for Dantzel's inspired prodding, I would not have pursued open-heart surgery and would not have been prepared to do the operation in 1972 that saved the life of President Spencer W. Kimball.

END QUOTE

Elder D. Todd Christofferson said in his talk “The Moral Force of Women”:

In all events, a mother can exert an influence unequalled by any other person in any other relationship. By the power of her example and teaching, her sons learn to respect womanhood and to incorporate discipline and high moral standards in their own lives. A mother's love and high expectations lead her children to act responsibly without excuses, to be serious about education and personal development, and to make ongoing contributions to the well-being of all around them.

END QUOTE

On this day of giving gratitude for strong, righteous women/mothers let us truly appreciate and understand the significance of women/mothers in shaping the world we live in. Let me end this

talk with a quote from Elder Neal A. Maxwell, from his talk “Women of God”:

When the real history of mankind is fully disclosed, will it feature the echoes of gunfire or the shaping sound of lullabies? The great armistices made by military men or the peacemaking of women in homes and in neighborhoods? Will what happened in cradles and kitchens prove to be more controlling than what happened in congresses? 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. Finally, remember: When we return to our real home, it will be with the “mutual approbation” of those who reign in the “royal courts on high.” There we will find beauty such as mortal “eye hath not seen”; we will hear sounds of surpassing music which mortal “ear hath not heard.” Could such a regal homecoming be possible without the anticipatory arrangements of a Heavenly Mother?

END QUOTE

I give this talk with gratitude for my mother and all the strong women that helped shaped my life. I pray that we will always remain grateful for the strong women that helped shape our lives. I pray that women, when presented with the choice, will be strong women. I pray that mothers when presented with the choice, will raise strong men and not weak men, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.