

## References to Heavenly Mother in Church Periodicals and Manuals, 1971–2002

I believe that we should judge the frequency and manner with which we talk about gospel subjects by following the example of the prophets and leaders of the Church. It is partly because of that belief that I compiled this list. The process was simple. I went to [library.lds.org](http://library.lds.org) and searched for the following phrases:

### Hits Search Terms

11	Heavenly Mother
16	Mother in heaven
153	Heavenly parent(s)
0	Parent(s) in heaven
2	Heavenly father and mother
1	Mother and father in heaven

There were over a hundred hits. Of course, this is not a rigorous search—I don't know all the ins and outs of Boolean logic. Neither is this list exhaustive, for I went through the hit list and only placed in this document quotes that not only refer to Heavenly Mother but also seem to me to state something as well, however brief. I believe this is a sacred topic and that when a person ponders on it, he or she should do so with the words of the living prophets and leaders of the Church foremost in the mind.

I suppose that here I should say something like, "This document may be copied and shared as long as the content is not changed," but since I didn't write any of it, I don't see why it would matter if someone altered or added to this document. These quotes are available to everyone so they can research, collect, and study the words of the prophets as much as they'd like. In fact, I think it'd be a great idea if everyone did just that!

—Nathan Richardson, July 2003

This document is available online:

[www.angelfire.com/folk/nathan000000/lds/documents/Heavenly\\_Mother\\_references.pdf](http://www.angelfire.com/folk/nathan000000/lds/documents/Heavenly_Mother_references.pdf)

### Entire text recommended:

Spencer W. Kimball, "Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters," *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 102

Patricia T. Holland, "'One Thing Needful': Becoming Women of Greater Faith in Christ," *Ensign*, Oct. 1987, 26

Gordon B. Hinckley, "Daughters of God," *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 97

Eliza R. Snow, "O My Father," *Hymns*, no 138.

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Explain that we all lived in heaven with Heavenly Father before we came to this earth. We are his children. That is why we call him Heavenly Father. We also lived with our Heavenly Mother and all the rest of Heavenly Father's children.

[Primary 2, 3: I Am a Child of God, Purpose, 11](#)

All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual pre-mortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.

*“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” Ensign, Nov. 1995, 102*

All men and women are in the similitude of the universal Father and Mother, and are literally the sons and daughters of Deity. . . . Man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal body to undergo an experience in mortality.

*First Presidency, “The Origin of Man,” Ensign, Feb. 2002, 26*

It is marriage, sanctified and God-sanctioned, upon which glorified home is founded—that blesses, happifies, exalts, and leads at length to companionship with our Heavenly parents, and to eternal, united life, and increase.

*Joseph F. Smith, Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith, 20: The Eternal Union of Husband and Wife, From the Life of Joseph F. Smith, 173*

There are forces that work beyond our sight. Sometimes we think the whole job is up to us, forgetful that there are loved ones beyond our sight who are thinking about us and our children. We forget that we have a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly Mother who are even more concerned, probably, than our earthly father and mother, and that influences from beyond are constantly working to try to help us when we do all we can.

*Harold B. Lee, “A Sure Trumpet Sound: Quotations from President Lee,” Ensign, Feb. 1974, 77*

Honoring your parents by living a good life and by showing them that you love and appreciate them are gifts that last forever. To your earthly mother and father and to your Heavenly Parents, you are their most valuable treasure. Their love and concern for you never ends.

*The First Presidency, “Christmas Message to Children of the Church in All the World,” Friend, Dec. 1974, 2–3*

When we sing that doctrinal hymn and anthem of affection, “O My Father,” we get a sense of the ultimate in maternal modesty, of the restrained, queenly elegance of our Heavenly Mother, and knowing how profoundly our mortal mothers have shaped us here, do we suppose her influence on us as individuals to be less if we live so as to return there?

*Spencer W. Kimball, “The True Way of Life and Salvation,” Ensign, May 1978, 4*

The Primary song says, “I am a child of God.” Born with a noble birthright. God is your father. He loves you. He and your mother in heaven value you beyond any measure. They gave your eternal intelligence spirit form, just as your earthly mother and father have given you a mortal body. You are unique. One of a kind, made of the eternal intelligence which gives you claim upon eternal life.

*Spencer W. Kimball, “Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters,” Ensign, Nov. 1978, 102*

I share the view expressed by Orson F. Whitney in these words:

“No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God ... and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven” (as quoted in Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972, p. 98).  
Howard W. Hunter, “The Opening and Closing of Doors,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 54

Also cited in:

Kenneth H. Beesley, “What Is the Purpose of Suffering?” *New Era*, Apr. 1975, 36  
Adney Y. Komatsu, “After Much Tribulation Come the Blessings,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 68  
Adney Y. Komatsu, “Looking to the Savior,” *Ensign*, May 1987, 78  
A. LaVar Thornock, “In Your Time of Crisis,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1988, 28  
OT Gospel Doctrine, 32: “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth”, Purpose, 157

And now, speaking of prayer, I touch on another matter. Last April, I spoke to the regional representatives of the Church, as I have done for a number of years on each occasion when they have come for general conference. These are training meetings where the regional representatives get information that they may carry with them across the Church. There is nothing secret or hidden about what is done there.

However, recently I heard that someone had secured a copy of my talk, looking upon that as a singular accomplishment, as if it had been given in a secret and sinister manner, designed to keep it from the world. This is nonsense.

I am therefore on this occasion going to take the liberty of rereading that portion of the talk which pertains to a matter over which some few women of the Church appear to be greatly exercised. I give it to all, in this forum, because of the activities of a few who evidently are seeking to lead others in the paths which they are following. I speak of those who advocate the offering of prayers to our Mother in Heaven. I quote from that earlier address:

“This [practice] began in private prayer and is beginning to spread to prayers offered in some of our meetings.

“It was Eliza R. Snow who wrote the words: ‘Truth is reason; truth eternal / Tells me I’ve a mother there.’ (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 292.)

“It has been said that the Prophet Joseph Smith made no correction to what Sister Snow had written. Therefore, we have a Mother in Heaven. Therefore, [some assume] that we may appropriately pray to her.

“Logic and reason would certainly suggest that if we have a Father in Heaven, we have a Mother in Heaven. That doctrine rests well with me.

“However, in light of the instruction we have received from the Lord Himself, I regard it as inappropriate for anyone in the Church to pray to our Mother in Heaven.

“The Lord Jesus Christ set the pattern for our prayers. In the Sermon on the Mount, He declared: ‘After this manner therefore pray ye: Our *Father* which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.’ (Matt. 6:9; italics added here and in following references.)

“When the resurrected Lord appeared to the Nephites and taught them, He said: ‘After this manner therefore pray ye: Our *Father* who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.’ (3 Ne. 13:9.)

“While He was among them, He further taught them by example and precept concerning this practice. The record states that ‘He himself also knelt

upon the earth; and behold he prayed unto the *Father*, and the things which he prayed cannot be written, and the multitude did bear record who heard him.' (3 Ne. 17:15.)

"Furthermore, He said: 'Pray in your families unto the *Father*, always in my name, that your wives and your children may be blessed.' (3 Ne. 18:21.)

"On another occasion, 'Jesus departed out of the midst of them, and went a little way off from them and bowed himself to the earth, and he said:

""*Father*, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen; and it is because of their belief in me that I have chosen them out of the world.

""*Father*, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words.' (3 Ne. 19:19–21.)

"And so I might continue with other specific instances from the scripture. Search as I have, I find nowhere in the standard works an account where Jesus prayed other than to His Father in Heaven or where He instructed the people to pray other than to His Father in Heaven.

"I have looked in vain for any instance where any President of the Church, from Joseph Smith to Ezra Taft Benson, has offered a prayer to 'our Mother in Heaven.'

"I suppose those ... who use this expression and who try to further its use are well-meaning, but they are misguided. The fact that we do not pray to our Mother in Heaven in no way belittles or denigrates her."

That is the end of the quotation from the talk I gave earlier, to which I may add that none of us can add to or diminish the glory of her of whom we have no revealed knowledge.

Gordon B. Hinckley, "Daughters of God," *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 97

The first spirit born to our heavenly parents was Jesus Christ (see D&C 93:21), so he is literally our elder brother (see *Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 26). Because we are the spiritual children of our heavenly parents, we have inherited the potential to develop their divine qualities. If we choose to do so, we can become perfect, just as they are.

Gospel Principles, Unit One: Our Premortal Life with God, 2: Our Heavenly Family, We Are Children of Our Heavenly Father, 11

We understood that we would have to leave our heavenly home for a time. We would not live in the presence of our heavenly parents. While we were away from them, all of us would sin and some of us would lose our way. Our Heavenly Father knew and loved each one of us. He knew we would need help, so he planned a way to help us.

Gospel Principles, Unit One: Our Premortal Life with God, 3: Jesus Christ, Our Chosen Leader and Savior, A Savior and Leader Was Needed, 17

When we lived as spirit children with our heavenly parents, our Heavenly Father told us about his plan for us to become more like him.

Gospel Principles, Unit Two: Leaving the Presence of God, 5: The Creation, 27

The first family on earth was established by our Heavenly Father when he gave Eve to Adam in marriage (see Moses 3:21–24). Since then, each of us has been commanded to marry and have children so that through our own experience we can learn to be heavenly parents. President Brigham Young explained that our families are not yet ours. The Lord has committed them to us to see how we will treat them. Only if we are faithful will they be given to us forever. What we do on earth determines whether or not we will be worthy to become heavenly parents (see chapter 2, "Our Heavenly Family").

Gospel Principles, Unit Eight: Family Salvation, 36: The Family Can Be Eternal, 231

During this premortal life our heavenly parents taught us the gospel and the plan of life.

*Primary 7, 2: Jesus Christ Volunteered to Be Our Savior, Purpose, 5*

Each of us comes to earth with a natural thirst to continually learn and progress. This is a trait we inherited from our heavenly parents.

*Visiting Teaching Message, "The Pursuit of Learning—A Lifelong Process," Tambuli, Mar. 1987, 8*

Honoring parents is a law that has two vital dimensions. In the first, we give honor to our earthly and heavenly parents, and in the second, we receive honor as parents ourselves.

*Handbook for Families, "Honoring Parents—and Being Honorable Parents," Ensign, July 1986, 57*

The family is the most important group of people on earth. Our earthly family is patterned after our heavenly family. We were all brothers and sisters in heaven. We were children of God. God was the leader of our heavenly home. We received loving care and guidance from our heavenly parents.

*Gospel Fundamentals, Part Eight: Saving Our Families, 32: Living as Families Forever, 177*

As members of the Church, we are each entitled to a spiritual birthright from our heavenly parents. What blessings are included in our birthright? (Answers may include the priesthood, temple blessings, ordinances, revelation, and the potential for exaltation.)

*OT Gospel Doctrine, 10: Birthright Blessings; Marriage in the Covenant, Purpose, 40*

The father concluded that his son had real questions about conception and birth. So he explained the process in simple, basic terms. He began with a gentle question designed to give the ten-year-old culprit a chance to redeem himself a bit. "I'll answer any questions you have, son, but answer one for me please. Who made our bodies first of all?"

"Heavenly Father" was the prompt answer.

"That's right, son. Heavenly Father made Adam and Eve. Who did they look like?"

"Heavenly Father and Jesus, and I guess our heavenly mother too," said the now attentive boy.

"Well, we really don't know much about our heavenly mother, but we can expect that Eve looked like her and Adam looked like Heavenly Father.

*A Parent's Guide, 4: Teaching Children: from Four to Eleven Years, 23*

President Spencer W. Kimball, speaking to Latter-day Saint girls in Mexico City, said: "You are daughters of God. ... You are made in the image of our heavenly mother. ... Your body is sacred to you and precious" (in Conference Report, Mexico City and Central America Area Conference 1973, 108).

*The Latter-day Saint Woman, Part A, Gospel Principles and Doctrine, 9: Chastity and Modesty, 60*

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?

*Neal A. Maxwell, "The Women of God," Ensign, May 1978, 10*

Women are endowed with special traits and attributes that come trailing down through eternity from a divine mother. Young women have special God-given feelings about charity, love, and obedience. Coarseness and vulgarity are contrary to their natures. They have a modifying, softening influence on young men. Young women were not foreordained to do what priesthood holders do. Theirs is a sacred, God-given role, and the traits they received from heavenly mother are equally as important as those given to the young men.

*Vaughn J. Featherstone, "A Champion of Youth," Ensign, Nov. 1987, 27*

I have heard it said by some that the reason women in the Church struggle to know themselves is because they don't have a divine female role model. But we do. We believe we have a mother in heaven. May I quote from President Spencer W. Kimball in a general conference address:

"When we sing that doctrinal hymn ... 'O My Father,' we get a sense of the ultimate in maternal modesty, of the restrained, queenly elegance of our Heavenly Mother, and knowing how profoundly our mortal mothers have shaped us here, do we suppose her influence on us as individuals to be less?"  
(*Ensign*, May 1978, p. 6.)

I have never questioned why our mother in heaven seems veiled to us, for I believe the Lord has his reasons for revealing as little as he has on that subject. Furthermore, I believe we know much more about our eternal nature than we think we do; and it is our sacred obligation to express our knowledge, to teach it to our young sisters and daughters, and in so doing to strengthen their faith and help them through the counterfeit confusions of these difficult latter days.

Patricia T. Holland, "'One Thing Needful': Becoming Women of Greater Faith in Christ," *Ensign*, Oct. 1987, 26

I know that God loves us individually and collectively *as women*, and that he has a mission for every one of us. As I learned on my Galilean hillside, I testify that if our desires are righteous, God overrules for our good and that heavenly parents will tenderly attend to our needs.

Patricia T. Holland, "'One Thing Needful': Becoming Women of Greater Faith in Christ," *Ensign*, Oct. 1987, 26

In the heavens, before the earth was formed, the plan of this earth life was explained to all of us. We were then but spirit offspring of our Father and Mother in heaven.

Eldred G. Smith, "Opposition in Order to Strengthen Us," *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 62

Jesus knew the Father's plan of salvation was vital for the growth and development of mankind. He unselfishly offered to give his own future mortal life as a Savior for us. Thereby, we might all return to the presence of our Heavenly Father and Mother. We could return to them with perfected, resurrected bodies having gained greater light and knowledge through experiences received during mortality so that during the eternities we can continue to become more like our Father and Mother in Heaven.

Theodore M. Burton, "A Marriage to Last through Eternity," *Ensign*, June 1987, 12

But spirit children are not born to a Father only. We are the offspring of Heavenly Parents. We lived in the family unit in the pre-existence. As our great doctrinal hymn says:

"In the heavens are parents single?  
No; the thought makes reason stare!  
Truth is reason, truth eternal  
Tells me I've a mother there."

*LDS Hymns*, no. 139

The name of the kind of life enjoyed by our Heavenly Parents is called eternal life. If we are to gain eternal life, if we are to advance and progress and become like them, we too must live in the family unit in the world to come. In other words, we must gain eternal family units of our own that are patterned after that of our Eternal Parents. This is the high and holy hope that the gospel holds out to both men and women.

Bruce R. McConkie, "Mothers in Israel and Daughters of Zion," *New Era*, May 1978, 35

Trees reach up for the light and grow in the process. So do we as sons and daughters of heavenly parents.  
Russell M. Nelson, "Which Way Are You Facing?" *New Era*, Mar. 2002, 4

“Thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” (D&C 115:4.)

Note carefully the language of the Lord. He did not say, “Thus shall my church be *named*.” He said, “Thus shall my church be *called*.” Years ago, its members were cautioned by the Brethren who wrote: “We feel that some may be misled by the too frequent use of the term ‘Mormon Church.’” (*Member-Missionary Class—Instructor’s Guide*, Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1982, p. 2.) Before any other name is considered to be a legitimate substitute, the thoughtful person might reverently consider the feelings of the Heavenly Parent who bestowed that name.

Russell M. Nelson, “Thus Shall My Church Be Called,” *Ensign*, May 1990, 16

My message to the children of the Church is to honor not only your earthly parents but your Heavenly Parents as well. That means that you also honor the parents of the children who will be born to *you*. And that means that you should live righteously now so that when you have children, they’ll be proud of you.

Russell M. Nelson, in Janet Peterson, “Friend to Friend,” *Friend*, Jan. 1986, 4

There is no other individual to compare with Jesus Christ, nor is there any other exhortation equal to his sublime expression of hope: “I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”

This divine entreaty is consistent with the fact that, as begotten children of heavenly parents, we are endowed with the potential to become like them, just as mortal children may become like their mortal parents.

Russell M. Nelson, “Perfection Pending,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86

As to why we are here on earth, I reminded him of the self-evident fact that, as the offspring of God, we inherit the capability of reaching, in full maturity, the status of our heavenly parents just as we inherit from our mortal parents the capability to attain to their mortal status; and that since God has a body of flesh and bones, it was necessary and perfectly natural for us, his spirit offspring, to obtain such bodies in order that we might be like him; that coming to earth was the means provided for us to obtain these bodies. I further explained to him that this mortal probation provides us the opportunity to, while walking by faith, prove ourselves worthy to go on to perfection and exaltation in the likeness of our heavenly parents.

Marion G. Romney, “The Way of Life,” *Ensign*, May 1976, 79

We cannot overstate the importance of parenthood and the family. The basis of the government of God is the eternal family. Our theology begins with heavenly parents and our highest aspiration is to attain that status ourselves. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the plan of our Heavenly Father, for the benefit of his spirit children. The gospel plan is made possible by the sacrifice of our Elder Brother. As earthly parents we participate in the gospel plan by providing earthly bodies for the spirit children of heavenly parents. We solemnly affirm that the fulness of eternal salvation is a family affair. We may truly say that the gospel plan originated in the council of an eternal family, it is implemented through our earthly families, and has its destiny in our eternal families. Small wonder The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is known as a family-centered church.

Dallin H. Oaks, “Parental Leadership in the Family,” *Ensign*, June 1985, 7

The purpose of mortal life and the mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints is to prepare the sons and daughters of God for their destiny—to become like our heavenly parents.

Dallin H. Oaks, “Same-Gender Attraction,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1995, 7

Our theology begins with heavenly parents. Our highest aspiration is to be like them.

Dallin H. Oaks, “Apostasy and Restoration,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 84

Consider the power of the idea taught in our beloved song "I Am a Child of God" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 301), sung so impressively by the choir at the beginning of this session. Here is the answer to one of life's great questions, "Who am I?" I am a child of God with a spirit lineage to heavenly parents. That parentage defines our eternal potential. That powerful idea is a potent antidepressant.

Dallin H. Oaks, "Powerful Ideas," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 25

We serve God and our fellowmen in order to become the kind of children who can return to live with our heavenly parents.

Dallin H. Oaks, "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 67

The gospel teaches us that we are the spirit children of heavenly parents. Before our mortal birth, we lived as the sons and daughters of the Eternal Father.

Dallin H. Oaks, "The Great Plan of Happiness," *Friend*, Apr. 1995, inside front cover

I marvel at the power a simple act of charity has in healing the human heart. Why can a loving word or look or listening ear change a life? Why is love such a powerful force?

I believe we knew the power and language of love in our premortal life. When we are loved, we recognize the same feelings we experienced regularly with our heavenly parents. . . .

Earth life is an apprenticeship in learning how to become a celestial brother or sister, a loving heavenly parent.

Jeanie McAllister, "Charity Never Faileth," *Ensign*, Mar. 1992, 17

The plan teaches that all who have or will live on earth are the spirit children of heavenly parents. We lived with them before coming to this earth to receive our bodies of flesh and bone.

M. Russell Ballard, "Answers to Life's Questions," *Ensign*, May 1995, 22

The spirit that dwells within this tabernacle of flesh and bone is the literal offspring of our eternal, heavenly parents. We know that; we have all talked about it in Sunday School. Because of that spiritual side of our existence, we have a spark of divinity within us. We trace our common parentage back to our heavenly parents, making us all brothers and sisters. We all understand that concept, I am sure.

M. Russell Ballard, "Is It Worth It?" *New Era*, June 1984, 38

But there are also those who are unseen who care and are cheering for us: heavenly parents, loved ones who have gone before us, those who are yet to come. They want us to succeed.

Paul H. Dunn, "The Cheering Section," *Ensign*, June 1980, 4

Promises are made to us, conditioned only upon our faithfulness, that extend from time to eternity. They will help us to understand the nearness of our heavenly parents. The power of the priesthood is thus given us in new and large measures.

John A. Widtsoe, "Looking Toward the Temple," *Ensign*, Jan. 1972, 56

You and I lived before this life in a celestial home with our heavenly parents.

J. Devn Cornish, "Learning How the Atonement Can Change You," *Ensign*, Apr. 2002, 20

Have you ever been told you are just like your mother, or you have your father's smile, or all of your family have the same color of eyes? The physical characteristics that we inherit from our parents are obvious. The spiritual characteristics we inherit from our heavenly parents have to be developed. You have been born with all the godlike gifts that Christ has. They are within you, but you have to choose to cultivate and develop them. Spiritual growth doesn't just happen without our best efforts.

Elaine L. Jack, "Identity of a Young Woman," *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 86

The lofty goal of exaltation or living eternally again in the presence of our Heavenly Parents can only be achieved as a family unit, and only after that family has developed a Christlike pattern of living within a frame work of conformity to priesthood principles.

Robert L. Simpson, "Q&A: Questions and Answers," *New Era*, July 1977, 11

The doctrine of the family begins with heavenly parents. Our highest aspiration is to be like them.

Robert D. Hales, "The Eternal Family," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 64

Jesus was born of heavenly parents in a premortal world—he was the firstborn of our Heavenly Father.

Robert D. Hales, "Your Sorrow Shall Be Turned to Joy," *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 65

When any good engineer designs a bridge, he makes it capable of bearing more weight than will ever be placed upon it. When the great architect of our souls created us in his own image, he endowed us with all the potential of our eternal heavenly parents. God was thinking in terms of our own futures when he gave to man his own attributes. Jesus also had this in mind when he taught the philosophies of life involving the Golden Rule, doing more than is expected of us, and going the second mile.

Sterling W. Sill, "A Hundred-Hundred Marriage," *Ensign*, Mar. 1971, 32

We are here to gain experience that could come only through separation from our heavenly parents.

Thomas S. Monson, "An Invitation to Exaltation," *Ensign*, July 1984, 69

Thomas S. Monson, "Invitation to Exaltation," *Ensign*, June 1993, 2

If we are to understand the importance of a temple marriage, we must believe with all our hearts that we are spirit children of God. It is imperative to realize that we are all of divine origin, that God is real, and that He lives. Our heavenly parents want us back with them. That is their goal, their work, and their glory.

Theodore M. Burton, "A Marriage to Last through Eternity," *Ensign*, June 1987, 12

All parents, including our Heavenly Parents, rejoice to see their daughters achieving eternal growth, respectful of their own capabilities and eager to expand them.

Ruth Hardy Funk, "I Have a Question," *Ensign*, Aug. 1977, 38

Before we were born into mortality, we lived in the premortal state as spirit children of our heavenly parents. We were taught there the plan of salvation.

ElRay L. Christiansen, "Q&A: Questions and Answers," *New Era*, July 1975, 46

To my beloved Pat and me, our children are more precious possessions than any crown or kingdom this world could offer. There is literally not anything in righteousness we would not do for them; there is no stream so deep nor mountain so high nor desert so wide that we could be kept from calming their fears or holding them close to us. And if we "being evil" can love so much and try so hard, what *does* that say of a more godly love that differs from our own as the stars differ from the sun? On a particularly difficult day—or sometimes a series of difficult days—what would this world's inhabitants not pay to know that heavenly parents are reaching across those same streams and mountains and deserts, anxious to hold them close? That manifest reassurance comes in its fullest form only in the covenants and doctrine and attending spirit of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. What a soothing strength that gives in a world—even a religious word—spoken of as being full of otherwise "cold Christs and tangled trinitities."

Jeffrey R. Holland, "Belonging: A View of Membership," *Ensign*, Apr. 1980, 27

There are two major categories in the Ten Commandments. The first four commandments focus on our relationship to God. The other six deal with our relationships with others. The fifth commandment—to honor our parents—is a natural transition between our duties to our heavenly parents and to our fellow mortals.

Robert J. Matthews, "Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness," *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 53

We know that in our premortal life, we were part of a family, and our divine parents provided us with inspired guidance and unerring examples of righteousness. There we had agency to choose, and they provided us with opportunities to use our agency to learn and grow. Here on earth we continue our education, and knowing that each of us would fall short of the perfection we had seen in our heavenly parents, Father provided a Savior and a plan of redemption for us. . . .

And as earthly parents encourage their earthly children to achieve their fullest potential, so, too, our eternal parents want each of their children to become as they are. The stunning truth, lost to humankind before the Restoration, is that each of us is a god in embryo. We may become as our heavenly parents. We, too, in exalted families, may one day preside in our own realms, under him who is our God and our Father forever.

Terry J. Moyer, "The Family—Now and Forever," *Ensign*, June 1993, 10

Think of the last time you experienced joy.

True joy—not the thrill of riding on a super roller coaster, or the happiness you feel when your favorite song comes on and you just happen to be dancing with your favorite person. Not even the satisfaction you feel when you ace a test.

No, we mean that deep enduring feeling that seems to warm your entire soul. The kind of sensation that makes you feel as if the heavens have opened and a loving God is encircling you in celestial arms.

What you're feeling, in essence, is the love that your heavenly parents and your brother Jesus Christ have for you. They have provided you with so much—with a body, with an earth to live on, with spiritual guidance, and with a means to return to and live with them someday and experience their love constantly.

Lisa A. Johnson, "I Feel the Savior's Love When . . . ," *New Era*, Mar. 1990, 20

I knew that however far from my earthly parents I might travel I would one day return and still feel the closeness and trust that we shared. But even more important, I realized that this very same bond exists between me and my heavenly parents.

Sian Bessey, "Learning Faith," *New Era*, Apr. 1987, 36

Loving heavenly parents await us, sending their love and encouragement not through letters per se, but through the scriptures, ancient and modern. I can almost see a tiny inscription written on the back of my scriptures. It says, "*Tot Zeins—Till we meet.*"

Eileen D. Telford, "*Tot Zeins—Till We Meet*," *Ensign*, Feb. 1990, 66