

LESSON IN LIVING

READING MOTHERS

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*You may have tangible wealth untold
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.*

*Richer than I you can never be—
I had a mother who read to me.*

Some of my fondest memories are when I sat in our living room in a large arm chair with a child on each side and two smaller ones on my lap. I was reading Bible and classic stories to them before they said their prayers and went to bed. The sweet feel of their warm, freshly bathed little bodies and the smell of their squeaky-clean, damp hair linger in my memory. They were so attentive. Almost always, when we finished, they would request, "Read it again, Mom!" They never seemed to tire of hearing a story over and over.

My love for bible stories began when my Grandmother Lillywhite presented me with a Bible Story book as a Christmas gift when I was only two-years-old. My mother began reading to me as she set a fine example for me to follow. My favorite tales were also my children's favorites. Actually, reading bible stories is an excellent way to get a larger picture of ancient biblical history; it helps tie facts together.

It gave me great satisfaction to have Sunday School teachers tell me how my children could answer almost all the questions they put to their class. One of my grandsons began reading at a very early age. He would phone me at 5:00 a.m. to compare how far he had gone in his scripture reading to how far I had gone in mine. To this day, as he fills a mission, he is still at ease with God's word. What a great blessing scripture reading has been in both of our lives.

Today, we often sit as families viewing a television program. This can draw loved ones closer together if properly done. Certainly, if there are moral lessons to be learned, we will want to point them out. And, if there is misinformation, we will also want that made clear to our family. Somehow, television doesn't seem to give the warmth and closeness that reading aloud does. I wonder if children have a faint memory of hearing their mother's voices when still in the womb?

As children grow older, having family scripture study can be very effective. When we began this "happy habit" our children were quite embarrassed, as none of their friends did it. Nowadays, it is a fairly common occurrence in devout families. Perhaps the main benefit comes from gathering together in a spirit of love as we learn, teach morals, and bond. May God bless our mothers to keep on reading!