A Scripture Based Pastoral Counseling Approach for Military Latter-day Saint Chaplains

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This booklet is dedicated to my wife (Laiken) and to my children, Sonia, Andrew, and Emmett.

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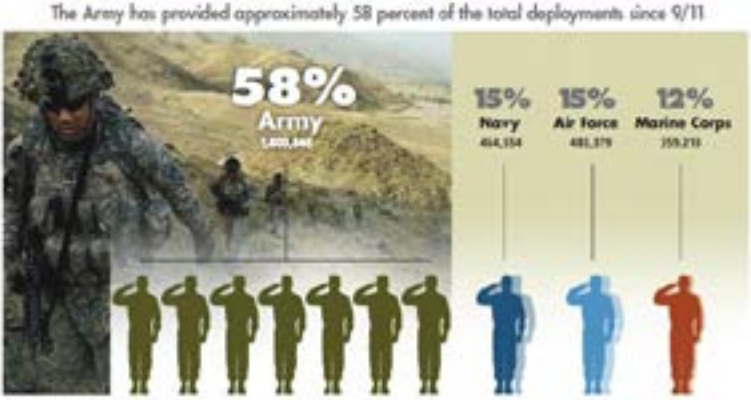
Introduction

Since September 11, 2001, the U.S. military has been continuously engaged in combat operations. More than 2.77 million service members have been mobilized on 5.4 million deployments. The majority of those deployed are from the Army. Many have mobilized multiple times.[1] Unfortunately, deployments can affect and exacerbate concerns like moral injury, marital relationships, and the effects of trauma on individuals and the well-being of families. These deployments can cause an increase across a wide variety of personal and family concerns.



All components have made contributions to operation in Afghanistan and Iraq. Of the 1.89 million deployed troops-years show, the Regular Army provided 71 percent of the Army's deployed troop-years, while the ARNGUS provided 20 percent and the USAR provided 9 percent. The relative sizes and compositions of the ARNGUS and USAR are responsible for much of the difference in deployed troop-years contributed by these two components.
SOURCE: Rand Arroy Center Analysis of DMDC's Contingence Tracking System Deployment File.
NOTE: Data includes September 2001 through September 2015.[2]

Historically, these modern deployments are longer, occur more often and the breaks between deployments are more infrequent than in previous sustained

1 Jennie W. Wenger, Caolionn O'Connell, and Linda Contrell, *Examination of Recent Deployment Experience across the Services and Components* (Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, RR-1928-A, 2018), 1–2, https://doi.org/10.7249/RR1928.

2 Wenger, *Examination of Recent Deployment Experience,* 5.

conflicts.[3] Advances in medical technology as well as body armor have contributed to a significant reduction of casualties compared with previous wars. However, this means that more troops are surviving experiences that would have killed their counterparts in earlier wars.[4] Combat exposure has been shown to increase the risk for mental health injuries as well as physical injuries, depression, etc.[5] Additionally, traumatic events that occurred both before and after military service can be compounded with trauma during military service, thus increasing the risk for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).[6] Owing to these factors, mental injuries are becoming more prevalent among modern soldiers. These mental injuries and many other issues pertaining to sustained deployments and the effects of deployments on service-members and their families creates opportunities for pastoral care and counseling for military chaplains.

Challenges in the Military

Multiple studies have been conducted on the prevalence of PTSD on military service-members. These studies show a point prevalence between 2% to 17%, and a lifetime prevalence between 6% to 31%.[7] This variance may be due to methodological and conceptual factors of each individual study.[8] Despite this variance, however, PTSD is a visible and constant threat to the combat fitness of the US military.

Depressive disorders also affect a military unit's combat fitness. A study published in 2011 examined the rates of depressive disorders in men with

3 Terri Tanielian, *Assessing Combat Exposure and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Troops and Estimating the Cost to Society: Implications from the RAND Invisible Wounds Study* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2009), 1.

4 Tanielian, *Assessing Combat Exposure*, 1–2.

5 Barry S. Levy and Victor W. Sidel, "Health Effects of Combat: A Life-Course Perspective," Annual Review of Public Health 30 (2009): 124.

6 Paula P. Schnurr, Carole A. Lunney, and Anjana Sengupta, "Risk Factors for the Development Versus Maintenance of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder," J*ournal of Traumatic Stress* 17.2 (April 2004): 94–95

7 Lisa K. Richardson, B. Christopher Freuh, and Ronald Acierno, "Prevalence Estimates of Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Critical Review," Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry 44.1 (January 2010): 5.

8 Richardson, Freuh, and Acierno, "Prevalence Estimates of Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," 10.

military experience. The results found that approximately 13.5% of veterans had a current depressive disorder, and that about 11.5% had a lifetime diagnosis.[9] Depressive disorders can also appear comorbid with PTSD that can further compound the negative effects of both. A separate study published in 2018 looked at Vietnam veterans 40 years after the war and showed that 7.3% of veterans with PTSD also had at least a single episode of a depressive disorder. The same study also showed that 11.4% of veterans with PTSD also had recurring episodes of a depressive disorder.[10]

In addition to physical and mental injuries, deployments and combat exposure also increase the risk for moral injury. Moral injury is a "type of psychological trauma characterized by intense guilt, shame, and spiritual crisis, which can develop when one violates his or her moral beliefs, is betrayed, or witnesses trusted individuals committing atrocities."[11] Military deployments and combat exposure provide settings where a soldier's action would otherwise be unethical and illegal in a civilian setting. Examples of this could be killing another human being, engaging in combat operations against women and children soldiers, misidentifying combatants, and others. Treaties and rules of engagement[12] provide a legal basis for waging war. However, individuals have their own personal moral values. When they violate, or witness others violating these values, moral injury can occur. Moral injury is different from PTSD, moral injury affects belief systems, while PTSD characterizes symptoms, e.g., avoidance, inability to sleep, hyper-vigilance, etc. The cognitive dissonance that occurs when moral values are violated can produce intense shame, guilt, a spiritual or existential crisis, demoralization and psychic anguish.[13] These feelings of shame and guilt can

9 Peter C. Britton et al., "Prevalence, Correlates, and Symptom Profiles of Depression Among Men with a History of Military Service," *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 46 (July 2011): 609.

10 T. Bullman and A. I. Schneiderman, "Comorbidity Risks of a Cohort of Vietnam Veterans Diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," *Journal of Military and Veteran's Health* 26.1 (January 2018): 32.

11 Jeremy D. Jinkerson, "Defining and Assessing Moral Injury: A Syndrome Perspective," *Traumatology* 22.2 (June 2016): 122.

12 Rules of engagement are the guidelines, policies and rules for the use of force for service members. They are subject to change depending on the conflict.

13 Jinkerson, "Defining and Assessing Moral Injury," 122.

further develop into PTSD. Because of the spiritual and existential nature of moral injury, it can be debilitating to combat fitness.

Not only can deployments cause stress on military personnel but also on their families. Returning soldiers may have difficulty reconnecting with their families. This is further compounded when family members experience "secondary traumatization," that is when individuals living near primary victims of violent trauma become indirect victims of that trauma and similar effects occur, such as "depression, interpersonal sensitivity and paranoia."[14] Families can develop PTSD through their veterans. Additionally, family members can also suffer from moral injury.[15]

Purpose of this Booklet

Due to the multiple challenges, and difficulties of a military life-style, chaplains spend a great deal of their time in providing pastoral care and counseling to service-members and their families. This booklet focuses on challenges within the Army specifically, and so experiences within other branches of the Armed Forces may be different. Yet, the principles can be easily adapted for all sections of the military.

The purpose of this booklet is to present two models of scripture-based counseling that can be used by military Latter-day Saint chaplains in providing pastoral care, comfort and counseling to soldiers and families. It will also provide guidance from leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints concerning topics that many chaplains address in their pastoral counseling, and scriptural references that can be used with these scripture-based counseling approaches. The information included in this booklet is meant to supplement the chaplain's knowledge on these issues.

The first model presented is Edward Wimberly's Biblical Narrative Model

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14 Tara Galovski and Judith A. Lyons, "Psychological Sequelae of Combat Violence: A Review of the Impact of PTSD on the Veteran's Family and Possible Interventions," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 9.5 (August 2004): 478, 480.

15 William P. Nash and Brett T. Litz, "Moral Injury: A Mechanism for War-Related Psychological Trauma in Military Family Members," *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review* 16.4 (December 2013): 369–71.

for Pastoral Counseling.[16] This model looks at the stories that individuals, couples and families tell about themselves and their problems. The goal of this model is to reconstruct the presenting problem within the framework of a Biblical story, like David and Goliath. While Wimberly focuses on the Bible, I will expand this model to include scriptural stories from Latter-day Saint canon.

The second model, which has a more specific focus, is Donald Capps's "Use of Psalms in Grief Counseling."[17] Capps's model provides a scriptural way to process grief through the psalms of lament found in the Bible. This allows a person to mourn with a faith-building perspective. Both models can serve as guides to chaplains on how to incorporate scripture into their pastoral counseling sessions.

In addition to these models, this booklet includes brief explanations and exegetical extrapolations of scriptural narratives and psalms from our canon, i.e., the Standard Works, [18] that may be adapted by the chaplain for use in the two pastoral counseling models presented. This section will include commentary from modern Church leaders, as well as commentary by other scholars to shed further light into how they can be adapted for use by chaplains.

Members of the military and their families can experience a vast variety of mental, emotional and physical wounds due to their military service. The military has recognized the impact of these wounds and uses various professional services to help alleviate them. Chaplains are one such occupation and service employed by the military that not only provides religious support but also offers pastoral counseling. While the basics of

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16 Edward P. Wimberly, *Using Scripture in Pastoral Counseling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994).

17 Donald Capps, *Biblical Approaches to Pastoral Counseling* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 47–97.

18 The Standard Works in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints consist of the Bible, The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. These are the canon of scripture that Latter-day Saint chaplains use when counseling with members from their church.

this booklet are applicable to each of the branches of the military, it will focus primarily on the Army Chaplaincy, and more specifically on pastoral counseling.

Pastoral Care and Counseling

Pastoral care and counseling are two aspects of a chaplain's duty. Many of a chaplain's interactions with soldiers will involve layers of pastoral care or counseling. David Benner defines pastoral care as "the total range of help offered by pastors . . . and other members of a congregation to those they seek to serve. Pastoral care is a ministry of compassion, and its source and motivation is the love of God."[19] Pastoral care, then, covers a broad scope of actions that chaplains can do to nurture their flock of soldiers and families. Howard Clinebell defines pastoral counseling as "a focused form of Pastoral Care geared toward enabling individuals, couples, and families to cope more constructively with crises, losses, difficult decisions, and other anxiety-laden experiences."[20] In other words, pastoral counseling is a concentrated form of pastoral care on specific individuals or small groups to help them surmount difficulties and challenges. For example, conducting worship services and visiting military units would be a form of pastoral care, while having personal conversations with soldiers would be a form of pastoral counseling.

Chaplains, therefore, perform a vital role in supporting military personnel and their families. One of the tools of chaplains is spirituality, and while not all interactions need to be of a spiritual nature, to ignore spirituality would be to discount a chaplain's unique tool and calling. However, meeting with a chaplain is different from meeting with a clinical therapist. Chaplains usually only meet with counselees one to three times.[21] To be effective, therefore, they must make efficient use of their time and tools during these short-term pastoral counseling sessions. Even though they are not professional clinicians, chaplains are often the first ones to identify issues or to provide support for soldiers with concerns. Thus, they provide an important link

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19 David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short-Term Structured Model*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 19.

20 Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011), 9–10.

21 Notes from graduate class September 2017 in REL E 600 pastoral counseling and chaplain care ministry from professors Blake Boatright and Vance Theodore, two retired Army chaplains.

between soldiers and other mental health professionals to whom they frequently give referrals.

Definition of Terms

The key terms used throughout this booklet are defined as follows:

Chaplain: Latter-day Saint chaplains are commissioned officers in the Armed Forces who perform or provide religious support to the men, women and families in the military. They perform rites, ordinances and other religious support, and provide pastoral counseling. They ensure the free exercise of religion and minister to the various faith traditions in the Armed Forces. "They also must be able to minister to various faith traditions without compromising their own beliefs."[22]

Pastoral Care: "All pastoral work concerned with the support and nurturance of persons and interpersonal relationships, including everyday expression of care and concern that may occur in the midst of various pastoring activities and relationships."[23] Pastoral Counseling: "The caring ministries that are more structured and focused on specifically articulated need or concern . . . 'Counseling' generally implies extended conversation focused on the needs and concerns of the one seeking help."[24]

Pastoral Counseling Process: Is the process that the chaplain and individual engage in to heal, alleviate, recover and grow from various forms of grief, trauma, crises, or issues of faith. This is usually achieved through insight that is, forming a new perspective, making connections between things, or gaining "understanding of why things happen as they do."[25]

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22 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Guidelines for Latter-day Saint Chaplains (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2017), 1.

23 R.J. Hunter, "Pastoral Care and Counseling (Comparative Terminology)," in *The Concise Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, ed. Glenn H. Asquith (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2010), 22.

24 Hunter, "Pastoral Care and Counseling (Comparative Terminology)," 22–23.

25 Clara Hill, *Helping Skills: Facilitating Exploration, Insight and Action* 4th ed. (Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2014), 229.

Spirituality: "The set of beliefs and practices to which individuals may turn for support following a traumatic event."[26]

26 Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Defense, "VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline for Management of Posttraumatic Stress, 2010," https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/MH/ptsd/cpg_PTSD-full-201011612.PDF.

The Use of Scripture during Pastoral Counseling

The Bible has long been used by clergy to console their parishioners in a form called Pastoral Counseling. Howard Clinebell in his foundational work *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling* defines pastoral counseling as "a focused form of Pastoral Care geared toward enabling individuals, couples, and families to cope more constructively with crises, losses, difficult decisions, and other anxiety-laden experiences."[27] Due to the amount of inspiration that can be drawn from its pages the Bible, the Book of Mormon and other scriptures, become a unique tool for Latter-day Saint chaplains as they counsel with their soldiers and families in their challenges with military life.

In Seward Hiltner's *Pastoral Counseling*, published in 1949, he presents various principles and methods for conducting pastoral counseling. Additionally, he provides a chapter on resources for pastoral counselors, which includes how scripture should be used. He first points out that merely saying the words of the Bible is not the same as understanding the text and applying it to a particular situation. [28] Scripture must be understood by both the pastoral counselor and the counselee in order for it to be meaningfully used. Hiltner recognized that the Bible competes with other sources for our attention. Because of this, many people do not learn the stories of the Bible in a religiously meaningful way. As such, many Bible stories "may not have been learned in the context of their religious meaning. David and Goliath may at first have been no more religiously meaningful than Popeye and a giant; Joseph, than Dick Tracy; Noah, than Superman."[29] For this reason, Hiltner believed that pastoral counselors need to assess how familiar with scripture a counselee is before using scripture in the counseling process.
Similarly, David Benner noted that scripture can create a dynamic connection between God and the help seeker. Because of this, "their [scripture] use must never, therefore, be mechanical legalistic, or magical . . . If they enhance this personal contact with God, they make an indispensable contribution to the counseling process. If they do not work to provide this contact,

27 Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011), 9–10.

28 Seward Hiltner, *Pastoral Counseling* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1949), 202.

29. Hiltner, *Pastoral Counseling*, 202.

they are probably being misused."[30] This position is also reflected by Jen Der Pan, et al. "The appropriate and ethical use of prayer or Scripture by a sensitive therapist can be of significant help to Christian clients."[31] Scripture is powerful only if it is used to heal, inspire, motivate, clarify, encourage and empower. Clinebell echoes this. "Use prayer and biblical material in ways that facilitate rather than block the owning and catharsis of negative feelings."[32] Moreover, scripture should only be used in pastoral counseling when it enhances a counselee's connection with God.

In order for pastoral counselors to effectively use scripture while counseling others they must also have a personal connection with scripture themselves. "Only if they are used meaningfully in the personal life of the pastor can they be employed appropriately in counseling."[33] The Bible is a powerful symbol. However, that symbol can be misused by pastors when they develop an "undisciplined dependence upon its symbolic use rather than their careful use of it as a teaching come from God."[34] Not only should the pastoral counselor understand the scriptural text, but they should also understand *why* they should, or should not, employ the usage of scripture. This requires a certain amount of self-scrutiny that will empower a counselor to use scriptures effectively. A pastor must know themselves, and be able to reflect on their behavior. Benner states that such self-scrutiny can lead to questions like, "Is it a way of avoiding talking about an uncomfortable subject? Or might it be a way of providing premature reassurance, possibly even a way of relieving one's own anxiety or distress?"[35]

Scripture cannot be used in a healing way during counseling if the quoted passage is not applicable to the presented problem. Clinebell's first guideline

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30 David G. Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling: A Short Term Structured Model* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 39.

31 Peter Jen Der Pan, Liang-Yu F. Deng, Shiuo Ling Tsai, and S. S. Jenny Yuan, "Perspectives of Taiwanese Pastoral Counselors on the Use of Scripture and Prayer in the Counseling Process," *Psychological Reports* 116.2 (April 2015): 544.

32 Clinebell, Basic Types, 233.

33 Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 37.

34 Wayne E. Oates, *The Bible in Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946), 19.

35 Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 38.

to the proper application of scripture is that it should only be used after the pastor has explored the help seeker's problem and background.[36] Benner also states at an assessment of some kind is important. "The appropriate use of religious resources in counseling is preceded by a pastor's awareness of both the person's problems as well as his or her religious background and present attitudes toward religion."[37] Conducting effective pastoral ministry and care are one way that church leaders can pre-empt this assessment.

Pastors should not only interact with their congregation at the pulpit, but also create with their congregants a community of mutual caregiving between clergy and laypersons alike. Clinebell states that this shared ministry "can and should happen anywhere—for example, on the steps of the church, in an educational setting, from the pulpit, in the pastor's office, in a hospital room, in a home visit, or even in a chance encounter on a street or in an airplane."[38] By performing this ministry of presence an effective pastor can get to know his congregants, so that when they come in times of crises, they already have some level of understanding.

There are, however, certain times when it would be inappropriate to quote scripture. Jen Der Pan, et al. stressed that scripture should not be used with severely disturbed or psychotic clients in need of medication, an untrained pastoral counselor should refer them to a professional. Nor should scripture be used with those who are in active rebellion against God, or those who are not interested in pursuing any explicit spiritual interventions.[39] Clinebell suggests that the pastoral counselor ask the counselee if using scripture would be meaningful.[40] For those who are mentally unstable, or agnostic toward God, quoted scripture may not contain any positive meaning to them at all.

This point leads to another important principle of scripture usage during pastoral counseling. A pastor should have an idea of how the passage would

36 Clinebell, Basic Types, 233.

37 Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 38.

38 Clinebell, *Basic Types*, 9.

39 Jen Der Pan, et al., "Perspectives of Taiwanese Pastoral Counselors," 544–45.

40 Clinebell, *Basic Types*, 233. See also Benner, *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*, 38.

be received. Scripture has infinite possible interpretations, and any single verse can mean one thing to one person, and have an entirely different meaning to another person, although an effective pastoral counselor can influence how a passage can be received by how they present it. "How the text is used affects its meaning . . . In this context [a pastoral counselor] will be aware of the way in which the conflicts and desires of the client shape meaning."[41] Therefore, it is important for the pastoral counselor to know themselves, the text, as well as thoroughly exploring the problem that the counselee brings. After using a scripture, according to Clinebell, the counselor should give the counselee an opportunity to explore their thoughts and feelings brought to light by that scripture. Thus, using scripture during pastoral counseling should not be a monologue. Rather, it should be a dialogue between counselor and counselee; allowing the Holy Spirit to work within the relationship which can provide insight for both parties.

1st Model: Biblical Narrative Model.

Human beings are story telling creatures. In the realm of pastoral counseling this was recognized by Ruard Ganzevoort. He affirmed, "People tell stories. They do so not only indaily life, but perhaps even more in pastoral counseling settings. In fact, they have to, because a story can express what cannot be said otherwise."[42] In order to understand how people use their own personal narratives, it was important for Ganzevoort to take a hermeneutical approach to study "the ways individuals interpret their lives in order to reach a meaningful understanding of actions and events."[43] Each individual, family and society, tells narratives about themselves in order to make meaning of life's events. These narratives do not just convey information, they also interpret information.[44] As part of the process of interpreting life events, people (families/society) form and maintain their own *narrative identity*. This is defined by Ganzevoort as,

41 Vivienne Joyce, "Religion and Psychodynamics" in *The Guide to Pastoral Counseling and Care*, eds. Gary Ahlskog and Harry Sands (Madison, CT: Psychosocial Press, 2000), 62.

42 R. Ruard Ganzevoort, "Investigating Life-Stories: Personal Narratives in Pastoral Psychology," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 21.4 (December 1993): 277.

43 Ganzevoort, "Investigating Life-Stories," 277.

44 Ganzevoort, "Investigating Life-Stories," 277.

> In telling the stories of his or her life, the individual creates a central character in the story. This is the image of the individual's identity one strives to construct and maintain. Through all the different life stories, there is a continuity, a certain pattern that we can call the personal narrative, that frames the interpretation. Therefore, we define life-stories as narrative patterns of interpretations whereby we seek to discover the sense, meaning, and value of life and of the events that are occurring.[45]

The narrative identity is maintained by, as well as sustains, events that occur in everyday life.

The narrative identity that is created and continued will affect how life events are interpreted and how the stories are told. People will try to maintain their default narratives for as long as possible. When an event confronts the narrative, and if the narrative cannot provide a suitable explanation for it, then a crisis may occur. "We try to assimilate new facts into our personal narrative. When this is appraised as impossible, the personal narrative has to be accommodated."[46]

Ganzevoort identifies two types of crises that result when the personal narrative cannot accommodate them, accidental or traumatic and developmental. An accidental or traumatic crisis arises from external facts or experiences that are presented to the individual. Developmental crisis come from within the individual and their personal development.[47] These types of crises occur multiple times over the course of a person's life. If a person is capable of restructuring their personal narrative to meet the crisis, they may experience little distress. For this reason, Ganzevoort suggests that pastoral (and psychological) counselors should not just listen to personal narratives but also help the counselee tell the story from a new perspective.[48] Doing so will allow the counselee to reconstruct their narrative identity in a way that can accommodate their traumatic or developmental crisis.[49]

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45 Ganzevoort, "Investigating Life-Stories," 277.

46 Ganzevoort, "Investigating Life-Stories," 279.

47 Ganzevoort, "Investigating Life-Stories," 279.

48 Ganzeport, "Investing Life Stories," 280.

49 Ganzevoort, "Investigating Life-Stories," 281–82.

An example of psychotherapy that develops this same understanding of the story telling aspect of humanity in a clinical setting is Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET). It was developed primarily to help trauma victims with PTSD reconstruct their traumatic event in a way that allows them to process and recover.

> People with PTSD often fail to integrate traumatic experiences into the narrative of their lives . . . In telling the story, the patient is exposed to the sensory information that accompanies the memory and to the image of the events themselves. The patient actually engages in his or her own fear/trauma network by narrating the fragments throughout the course of therapy, and he or she is able to reweave the events back into a *cool-system framework* controlling the triggers present with the hot memories.[50]

Essentially, NET reworks how a person remembers a traumatic event by allowing them to process the sensory experiences of that event. "NET works at the level of the individual by encouraging the telling of the trauma story and by reliving the past traumatic sceneries within an imaginative exposure design. The goal is to allow for the modification of the *fear network* co-constructed by traumatic and stressful events."[51] That is to say, NET seeks to help counselees experience their traumatic event (the sights, sounds, emotions, and meanings) in a way that allows them to put into words their negative feelings as they develop a trauma narrative with the counselor. The counselor helps the counselee construct, over multiple sessions as needed, a chronological narrative of their traumatic event. The end goal is that this process of trauma narrative construction will allow the counselee to make a positive change to how they feel about and remember the traumatic event.

In his book *Using Scripture in Pastoral Counseling,* Edward Wimberly presents the Biblical Narrative Model that also has its roots in the story telling traditions of humanity. Stephen Ballaban, while serving as a chaplain for the

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50 Maggie Schauer, Frank Neuner, and Thomas Elbert, Narrative Exposure Therapy: A Short-Term Treatment for Traumatic Stress Disorders (Cambridge, MA: Hogrefe Publishing, 2011), 35.

51 Schauer, Neuner, and Elbert, Narrative Exposure Therapy, 3.

VA, commented on Wimberly's work calling it a "seminal work" in the field of pastoral counseling.[52] Similar to Ganzevoort, Wimberly's model strives to reframe a counselee's interpretation of the presenting problem within the view of chosen scriptural stories. Wimberly also recognized the usefulness of psychology in pastoral counseling. He identified three traditional methods for using the Bible in pastoral counseling, dynamic, moral instructional and disclosive.[53]

According to the dynamic method, scriptural passages "are chosen for their relevance to the psychological dynamics in the life of the counselee," and "concern is for the way the Bible can inform the psychological problem the counselee has in ways that are consistent with psychology." [54] The moral instructional method is not concerned with consistency with psychology, only on how the scriptures can influence moral behavior.[55] The disclosive approach refers "to the text's ability to reveal its meaning and in doing so influence the reader and listener."[56] Wimberly's own model combines the dynamic and disclosive methods together. In short, the scriptures can be used to bring the counselee insight and influence them towards positive change in ways that are consistent with modern psychological practices.

The following displays the seven steps of Wimberly's Biblical Narrative Model:

Biblical Narrative Model

1. Attend to the presenting problem
2. Attend to the mythology (narrative identity), whether personal, marital or family
3. Identify the nature of the mythology
4. Map the influence of the mythology
5. Attend to the preferred story
6. Set goals
7. Re-authoring the mythology

52 Steven Ballaban, "The Use of Traumatic Biblical Narratives in Spiritual Recovery from Trauma: Theory and Case Study," *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* 68.4 (December, 2014), 4.

53 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 31.

54 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 31.

55 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 31.

56 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 31.

The first step the Biblical Narrative Model is to "address the story surrounding the presenting problem."[57] Much like Benner and Clinebell have stated above, this requires exploring the context of the issues at hand until the counselor has sufficient understanding. It also includes an assessment of the counselee's religious history, so that the counselor can get a "feel for how counselees use religious resources and language every day."[58] This dialogue will piece together both the context of the issues as well as how the beliefs of the counselee relate to the problem.

The second step is to attend to the personal, marital, or family mythology. Mythology is defined as "the counselee's self-beliefs and self-conviction." It is made up of "symbolic and emotionally laden themes that make up the self [or couple/family] and the self in relation to others."[59] This is essentially the same as the *narrative identity* spoken by Ganzevoort. This step includes an exploration of the historic values and beliefs throughout the counselee's life as well as any Bible stories with which they identify. Wimberly also states that it is crucial to understand the counselee's image of God. Various images of God can provide different avenues to explore more areas of the personal mythology.[60]

The third step is related and involves identifying any other personal, marital and/or family mythologies that may be influencing the counselee or have an impact on the presenting problem. These are additional narratives that the couple or family tells about themselves.

The fourth step is to trace the influence of the personal mythology through the life of the counselee. This goes beyond the impact that the personal values and beliefs have on the presenting problem, but also looks at the impact that those values and beliefs have on the personal narrative and actions. "Emphasis needs to be placed on the fact that any significant changes that take place in the counselee's life will take place largely because he or she has given some attention to the personal mythology."[61] That is to say, this

57 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 11.

58 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 11.

59 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 22.

60 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 23.

61 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 23–24.

step looks at how the presenting problem impacts the narrative identity of the counselee and determining the counselee's hermeneutical starting point. This step answers the question: how do they use their story to interpret the presenting problem?

Ballaban identifies step five as "the crux of Wimberly's use of sacred text."[62] Here, the counselor and counselee choose an ideal narrative from the Bible and then examine how the scriptures might help the counselee to design and enact that ideal story in their own life. Attention is focused on the presenting problem and the results that the counselee hopes they will get from pastoral counseling.[63] This includes finding a scriptural story, such as David and Goliath, that will help the counselee reframe the problem and produce a new interpretation of their life. That is to say, the counselee becomes David and interprets their challenges as Goliath.

The sixth step is to set goals and create an action plan with the counselee so that they can execute their preferred story. This largely consists of exploring areas in the person's life and story that will be focused on with counseling.[64] The goals are made with the mindset that the counselee will re-author the scriptural story to become their own. The counselee then becomes David, while the problem represents Goliath.

The seventh and final step in Wimberly's model is to re-author the personal mythology, that is, to modify the narrative identity, the beliefs and values that the person, couple or family has. Wimberly notes that this step truly begins as soon as the counseling starts, but it is outside the perception of the counselee.[65] It is at this point where the previously identified scriptural stories are brought to the front and applied to the life of the counselee. They begin to take the role of the main characters; characters who they identify with because of similar situations. Wimberly states that "the purpose of re-authoring is to use reason to gain distance from the personal mythology in order to discern the possible alternatives that could lead to a preferred

62 Ballaban, "The Use of Traumatic Biblical Narratives," 5.

63 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 24.

64 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 24.

65 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 24.

story."[66] Framing their problem through a scriptural narrative instead of only their old narrative identity allows the counselee to approach the problem from a different angle, which is likely to produce different results.
Wimberly's narrative based model can be applied to individuals, couples and families alike. Each additional person adds another dimension of values and beliefs to explore and draw insight from. It also empowers the counselees to take charge and find what story best resonates with themselves.

2nd Model: Psalms in Grief Counseling

Whereas Wimberly's model represents a broad approach to the use of scripture in pastoral counseling the second model that will be adapted for use by this booklet represents a more focused approach. Donald Capps developed a model for the use of psalms during grief counseling.[67] As already discussed, grief is a part of military life. Grief can be felt as result of the death of a loved one, and also during the physical separation of deployment. There is an element of grief in each of the challenges previously discussed, e.g., addition, depression and sexual abuse. Whereas Wimberly's narrative model can be used to address a broad variety of presenting problems, Capps's model for the use of psalms provides a formal and scriptural structure focused specifically on processing grief.

The following presents Capps's structure for understanding grief through the lamentation psalms.

The Structure of the Psalms of Lament

1. Address to God
2. Complaint
3. Confession of Trust
4. Petition
5. Words of Assurance
6. Vow to Praise

66 Wimberly, *Using Scripture*, 44.

67 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 59.

Capps recognizes that there are various types of psalms, each having its own form and structure and focuses on the "Psalms of Lamentation."[68] Lamentation psalms can vary in form, but usually consist of six elements.[69] First is the "Address to God," that is the psalmist begins the address and cries to God for help. Secondly, a "Complaint." This is the presenting problem that the psalmist brings to God, usually either sickness, threat of enemies, or prospect of death. The complaint often introduces intense feelings of anger, either directed toward the psalmist's enemies, or even toward God.

Capps understands that these intense emotions "reflect the fact that the *range* and *depth* of negative feelings acceptable in the lament is broader and more intense than is often encouraged in pastoral counseling."[70] Yet, notwithstanding how uncomfortable this may make the pastoral counselor, Capps recommends that such emotions should not be ignored and denied. Empathy is needed to help the counselee process all their complex emotions.

The third characteristic is a "Confession of Trust." After the psalmist gives their complaint they then state their belief that God is able to act and intervene on their behalf. This is an action of faith.

The fourth is the "Petition." After expressing their confidence in God, the psalmist pleads for divine aid. The fifth step is "Words of Assurance." Here the psalmist expresses confidence that their petition will be heard. Capps realizes that some biblical scholars suggest that during temple worship it was the priest who responded to the petitioner. [71] As such, the pastoral counselor may consider themselves the ones to respond with words of comfort, but to do so they must empathetically make the counselee's petition their own.[72]

The sixth characteristic of lament psalms is the "Vow of Praise." The psalmist testifies of the deeds God has done for them and will continue to praise God for the deeds he has not yet done.

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68 Capps recognizes that no two scholars agree on exactly what the types of psalms are or which ones belong to each type. See Capps, Biblical Approaches, 59.

69 See Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 60–61.

70 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 67.

71 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 61.

72 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 61.

Capps then addresses Kübler-Ross's model for grief, which structures grief as: denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.[73] Capps compares her model with the six-stage psalm of lament structure. Capps maintains that the weakness in Kübler-Ross's five stage model is that it fails to include the transforming intervention of God.[74] The psalm of lament is deeply spiritual as well as personal, and when processed it can become a transformative moment in the petitioner's faith journey.

Capps takes four lessons from reimagining the grief process through studying psalms. The first is that during grieving, a person can feel both a wide range of emotion as well as the intense depth of those emotions. Grieving persons can feel negative emotions such as guilt or anger, and also positive emotions such as self-justification. "Complaints arise out of this welter of feelings, and are the grieving person's attempt to focus these feelings, to give them a 'name.'"[75] Importantly, God can handle all these emotions. Anger, fear, depression, God will be empathetic to the plight of the petitioner.

The complaint stage of the psalm has room for Kübler-Ross's anger stage. Chaplains should let their counselees know that it is normal to be angry, and that they can express this anger to God, even if this anger is directed at God. He is perfectly empathetic which makes him an excellent listener. However, chaplains need to be aware that people may lash out in anger at them since the chaplain is the one who is physically present.

The second lesson is the importance of the petition. Kübler-Ross has bargaining leading to depression, as the bargaining is often seen as futile. However, the psalms illustrate the confidence that God will listen to the petition and intervene one way or another. "Petition has great importance for the grief process. It enables one to do something about one's complaints by clarifying how they might be alleviated, and by laying hold of new spiritual energies to overcome them."[76] Many people who are grieving do not bargain with God, but rather make legitimate requests for God's aid. Capps relays

73 See Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, On Death and Dying (London: Macmillian Company, 1969.

74 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 76.

75 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 78.

76 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 80.

these through petitions such as "Remove my anger, loneliness, frustration, sense of betrayal. Help me understand the meaning of my loss . . . Remove my guilt for things I ought to have said and done but did not."[77] It is an act of faith that God will work to provide this aid.

The third lesson is the role of the words of assurance. Capps, using biblical scholarship, suggests that in ancient Israel, it was the priest that responded to the petition with words of assurance. In a pastoral counseling setting, then, it may be appropriate for the pastoral counselor to give words of assurance to the griever. [78] However, Capps states that the assurance from the counselor cannot take the place of experiencing God's intervention. The counselor can still give assurance by being empathetic to the plight of the griever. "The counselor may serve as a mediator in support of the counselee's petition. This means making the counselee's petition one's own."[79] Ultimately, though, the pastoral counselor needs to let the counselee work through all these emotions and feel God's divine love for themselves. The chaplain cannot force them to receive assurance.

The final lesson to be learned through the psalms in grief counseling is by personalizing the vow to praise. This step may be very difficult for some, while easy for others. "For some who are bereaved, it seems perfectly natural that the grief process will culminate in the praise of God because praise is an integral part of their Christian hope."[80] Others, though, may be unable to praise God in their grief, "but they can know experientially that God mourns with them."[81]

In these instances it is the role of the counselor to enable the griever to sense that God too is grieving. The realization of their own reluctance to praise may also be used as another area of focus during pastoral counseling; that is, forgiving others, including God.[82] Capps recognizes that it can be difficult

77 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 80.

78 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 61, 82.

79 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 83

80 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 85.

81 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 86.

82 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 87.

for someone to praise God when they are angry at Him for not preventing the disaster. God could be included in the list of enemies of their own lament psalm. As the pastoral counselor is able to help them understand that God too feels their sorrow then they may be able to replace recriminations with positive thoughts and experiences in their own life.[83]

Capps' model reinterprets grief, not as some depressing conclusion, but rather empowering and an exalting experience that can lead the griever to know God on a deeper level. His model still allows for people to become angry, even towards God, and at the same time the form of the lament psalm allows a person to vent from a position of faith, believing that God can relieve them from their anger and grief. This process allows the person to experience God's own care for their emotions and lives that will hopefully bring them relief from their grief.

Summary

Whereas the atonement of Jesus Christ provides an umbrella effect in helping chaplains provide hope and comfort for those they are counseling, the use of Wimberly's narrative model can address a broad variety of presenting problems like addiction, moral injury, PTSD, etc., That chaplains encounter in their pastoral counseling. Also, Capps's model for the use of Psalms in understanding grief provides a formal and scriptural structure that focuses specifically on processing grief in a way that allows for feelings of depression.

The following discussion offers examples of how the narrative and grief approaches can be used in scriptural based counseling. It also includes some examples of (and by no means exhaustive) scripture references that can be utilized with these two scriptural counseling models, in conjunction with the doctrine taught by the scriptures. The combination of these tools can enlighten the narratives and psalms. The subsequent content gives the chaplain an idea of how to use these methods.

Latter-day Saint, and other Christians, tend to view scriptural characters as persons that should be emulated. Certainly, there are heroic figures

83 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 87.

that have desirable attributes that should be copied, but the scriptures also include plenty of troubling narratives that cause modern readers to struggle to identify with scriptural characters. In his book, *This Strange and Sacred Scripture*, Matthew Schlimm addresses the discomfort that some Biblical narratives cause to our modern sensibilities, and concludes that they are still of worth to modern readers. One example he gives is the rape of Dinah by Shechem in Genesis 34. He points out that there is not a single character in the chapter that should be emulated by modern Christians.

> At the outset of this chapter, readers witness a tribal prince rape Dinah. When her father—our patriarch Jacob—learns about it, he does nothing. If his response is appalling, so is that of Dinah's brothers. They slaughter not only Shechem but also every male inhabitant of his city, grossly distorting the rite of circumcision in the process. If we approach the Bible while assuming we should imitate its characters, we'll give up on reading it. There's no one in Genesis 34 whom readers should try to copy. Shechem's rape, Jacob's silence, and the brothers' violence—all of these actions are horrendous. Readers expecting the Bible to contain rosy and inspiring stories are in for a sore surprise.[84]

Schlimm continues by stating that the Bible (and we can add the Book of Mormon) may not always give readers a set of directions to follow in response to traumatic events. In Genesis 34, the text does not proscribe a course of action to take whenever a loved one is raped. Instead, Schlimm recognizes that Genesis 34 ends with a question. In the last verse of the chapter, Levi and Simeon, after having killed Shechem and his townsfolk, ask Jacob, "Should our sister be treated like a whore?" (Genesis 34:31, NRSV). The Bible does not respond to that question, instead, the story just ends with the question. "We might prefer to ignore such questions because they involve unpleasant topics. But the Bible refuses to let us do so."[85]

The purpose of the story or narrative is to prompt discussion, not to answer

84 Matthew Richard Schlimm, *This Strange and Sacred Scripture: Wrestling with the Old Testament and its Oddities* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015), 65.

85 Schlimm, This Strange and Sacred Scripture, 65.

a question.[86] These kinds of discussions are the kinds of discussions that chaplains will have with their soldiers and families. There is meaning to be found in these narratives that the Bible, the Book of Mormon and other sacred texts offer. The psalms also portray the depths of human emotion.

Chaplains, as pastoral counselors, can use such narratives and psalms during their pastoral counseling to discuss events that may have happened in the lives of the counselee and the feelings they experience. Soldiers experiencing the horrors of war can find comfort in knowing that God knows their sufferings. Bible scholar Anathea Portier-Young wrote an article addressing the role of violence in the Bible. She commented on the work of Army Chaplain Mel Baars and stated,

> for soldiers who had experienced and even committed atrocities in war, there is tremendous value in learning that Scripture knows their horror and shame and knows the dehumanizing effect of war. Finding these horrors contained within sacred Scripture might suggest to combat veterans that they are not cast outside the orbit of God's power to redeem.[87]

Ultimately, "Our sacred traditions know the horror they know. These horrors come to us in a form that must be engaged and argued with, but their very presence in Scripture suggests that there is no horror we dare not speak before God, no crime we dare not confess, because there is no horror that God does not see and know."[88] This is consistent with the theology of the Church. Jesus does know the pain of the soldier because even our most sacred texts include that pain. Latter-day Saint chaplains, then, can use the scriptures to connect to the soldier and bring them healing and comfort. God understands and has compassion for even the soldier in war.

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86 See also Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 106.

87 Anathea Portier-Young, "Drinking the Cup of Horror and Gnawing on Its Shards: Biblical Theology Through Biblical Violence, Not Around It," in *Biblical Theologies*, ed. Heinrich Assel, Stefan Beyerle, and Christfried Böttrich (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 407.

88 Portier-Young, "Drinking the Cup of Horror," 407.

Similarly, the scriptures also include accounts of all manner of earthly challenges, trials, abuses, and horrors. Through the use of the two models presented in this booklet, chaplains can help soldiers and their families in their challenges pull meaning, comfort, and hope from the scriptures precisely because the scriptures discuss things similar to what the modern reader may be going through. While understanding the scriptural context behind the scriptural stories is important to accurately derive meaning, arriving at any therapeutic meaning (insight) is impossible without the reader inserting themselves into the text in a way that is meaningful to them.

Military Challenges and Scriptural Resources

This section is organized by topics: the Atonement of Jesus Christ, addiction and substance abuse, depression, family, grief, moral injury, pornography, PTSD, and sexual abuse.[89] There are considerable inter-correlations between many of the counseling topics presented and each section should not be read as exclusive of all others. Each topic consists of three parts, they begin by addressing how the challenges of the topic manifest within the military culture. This is to provide readers with an initial understanding that is meant to be further supplemented by the chaplain's own research. Then, each topic includes teachings from Church leaders that shed light on the topic. Finally, select scripture references are given to provide insight into doctrine.

Atonement

Within academia and the military, the Atonement of Jesus Christ is not formally recognized; however, they do occasionally discuss the principles of spirituality and religiosity as coping mechanisms for veterans. One such article, by William Sterner and Lisa Jackson-Cherry, defines spirituality as the integration of the "aspects of purpose, meaning, transcendence, and connectedness, which may include a higher power" and religiosity as "an organized belief system often connected to a religious institution and the integration of common practices or rituals."[90] Additionally, the terms spirituality and religiosity are not mutually exclusive and are often interchangeable. Sterner and Jackson-Cherry recognize that previous studies have "found a positive relationship between high levels of religiosity and lower levels of depression"[91] and that positive religious coping skills contribute to post-traumatic growth.[92]

At the same time, they recognize that spirituality can also have detrimental

89 It should be noted that this is not a comprehensive list of pastoral counseling topics, but a few of the primary issues and concerns that chaplain deal with during counseling sessions.

90 William R. Sterner and Lisa R. Jackson-Cherry, "The Influence of Spirituality and Religion on Coping for Combat-Deployed Military Personnel," *Counseling and Values* 60.1 (April 2015): 49.

91 Sterner and Jackson-Cherry, "The Influence of Spirituality and Religion," 50.

92 Sterner and Jackson-Cherry, "The Influence of Spirituality and Religion," 51.

effects on military personnel. A person with high spirituality may be at increased risk for spiritual conflict, manifesting as moral injury, if they perceive their behaviors as conflicting with their spiritual values.[93] Furthermore, since spirituality is subjective, they recognized that those who "perceived their Higher Power as a source of validation and acceptance were more likely to find healthy meaning in their deployment and recovery from trauma. Those who reported their Higher Power as being judgmental, punishing, and rejecting had increased difficulty recovering from combat-related trauma."[94]

Sterner and Jackson-Cherry conclude that therapists and chaplains should work in conjunction with each other during military deployments and that they should assess the role that spirituality plays in the lives of soldiers.[95] Doing so will allow both the therapist and chaplain to be aware of the positive tools, and weaknesses of a soldier's spirituality and thus facilitate positive growth through the deployment.

For the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the most important event to happen in the history of the world. Elder Tad R. Callister calls the Atonement "the heart of the gospel."[96] The Atonement "infuses life into every doctrine, every principle, and every ordinance, transforming what might otherwise be a lofty but nonetheless lifeless ideal, to a vibrant spiritual truth."[97]

Elder Callister taught that Jesus Christ knows the depth of all human experience. "While the Savior knew all things in the Spirit, he also knew the pains, infirmities, and temptations of man as experienced in the flesh. He never allowed godly power to insulate him when he walked the path of mortals. He chose to let every pain and affliction and weakness of man traverse and engulf his physical frame."[98] Christ suffered not just our sins, but

93 Sterner and Jackson-Cherry, "The Influence of Spirituality and Religion," 52.

94 Sterner and Jackson-Cherry, "The Influence of Spirituality and Religion," 51.

95 Sterner and Jackson-Cherry, "The Influence of Spirituality and Religion," 63.

96 Tad R. Callister, *The Infinite Atonement* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 8.

97 Callister, *The Infinite Atonement*, 8.

98 Callister, *The Infinite Atonement*, 207.

also our individual pains and heart aches (Alma 7:11–12). Jesus Christ knows the pain of the solider in combat.

Additionally, a precise explanation of the Atonement of Jesus Christ is difficult to arrive at. Elder Callister described the study of the Atonement as a man who goes to a cabin in the mountains to absorb the scenery. No matter which direction he faces he cannot comprehend the whole of the landscape. "Beauty besets him in every direction. So, it is with the Atonement. Regardless of our vantage point, it is glorious to behold."[99]

The Latter-day Saint Bible Dictionary describes Christ's Atonement through the lens of sin. "The word [atonement] describes the setting 'at one' of those who have been estranged and denotes the reconciliation of man to God. Sin is the cause of the estrangement, and therefore the purpose of atonement is to correct or overcome the consequences of sin."[100] Redemption from sin is central to the Atonement, however, that is only a part of the effects of the Atonement.

When Alma taught the Nephites about the mission of Jesus Christ he said:

> And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people. And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities (Alma 7:11–12)

For Alma, Christ's atoning sacrifice was not only a redemption from sin, but also from pains and sicknesses regardless of their connection to sin. This echoes what Jacob taught centuries earlier. "He suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam" (2 Nephi 9:21).

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99 Callister, *The Infinite Atonement*, 1.

100 The Bible Dictionary in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible, "Atonement," 617.

Elder Packer taught that Jesus Christ embodies the role of healer and restorer. "Restoring what you cannot restore, healing the wound you cannot heal, fixing that which you broke and you cannot fix is the very purpose of the of the atonement of Christ."[101] Additionally, "save for the exception of the very few who defect to perdition, there is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no apostasy, no crime exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness. That is the promise of the atonement of Christ."[102] This healing aspect applies to all categories that have been discussed in this booklet, whether it's the victim or perpetrator of sexual abuse, those who suffer from PTSD or moral injury, depression, substance abuse and familial conflict.

Fiona and Terryl Givens contribute to this thought and describe the depth of understanding and compassion as coming from Christ's own mortality. "Christ's very real participation in human despair, loneliness and the fear of being forsaken work in him a perfect understanding of the human condition."[103] They also recognize that Jesus's title of *Savior* of the World comes from the Greek word *soter* which also means *healer*. "We could with equal linguistic justification call him Jesus Christ, Son of God, *Healer* of the World."[104]

Jesus not only suffered for the sins of humanity, he also endured all other manner of pains and torments so that he could know "how to succor his people according to their infirmities." Terryl Givens, highlighting other Latter-day Saint writers, referred to this understanding of the Atonement by calling Christ "the supremely empathic One."[105] Additionally, Givens stated "Christ's willing experience of every human pain ever suffered is an unparalleled gesture of love. But according to the Book of Mormon, it also provides the basis for his perfect empathy, that makes it possible for humans

101 Boyd K. Packer, "The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness," *Ensign*, November 1995, 19-20.

102 Packer, "The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness," 20.

103 Fiona Givens and Terryl Givens, *The Christ Who Heals* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2017), 57.

104 Givens and Givens, *The Christ Who Heals*, 64.

105 Givens, *Wrestling the Angel*, 229.

to exhibit complete trust and confidence in his comprehension of our pain-filled lives."[106]

Christ experienced the same pain that the soldier feels on the battlefield, or the pain that a family feels when their loved one returns from deployment, a completely different person having been scarred by the horrors of war. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is his full life mission (3 Nephi 27:13–21).
It is important, as President Nelson taught in the April 2017 conference, to not refer to the Atonement of Jesus Christ as simply "the Atonement." "These expressions present a real risk of misdirecting faith by treating the *event* as if *it* had living existence and capabilities independent of our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ."[107] When focusing on these healing aspects of Jesus Christ it is important for chaplains to remember this.

> There is no amorphous entity called "the Atonement" upon which we may call for succor, healing, forgiveness, or power. Jesus Christ is the source. Sacred terms such as *Atonement* and *Resurrection* describe what the Savior did, according to the Father's plan, so that we may live with hope in this life and gain eternal life in the world to come. The Savior's atoning sacrifice—the central act of all human history—is best understood and appreciated when we expressly and clearly connect it to Him.[108]

Jesus Christ is the actor of the atonement. Without him the atonement has no power. Jesus is the source of healing.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ is infinite (Alma 34: 9–16). Since the Atonement is infinite it covers all things, even the soldier's pain. Chaplains can use this understanding to help bring the suffering soldier and family to Christ. By understanding Christ's perfect empathy of humanity, they can have the confidence that Christ can heal them. The Atonement applies to the healing and recovery for each of the subjects discussed in this booklet. Jesus

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106 Givens, *Wrestling the Angel,* 234.

107 Russell M. Nelson, "Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives," *Ensign*, May 2017, 40.

108 Nelson, "Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives," 40.

Christ knows the soldier's pain. He knows the family's pain. "And with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

Recommended Scriptures:

Mosiah 14–16 (doctrine): Abinadi's sermon to King Noah and his priests provides an excellent understanding of the mission of Christ. While Abinadi condemns King Noah, he still presents a message of hope and rejoicing for those who accept Christ. (Mosiah 15:18) Since Abinadi builds off of Isaiah chapters 52 and 53, Latter-day Saint chaplains, when counseling fellow Christians, may consider interpreting Isaiah in a similar fashion to Abinadi; one that highlights the hope of redemption.

Mosiah 28:4 (doctrine): The sons of Mosiah were called the very vilest of sinners, and yet the Lord, in his mercy, spared them. See also 1 Timothy 1:13–16 where Paul expresses similar thoughts about himself, even commenting on God's mercy toward himself.

Alma 7:11–12 (doctrine): Alma seems to be reinterpreting Isaiah 53:4,[109] and as such chaplains may consider its use with other Christians as mentioned above. The author of Hebrews also conveys a similar understanding of Christ's Atonement, that is to say, the mission and empathy in Hebrews 2:17–18. The principle that Alma teaches is that the Atonement of Jesus Christ covers everything. Knowing this, "Let us therefore come bodly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). Jesus Christ stands ready to embrace us all that we may be healed from whatever our infirmities.

Alma 34:9–10 (doctrine): Amulek provides the rationale and necessity for an infinite atonement. Since the atonement is endless, even soldiers and their families can take comfort in it.

Alma 36 and Acts 9:1–9 (narrative): Both of these narratives depict someone (Alma and Saul) who began as an enemy of God, yet through a dramatic miracle they both turn their lives around and become powerful workers of

109 Thomas A. Wayment, "The Hebrew Text of Alma 7:11," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14.1 (2005): 98–103, 130.

good in the world. These narratives may be considered for use and adaptation with Wimberly's model.

3 Nephi 27:12–21 (doctrine): Jesus himself lays out the Father's plan for the redemption of humanity, that Christ would assume the human condition, suffer and die so that he could bring souls to the Father through the principles and ordinances of the gospel. When this chapter is understood in conjunction with the Latter-day Saint understanding of the Plan of Salvation it can provide a framework of hope. At the same time, Chaplains will have to be sensitive to the framework of their counselees.

Moses 6:27–40 (doctrine): Here, Enoch is shown a vision of all creation. Enoch is surprised when he sees God weeping for the world and asks not simply *why* God weeps but *how it is even possible* for God to be sorrowful (vv. 28–29). God responds, "Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands" (v. 32) and since humanity is in a fallen state "wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?" (v. 37).

Terryl and Fiona Givens point out that is not the wickedness or disobedience that God mourns, but rather that God weeps for humanity's "misery" and "suffering."[110] Another insight gained from these verses is that God, infinite and perfect as he is, still feels pain. The scriptures make it clear that God feels much more than happiness, he experiences the full range of emotions. This understanding can be used to give hope to people who suffer. It is ok for us to feel what we feel. While we certainly want to feel happy all the time, it is therapeutic to process the entire range of our emotions.

These verses provide Latter-day Saints with a different view of God than some other religions, and so the insight that God is empathetic to such a level that he weeps may not be accepted by other theologies. Nevertheless, it is a wellspring of hope and comfort that chaplains may draw from.

110 Terryl Givens and Fiona Givens, T*he God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Peak, 2012), 25.

Addiction and Substance Abuse

An article published by Dr. Bray et al. in 2010 compared results of the 2008 DoD Health Behavior Survey with previous DoD Health Behavior Surveys since 1980.[111] The purpose of the survey was to monitor and quantify issues related to lifestyle behaviors, including substance use (legal and illegal), stress, PTSD, anxiety, and suicidal ideation and attempts.[112] The 2008 survey questioned 40,436 Armed Forces personnel from all branches of the military. For the purposes of this booklet, the most important findings from Bray's analysis are the use and misuse of four different types of substances: illicit drug use, prescription drug misuse, alcohol use and cigarette smoking.
The article concluded that rates of illicit drug use had sharply declined from 28% in 1980 to only 3% in 2002. This is largely due to modern drug screening procedures and the current no tolerance culture in the military.[113] However, Dr. Bray also recognized that for the 2005 and 2008 surveys the wording was changed to accommodate prescription drug misuse apart from illicit drug use. As such, the rate for misuse of prescription drugs has grown from 4% in 2005 to 11% in 2008.[114] This increase reflects the rising trend in the civilian population for opioid misuse during the same period. Though, it should also be noted that opioid use has declined in recent years in both military and civilian settings.[115]

According to Bray heavy alcohol use, defined as five or more drinks per drinking occasion at least once per week, increased sharply from 15% in 1998 to 20% in 2008.[116] Such heavy drinking among active duty military personnel is concerning because it is associated with other unintentional injuries including non-combat related hospitalizations and death, as well as adversely affecting military readiness, workplace productivity, safety and

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111 Robert M. Bray, et al., "Substance Use and Mental Health Trends Among U.S. Military Active Duty Personnel: Key Findings From the 2008 DoD Health Behavior Survey," *Military Medicine* 175.6 (June 2010): 390–99.

112 Bray, "Substance Use and Mental Health Trends, 390.

113 Bray, "Substance Use and Mental Health Trends," 397.

114 Bray, "Substance Use and Mental Health Trends," 397.

115 William Kazanis, et al. "Opioid Use Patterns Among Active Duty Service Members and Civilians: 2006–2014," *Military Medicine* 183.3/4 (March/April 2018): 158.

116 Bray, "Substance Use and Mental Health Trends," 397.

healthcare costs.[117] Bray also acknowledges the concern that binge drinking may manifest as a self-medication behavior for comorbid mental health problems such as PTSD, anxiety and depression.[118]

Cigarette use has decreased from nearly 50% in 1980 to 31% in 2008.[119] Still, this means that nearly a third of active duty personnel continue to smoke. A more recent study that examined cigarette usage rates among individuals with mental illness and that that while in general smoking rates have decreased in the past ten years, the rates have remained fairly the same within individuals who have mental illnesses.[120] Most notably cigarette use appears comorbid with PTSD at a general range of 24% to 27%, though the authors recognize that numbers are likely higher due to not accounting for non-cigarette tobacco products.[121]

Within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints illicit drugs, alcohol and tobacco use in not condoned. Doctrine and Covenants section 89 specifically prohibits wine, strong drinks and tobacco (D&C 89:5–8). Additionally, modern apostles have included illegal drugs and any other addictive substances in these prohibitions. President Boyd K. Packer reminded the saints, that "all are taught to avoid tea, coffee, liquor, tobacco, and of course varieties of drugs and addictive substances, which are ever present before our young people."[122]

In another talk President Packer explained *why* the saints have such high standards, including abstaining from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. The reason President Packer gave was simple. "The Church you belong to, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is the restored Church. When you know what *restored* means, you will understand why standards of conduct are as they are."[123] President Packer continued to teach that the Church is

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117 Mandy A. Stahre, et al., "Binge Drinking Among U.S. Active-Duty Military Personnel," American *Journal of Preventive Medicine* 36.3 (March 2009): 208–209.

118 Bray, "Substance Use and Mental Health Trends," 397.

119 Bray, "Substance Use and Mental Health Trends," 397.

120 Irene Pericot-Valverde, et al., "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Tobacco Use: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," *Addictive Behaviors* 84 (2018): 239.

121 Pericot-Valverde, "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Tobacco Use," 244.

122 Boyd K. Packer, "Guided by the Holy Spirit," *Ensign*, May 2011, 31.

123 Boyd K. Packer, "The Standard of Truth Has Been Erected," *Ensign*, November 2003, 24.

the institution established by God to help bring about "the great plan of happiness."

We do not set the standards, but we are commanded to teach them and maintain them . . However out of step we may seem, however much the standards are belittled, however much others yield, we will not yield, we cannot yield. Obedience to the moral standard and observance of the Word of Wisdom will remain as requirements for ordination to the priesthood, for a mission, and for a temple recommend.[124]

President Packer's reasoning for the keeping Word of Wisdom is ultimately not for physical health, rather it is the spiritual health that should be the saints' driving motivation for obedience. By keeping these standards, the saints can receive the power of the Holy Ghost to guide them through life and resist the temptations of Satan. The benefits of physical health that come from living the Word of Wisdom are secondary to the spiritual blessings.
While the Church stresses avoidance as the best way to prevent addiction, it understands that many people have already become chained by addictions.

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf addressed during the April 2014 general conference. "But what of those who find themselves in the grip of addiction? Please know, first of all, that there is hope. Seek help from loved ones, Church leaders, and trained counselors."[125] Elder Uchtdorf conveyed hope through both professional help and Jesus Christ. He also acknowledged that addictions are hard to break. "The most important thing is to keep trying—sometimes it takes several attempts before people find success. So don't give up. Don't lose faith. Keep your heart close to the Lord, and He will give you the power of deliverance. He will make you free."[126]

Addictions to many substances are notoriously difficult to break. Relapse has been recognized as a fundamental aspect of all addictive behaviors.[127] It is common for people battling addictions to relapse multiple times. Thus the

124 Packer, "The Standard of Truth Has Been Erected," 26.

125 Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Are You Sleeping Through the Restoration?" *Ensign*, May 2014, 60–61.

126 Uchtdorf, "Are You Sleeping Through the Restoration?" 61.

127 Arnold M. Washton and Joan E. Zweben, *Treating Alcohol and Drug Problems in Psychotherapy Practice* (New York: Guilford Press, 2008), 206.

chaplain will have to balance empathy when relapses occur with prevention of further relapse.

Latter-day Saint doctrine also stresses agency as one of the most important principles of the gospel. Elder Oaks stated, "From the beginning, agency and opposition were central to the Father's plan."[128] In a similar vein Elder Nelson once stated, "That precious privilege of choice—man's agency—was decreed before the world was created. It is a moral agency. Thus, it was opposed by Satan but affirmed by the Lord and reaffirmed through prophets in ancient and in modern times."[129] It is because addiction represents a grave threat to agency that modern prophets continue to warn of the dangers of abusive substances. Elder Ballard compared the threat that addiction poses to human agency to Satan as a fisherman who uses lures to catch fish.

> The battle over man's God-given agency continues today. Satan and his minions have their lures all around us, hoping that we will falter and take his flies so he can reel us in with counterfeit means. He uses addiction to steal away agency. According to the dictionary, addiction of any kind means to surrender to something, thus relinquishing agency and becoming dependent on some life-destroying substance or behavior.[130]

The compulsory nature of addiction strikes at the very heart of agency. When people lose self-control, they lose their agency.

Many people that chaplains will counsel may never had received moral instruction, like the Word of Wisdom, that counsels them to stay away from dangerous substances. Others, may have turned to substance use to cope with the wounds caused by a military life style. Moreover, even Latter-day Saints have become chained to opiate addiction as a result of surgery or other physical ailments. Harmful substances are everywhere. As such, mindfully approaching which substances are taken into our bodies remains a central principle of the divinely given Word of Wisdom. Often times, chaplains will refer those with substantial addictions to professional services specializing

128 Dallin H. Oaks, "Opposition in All Things," *Ensign*, May 2016, 115.

129 Russell M. Nelson, "Choices," *Ensign*, November 1990, 74.

130 M. Russell Ballard, "O That Cunning Plan of the Evil One," *Ensign,* November 2010, 108.

in addictions and substance abuse. Yet, chaplains should be sensitive to the familial and social contexts of their counselees when addressing substance use. Additionally, it should be recognized that substance abuse is sometimes used as a self-medication mechanism for other pressing issues, such as PTSD and depression.

Recommended Scriptures:

D&C 89 (doctrine): Many times, the emphasis of the Word of Wisdom is on what *not* to consume. However, more than half of the section focuses on the good things to eat and the blessings associated with doing so. Additionally, the Word of Wisdom is more than a temporal health code, it also has deeply spiritual ramifications. Elder Nelson explains,

> The Word of Wisdom is a spiritual law. To the obedient He proclaimed: 'I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them' (D&C 89:21). At the first Passover, the destroying angel did pass over houses that were marked with blood on the doorposts. In our day, the faithful keep the Word of Wisdom. It is one of our signs unto God that we are His covenant people.[131]

The blessings of living this law are reserved not just for Latter-day Saints, but for anyone who decides to make such commitment. Chaplains do not need to exclusively pull from LDS doctrine on the Word of Wisdom to promote physical health. Several other religions (Seventh Day Adventist, Judaism and Islam) and even secular organizations (such as Alcoholics Anonymous) have standards for health and behavior that teach principles similar to the Word of Wisdom. Chaplains should evaluate and feel free to use any good system that echoes the principles of this doctrine.

*The Children of Israel in the Desert (narrative)***:** Even after miraculously escaping Egypt, the Israelites murmur against Moses several times, and even go as far as to state that they were better off in Egypt (Exodus 14:12; 16:2–3; 17:2; Numbers 11:5–6; 14:2–3; 16:41; 20:2–3). Someone struggling against substance use may consider the narrative of the Israelites in the desert as

131 Russell M. Nelson, "Addiction or Freedom," *Ensign*, November 1988, 8.

a situation similar to their own. The Israelites want to go back to Egypt. Nothing Moses does is enough. The Israelites drive Moses to question his role as prophet and Moses even asks God to kill him because the burden is too great (Numbers 11:11–15). Discuss what Moses does for relief as well as what ultimately gets the Israelites out of the desert.

Matthew 11:28–30 (doctrine): Jesus Christ is perfectly willing to take upon himself all our burdens, even those of one in the depths of addiction. Elder Oaks gave hope to all those who feel such heavy burdens. "Many carry heavy burdens . . . Some are caught in the grip of addictive substances or practices like alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or pornography . . . In one way or another, many are heavy laden. To each of us our Savior gives this loving invitation: 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'"[132]

1 Corinthians 6:11–12 (doctrine): Here, Paul is specifically addressing the Corinthians who were engaging in a variety of sexual immoral activities (1 Corinthians 5:1, 9; 6:9–10). The people of Corinth were justifying their actions by arguing that "all things are lawful for me" (1 Corinthians 6:12). This type of justification can also be echoed by those who use harmful substances.

Joseph Smith provided a variant translation in the Joseph Smith Translation of verse 12 in order to address the awkwardness of the KJV rendering. "All *these* things are *not* lawful unto me, *and* all *these* things are not expedient. All things are *not* lawful for me, *therefore* I will not . . ." (1 Corinthians 6:12, JST). Modern translations have rendered this verse in a way that may be useful to the chaplain. The ESV puts both "all things are lawful to me" phrases into quotation marks, indicating that Paul is employing a slogan used by the Corinthians. "'All things are lawful for me,' but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be dominated by anything." (1 Corinthians 6:12 ESV). The NRSV renders this verse similarly and the NIV includes the phrase "you say" to show this contrast between what the Corinthians say against what Paul says.

Since this sentiment of "all things are lawful to me" is present in scripture, it deserves to be discussed. If the chaplain can perceive that the counselee

132 Dallin H. Oaks, "He Heals the Heavy Laden," *Ensign,* November 2006, 6.

is manifesting both sides of this sentiment, it may do well to bring this discrepancy to the forefront. Developing discrepancy is one method used by Motivational Interviewing, a method of conducting therapy which was developed as a therapy for addicts.[133]

Additionally, Paul states that some of the Corinthians were among those mentioned in 1 Corinthians 6:9–10, yet now they have been sanctified through Jesus. The Chaplain may want to explore with the counselee how they think this cleansing process occurred and how they can go through the same process.

Psalm 38 (grief): In this Psalm the lamenter grieves for their past actions. The address to God is found in the first verse. Verses 2 through 14 include the lamenter's complaint. Included in this complaint is a recognition that their actions were foolish (v.5) and that their actions have pushed away their friends and family (v.11). The psalmist's complaint, and the experiences and emotions of someone wrestling with substance abuse may be the same. The confession of trust is found in verse 15 "For in thee, O Lord, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God." The petition comprises the rest of the psalm with no explicit words of assurance. However, the final words "O Lord, my salvation" are a brief vow of praise.

133 William R. Miller and Stephen Rodrick, *Motivational Interviewing: Helping People Change* (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2013), 86-87.

Depression and Suicide

Depression

According to the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5) depression can take several forms. These range from Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), the milder dysthymia, disruptive mood dysregulation, substance/medication- induced depression and depression due to another medical condition, among others.[134] Some of the defining characteristics of these disorders are the "changes in affect, cognition, and neurovegetative functions" that are distinct from normal grief and bereavement.[135]

A study published in 2012 examined the rates of MDD in 5,692 U.S. Army soldiers and concluded that the point prevalence for MDD was 12.0% for currently deployed soldiers, 13.1% for previously deployed soldiers, and 5.7% for those who had never been deployed.[136] Additionally they estimated that 16.2% of the personnel in their study would have a lifetime history of MDD, and of that group, 69.7% (11.3% of the total sample) had the first onset of MDD prior to enlistment.[137] They also contend that further research shows that MDD is as common, if not more common, than PTSD and that despite this the majority of the discussion has revolved around PTSD.[138]
Further complicating the debilitating effects of MDD is the comorbidity factor. A study published by Shen, Arkes and Williams in 2012 examined 678,382 individuals serving in all branches of the Armed Forces. They found a range of 1.7% to 3.3% were diagnosed with MDD, and that MDD was "more likely to be accompanied by other comorbid conditions" with 25% having substance use disorder and 18% having PTSD.[139] Despite having a

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134 American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders DSM-5*, 5th ed. (Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association, 2013), 155.

135 DSM-5, 155.

136 Anne M. Gadermann, et al., "Prevalence of DSM-IV Major Depression Among U.S. Military Personnel: Meta-analysis and Simulation," *Military Medicine* 177.8 (Aug 2012): 54.

137 Gadermann, "Prevalence of DSM-IV Major Depression," 54.

138 Gadermann, "Prevalence of DSM-IV Major Depression," 47.

139 Yu-Chu Shen, Jeremy Arkes, and Thomas V. Williams, "Effects of Iraq/Afghanistan Deployments on Major Depression and Substance Use Disorder: Analysis of Active Duty Personnel in the US Military," *American Journal of Public Health* 102.S1 (March 2012): S82.

significantly lower range for MDD than the study published by Gadermann et al. above, Shen, Arkes and Williams still concluded that "the rate of major depression was substantially higher in the population deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, or other known non-classified locations . . . compared with the nondeployed population."[140] It is probable, then, that chaplains counseling people with depression will also have to be aware of other comorbid factors that could be adding to the distress.

Within general conference talks, the word "depression" has been used many times. However, these instances refer to economic depressions, such as the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s.[141] As such, it is difficult to discern how many times MDD or other instances of emotional depression have been addressed by leaders. Nevertheless, MDD has been addressed in general conference.

For example, during the October general conference in 2013, Elder Jeffery R. Holland addressed his sermon to "those who suffer from some form of mental illness or emotional disorder, whether those afflictions be slight or severe, of brief duration or persistent over a lifetime," and specifically named Major Depressive Disorder.[142] Elder Holland's message was one of hope to any person who may be depressed. This hope comes from an appreciation of God's divine love. "It is only an appreciation of this divine love that will make our own lesser suffering first bearable, then understandable, and finally redemptive."[143] By being grateful for God's divine love, we can maintain faith in him. This constant renewal of faith serves as a moral reinforcer until we are healed. "Hold fast to the perfecting promises of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Believe in miracles."[144] Elder Holland recognizes that certain pains may never go away. This hope is for not only the temporal relief of the emotional pain, but also the eternal relief that the resurrection provides us. At the same time he encourages saints to have faith to be healed. Elder Holland also encouraged the saints to seek help from professionals. "Seek the advice of reputable people with certified training, professional skills,

140 Shen, Arkes and Williams, "Effects of Iraq/Afghanistan Deployments." S82.

141 Mark Davies, "LDS General Conference Corpus," https://www.lds-general-conference.org/.

142 Jeffery R. Holland, "Like A Broken Vessel," *Ensign,* November 2013, 40.

143 Holland, "Like A Broken Vessel," 40.

144 Holland, "Like A Broken Vessel," 41.

and good values . . . If you had appendicitis, God would expect you to seek a priesthood blessing *and* get the best medical care available. So too with emotional disorders. Our Father in Heaven expects us to use *all* of the marvelous gifts He has provided in this glorious dispensation."[145]

In the April 1995 conference, Elder Merrill J. Bateman addressed the church on the subject of death and the tragic loss we feel when loved ones die. He acknowledges that this loss can cause significant emotional distress. He taught that death serves as a reminder that ultimate healing will come during the resurrection. "Death teaches that we do not experience a fullness of joy in mortality and that everlasting joy can be achieved only with the assistance of the Master."[146]

When loved ones die, we should all have hope in the resurrection. One does not need, however, to wait until the resurrection for relief. Elder Bateman assured the saints that "through Christ, broken hearts are mended and peace replaces anxiety and sorrow."[147] He quoted Alma 7:11–12 and taught that Jesus Christ does understand each individual and can heal their spirit and body. "The Savior's atonement in the garden and on the cross is intimate as well as infinite. Infinite in that it spans the eternities. Intimate in that the Savior felt each person's pains, sufferings, and sicknesses. Consequently, he knows how to carry our sorrows and relieve our burdens that we might be healed from within, made whole persons, and receive everlasting joy in his kingdom."[148]

Another aspect of depression that is unique to religious groups is the concept that depression and other mental disorders are sins. A survey that examined Catholics and Protestants published in 2007 concluded that 31.4% agreed with the statement "the church [made] you feel like the mental illness was a result of personal sin."[149] Within the restored Church, mental illness is not declared a sin. However, since Alma's teaching that "wickedness never was

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145 Holland, "Like A Broken Vessel," 41.

146 Merrill J. Bateman, "The Power to Heal from Within," *Ensign*, May 1995, 13.

147 Bateman, "The Power to Heal from Within," 14.

148 Bateman, "The Power to Heal from Within," 14.

149 Matthew S. Stanford, "Demon or Disorder: A Survey of Attitudes Toward Mental Illness in the Christian Church," *Mental Health, Religion and Culture* 10.5 (August 2007): 447.

happiness" (Alma 41:10) is frequently used in conference addresses[150] it is possible that someone could misconstrue the meaning of that verse to say, "if I am unhappy it is because I sinned." In a talk given during the October 2015 general conference Elder Oaks addressed this false notion and the hope Jesus Christ can bring.

> I am still speaking of mortal infirmities not caused by our sins. Some are born with physical or mental disabilities that cause personal suffering for them and struggles for those who love and care for them. For many, the infirmity of depression is painful or permanently disabling . . . Those who suffer this circumstance should remember that our Savior experienced this kind of pain also and that, through His Atonement, He offers the strength to bear it.[151]

When counseling individuals about depression it is important that the chaplain be aware that a portion of religious adherents may view depression or any other mental illness as a sin. The modern apostles of the Church affirm, however, that this in not the case. Rather, mental illness is a result of the challenges of mortality that will eventually be overcome through Jesus Christ.

Suicide

A person in the depths of depression may also exhibit suicidal ideation as well as attempt or complete suicide. Various studies have linked suicidality and depression; among the general population of those who attempt suicide the comorbidity with depression ranges from 39% to 62%.[152] Historically, the rate of suicide within the military has been lower than the rate of suicide among the general population.[153] However, since 9/11 and the War on Terror, the military has seen an increase in suicide rates. The statistics can be startling.

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150 Alma 41:10 has been quoted more than 80 times in general conference since 1945. See Davies, "LDS General Conference Corpus."

151 Dallin H. Oaks, "Strengthened by the Atonement of Jesus Christ," *Ensign*, November 2015, 63.

152 Holly J. Ramsawh, et al., "Risk for Suicidal Behaviors Associated with PTSD, Depression, and Their Comorbidity in the U.S. Army," *Journal of Affective Disorders* 161 (2014): 117.

153 Kathleen E. Bachynski, et al., "Mental Health Risk Factors for Suicides in the US Army, 2007–8," *Injury Prevention* 18.6 (December 2012): 405.

Beginning in 2006 the crude rate of suicides in the military, that is the number of all incidents divided by the number of the total population, surpassed the rate of the general population. However, if one takes into account that the majority of military personnel fit within a specific gender and age range (male aged 17–24) then the rise in rates is comparable.[154] For example, in 2006 the crude rate of completed suicides in the US population and Army were 14.3 and 17.8 per 100,000 respectively. When adjusted for age and sex the rates become 18.5 and 17.7 among the general and military populations.[155]

However, since 2009 even the adjusted rate has passed that of the general population. In 2015, the disparity had further increase with the adjusted rate as 22.0 for the general population while it was 24.6 in the Army.[156] Every soldier, non-commissioned officer (NCO), officer and chaplain must be vigilant and recognize risk factors for suicidality.

Many of the topics discussed in this booklet can be risk factors for suicide. Military Sexual Trauma, for both men and women, has been shown to increase risk of suicide because it increases the risk of depression and PTSD, both of which are additional risk factors.[157] Studies show that alcohol use is also a noticeable risk factor for suicide. Between the years 2005 and 2010 about 29% of suicides in the Army involved drug or alcohol use.[158] Additionally, moral injury, a concept to be covered later in this chapter, is also recognized as a risk factor for suicides in the military. Among veterans in combat units or those exposed to killing and other atrocities, the risk for suicide increases from about 25% to 43%. While the more research is

154 Eren Youmans Watkins, et al., "Adjusting Suicide Rates in a Military Population: Methods to Determine the Appropriate Standard Population," *American Journal of Public Health* 108.6 (June 2018): 770–72.

155 Watkins, "Adjusting Suicide Rates in a Military Population," 770.

156 Watkins, "Adjusting Suicide Rates in a Military Population," 772.

157 For men, see Lindsey L. Monteith, et al., "Understanding Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Among Men Exposed to Military Sexual Trauma: An Ecological Framework," Psychology of Men and Masculinities 20.1 (January 2019): 24. For women, see K. H. Thomas, et al., "Predictors of Depression Diagnoses and Symptoms in United States Female Veterans: Results from a National Survey and Implications for Programming," Journal of Military and Veteran Health 24 no. 3 (July 2016): 7.

158 Holly B. Herberman Mash, et al., "Alcohol Use and Reasons for Drinking as Risk Factors for Suicidal Behavior in the U.S. Army," *Military Medicine* 181.8 (August 2016): 811.

needed, the preliminary findings suggest that moral injury is a major factor in the increased risk.[159]

Within the Church, suicide has been mentioned in general conference 112 times, with the most frequent usage occurring during the 1960's and 1970's. Suicide has only been mentioned 6 times since 2000.[160] However, despite the lack of usage recently, the Church has created online resources to support those who struggle with suicidal ideation and those who care for them.

The Church's website for suicide resources is suicide.lds.org. On it, there are multiple tabs with helpful articles and videos. The subject matter of these range from "Doctrines and Principles" to "Loss Survivors" and "Attempt Survivors," among others.[161] Included within the "Doctrines and Principles" tab is short video interview with Elder Dale G. Renlund. In this video Elder Renlund specifically addresses the relationship between suicide and sin: "There is an old sectarian notion that suicide is a sin, and that someone who commits suicide is banished to hell forever. That is totally false."[162] Additionally, Elder Renlund urges the saints to "reach out in love and understanding" to those who struggle with suicidal ideation and suicidal attempts. "You do that in concert with health care professionals, and with ecclesiastical leaders, with friends and family support."[163] Elder Renlund makes it clear that God understands an individual's pain and that suicide will not be the defining characteristic of their eternity.

In the October 1987, *Ensign* Elder M. Russell Ballard wrote an article on suicide, which was later published into a book, and addressed the question: "What is the truth of suicide?" Elder Ballard begins the article by recounting the unfortunate passing of a faithful, elderly saint, whose funeral Elder Ballard attended. His wife had passed away years before and he was confined

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159 Yossi Levi-Belz and Gadi Zerach, "Moral Injury, Suicide Ideation, and Behavior Among Combat Veterans: The Mediating Roles of Entrapment and Depression," *Psychiatry Research* 269 (2018): 508.

160 Davies, "LDS General Conference Corpus."

161 See suicide.lds.org for the full list.

162 Dale G. Renlund, "Understanding Suicide," suicide.lds.org, https://www.lds.org/church/news/reach-out-in-love-elder-renlund-says-in-new-suicide-prevention-videos?lang=eng

163 Dale G. Renlund, "Understanding Suicide," suicide.lds.org.

to home in a wheel chair. This man grew more depressed until he took his own life.

At the funeral, Elder Ballard reported that one of the sons of this man came to him and said, "All the good things he did throughout his life don't matter anymore. Now that he's taken his life, he will be in the telestial kingdom throughout eternity."[164] The son's comments reflected the "old sectarian notion" that Elder Renlund discussed above.

Elder Ballard stresses that suicide is serious and quotes several apostles of the Church. The Church cannot condone suicide. Notwithstanding this, the Church also recognizes that like any other trangression, there is hope for restoration. "Only the Lord knows all the details, and he it is who will judge our actions here on earth. When he does judge us, I feel he will take all things into consideration: our genetic and chemical makeup, our mental state, our intellectual capacity, the teachings we have received, the traditions of our fathers, our health, and so forth."[165] Although Elder Ballard makes it clear that suicide is considered a sin; he further stresses that "the Lord will not judge the person who commits that sin strictly by the act itself. The Lord will look at that person's circumstances and the degree of his accountability at the time of the act."[166]

Elder Ballard concludes his article by quoting D&C 138:57–59. "The dead *who repent will be redeemed,* through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God." Elder Renlund's and Elder Ballard's statements may seem to be contradictory. However, the false notion that Elder Renlund addresses is that suicide is a sin *and* that someone who commits suicide is banished to hell forever, that is, they are beyond redemption. Elder Ballard shows that even though suicide is a sin, redemption is still possible. It can be repented of, and it can be forgiven. The doctrine of the Church is clear that even suicide is still within reach of the redemption of Jesus Christ.

The scriptures depict even the mightiest of God's chosen men and women

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164 M. Russell Ballard, "Suicide: Some Things We Know, and Some We Do Not," *Ensign*, October 1987, 6–7.

165 Ballard, Suicide,8.

166 Ballard, Suicide, 8.

as people who suffer. Moses breaks down in Numbers 11, even asking God to kill him. He felt his burdens were too great and saw only one way to find relief. God, instead, raised up others to support Moses and share the burdens.

In the Book of Mormon, we see a vulnerable Nephi who mourns for his own weakness (2 Nephi 4:17). The Nephite prophet Jacob ends his message by saying, "the time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation, in a wilderness, and hated of our brethren, which caused wars and contentions; wherefore, we did mourn out our days" (Jacob 7:26).

The prophet Joseph Smith himself suffered despair and loneliness. The deepest point may very well have been the winter in Liberty jail. Elder Oaks taught that "Joseph was painfully imprisoned in Liberty Jail for many months. When he prayed for relief, the Lord told him that 'all these things shall give thee experience and shall be for thy good' (D&C 122:7)."[167]

These examples show that even God's chosen prophets suffer. Just as the prophets suffered, so too will we suffer. For many, waiting for the Lord to provide relief is practically unbearable and the chaplain in this instance should be empathetic.

Elder Uchtdorf taught that patience in affliction is an act of faith. "Patience is a godly attribute that can heal souls, unlock treasures of knowledge and understanding, and transform ordinary men and women into saints and angels. Patience is truly a fruit of the Spirit."[168] In the same talk he stated, "Patience means accepting that which cannot be changed and facing it with courage, grace, and faith."[169] The depths of depression are characterized by hopelessness.[170] Such hopelessness may rob a person of faith. An important principle found in the Book of Mormon may help those with depression to find relief. In Moroni 7, Mormon gives us a profound sermon on faith, hope and charity.

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167 Dallin H. Oaks, "Opposition in All Things," *Ensign*, May 2016, 116.

168 Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Continue in Patience," *Ensign*, May 2010, 58.

169 Uchtdorf, "Continue in Patience," 59.

170 DSM-5, 160.

> And again, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you concerning hope. How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope? And what is it that ye shall hope for? Behold I say unto you that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise. Wherefore, if a man have faith he must needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope (Moroni 7:41–42).

For Mormon, faith and hope have a mutual relationship. Elder Wilford Andersen taught that an increase of one will increase the other. Additionally, he addressed depression.

> I do not wish to minimize the reality of clinical depression. For some, solutions to depression and anxieties will be found through consultation with competent professionals. But for most of us, sadness and fear begin to melt away and are replaced by happiness and peace when we put our trust in the Author of the plan of happiness and when we develop faith in the Prince of Peace.[171]

Depression is not just a mental disorder, it has the potential to become a spiritual disorder because it can inhibit the connection to the divine. Chaplains can use these principles of faith and hope in conjunction with referrals to professional counselors for cases of depression

Recommended Scriptures

Elijah 1 Kings 19 (narrative): After Elijah defeats the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel, Jezebel sends him a message where she swears to kill him. Elijah then flees alone into the wilderness. There, in sorrow and loneliness he cries to God, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4). Marcia Webb notes that "despite the prophet's utterance of defeat, God does not chastise Elijah for any lack of faith, nor does God prod him to improve his attitude. There is no coaxing Elijah for increased prayer, nor any goading for repentance from sin, nor

171 Wilford W. Andersen, "The Rock of Our Redeemer," *Ensign*, May 2010, 17.

any criticism about self-pity. Instead, God approaches the prophet gently, attending to his weary body."[172] God takes care of Elijah through a series of miracles, but Elijah is still alone in the desert. When Elijah gets stronger, in 1 King 19:8, Webb notices that God himself appears to the prophet and lets him know that his work has not been in vain.[173]

The chaplain may consider adapting this narrative for use with Wimberly's model. Here, we have a man who tried to do his best, had a few triumphs, but still thought that his works were not enough. In despair he asks God for release. God provides him comfort, both physically and spiritually, before sending him to continue his mission. Soldiers or family members may consider themselves in situations like Elijah's. The chaplain should help them process their sorrows and griefs and allow them to feel God's own words of assurance for themselves.

Psalm 42 (Grief): in the first two verses the address to God is combined with the introduction of the complaint. The psalmist yearns to be closer to God, and they even describe this as "thirsting for God" (v. 2). Yet, their only source of nourishment has been their own tears (v. 3). The complaint culminates into a confession of trust combined with the vow to praise in verse 5 which is repeated again in verse 11. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." The petition is implicitly found in the psalm, they are asking for relief from their despair, and from their enemies who say "Where is your God?" (v. 3 and 10). The psalmist gives their own words of assurance in verses 7 and 8. Even though the "deep calleth unto deep" the psalmist replies "Yet the Lord will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me." The psalmist mourns for their own shortcomings and the gap that separates them from God. While this psalm is not exclusive to depression, it does convey the imagery of tears and the depths of despair as the waves of the billowing sea.

Joseph Smith D&C 121–123 (narrative): These sections are just excerpts of the two-part letter that Joseph sent to "To the Church of Latter-day Saints at Quincy, Illinois, and Scattered Abroad, and to Bishop Partridge in

172 Marcia Webb, *Toward a Theology of Psychological Disorder* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017), 29.

173 Webb, *Toward a Theology*, 29.

Particular."[174] The saints had endured persecution and participated in several armed conflicts in what has been called the Missouri-Mormon War. Joseph Smith and several other prominent men of the church were imprisoned by the Missouri militia during the winter of 1838–1839. Justin Bray, writing on the context of these sections, stated "Day after day the men languished in jail, and the emotional sting slowly and continuously tested their faith."[175] Joseph expresses his sorrow and anger when he asks, "How long shall thy hand be stayed?" (D&C 121:2). Yet, the Lord in his replies lets Joseph know, "thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes" (D&C 121:7–8).
Later, God taught Joseph:

> And if thou shouldst be cast into the pit, or into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; if thou be cast into the deep; if the billowing surge conspire against thee; if fierce winds become thine enemy; if the heavens gather blackness, and all the elements combine to hedge up the way; and above all, if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good (D&C 122:7).

Joseph suffered long and hard in prison. Similarly, Paul calls himself a "prisoner of Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 3:1). The chaplain can explore these prison narratives (see also Acts 16:16–40) with the counselee.

Paul's Prison Epistles (narrative): The prison epistles are Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians and 2 Timothy. In these epistles we see a vulnerable Paul. He "suffered the loss of all things" for Christ (Philippians 3:8). Yet he faced his imprisonment with optimism. Even though he is a prisoner *of* Rome, Paul still sees this as a missionary opportunity by being a prisoner *for* Christ (Ephesian 3:1).

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174 Joseph Smith Papers History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842], https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-c-1-2-november-1838-31-july-1842/81#historical-intro.

175 Justin R. Bray, "Within the Walls of Liberty Jail," in *Revelations in Context: The Stories Behind the Sections of the Doctrine and Covenants* eds. Matthew S. McBride and James Goldberg (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2016), 258.

Family

Families of personnel in the military face their own unique challenges. Any one of the subjects addressed in this booklet can apply to family members of soldier as much as to the soldiers themselves. On top of the challenge presented when their loved one is deployed for lengths of time, a new challenge forms when their soldier returns from deployment. "Not only do veterans struggle with returning home, but their partners also struggle. The following statistics highlight the issue sharply. Eighty three percent of military spouses have feelings of anxiety and depression while their spouse is deployed, and 28% have difficulties with readjustment upon their spouse's return. Military children also struggle with readjustment in various ways, which frequently includes increased levels of anxiety and behavioral problems at home and at school."[176] Families are also at risk for developing "secondary traumatization," where family members become traumatized through their loved one's own combat related stress.[177] Chaplains will therefore have to also provide support for family members and as such will deal with a broad spectrum of challenges.

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a form of domestic abuse that uses, attempts to use, or threatens the use of force and has been recognized as occurring within the military.[178] A review of surveys into IPV in a military setting concluded that 23% of active duty males and 31% of active duty females were perpetrators of IPV. Additional statistics include, 66% of military setting IPV victims are female spouses who are less than 25 years old, and 78% of IPV victims had children.[179] As such, chaplains need to be aware that while active duty females have higher statistical rates of perpetration there are substantially more males than females in the military.

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176 Thomas, "Predictors of Depression Diagnoses and Symptoms in United States Female Veterans," 11.

177 Patricia Lester, "Families Overcoming Under Stress: Implementing Family-Centered Prevention for Military Families Facing Wartime Deployments and Combat Operational Stress," *Military Medicine* 176.1 (January 2011): 19.

178 Keith Klostermann, et al., "Intimate partner Violence in the Military: Treatment Considerations," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 17 (2012): 54.

179 Klostermann, "Intimate Partner Violence in the Military," 54.

While studies have recognized that alcohol use and PTSD are not the causes of IPV, they are nevertheless risk factors.[180]

While military families certainly have their own difficult challenges to face they are also a source of support and resiliency for all family members, including the military service member. Shelley Riggs and David Riggs have used Attachment Theory for their framework to conceptualize individual resilience during the deployment of a family member within the relational context of familial attachment. They argue that families with secure attachments cope with the stresses of deployment and reintegration better than those families with either anxious-ambivalent attachment, or avoidant attachment. [181]

They suggest that spouses typically consider anxious or avoidant attachment "good enough" to get by under normal circumstances. However, deployment of a spouse means that not only the primary attachment figure is gone but also "entails a loss of emotional support, loneliness, financial strain, role shifts or conflicts, and the role overload of single parenthood. So when their typical coping strategies break down under the additive contextual stress associated with deployment, insecure parents are likely to become distressed."[182] Similarly, children will feel negatively impacted if they did not have secure attachment with their deployed parent. "The impact of the deploying parent's departure will be mitigated if children feel securely bonded to a non-deploying parent who copes effectively and maintains relatively stable parenting practices."[183] The ramifications, then, of this research is that families should work to develop secure attachment before, during and after deployments.

Within the Church, the role of the family in society is clearly, and potently laid out in *The Family: A Proclamation to the World*. Elder Oaks vigorously

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180 Heather M Foran, et al., "Hazardous Alcohol Use and Intimate Partner Violence in the Military: Understanding Protective Factors," *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 26.3 (2012): 471, 480–81.

181 Shelley A. Riggs and David S. Riggs, "Risk and Resilience in Military Families Experiencing Deployment: The Role of the Family Attachment Network," *Journal of Family Psychology* 25.5 (October 2011): 675–78.

182 Riggs and Riggs, "Risk and Resilience in Military Families," 678.

183 Riggs and Riggs, "Risk and Resilience in Military Families," 679.

defended the family proclamation during the October 2017 general conference. He said,

> I testify that the proclamation on the family is a statement of eternal truth, the will of the Lord for His children who seek eternal life. It has been the basis of Church teaching and practice for the last 22 years and will continue so for the future. Consider it as such, teach it, live by it, and you will be blessed as you press forward toward eternal life.[184]

Elder Oaks argues that *The Family Proclamation* is the doctrine of the Church and it should be treated and studied as such.

One key concept of *The Family Proclamation* that may help families is its emphasis on principles that foster secure attachments. "Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities."[185] Since secure attachment minimizes risk factors and increases coping mechanisms helping families to live these principles will increase familial resiliency in the military.

These principles are not values exclusive to Latter-day Saints. Chaplains should seek to use soldiers' and their families' own faith traditions and look for similar values to incorporate in their counseling.

Another way to facilitate secure attachment is through the use of family councils. Elder Ballard gave a talk in the April 2016 conference that gave suggestions for how these councils could be conducted. He listed four basic types of councils. "First, a general family council with all family members present. Second, an executive family council between husband and wife. Third, a limited council with both parents and one child. Fourth, a one-one-one council with one parent and one child."[186] One of the purposes of these

184 Dallin H. Oaks, "The Plan and the Proclamation," *Ensign*, May 2017, 30.

185 "The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, November 2010, 129.

186 M. Russell Ballard, "Family Councils," *Ensign*, May 2016, 63.

councils is to work out any difficulties that the family faces. "All the talking and sharing and loving in the world may not solve a medical problem or an emotional challenge that one or more family members may be facing. At such times, the family council becomes a place of unity, loyalty, and loving support as outside help is enlisted in the search for solutions."[187]

The great thing about modern technology is that these councils can still be conducted with a deployed family member. The internet makes communication much easier than before and chaplains can help encourage soldiers to engage with their families in an activity that is much more than a simple phone call home. Elder Ballard ended his talk stating that "councils will give each family member a feeling of worth and importance; and most of all they will assist us to be more successful and happy in our precious relationships, within the walls of our homes."[188] These principles of conducting family councils can be applied to families in military settings, both during and after deployments, to foster increased secure attachment.

The scriptures are full of dysfunctional families. The first family produces the first murderer in Cain. Abraham leaves the land of his fathers because "they turned from righteousness," and his own father tried to sacrifice him (Abraham 1:5). Sarah mistreats Hagar so severely that Hagar flees and divine intervention must save her. Jacob's whole family life revolves around one deception after another. These are only select people in Genesis. Just three chapters into the Book of Mormon Nephi and Sam are beaten by Laman and Lemuel, who continue to physically abuse Nephi. Alma the Elder, even after his own profound spiritual conversion, raises a son who becomes an enemy of the church. The list of dysfunctional families goes on and on.

As Elder Maxwell once put it, "There are no perfect families, either in the world or in the Church, but there are many good families."[189] The good and bad dynamics of families included in scripture should be discussed. Schlimm wrote, "The Bible describes a violent world because our world is violent. If we ignore the violent nature of our world, we also ignore the victims of

187 Ballard, "Family Councils," 64.

188 Ballard, "Family Councils," 65.

189 Neal A. Maxwell, "Take Especial Care of Your Family," *Ensign*, May 1994, 89.

violence. And we cannot ignore those who suffer if we are God's people."[190] Using similar logic, the Bible contains many depictions of dysfunctional families precisely because that is reality. The scriptures give the chaplain a wellspring of stories to draw upon.

Recommended Scriptures:

The Family: A Proclamation to the World (doctrine): The Family Proclamation clearly and powerfully outlines the doctrines of the Church. Elder Oaks, giving his eyewitness testimony as to the creation of the document, stated "It was a surprise to some who thought the doctrinal truths about marriage and the family were well understood without restatement. Nevertheless, we felt the confirmation and we went to work."[191] Chaplains should use this proclamation and adapt it as needed in their ministry.

Jacob and His Family (narrative): Jacob is born in Genesis 25 and his family takes over the narrative of the rest of book of Genesis. Jacob's immediate family demonstrates that even God's chosen people have dysfunctional families. This sentiment is repeated by George Ramsey.

> The election of this family to be God's chosen ones has always been a motif laden with mystery. The family of the Ancestors seems almost dysfunctional, and even the most noble figures among the patriarchs and matriarchs exhibit unappealing behavior. Yet the story of the generation following Jacob, Rachel and Leah shows the theme of the divine promises developing steadfastly towards fulfillment.[192]

Despite all the mistakes each member of the family makes, from the patriarch Jacob himself, to Judah, Simeon and Levi, and even Joseph himself, God still uses this family to lay the foundation for rest of the history of the Bible.

There are many episodes that this family goes through. The brothers Jacob

190 Schlimm, *This Strange and Sacred Scripture*, 66.

191 Oaks, "The Plan and the Proclamation," 30.

192 George W. Ramsey, "Israel's Ancestors: The Patriarchs and Matriarchs," in *The Biblical World* ed. John Barton (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 187.

and Esau have a significant falling out in Genesis 27. Jacob is deceived by his father-in-law Laban in Genesis 29 over which daughter he will marry, and later Jacob returns the deception to Laban by manipulating their flocks in Genesis 30. Dinah is raped in Genesis 34. The brothers conspire to sell Joseph as a slave in Genesis 37. Joseph deceives his brothers and raises false accusations against them in Genesis 42, yet ultimately, he humbles himself and accepts his brother's apology and takes the whole family in. These narratives portray a variety of familial interactions that could provide discussion and meaning for modern readers.

The Stripling Warriors, Alma 56–57 (narrative): Although the Book of Mormon does not give us personal details about the families of the Ammonites, it does portray general characteristics that can be emulated by modern readers.

The stripling warriors were able to come to the aid of the Nephites during a critical moment in their history because they were raised by faithful parents. The faithfulness of the fathers is demonstrated by their choice to stay true to their covenants and commitments. The fathers nearly broke their own covenants with God in order to fight and defend the Nephites who once fought and defended them from their enemies. Yet, the fathers heeded the counsel from Helaman, their religious leader, to keep their covenant (Alma 56:6–7). The faithfulness of the mothers is demonstrated by the stripling warriors' own words "We do not doubt our mothers knew it" (Alma 56:48). It is because of the lessons taught by their parents that the stripling warriors were able to follow Helaman. "Yea, and they did obey and observe to perform every word of command with exactness; yea, and even according to their faith it was done unto them; and I did remember the words which they said unto me that their mothers had taught them" (Alma 57:21). Elder Richard Maynes stated "Helaman and his young stripling soldiers understood the importance of making covenants with the Lord. They were also recipients of the blessings that come to those who faithfully keep their covenants."[193]

193 Richard J. Maynes, "Keeping Our Covenants," *Ensign,* November 2004, 93.

Grief

Though the Armed Forces of the United States may be the most elite military in the world, they are not immune to the effects of grief. This section will cover conceptual models useful for chaplains as they conduct grief counseling with their soldiers and families.

Elizabeth Kübler-Ross authored her foundational work *On Death and Dying* in 1969, during the middle of the Vietnam War. As a doctor of psychiatry, she worked with the terminally ill and dying. This led her to develop what is now called the "Kübler-Ross Model" or the "Five Stages of Grief." For Kübler-Ross, grief encompasses all five stages of her model: death and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

The foundation of these stages, according to Kübler-Ross, is the universal fear of death. She argues that even with our modern medicines and technologies we are still as afraid of death as the ancients. "Death is still a fearful, frightening happening, and the fear of death is a universal fear even if we think we have mastered it on many levels."[194] She also argues that in our modern culture we fear death because it is vastly removed from our everyday experiences. "We use euphemisms, we make the dead look as if they were asleep, we ship the children off to protect them from the anxiety and turmoil around the house if the patient is fortunate enough to die at home . . . One of the most important facts is that dying nowadays is more gruesome in many ways, namely, more lonely, mechanical and dehumanized."[195]

Since death is separated from daily living, it has become a foreign monster to be feared. It is this fear of death that drives Kübler-Ross's concept of grief as denial. She sugggests that a person will not, or cannot, fathom their own death, only the death of others.

> Since in our unconscious we cannot perceive our own death and do believe in our own immortality, but can conceive our neighbor's death, news of numbers of people killed in battle, in wars, on the highways only support our unconscious belief in our

194 Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*, 4.

195 Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying,* 7.

> own immortality and allow us—in the privacy and secrecy of our unconscious mind—to rejoice that it is 'the next guy, not me.'[196]

Kübler-Ross has a somewhat pessimistic outlook on grief even in her final stage, acceptance. "Acceptance should not be mistaken for a happy stage. It is almost void of feelings. It is as if the pain had gone, the struggle is over, and there comes a time for 'the final rest before the long journey.'"[197] One reviewer of Kübler-Ross's model stated regarding this final stage, "it is unclear concerning Kübler-Ross whether 'acceptance' is affirmation or whether it is resignation. I believe she, herself, is not clear."[198] Resignation, the fear of death and the thought "only the other guy dies, not me" are all experienced by soldiers in combat, but such perspectives are not the only ways to conceive of grief.

Another limitation of *On Death and Dying* is that Kübler-Ross focuses on grief as experienced by the individual contemplating their own mortality, and not on grief as experienced by those who lose someone (or something) important to them. For Kübler-Ross, grief is dynamic, but also pessimistic. However, there are additional perspectives that a person, even soldiers, can use to shape how they consider grief.

Grief can be understood as being more optimistic than Kübler-Ross's five stages. John W. James and Russell Friedman, authors of *The Grief Recovery Handbook* define grief as "the conflicting feelings caused by the end of or change in a familiar pattern of behavior."[199] Ultimately, they argue that grief is dynamic, having both positive and negative qualities.

> When someone you love dies after suffering a long illness, you may feel a sense of relief that your loved one's suffering is over. That is a positive feeling, even though it is associated with death. At the

196 Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*, 12–13.

197 Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*, 100.

198 Walter Brueggemann, "The Formfulness of Grief," Interpretation: *A Journal of Bible and Theology* 31.3 (July 1977): 270.

199 John W. James and Russell Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook* (New York: Haper Collins Publishers, 2009), 3.

> same time, you may realize that you can no longer see or touch that person. This may be very painful for you. These conflicting feelings, relief and pain, are totally normal in response to death.[200]

Grief then, is not something to be feared and avoided. Grief is not simply a process that people go through, but it also consists of thoughts and feelings that must be processed. "Although the experience [of grief] is common, its expression varies across individuals. People grieve in different ways, for different durations, and with manifestations that range from depression to rage to avoidance."[201] Chaplains need to discover the different ways people grieve, as well as encourage people to fully grieve.

More recently, the dialogue about grief has shifted from conceptualizing grief as stages, to envisioning it in terms of tasks. According to Judith Cohen, Anthony Mannarino and Kraig Knedsen, the seven tasks are: 1) accepting the reality of the death, 2) fully experiencing the pain associated with that loss, 3) adjusting to life without the loved one, 4) integrating aspects of the loved one into one's own self-identity, 5) converting the relationship from one of ongoing interactions to one of memory, 6) finding meaning in the loved one's death, and 7) recommitting to new relationships.[202] Unlike Kübler-Ross, this framework is not linear; a person does not necessarily start at stage one and move into the next ones, rather, they present these tasks as parts of grief that must be experienced eventually, and perhaps repeatedly.

However, if someone is not able to process the tasks of grief fully and completely, the normal grieving process may be interrupted and thus produce more intense and debilitating reactions.[203] When this interruption occurs, Complicated Grief (CG) may develop. The defining characteristic of CG,

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200 James and Friedman, *The Grief Recovery Handbook*, 3.

201 Robyn A. Howarth, "Concepts and Controversies in Grief and Loss," *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* 33.1 (January 2011): 4.

202 Judith A. Cohen, Anthony P. Mannarino, and Kraig Knudsen, "Treating Childhood Traumatic Grief: A Pilot Study," *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 43.10 (October 2004): 1226.

203 Howarth, "Concepts and Controversies," 5.

sometimes referred to as prolonged grief disorder,[204] is when the normal grieving process is interrupted, or stalls, and that there is no resolution.[205] The grieving person becomes overwhelmed and cannot become reconciled to the loss. Instead they concentrate on the traumatic aspects of the loss and as a result are unable to proceed through the normal grieving process.[206]

In the military, grief and loss is common, and is experienced by both soldiers and their families. A study published in 2018, examined a relatively small sample of 622 service-members to measure CG. They found that 502 (80.7%) had experienced a significant loss, and of those 142 (22.8%) met the criteria for CG.[207] Additionally, CG was associated with higher rates of PTSD.[208]

Complicated Grief has been shown to affect between 7% to 15% of the general population,[209] which is similar to the rates among military families who have lost loved ones.[210]

Since the Church, with its doctrine of the Plan of Salvation, has an optimistic outlook on life grief is likewise treated with optimism. It is viewed as a necessary part of life and therefore occupies a place within God's plan. In 1988, Elder Russel M. Nelson explained this as well as the hope that the plan gives us.

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204 Complicated grief and prolonged grief disorder may appear separate from each other in the literature. Additionally, neither were included in the DSM-4; however, the DSM-5 created a proposed disorder for "persistent complex bereavement disorder" and called for further research. See DSM-5, 789–92.

205 Howarth, "Concepts and Controversies," 6.

206 Howarth, "Concepts and Controversies," 6.

207 Meredith E. Charney, et al., "Complicated Grief Among Military Service Members and Veterans Who Served After September 11, 2001," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 31.1 (February 2018): 159.

208 Charney, "Complicated Grief Among Military," 159.

209 Stephen J. Cozza, et al., "Performance of DSM-5 Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder Criteria in a Community Sample of Bereaved Military Family Members," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 173.9 (September 2016): 919.

210 Joscelyn E. Fisher, et al., "Examination of Factor Structure of the Inventory of Complicated Grief (ICG) in a Sample of Bereaved Military Family Members with Persistent and Elevated Grief," *International Journal of Methods in Psychiatric Research* 26.3 (September 2017): 1575–76.

> You who may be momentarily disheartened, remember, life is not meant to be easy. Trials must be borne and grief endured along the way. As you remember that 'with God nothing shall be impossible,' [Luke 1:3] know that He is your Father. You are a son or daughter created in His image, entitled through your worthiness to receive revelation to help with your righteous endeavors. You may take upon you the holy name of the Lord. You can qualify to speak in the sacred name of God. It matters not that giants of tribulation torment you. Your prayerful access to help is just as real as when David battled his Goliath [1 Samuel 17:32–50].[211]

Understanding the plan of salvation puts trials, afflictions, and grief into perspective. In another talk, in order to give up perspective, Elder Nelson laid out the plan of salvation, focusing on what happens after death.[212] He teaches that mourning is part of losing a loved one, which can apply equally to losing a family member or a fellow soldier.

The perspective Elder Nelson sought to teach was that "Eternal perspective provides peace 'which passeth all understanding' . . . Life does not begin with birth, nor does it end with death." He taught that this perspective should give us hope for the reunion we will have with those we have lost.

Elder Lance B. Wickman, who also served two tours in Vietnam, knew what it was like to lose a loved one. In a talk given in April 2008, he recounted an experience he had as an infantry officer in Vietnam.[213] His unit was on patrol and engaged the enemy. Sergeant Arthur Cyrus Morris, who Elder Wickman called "my dear friend," was wounded yet refused to board a medical evacuation helicopter. Sergeant Morris's words to Elder Wickman were, "They can't kill a tough old bird like me."[214] Yet, before the end of the day, the enemy had killed him, and those words haunted and echoed in Elder Wickman's mind. "One moment, my friend was a vital, living person; the next, his immortal spirit had fled, leaving the mortal tabernacle a lump

211 Russell M. Nelson, "With God Nothing Shall Be Impossible," *Ensign*, May 1988, 35.

212 Russell M. Nelson, "Doors of Death," *Ensign*, May 1992, 72.

213 Lance B. Wickman, "Today," *Ensign*, May 2008, 104.

214 Wickman, "Today," 104.

of lifeless clay."[215] Yet, Elder Wickman was able to draw hope out of that moment. If Sergeant Morris was dreadfully wrong, he was also magnificently right! We really are immortal in the sense that Christ's Atonement conquers death, both physical and spiritual. And *provided* we have so lived *Today* that we have claim on the Atonement's cleansing grace, we will live forever with God.[216]

The plan of salvation offers all of humanity the opportunity to live again. The saints, therefore, should take hope that Jesus Christ will eventually heal all wounds, which includes those inflicted by grief.

Grief may also be experienced not only when a person loses a loved one, or comrade in arms, but also when crimes, such as acts of violence, are committed against that person. Elder Larry Echo Hawk recently gave a moving sermon on the role of forgiveness in healing grief.[217] Elder Echo Hawk had to personally work through forgiveness in order to find relief from grief. In 1982, a drunk driver killed Elder Echo Hawk's brother Tommy, and his sister-in-law Joan. "We gathered with my parents and siblings and grieved the loss of our beloved Tommy and Joan. We had lost them to a senseless criminal act. Our hearts were broken, and anger toward the young offender began to well up inside me."[218] While that anger built up inside him, his parents and sister were more easily able to forgive the perpetrator. Despite their own sorrow and grief, they were able to demonstrate forgiveness at a hearing for the criminal and displayed empathy for his family. Elder Echo Hawk explains the impact their forgiveness had on him.

> That outreach of forgiveness in those moments caused my own heart to soften and opened a pathway to healing. Over time I learned how to have a forgiving heart. Only with the help of the Prince of Peace was my painful burden lifted. My heart will always miss Tommy and Joan, but forgiveness now allows me to remember them with unfettered joy. And I know we will be together again as a family.[219]

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215 Wickman, "Today," 104.

216 Wickman, "Today," 105.

217 Larry J. Echo Hawk, "Even as Christ Forgives You, So Also Do Ye," *Ensign*, May 2018.

218 Echo Hawk, "Even as Christ Forgive You," 15.

219 Echo Hawk, "Even as Christ Forgive You," 16.

Additionally, Elder Echo Hawk made it clear that criminal acts are not to be condoned, yet we still must forgive everyone. "We know full well that individuals are to be held accountable for their criminal acts and civil wrongdoings. However, we also know that, as sons and daughters of God, we follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. We are to be forgiving even when it seems others may not warrant our forgiveness."[220] Elder Echo Hawk taught that we are required to forgive everyone because Jesus Christ forgave us (D&C 64:9–10).

Elder Echo Hawk recognized that forgiveness may not come easily. It can be difficult and take time, yet it allows us to heal. He said,

> Brothers and sisters, are there people in our lives who have hurt us? Do we harbor what seem like fully justified feelings of resentment and anger? Are we letting pride keep us from forgiving and letting go? I invite all of us to forgive completely and let healing occur from within. And even if forgiveness doesn't come today, know that as we desire it and work for it, it will come—just as it eventually did for me after my brother's death.[221]

Forgiveness is important in the healing process when others have hurt us. Elder Echo Hawk's personal experience serves as a powerful reminder to the good that can come from forgiving.

Grief is complicated. The characters of the scriptures have reasons to be joyful, but also plenty of reason to feel sorrow, at the same time. Modern readers tend to focus on the good and saintly aspects of these characters, sometimes at the expense of not exploring the bad and sorrowful aspects. Such a framework for interpreting scripture can produce incomplete pictures of the principles the scriptures are trying to teach us. Especially with Latter-day Saints and scriptures such as 2 Nephi 2:25 "Adam fell that men might be; and men are that they might have joy," we can quickly assume that we are meant to only be happy. The Book of Mormon is not the only book of scripture to teach this principle. Philippians 4:4 reads "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice" (NRSV). This causes us to forget that Jesus

220 Echo Hawk, "Even as Christ Forgive You," 16.

221 Echo Hawk, "Even as Christ Forgive You," 16.

wept (John 11:35) and that God himself can and does weep (Moses 7:28). Ultimately, we are meant to experience the full range of emotions and the scriptures depict this well.

Schlimm notes that there are multiple psalms and other scriptures that accuse God of causing problems. "People [in the scriptures] don't just express the depths of their sorrow. They shake their fists in rage at their Creator. They dare to hurl accusations at God. They fire piercing questions. Instead of affirming that God *protects* us in the worst of time, [some] Old Testament prayers accuse God of *causing* the worst of time."[222] Later, he concludes that such displays of sorrow and anger directed toward God are actually a sign of an intimate and trusting relationship. "People express emotions with those closest to them . . . Perhaps these prayers of sorrow and anger show us what intimacy with God actually looks like: rather than hiding emotions, people approach God with such vulnerability and trust that they tell God all that they think and feel."[223] Our most sacred texts accuse God of sleeping (Psalm 44:23–44), causing injustice (Habakkuk 1:2–3), and even being undependable (Jeremiah 15:18).

Chaplains can use these scriptures to help counselees process their own complex emotions. Using the psalms of lament in particular, allows those who grieve to have a formal structure through which to process their emotions from a basis of faith. This faith is manifested by processing the entire range of emotion with God, and the pastoral counselor, as the listeners. This faith understands that it is acceptable to be angry, even toward God, because he is perfectly empathetic. As Capps discussed, the critical point of using the lament psalms to process grief is for the worshipper to experience God's intervention.[224] The words of assurance that the chaplain gives should not be the end, but rather the means for helping this process along.

Recommended Scriptures:

Job (narrative): Job is often portrayed as perfectly patient in affliction, yet, the Book of Job has him complaining repeatedly and intensely. "So that my

222 Schlimm, *This Strange and Sacred Scripture*, 163.

223 Schlimm, *This Strange and Sacred Scripture*, 174.

224 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 8283.

soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life. I loathe it; I would not live always: let me alone; for my days are vanity" (Job 7:15–16). Job even accuses God of being the one to wrongfully cause his problems. "For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me" (Job 6:4). This is not to suggest that Job is not worth emulating, but rather that we are just like Job. Counselees may even apply Job's experiences to their own suffering. Chaplains would do well to be familiar with the form and structure of the book of Job so that they can bring additional insights into the lives of their counselees.[225]

The Psalm of Nephi, 2 Nephi 4:16–35 (grief): Latter-day Saint readers often marvel at the rhetorical wonder that is Nephi's Psalm. Here, we see an aspect of Nephi not seen anywhere else. We see Nephi not as the stalwart youth who said, "I will go and do" (1 Nephi 3:7), but rather as a fellow sinner, weak and vulnerable. Furthermore, modern scholars have recognized that Nephi's Psalm fits the structure of a psalm of lament. In his form-critical analysis Matthew Nickerson demonstrated this.[226]

According to Nickerson, the initial address to God is found in 2 Nephi 4:16–17, though he recognizes that it is not as explicit as is typical of biblical psalms. This, he argues is due to the textual context of Nephi's psalm, it is part of a narrative unlike the Book of Psalms which are individual.[227] The complaint is found in 2 Nephi 4:17–19. Here, Nephi grieves over his own sins which cause his sorrows. Nickerson asserts that the nature of Nephi's sin remains in question, but he recognizes that other writers have proposed alternatives such as the anger which "so easily beset" Nephi.[228] The confession of trust, 2 Nephi 4:20–30, occupies the bulk of Nephi's psalm. Nephi recounts his earlier trials and recognizes God's preserving hand. "My God hath been my support; he hath led me through mine afflictions in the wilderness; and he hath preserved me upon the waters of the great deep" (4:20). Nephi's petition is found in 2 Nephi 4:31–33, and the readers can

225 For an excellent commentary on the Book of Job see Michael Austin, Re-reading J*ob: Understanding the Ancient World's Greatest Poem* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2014).

226 Matthew Nickerson, "Nephi's Psalm: 2 Nephi 4:16–35 in the Light of Form-Critical Analysis," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 6.2 (1997): 26–42.

227 Nickerson, "Nephi's Psalm," 32.

228 Nickerson, "Nephi's Psalm," 34.

feel the depth of his desire. "O Lord, wilt thou redeem my soul?" (2 Nephi 4:31). Nickerson does not account for words of assurance, but, as previously mentioned, Nephi's psalm has a different context from the biblical psalms.

Nickerson concludes his analysis by identifying the vow to praise in 2 Nephi 4:34–35. Nickerson demonstrates that Nephi's faithful certainty that God will provide him relief fits with the pattern set by biblical psalms. "In many psalms this certainty on part of the suppliant is demonstrated not by simply *promising* to sing thanksgiving and praise but by actually *including* their gratitude and praise for the Lord in the closing verses of the lament."[229]

John Welch noted that Nephi constructed his psalm at a very emotional time. Not only had Lehi just died, but his brothers were also actively trying to murder him.[230] For grieving Latter-day Saint soldiers and families walking through Nephi's psalm may provide exceptional comfort. Whether it is grieving over losing a fellow comrade in arms, or grieving over the prospect of deployment and combat, Nephi expresses emotions modern soldiers can feel. Not only is Nephi a well-known hero of the Book of Mormon, but we also see him as deeply human which magnifies the power of his words. Nephi is like any one of us.

*Psalms of Lament (grief)***:** Capps includes a list of psalms and suggested uses. It should be recognized that the psalms are dynamic and can certainly be used for additional situations as the counselee and counselor find meaningful. Psalm 6 and 139 for those who fear death is imminent, Psalm 41 for the terminally ill, Psalm 42 for those who face an uncertain future, Psalm 90 for the bereaved, Psalm 102 for those who face a premature death, Psalm 71 for those who feel threatened with age, Psalm 55 for those who grieve over broken relationships, Psalm 38 for those who regret past mistakes, Psalm 42 for those who have lost personal prestige, and Psalm 73 for those who lack personal success.[231]

229 Nickerson, "Nephi's Psalm," 40.

230 John W. Welch, "The Psalm of Nephi as a Post-Lehi Document," in *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon: The FARMS Updates of the 1990s* eds. John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1999), 72–74.

231 Capps, *Biblical Approaches*, 93–95.

Moral Injury

Moral injury is a recently recognized phenomenon that can manifest as moral or even psychological wounds to people who participate in war. For decades, most of the research into these types wounds focused on the role of PTSD; however, moral injury is different than experiencing traumatic events.[232] Moral injury is the wound of the soul; it is manifested in those souls who "in combat, transgress otherwise deeply held values related to human life because they kill and maim one another and often innocent civilians."[233]

These wounds may develop from potentially moral injurious experiences such as "perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations."[234] Moral injury, then, can occur to combatants engaged with the enemy (whether fighting in accordance with the accepted rules of engagement or not), and also to those who are not actively engaged in combat but who witness something which transgresses their own personal morals, ethics and values.

Historically, moral injury was included in the diagnostic criteria for PTSD when PTSD was first recognized as a mental disorder in the DSM-3. "In the first iteration of the PTSD construct (DSM-3) guilt about . . . behavior required for survival' was a symptom of PTSD."[235] At the time, research into moral injury was lacking, probably because "some clinicians believe that addressing ethical conflicts and moral violations is outside the realm of their expertise, preferring to recommend religious counseling instead."[236] Thus, clinicians have tended to focus on the trauma wound of the veteran and not on the moral and ethical wound.

Further research has sought to discuss the relationship between moral injury and PTSD. A recent study by Alexander Jordan et al., examined the different

232 Sheila Frankfurt and Patricia Frazier, "A Review of Research on Moral Injury in Combat Veterans," *Military Psychology* 28.5 (May 2016): 318.

233 Nancy J. Ramsay, "Moral Injury as Loss and Grief with Attention to Ritual Resources for Care," *Pastoral Psychology* 68 (2019): 108.

234 Brett T. Litz, et al., "Moral Injury and Moral Repair in War Veterans: A Preliminary Model and Intervention Strategy," *Clinical Psychology Review* 29 (2009): 697.

235 Litz, "Moral Injury and Moral Repair," 696.

236 Litz, "Moral Injury and Moral Repair," 696.

types of PTSD symptoms caused by moral injury. They concluded that two different sets of Potentially Morally Injurious Events (PMIEs) exist: perpetration events, and betrayal events. Perpetration moral injury results when a person's actions violate their own moral values and betrayal moral injury is caused when the actions of trusted others violate personal values.[237]

Jordan and his colleagues maintain that these PMIEs are not directly linked to PTSD, but rather "the effect of PMIEs on PTSD symptoms and other aspects of moral injury is, in part, mediated by the *unique event specific meaning* of PMIEs to the persons who experienced them, shaped by their learning histories and cultural context, especially the degree to which such events contradict firmly established identities or worldviews."[238] They do not, however, completely separate moral injury from PTSD. Instead they argue that moral injury intensifies PTSD because moral injury compounds the trauma-related, life threatening event with "inner conflict and emotional turmoil as the service member tries to reconcile his or her actions or the actions of others with his or her worldview."[239]

This conflict manifests as different PTSD symptoms relative to either the perpetrating or betraying nature of the PMIE. For perpetration moral injuries guilt, shame and depression are more typical; for betrayal moral injuries, anger, a condemnation-for-others attitude, intrusive thoughts and isolation is more typical.[240] They conclude that the way to repair moral injury is to "facilitate forgiveness of self and others, making amends or engagement in the reexperiencing of the inherent goodness in humanity."[241]

Currently, moral injury is still considered part of PTSD, however Jordan et al. call for further research into understanding moral injury and perhaps separating it from PTSD, as well as the development of moral repair strategies

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237 Alexander H. Jordan, et al. "Distinguishing War-Related PTSD Resulting from Perpetration- and Betrayal-Based Morally Injurious Events," *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* 9.6 (November 2017): 627–28.

238 Jordan, "Distinguishing War-Related PTSD," 628

239 Jordan, "Distinguishing War-Related PTSD," 628.

240 Jordan, "Distinguishing War-Related PTSD," 628.

241 Jordan, "Distinguishing War-Related PTSD," 632.

It is important for chaplains to recognize that moral injury is not just caused by the act of killing, or witnessing others kill. Those in the military who experience religious or racial prejudice, or even the victims of Military Sexual Trauma (MST) may have considered their abusers as former friends. These betrayals of supposed comrades could induce moral injury.[242] This type of prejudice is another aspect of moral injury that chaplains should be aware of since the military culture forms a bond between all soldiers. If that bond is betrayed, moral injury could result.

Lieutenant Colonel Dave Grossman's foundational work on the psychological cost of killing reported that after sixty days of continuous combat, 98% of all surviving soldiers become psychiatric casualties of one kind or another.[243]

> Treatment for these many manifestations of combat stress involves simply removing the soldier from the combat environment. Until the post-Vietnam era, when hundreds and thousands of PTSD cases appeared, this was the only treatment believed necessary to permit the soldier to return to normal life. But the problem is that the military does not want to simply return the psychiatric casualty to normal life, it wants to return him to combat!"[244]

In his work, Grossman examines why soldiers kill, and describes the cost of killing another human being. Killing, he describes, is a betrayal of human nature that offends our sensibilities.[245] Moral injury is the wound caused by this type of betrayal.

Due to the relatively new understanding of moral injury, it has not been mentioned by name within the Church. However, Jordan et al. postulate that moral repair methods should focus on forgiveness of self and others, making amends and re-experiencing the goodness of humanity—topics which are frequently discussed by Church leaders from the pulpit.

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242 Ramsay, "Moral Injury as Loss and Grief," 108.

243 Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2009), 43–44.

244 Grossman, *On Killing*, 48.

245 Grossman, *On Killing*, xxix.

Elder James E. Faust gave a talk in 2007 on the topic of forgiveness. He began by sharing the tragedy of an Amish community, the West Nickel Mines School shooting. The local milk man had mental disturbances and sadly took and killed hostages at the Amish school. Yet, despite the tragedy, the Amish community did not harbor hatred, they forgave. Elder Faust recognized that the response of the Amish was ideal, and that doesn't necessarily match reality. "Forgiveness is not always instantaneous as it was with the Amish. When innocent children have been molested or killed, most of us do not think first about forgiveness. Our natural response is anger. We may even feel justified in wanting to 'get even' with anyone who inflicts injury on us or our family."[246] While the Amish may not have displayed the symptoms of moral injury, the lesson Elder Faust taught is applicable to those who have received moral injury in the military. As noted above, moral injury can be accompanied by feelings of anger, guilt and shame. Elder Faust stated that we need to recognize these emotions, and when we accept them we can then take them to the Lord to heal us. He continues with,

> We need to recognize and acknowledge angry feelings. It will take humility to do this, but if we will get on our knees and ask Heavenly Father for a feeling of forgiveness, He will help us. The Lord requires us 'to forgive all men' for our own good because 'hatred retards spiritual growth.' Only as we rid ourselves of hatred and bitterness can the Lord put comfort into our hearts.[247]

This is processing one's emotions through the lens of faith.

Similarly, Elder Gerrit Gong spoke on how we can always remember God, as repeated in the sacrament prayers, and how that remembrance can help us heal. While Elder Gong did not address moral injury, he does focus on feelings of betrayal, which are a part of moral injury.

> When trust is betrayed, dreams shattered, hearts broken and broken again, when we want justice and need mercy, when our fists clench and our tears flow, when we need to know what to hold onto and what to let go of, we can always remember Him. Life is not as cruel

246 James E. Faust, "The Healing Power of Forgiveness," *Ensign*, April 2007, 68.

247 Faust, "The Healing Power of Forgiveness," 69.

> as it can sometimes seem. His infinite compassion can help us find our way, truth, and life.[248]

Recognizing what we need "to hold onto and what to let go of" requires introspection and may yield insight into healing from moral injury.

Elder Uchtdorf gave a talk in 2008 that focused on two principles that would help us "find a path to peace, hope, and joy—even during times of trial and distress."[249] These two principles are the Lord's happiness, and how we can experience it despite the challenges of life. According to Elder Uchtdorf, God receives happiness through creation and being compassionate and all humanity can emulate these activities. He said, "creation brings deep satisfaction and fulfillment"[250] and such a sense of purpose may help to increase the self-esteem of those who feel they have betrayed their own moral values.

Elder Uchtdorf gives the following counsel to those who feel like they cannot do anything. "If you still feel incapable of creating, start small. Try to see how many smiles you can create, write a letter of appreciation, learn a new skill, identify a space and beautify it."[251] From there, he moves on to being compassionate and how compassion develops happiness. "As we lose ourselves in the service of others, we discover our own lives and our own happiness."[252] Even if a person can only perform small acts of service it will help them to develop a sense of happiness. None of this is to say that happiness is immediate, especially when moral injury and PTSD are present, rather that creation and compassion will help a person to re-experience the inherent goodness of humanity.

While the scriptures do not address moral injury by name, they do address situations that fit within the definition of "perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and

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248 Gerrit W. Gong, "Always Remember Him," *Ensign*, May 2016, 109.

249 Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Happiness, Your Heritage," *Ensign*, November 2008, 118.

250 Uchtdorf, "Happines, Your Heritage," 118.

251 Uchtdorf, "Happiness, Your Heritage," 119.

252 Uchtdorf, "Happiness, Your Heritage," 119.

expectations."[253] At the center of the healing process of moral injury is to "facilitate forgiveness of self and others, making amends or engagement in the re-experiencing of the inherent goodness in humanity."[254] The scriptures include a multitude of stories and teachings regarding these aspects of forgiveness, reconciliation, and understanding that "men [and women] are that they might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25) that could be advantageous to the chaplain in his ministry.

Recommended Scriptures

Jacob, Genesis 32:24–30 (narrative): While there are multiple narratives of the patriarch's life that could be used to demonstrate someone struggling through morally injurious experiences, these verses give us an example of part of the healing process. The last time Jacob saw Esau was at Beersheba in Genesis 27 when Jacob beguiled Isaac for the blessing. After this deception came to light, Esau swore to himself "I [will] slay my brother Jacob" (Genesis 27:41) and so Jacob fled to live with his uncle Laban. During this journey to flee away from Esau, Jacob received a vision of a ladder that ascended to heaven at Bethel (Genesis 28:12).

This seemed to be his first invitation to accept Jehovah as his God. Years later, in Genesis 32 he is returning to his home and worries about Esau's wrath. Messengers from Esau tell Jacob that Esau will meet him the next day with 400 men. "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed" (Genesis 32:7). Fearing that his brother would attack him, Jacob divides his household into two camps so that if Esau attacks one the other can escape. He also formulates a plan to gift Esau a substantial amount of his flocks and cattle to attempt to preemptively appease Esau. It is that night, after he has formulated his contingency plans that he wrestles with an angel.

Gaye Strathearn, in a devotional address given at Brigham Young University-Hawaii, pointed out at that Jacob seemed to be hesitant to make covenants with the Lord at Bethel.[255] This is expressed through his use of an "if . . .

253 Litz, "Moral Injury and Moral Repair," 697.

254 Jordan, "Distinguishing War-Related PTSD," 632.

255 Gaye Strathearn, "In a World Full of Choices—Choose God" (Speech, Brigham Young University-Hawaii, Laie, HI, January 23, 2018), https://devotional.byuh.edu/node/1105.

then" statement. "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, *If* God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; *then* shall the Lord be my God" (Genesis 28:20–21). It was only after his years in Haran, as well as the crisis Esau poses when Jacob returns to Canaan that he decides to commit to the covenant. However, in order to secure the covenant, he has to wrestle with God.

Arthur Frank examines the account of Jacob wrestling the angel and asks readers to consider this question, "Is Jacob wrestling a blessing out of the angel, or is the angel wrestling the petition for a blessing out of Jacob?"[256] This is a profound question when taking into account the context of Jacob's life thus far. Expounding on Frank, Nancy Ramsay states that for Jacob the wrestle is a "struggle with the moral injury he incurred in a series of betrayals that began with his birth family . . . The story suggests that Jacob is wrestling with God in the process of coming to terms with his very sense of self as he confronts the shame and guilt that shape his reflections on his betrayals of relational obligations."[257] With this interpretation, Jacob confronts the angel with his guilt. Jacob desires to rid himself of his guilt before he sees his brother the next morning. The struggle is so deep that Jacob does not realize that the angel is actually God himself, he does not learn this until the end.

The wrestle is not easy, it lasts practically all night, and the wrestle physically wounds him. Frank makes the following observation. "He leaves the scene with a limp, which is the stigmata of his encounter with the divine, and with a new name, Israel, which is the boon of his encounter."[258] According to this interpretation, Jacob wrestles with God over the guilt of his previous deceptions in preparation for meeting his dangerous brother. Jacob leaves the encounter a changed person, empowered to reconcile with his brother the next day. Ultimately, he decides to make a covenant with God, receives the blessing manifest through his new name Israel, and erected a public stele declaring "God is the God of Israel" (Genesis 33:20).

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256 Arthur W. Frank, *The Wounded Storyteller* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 181.

257 Ramsay, "Moral Injury as Loss and Grief," 110.

258 Frank, *The Wounded Storyteller*, 180–81.

While forming covenants may not be within the contexts of counselees that chaplains interact with, the chaplain may consider reframing this narrative through forming duties and obligations to other people or even God. Forming connections with others is one way to "re-experience the inherent goodness of humanity." Additionally, Jacob story can serve as a model for the wrestle to recover from moral injury.

Paul (narrative): Paul's moral injury comes because he persecuted the church. We see this guilt haunting him even years after his conversion. He recognizes that the grace of God has saved him, yet the moral injury remains. 1 Corinthians 15:9–10 "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am." See also Romans 7:24 and 1 Timothy 1:14–16.

*Alma 36 (narrative)***:** Here, Alma the Younger recounts his own spiritual journey to his son Helaman. Alma and his friends were among the "very vilest of sinners," and through God's mercy they were spared, yet "they suffered much anguish of soul because of their iniquities, suffering much and fearing that they should be cast off forever" (Mosiah 28:4). Alma 36 can be seen as Alma's wrestle with his own moral injury. Alma was "wracked with eternal torment," and "harrowed up" by his many sins. His own actions resulted in the spiritual destruction of many who left the Nephite church. "I had murdered many of his children, or rather led them away unto destruction" (Alma 36:14). Alma uses incredibly painful words to describe the effect this guilt had upon his soul. But he also describes where he got relief.

> I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death. And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more. And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain! (Alma 36:18–20).

Alma's story, like the apostle Paul's, can give people hope that no matter what they have done, Jesus Christ can help them heal. Additionally, it

conveys an important message on the interaction between remembering the event and feeling the pain. Elder Uchtdorf taught,

> Remembering will help us avoid making the same mistakes again. But if we stay true and faithful, the memory of our sins will be softened over time. This will be part of the needed healing and sanctification process. Alma testified that after he cried out to Jesus for mercy, he could still remember his sins, but the memory of his sins no longer distressed and tortured him, because he knew he had been forgiven.[259]

We will still remember the things we have done and experienced, but the pain will not bother us.

259 Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Point of Safe Return," *Ensign*, May 2007.

Pornography

To date, there have been little research conducted regarding the use of pornography in military settings. In 1996, Madeline Morris, a Law professor at Duke University, published a 130 page article that delved into the topic of rape in military culture.[260] A portion of her work focused on the place of pornography in the military. She compared rates of pornography usage among civilians with those in the military. She reported that from 1992 to 1993, for those with only high school graduate education levels, 9% of civilian men used pornography compared to 24% of military men. Additionally, for college graduates, the rates were 7% of civilian men compared to 12% of military men.[261] Ultimately, Morris suggested that pornography usage does not compel military men to rape women, but rather that "that the prevalence of pornography in the military environment may reflect sexual attitudes and norms within military culture that cast women as sexual targets and men as sexual consumers."[262]

The data presented by Morris is now 26 years old; however, there are ample studies examining the use of pornography among the general population. Measuring pornography use can be difficult, since there is no single definition for what constitutes pornography.[263] A study published in 2016 analyzed a variety of pornography reporting methods and concluded that the approximate rates for pornography usage within the past year were 59% to 69% for men and 27% to 42% for women. Usage rates within the past week of the survey were 40% to 46% for men and 16% to 19% for women.[264] This data shows that the rates for men are nearly double that of women, and that men tend to use pornography much more frequently than women do.

Just as defining pornography has had significant debate, so too has pornography's designation as "addictive" caused polarizing arguments. At

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260 Madeline Morris, "By Force of Arms: Rape, War and Military Culture," *Duke Law Journal* 45.4 (February 1996): 651–781.

261 Morris, "By Force of Arms," 714.

262 Morris, "By Force of Arms," 715.

263 Mark Regnerus, David Gordon and Joseph Price, "Documenting Pornography Use in America: A Comparative Analysis of Methodological Approaches," *Journal of Sex Research* 53.7 (2016): 874.

264 Regnerus, Gordon and Price, "Documenting Pornography Use in America," 877.

one end of the spectrum, famous blogger Matt Walsh titled an article "We're a Nation of Porn Addicts,"[265] while the other side is represented by such articles like Samantha Allen's "Your Porn Addiction Isn't Real."[266]

Among the addiction camp is a prominent marriage family therapist and author Dr. Kevin B. Skinner. His book *Treating Pornography Addiction* is a fundamental text in the realm of counseling pornography users.[267] In his book, he discusses "The Addiction Continuum" that describes pornography usage within seven levels of intensity. These levels range from level 1 (viewing pornography at most once or twice a year), to level 7 (spending hours each day, in addition to constantly lying and denying pornography use as well as exhibiting risky sexual behaviors to act out things that are being viewed).[268]

One limitation of Skinner's stance on pornography as an addiction is that he almost entirely focuses on male usage, and reduces those who frequently use pornography to outcasts that cannot function socially in any positive way.

> In social circumstances pornography-addiction clients are likely to do one of three things. The first possibility is that they will limit their social interaction. This often leads to further isolation and feelings of being alone . . . Others turn to social interaction into a search for sexual experiences . . . the social interaction can be dangerous (e.g. emotional issues and sexually transmitted diseases) and will seldom if ever lead to real or lasting relationships. Those in the final group try to remain socially active . . . However, they often limit how close others can get to them because they are afraid that if they get too close they will end up hurting the person.[269]

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265 Matt Walsh, "We're A Nation Of Porn Addicts. Why Are We Surprised By The Perverts In Our Midst?" Dailywire.com, https://www.dailywire.com/news/24137/walsh-were-nation-porn-addicts-why-are-we-matt-walsh.

266 Samantha Allen, "Your Porn Addiction Isn't Real," thedailybeast.com, https://www.thedailybeast.com/your-porn-addiction-isnt-real.

267 Kevin B. Skinner, *Treating Pornography Addiction: The Essential Tools for Recovery* (Lindon, UT: The Skinner Corp, 2005).

268 Skinner, *Treating Pornography Addiction*, 24–32.

269 Skinner, *Treating Pornography Addiction,* 36–37.

In his book, Skinner provides a model, the reaction sequence, to conceptualize the effects that occur before and after pornography use. The reaction sequence is a bio-psycho process that occurs before, during and after a person uses pornography.

This is valuable for chaplains to understand because a person starts this process before they actually use pornography. If they are taught and empowered on how to interrupt this sequence, then the process stops and use can be averted. The reaction sequence begins with "vulnerable time" where the person is exposed to a stimulus that begins them down the path to use pornography. Once this stimulus begins, it generates thoughts and emotions that both anticipate and perhaps push back against viewing pornography. At this point, the brain begins to release chemicals in anticipation of viewing pornography. "It is important to note that once a reaction sequence is fully developed in the mind, these chemicals are released into the body before a person ever sees pornography."[270] After the chemical release, more thoughts are generated that provide a rationalizing belief, such as "it's really not that bad." Then, feeling justified, the person uses pornography.[271] Chaplains can raise awareness of a person's reaction sequence and can move to interrupt it and minimize the risks associated with the different steps.

Outside of the "pornography as addiction" camp, two additional camps view pornography as "not an addiction." The first are those who would state that pornography use has relatively no negative consequences. One such article was published by Christian Grov et al, and suggested that pornography use may facilitate better open and honest sexual communication among partners, thus increasing their satisfaction with each other.[272] Opposite this camp are those who suggest that pornography use can have negative consequences, but still does not fit the definition of an "addiction."

The reason for not labeling pornography use as an addiction is that even the DSM-5 does not use the word "addiction" but rather "dependence" when

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270 Skinner, *Treating Pornography Addiction*, 49.

271 Skinner, *Treating Pornography Addiction*, 45–55.

272 Christian Grov, Brian Joseph Gillespie, Tracy Royce, and Janet Lever, "Perceived Consequences of Casual Online Sexual Activities on Heterosexual Relationships: A U.S. Online Survey," *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 40.2 (April 2011): 429–39.

used to describe substance abuse or substance dependence. Researchers state that,

> Addiction is such a subjective word. It simply means different things to different people—even to different experts . . . When some people think of addiction, they think of the *condition* of addiction, the condition of someone at the stage of asking for treatment or of causing problems for others . . . Others, however, are thinking of the process of addiction, looking for the necessary and sufficient conditions for the development of addiction, the transition from volitional to compulsive drug use. This is a scientific perspective, probing the differences between cause (what comes first) and consequence (what follows).[273]

The lack of a definition of pornography, among certain clinicians and researchers, has given rise to a new concept, "perceived addiction." Which "focuses on the propensity of the individual to interpret personal use of pornography in a pathological manner . . . perceived addiction refers to the extent to which an individual feels addicted to pornography.[274] Ultimately, this a battle between semantics.

The chaplain should evaluate how much pornography use interferes with the ability to function normally. This understanding allows a therapist, or chaplain, to recognize that pornography use can have negative consequences without laying the burden of guilt and shame on an individual.

Within the Church, the term pornography has been used in general conference 414 times, 227 of which occurred within the past nineteen years.[275] Additionally, when used in conference pornography tends to be grouped with "addictions" like drugs and alcohol. During the October 2015 conference President Monson stated, "The addictions which can come from drugs,

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273 Roy A. Wise and George F. Koob, "The Development and Maintenance of Drug Addiction," *Neuropsychopharmacology* 39 (2014): 254–55.

274 Joshua B. Grubbs, et al., "Perceived Addiction to Internet Pornography and Psychological Distress: Examining Relationships Concurrently and Over Time," *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 29.4 (December 2015): 1056.

275 Davies, "LDS General Conference Corpus."

alcohol, pornography, and immorality are real and are nearly impossible to break without great struggle and much help."[276]

However, Elder Oaks addressed the issue of pornography and addiction in the October 2015 *Ensign.*[277] In his article, he provides his own continuum of pornography use in four stages. The first stage is accidental or inadvertent exposure. "There is no sin in this when we turn away and don't pursue it."[278] The second and third stages are occasional and intensive use. "This use of pornography may be occasional or even frequent, but it is always intentional, and that is its evil."[279] The fourth stage is compulsive use, which Elder Oaks labels as "addiction."

It is only in this last stage the Elder Oaks describes pornography use as addictive. "A person's behavior is addictive when it forms a 'dependency' (a medical term applied to the use of drugs, alcohol, compulsive gambling, etc.) amounting to an 'irresistible compulsion' that 'takes priority over almost everything else in life.'"[280] Here, Elder Oaks provide an additional way to look at pornography use. Instead of the all or nothing stance that some clinicians and researchers take, Elder Oaks provides a middle ground. He states, "In fact, most young men and young women who struggle with pornography are not addicted."[281] This, he says, is an important distinction to make. "If behavior is incorrectly classified as an addiction, the user may think he or she has lost agency and the capacity to overcome the problem. This can weaken resolve to recover and repent. On the other hand, having a clearer understanding of the depth of a problem—that it may not be as ingrained or extreme as feared—can give hope and an increased capacity to exercise agency to discontinue and repent."[282]

With this stance, that pornography is a problem but not necessarily an addiction, people can be empowered with hope that they are not slaves to it.

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276 Thomas S. Monson, "Keep the Commandments" *Ensign,* November 2015, 84-85.

277 Dallin H. Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," *Ensign*, October 2015, 32–38.

278 Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," 34.

279 Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," 34.

280 Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," 34.

281 Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," 34.

282 Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," 34.

Additionally, he stated that accurately identifying where a person is at in their usage, whether it is occasional, intensive or compulsive allows them to have a better understanding of what actions are necessary to repent and recover.[283]

Linda Reeves taught, "One reason we are here on earth is to learn to manage the passions and feelings of our mortal bodies."[284] The scriptures teach these principles. The Lord's standard for his people has always included elements of chastity. Recovering from pornography requires humility and understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.[285] There is hope for those who repent. Recovery is possible.

Recommended Scriptures:

*Alma 39:1–9 (narrative)***:** Michael Ash recognized that traditionally, Latter-day Saints rank sexual sins next to murder.[286] This stems from a casual reading of Alma 39:5. "Know ye not, my son, that these things are an abomination in the sight of the Lord; yea, most abominable above all sins save it be the shedding of innocent blood or denying the Holy Ghost?"

Without diminishing the severity of sexual sin, Ash proposes an alternative interpretation for these verses. According to Ash, the "abomination" Alma refers to is "causing the spiritual death of others."[287] Earlier, Alma had described how he himself murdered, or led the Nephites astray. "I had murdered many of his children, or rather led them away unto destruction" (Alma 36:14). Using the rest of Alma's discourse Ash points out that Alma is doing more than addressing Corianton's sexual transgression. Alma also charges Corianton with "forsak[ing] the ministry," and that he should have "tended to the ministry wherewith thou wast entrusted" (Alma 39:3–4).

Abandoning his ministry by going after a harlot caused many people to reject Alma "For when they saw your conduct they would not believe in my words"

283 Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," 35.

284 Linda S. Reeves, "Protection from Pornography—a Christ-Focused Home," *Ensign*, April 2014, .

285 Oaks, "Recovering from the Trap of Pornography," 36.

286 Michael R. Ash, "The Sin 'Next to Murder': An Alternative Interpretation," *Sunstone* 143 (November 2006): 34.

287 Ash, "The Sin 'Next to Murder,'" 34.

(Alma 39:11). Ash summarizes Alma's argument to Corianton as follows: "Corianton is guilty of leaving his mission to chase a harlot (either literally and/or figuratively). This harlot has damaged many testimonies already, and Corianton's actions have also led some of the people to destruction instead of to God."[288] According to Ash's interpretation, the sin next to murder is not sexual transgression, but rather leading people spiritually astray.

Now, what does this have to do with pornography? As stated above, many people overzealously jump to shaming people who use pornography by saying it is an addiction, similar to how saints casually assume Alma says sexual transgression is next to murder. Both the assumptions are inaccurate.

Elder Oaks, as shown above, provided a model of pornography use for the saints to use. Only when pornography use reaches its most compulsive levels would Elder Oaks consider it an addiction. With this understanding, and armed with the context of Alma's discourse to Corianton, the chaplain can readily adapt the principles Alma taught to those they counsel with pornography use.

In addition to teaching about the seriousness of chastity, Alma also teaches Corianton about the resurrection and the plan of salvation. He does this in order to give context for the seriousness of chastity and tending to the ministry. Since many people may not want to discuss the spiritual ramification of pornography use, chaplains can still adapt Alma's principles to the mundane. When people understand their obligations, whether that is to their family, or to the Army, they can understand that pornography use can hurt their relationships. Spouses may feel betrayed, angered, or shame. A pornography user may stay up late using pornography, causing them to sleep in and miss early morning physical training or even fall asleep on duty during the day. Chaplains can adapt their counseling methods to help soldiers "focus on the ministry," whether that ministry is at home or with the Army.

288 Ash, "The Sin 'Next to Murder,'" 36.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is common within the military. The rates of PTSD as demonstrated by a variety of studies show a point prevalence between 2% to 17%; and a lifetime prevalence between 6% to 31%.[289] Within the DSM-5, PTSD is categorized as a trauma- and stressor-related disorder. "Exposure to a traumatic or stressful event" is explicitly needed in the diagnostic criteria. In order for a PTSD diagnosis to be made it must include all seven diagnostic criteria (each with multiple caveats).[290] As such, PTSD is complicated to diagnose, and while chaplains are not diagnosticians, they must be familiar with the criteria as they may be some of first professionals to recognize PTSD, or acute stress, in its early stages and then can refer them to mental health professionals.

While PTSD is the most severe type of trauma- and stressor-related disorders, there are milder and more common disorders such as Acute Stress Disorder (which can progress into PTSD) and Adjustment Disorder. One of the distinguishing features between PTSD and acute stress disorder is that the latter has a duration of at least three days to one month.[291] If the symptoms of acute stress do not resolve after one month then the diagnosis could be intensified to PTSD. While Acute Stress and PTSD begin onset within days of the traumatic event, it is nevertheless possible for a person to develop PTSD months or years after the event.[292] During the "delayed expression" process some initial symptoms may present themselves early, however the full diagnostic criteria may take much longer to develop.[293]

Many of the studies on the developmental course of PTSD in military settings examine the role of combat trauma. One study conducted by Jonathan Green, et al. concluded that enemy combat tactics could have a direct influence on increasing the risk factor for developing PTSD. Green describes two different styles of conducting warfare, symmetrical and asymmetrical.

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289 Richardson, "Prevalence Estimates of Combat-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," 5.

290 See DSM-5, 271–74 for full diagnostic criteria.

291 DSM-5, 279.

292 DSM-5, 276.

293 DSM-5, 276–77.

Symmetrical warfare is the historically common way to conduct warfare. Both armies use similar weapons, and conventional tactics. Asymmetrical warfare describes one side exploiting the vulnerabilities of the other, such as hiding among civilians, ambushes, booby traps, guerilla warfare, etc. The first example is the Vietnam War. "Because U.S. military personnel largely use conventional tactics across conflicts, enemy combatants attempting to gain advantage through the use of asymmetric tactics will invariably turn to guerilla-style threats.

This distinction may explain the high PTSD prevalence in Vietnam veterans."[294] In Vietnam, soldiers often had to fight an enemy in the jungle that they could not see, without clear objectives and without static defense perimeters.[295] Green, et al, then compared PTSD in veterans from the invasion (predominately-symmetrical warfare) and insurgency (predominately-asymmetrical) phases of the invasion of Iraq. They concluded that "asymmetric or guerrilla-style tactics by enemy combatants was associated with increased rates of PTSD relative to deployment phases characterized by more symmetric fighting."[296]

It is also important to recognize that according to the DSM-5 a person does not need to experience the traumatic event firsthand in order to develop PTSD. The diagnostic criteria includes four ways of exposure to traumatic events: directly experiencing the event, witnessing the event as it occurred to others, learning of the event and lastly, "experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic events" experienced by first responders.[297]

A study published in 2008 examined more than 50,000 U.S. military and support personnel (including health care workers) that were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. They determined that health care specialists who never saw combat had slightly higher rates of PTSD (2.9%) than combat specialists did

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294 Jonathan D. Green, et al., "The Effect of Enemy Combat Tactics on PTSD Prevalence Rates: A Comparison of Operation Iraqi Freedom Deployment Phases in a Sample of Male and Female Veterans," *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* 8.5 (September 2016): 635.

295 Green, "The Effect of Enemy Combat Tactics on PTSD Prevalence Rates," 635.

296 Green, "The Effect of Enemy Combat Tactics on PTSD Prevalence Rates," 638.

297 DSM-5, 271.

(2.4%).[298] Thus, chaplains must be sensitive to all soldiers, support personnel and family members. PTSD can develop through "secondary traumatization," such as first responders or family members living with post-deployment soldiers. These family members become indirect victims of the trauma experienced by their loved one.[299] Just as families can develop PTSD through their veterans, they can also suffer from the development of moral injury in a similar way.[300]

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder has never been mentioned in general conference. The word "trauma" has only been mentioned fifteen times.[301] More popular, however, is the scriptural term "affliction" which has occurred 589 times. Yet, experiencing the afflictions of life does not mean that a person would develop PTSD. Among all those who experience traumatic events, only about a 20% to 25% develop PTSD.[302]

In the April 1982 general conference, Elaine Cannon, the Young Women's general president at the time, gave a moving talk addressing mortality's challenges. She begins saying, "though deepening trials throng our way, we know that our afflictions can be consecrated to our good. Good can come from trouble. Trauma can enliven the heart and enrich the soul. Clouds do have silver linings, and the leaf will burst again on the dry branch."[303] Even those with PTSD can have hope that somehow good will come.

Just as moral injury is not a scriptural concept, niether is PTSD. Modern research still has not nailed down why some people develop PTSD and others do not, even when they experience the same event. Nevertheless, many of the situations that scriptural characters go through are resoundingly traumatic.

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298 Tyler C. Smith, et al., "New Onset and Persistent Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Self Reported After Deployment and Combat Exposures: Prospective Population Based US Military Cohort Study," *British Medical Journal* 336 (February 16, 2008): 367.

299 Tara Galovski and Judith A. Lyons, "Psychological Sequelae of Combat Violence: A Review of the Impact of PTSD on the Veteran's Family and Possible Interventions," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 9.5 (August 2004): 478, 480.

300 Nash and Litz, "Moral Injury," 369–71.

301 Davies, "LDS General Conference Corpus."

302 Stephen Joseph, *What Doesn't Kill Us: The New Psychology of Posttraumatic Growth* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 64.

303 Elaine Cannon, "Reach for Joy," Ensign, April 1982, 95.

There are soldiers who go into war, which are more personal and bloodier than typical modern wars simply due to the nature of close combat. Women are kidnapped, sexually abused and more. People lose their loved ones to disease and death. The kingdoms of Israel and the Nephites are on the cusp of destruction for many years at a time. The Nephites often had to participate in "the work of death" (Alma 43:37; 44:20; Helaman 4:5). Even Jesus Christ himself was beaten, abused and bloodied. Traumatic events are common in scripture, and the characters struggle to cope.

Recommended Scriptures

Naomi, Ruth 1–4 (narrative): Naomi's story begins with the traumatic loss of her husband and two sons. Webb notes that the loss of the males of her household would have left her destitute and powerless.[304] In such a condition she returns to Israel and renames herself "Mara," Hebrew for *bitter*, because "the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me" (Ruth 1:20). This indicates the severity of her grief. Not only does she change her name, but also accuses God of causing her present calamity. It is in this state of despair that she returns to Israel with Ruth. Webb makes an important observation.

> Nowhere in the text do we read of the community's chastisement of Naomi for her poor attitude or her self-pity. Nor do we read their suggestions that she use personal willpower to combat her despair and find immediate relief. Instead, Naomi's story is testimony to the gradual personal and social processes involved in the restoration of mental health.[305]

Naomi's spirits rise slowly and surely as Ruth remains her faithful companion. It is Ruth that first proposes the idea of gleaning the fields of Boaz, to which Naomi consents (Ruth 2:2). Later, with her spirits stronger still, Naomi concocts a plan for Ruth to win over Boaz (Ruth 3:1–5); a plan that eventually works. Boaz accepts his role as kinsman-redeemer (Ruth 3:12) and marries Ruth, forming a new family for Naomi. When Ruth has a son, the community joins Naomi in rejoicing. "And the women said unto

304 Webb, *Toward a Theology of Psychological Disorder,* 27.

305 Webb, Toward a Theology of Psychological Disorder, 28.

Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel" (Ruth 4:14).

Webb points out that Naomi's narrative demonstrates the process of a person transforming from embittered to rejoicing and that the community supported this process.[306]

Naomi's transformation from loss and grief to rejoicing in her new family is one that chaplains may wish adapt to Wimberly's model. Chaplains should point out the roles and actions of each of the characters. Naomi, in despair has to rely on Ruth to sustenance. Yet, when Naomi is strong enough she helps Ruth secure a new husband. Boaz, initially, only wanted to help support the two widows, but when Ruth asked him to become her redeemer he obliged. One application of this is to use these roles and actions as a tool to model how healthy families can care for a loved one with PTSD. And, let us not forget that Ruth must have had to process her own grief as well.

Psalm 6 (grief): Here the lamenter suffers both in body and mind. "Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak: O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed. My soul is also sore vexed" (Psalm 6:2–3). They plead with the Lord to relieve them of their suffering, asking "how long?" (Psalm 6:3) The emotional torment is constant. "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears" (Psalm 6:6). These are feelings in body and soul that those with PTSD may suffer. As this is a lament psalm, the chaplain may encourage the counselee to process their grief through this psalm. The address begins in verse 1. The complaint in verses 2 and 3. The confession of trust is implicit here, but the psalmist petitions God for relief in the verse 4 because they believe he can. Verse 9 reads as words of assurance that the lamenter gives themselves. The vow to praise is missing. Yet, with this Psalm the chaplain may encourage the counselee to write their own additions, including the confession of trust and vow to praise.

306 Webb, Toward a Theology of Psychological Disorder, 28.

Sexual Abuse

Since the manner, in which sexual assaults are reported in the military impact how the statistical data is received, it is important to review this process. The United States military has a unique way of reporting and investigating crimes of sexual violence compared to how similar occurrences are handled in the civilian sector. The victim of sexual assault within the military has two options for reporting: unrestricted and restricted. Unrestricted reporting begins an official law enforcement investigation, informing the chain of command and all need-to-know personnel. This can be initiated by reporting to the chaplain, the chain of command, law enforcement personnel, medical personnel, and victim advocates. On the other hand, restricted reporting does not begin a formal investigation and keeps the communications strictly confidential. This confidentiality can only be maintained if the victim reports to the chaplain, the victim advocate, or medical personnel in states that do not have laws for mandatory reporting.

The victim can choose at any time to convert their restricted report to an unrestricted report; however, the inverse is not true. If a victim chooses to keep the incident restricted, then the chaplain may inform the chain of command that an incident took place but cannot divulge the details of who the victim or alleged perpetrator are. As such the statistical data from restricted reports is limited to the number of restricted reports received, all other details are unknown.[307]

The DoD 2017 annual report from the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) disclosed that it received 6,679 reports of sexual assault, which is a 10% increase from those received in 2016.[308] Of these, 5,110 were unrestricted and 1,659 were restricted. SAPRO concluded that approximately 57% of unrestricted cases included both a service member as a victim and perpetrator, and 25% of cases included a service member victim and a non-service member perpetrator or an unidentified perpetrator. The remaining 19% of cases included a service member perpetrator and a non-

307 Department of Defense, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SPARO) 2017, Appendix B: Statistical Data on Sexual Assault, DoD Appendix B: (Washington, DC department of Defense, 2017). 6," https://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/FY17_Annual/Appendix_B_Statistical_Data_on_Sexual_Assault.

308 Department of Defense, Sexual Assault Prevention, 6.

service member victim.[309] The analysis of completed investigations reported that 81% of victims were female, and 78% of perpetrators were male.[310] Additionally, SAPRO estimates that only one third of sexual assault victims in 2016 reported the incident, which is an improvement from 2006 with an estimated 1 in 14 incidents being reported at that time.[311]

Further research helps shed more light on these statistics and guides the interpretation of the data. Much of the research in recent decades on Military Sexual Trauma (MST), that is acts of sexual violence committed against someone while serving in the military, has focused on females since they are the statistical majority of victims. That females are often the targets in acts of sexual abuse in the military is a reality that cannot be denied. However, an article published in 2011 pointed out that even though female victims compromise the statistical majority of sexual violence cases in the military, because the military is predominately male there are nearly as many male victims of MST as there are female victims. Tim Hoyt et al., showed that according to the VA's own data in 2005 there were 6,227 cases where males were victims of MST compared to 6,469 female victims.[312] While many studies give a wide variance to the lifetime probability of females in the military becoming victims of MST, most estimates cluster around 23% to 33%.[313] For males in the military, the range is .03% to 12.4%.[314] The statistics can be deceiving since out of the 1.4 million personnel in the military only about 203,000 are women.[315] According to the analysis of several studies, men are significantly less likely to report military sexual assaults than women, 81% of men and 67% of women do not report being sexually

309 The percentages add up to 101% in Department of Defense, Sexual Assault Prevention, 12.

310 Department of Defense, Sexual Assault Prevention, 32.

311 Department of Defense, Sexual Assault Prevention, 3.

312 Tim Hoyt, Jennifer Klosterman Rielage, and Lauren F. Williams, "Military Sexual Trauma in Men: A Review of Reported Rates," *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation* 12 (2011): 245.

313 Naomi Himmelfarb, Deborah Yaeger, and Jim Mintz, "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Female Veterans with Military and Civilian Sexual Trauma," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 19.6 (December 2011): 837.

314 Carol O'Brien, Jessica Keith, and Lisa Shoemaker, "Don't Tell: Military Culture and Male Rape," *Psychological Services* 12, no. 4 (2015): 357.

315 CNN Staff, "By the Numbers: Women in the Military," CNN.com, https://www.cnn.com/2013/01/24/us/military-women-glance/index.html.

assaulted.[316] This is likely due to "rape myths" that are pervasive in the military.[317]

Military Sexual Trauma has been linked to various mental health issues such as PTSD, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, interpersonal difficulties, negative self-concept, and isolation.[318] However, males and females tend to manifest these issues differently. For instance, women are more likely to develop PTSD while men are more likely to develop non-PTSD anxiety disorders such as bipolar disorder, personality disorders and psychosis.[319]

Another example is that psychological problems tend to be more persistent and resistant to treatment in men than in women.[320] As such, MST presents a real and threatening presence within the military. It is important to not that chaplains will not only counsel victims but likely the perpetrators as well.

Within the Church, the phrase "sexual abuse" has been used in General Conference a total of 15 times in 13 talks, from 1980 to 2008. However, the generic term "abuse" has been used 252 times since 1990.[321] This expanded use of abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual and substance abuse.
In April 1992, Elder Richard G. Scott gave a sermon that directly addressed the traumatic pains caused by abuse in all its forms, including sexual abuse. Elder Scott recognized the debilitating nature of abuse, and that its consequences can be devastating to the victim. These consequences often culminate in self-loathing, hatred of others, and hatred of God.

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316 O'Brien, "Don't Tell," 358.

317 O'Brien, "Don't Tell," 359–62. Rape myths place blame on the victim by suggesting that they are at fault and if they wanted to, they could prevent it. Rape myths prevent many women from reporting.

318 William B. Elder, Jessica L. Domino, Timothy O. Rentz, and Emma L. Mata-Galán, "Conceptual Model of Male Military Sexual Trauma," Psychological Trauma: *Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy* 9.S1 (August 2017): 59–60. See also Austin M. Hahn, Christine K. Tirabassi, Raluca M. Simons, and Jeffrey S. Simons, "Military Sexual Trauma, Combat Exposure, and Negative Urgency as Independent Predictors of PTSD and Subsequent Alcohol Problems Among OEF/OIF Veterans," *Psychological Services* 12.4 (November 2015): 378–83.

319 Jaclyn C. Kearns, et al., "The Effect of Military Sexual Assault, Combat Exposure, Postbattle Experiences, and General Harassment on the Development of PTSD and MDD in Female OEF/OIF Veterans," *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, 2.4, (December 2016): 419.

320 Hoyt, "Military Sexual Trauma in Men," 245.

321 Davies, "LDS General Conference Corpus."

> They [consequences of abuse] include fear, depression, guilt, self-hatred, destruction of self-esteem, and alienation from normal human relationships. When aggravated by continued abuse, powerful emotions of rebellion, anger, and hatred are generated. These feelings often are focused against oneself, others, life itself, and even Heavenly Father.[322]

After acknowledging the consequences of abuse, Elder Scott then moves to the topic of moral agency. "To be helped, you must understand some things about eternal law. Your abuse results from another's unrighteous attack on your freedom. Since all of Father in Heaven's children enjoy agency, there can be some who choose willfully to violate the commandments and harm you."[323] Moral agency is one of the bedrock values of the doctrine of the Church.[324] God will not violate people's agency even though their actions may restrict another's agency. To this Elder Scott provides hope. "You must understand that *you are free to determine to overcome the harmful results of abuse.* Your attitude can control the change for good in your life. It allows you to have the help the Lord intends you to receive."[325] Attitude is where the hope of healing can begin to work.

Elder Scott taught that a victim can use their own agency to call for divine aid and healing, but they cannot waste their energies on revenge. Healing emotional trauma takes time and is more of a process than a single event.

Elder Scott also revisited the topic of abuse and specified himself that he would address "sexual abuse" in the April 2008 General Conference. This talk addressed many of the same concepts he addressed in his earlier sermon. One difference is that he devoted two paragraphs specifically to the perpetrator. "Now, to the perpetrator who has shattered the life of another by abuse: Recognize that you need help with your addiction or it will destroy

322 Richard G. Scott, "Healing the Tragic Scars of Abuse," Ensign, May 1992, 31.

323 Scott, "Healing the Tragic Scars of Abuse," 31.

324 Teryl Givens, Wrestling the Angel: The Foundations of Mormon Thought: Cosmos, God, Humanity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 45.

325 Scott, "Healing the Tragic Scars of Abuse," 31.

you. You will not overcome it by yourself. You likely need specialized professional help. I plead with you to seek to be rescued *now*."[326]

Elder Scott also encouraged perpetrators to face civil discipline, as that step is necessary to begin full repentance. Elder Scott's message was clear; he condemned the actions of the perpetrator while maintaining that even they can receive forgiveness for their acts.[327]

In an article published in the April 2017 *Ensign*, Nanon Talley from LDS Family Services specifically addressed sexual abuse. While much of the article focuses on childhood experiences, the principles of healing and forgiveness are still applicable to adults who experience sexual assaults in the military. She cites Alma 7:11–12 and states that "[Christ's] suffering was not just for our sins but also for our healing when someone else's sins cause us suffering."[328] She also stated, "often it is helpful to work with a professional experienced in this healing process."[329] Healing, then, comes from Jesus Christ and can be supplemented with professional help.

The scriptures contain many accounts of sexual misconduct, with virtually all focusing on the male abuse of females. Just to name a few, Dinah (Gen. 34), Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11), Tamar the daughter of David (2 Sam. 13), the Persian queen Vashti (Esther 1), and the Book of Mormon also mentions the priests of Noah kidnapping the daughters of the Lamanites (Mosiah 20) and the Nephite abuse of Lamanite prisoners (Moroni 9:9).

The narratives surrounding most of these characters do not end on happy notes.[330] Yet, they are narratives that should be discussed and worked out. Following Wimberly's Biblical Narrative Model, a chaplain can use these narratives to provoke discussion, and even for the counselee to add to the Biblical character's unwritten story.

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326 Richard G. Scott, "To Heal the Shattering Consequences of Abuse," Ensign, May 2008, 43.

327 Scott, "To Heal the Shattering Consequences of Abuse," 43.

328 Nanon Talley, "A Bridge to Hope and Healing," Ensign, April 2017, 61.

329 Nanon Talley, "A Bridge to Hope and Healing," Ensign, April 2017, 62.

330 Arguably, of this list, the only person who ends up in a good position is Bathsheba as queen mother to Solomon.

Recommended Scriptures:

Bathsheba, 2 Samuel 11 & 1 Kings 1 (narrative): The story of David and Bathsheba has been read by modern audiences as a rape narrative,[331] however, the modern legal definitions of rape do not equal the Biblical definition.[332] Some scholars, therefore, have argued against reading this as a rape narrative.[333] With this is mind, however, meaningful exploration of Bathsheba's character can still occur, and the counselee may even find qualities worthy of emulation.

The story begins with David choosing to stay behind and not fulfill the duty of the king to lead troops in battle. From *his own roof* David saw Bathsheba bathing (2 Samuel 11:2). The scriptures never condemn Bathsheba, and the Bible even suggests she was fulfilling her duty to the Law of Moses, since her bath was probably a ritual cleansing after menstruation.[334] David then summons her. Some time after their encounter, Bathsheba tells David that she is pregnant, and David then conspires to kill Uriah. God tells the prophet Nathan what has transpired, and Nathan pronounces a judgement upon David's house, including that the baby would die.

Heather Farrell points out, "As with most sin, David's mistake did not just impact him. Bathsheba not only lost her child, but she also suffered in the upheaval and violence that soon came to David's house as—the prophet had promised—a result of his sin."[335] Farrell then asks a deep question chaplains can use to discuss this narrative, "What do we do when, like Bathsheba, the result of someone else's sin hurts us and leaves our life in turmoil?"[336]

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331 See Trevor Dennis, *Sarah Laughed: Women's Voices in the Old Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 140–175.

332 The Biblical definitions of rape (Deuteronomy 22:22–29) are different from modern definitions. Nevertheless, in the modern day, both victims and perpetrators can find comfort and healing in the discussions that the scriptural passages of sexual abuse.

333 See Alexander Izuchukwu Abasili, "Was it Rape? The David and Bathsheba Pericope Re-examined," *Vestus Testamentum* 61.1 (January 2011):1–15.

334 Heather Farrell, *Walking with the Women of the Old Testament* (Springville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2017), 190.

335 Farrell, *Walking with the Women of the Old Testament*, 191.

336 Farrell, *Walking with the Women of the Old Testament*, 191.

Unlike most scriptural narratives of sexual promiscuity Bathsheba's story does not end here. Years later, when David "was old and stricken in years" (1 Kings 1:1) another of his sons, Adonijah, began to conspire to become king. His machinations excluded the priests and Nathan from his government (1 Kings 1:8, 10). Nathan, seeing that their lives were in peril should Adonijah rise to power, approached Bathsheba and counseled her to tell David to pronounce Solomon as his heir. Farrell paints the next scene in a noble way. "In true matriarch fashion, Bathsheba approached her husband and advocated for her son. Backed by the support of the prophet, she took control of the destiny of the Jewish kingdom."[337] Bathsheba successfully persuaded David and Solomon became king.

Bathsheba goes from being the one David controls and manipulates to taking charge of her own destiny. She does so in a way that not only benefits herself, but also the prophet and priests, thereby preserving the God-given Israelite religion. Whatever Bathsheba suffered years before when David killed her husband and they lost their child, she does not let that hinder her ability to advocate for herself and her kingdom. The chaplain may adapt this for use with Wimberly's model. Bathsheba could demonstrate the courage to take charge of one's situation and not remain passive.

Dinah Genesis 34 (narrative): Dinah is raped by Shechem. Jacob remains fairly passive while her brothers Simeon and Levi go out for vengeance and kill Shechem and his townsfolk. The chaplain may consider this chapter to be used to provoke discussion within a family if a family member is raped or sexually abused. Answer the question posed by Levi and Simeon in Genesis 34:31. How should a family deal with rape? Is revenge (characterized by Levi and Simeon) or is passivity and silence (characterized by Jacob) the answer? Explore the feelings of all the characters.

Judah (and Tamar) Genesis 38 (narrative): This story is confusing and bizarre to modern sensibilities.[338] It is skipped in Latter-day Saint Sunday school curriculum and even the famous play "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." Yet, this narrative models not only the courage of

337 Farrell, *Walking with the Women of the Old Testamen*t, 192.

338 Farrell, *Walking with the Women of the Old Testament*, 84.

a sexually objectified woman, Tamar, it also models the process of recovery for Judah, the perpetrator.

In Genesis 37 we are introduced Joseph, the dreamer and favorite of his father, and his jealous brothers. When Joseph went out to the fields to visit his brothers, and they conspired to initially kill him. Ruben, the eldest son, persuaded them to just throw him in a pit (Genesis 38:20–22). It is Judah, though, who takes charge of the brothers and changes the plan. "What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content" (Genesis 37:26–27). Judah is perfectly content with selling another human being. Joseph is sold as a slave. His precious coat is torn and presented to Jacob. The brothers ask Jacob to "know now whether it be thy son's coat or no" (Genesis 37:32). The Hebrew root for the word "know" is *nakar* which means to know, recognize, discern.[339] This word is important.

It is then in Genesis 38 that the story moves to Judah and Tamar. Some scholars have argued that this chapter represents an interruption in the Joseph narrative,[340] yet it has several prominent features that contribute to a unity of the larger narrative in Genesis 37–48. In Genesis 38, Tamar marries Er, the son of Judah. For whatever reason, God smites him and he dies. Following the not yet codified levirate law of marriage to raise a child for the lost son[341] Tamar marries Judah's next son, Onan. He too is killed by God. Judah, having lost two sons refused to give his third son to Tamar, "lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren did" (Genesis 38:85). Because Judah would not give his next son to Tamar, the duty of raising a child in the name of Er falls to Judah himself. To get Judah to fulfill his culturally acceptable obligations Tamar crafts a plan. She dresses up as a harlot and encounters Judah. He begins the negotiations to a sexual encounter, but since he has nothing to give her.
Tamar requests his signet, bracelet and staff as a "pledge," or "surety," that Judah would later bring a goat to her as payment. Judah is perfectly content

339 Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peapody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 647–48.

340 Harold W. Attridge et. al., *The Harper Collins Study Bible* (Sacramento: HarperCollins Publishers, 2006), 62.

341 The Law of Moses codifies this in Deuteronomy 25:5–10.

to buy another human being. Judah conducts his business, and Tamar goes her way never coming back to collect the goat. Months later, when Judah finds out she is pregnant he summons her so that she may be executed by fire (Genesis 38:24). Yet, Tamar produces Judah's signet, bracelet and staff and says "Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff" (Genesis 38:25). Here we see the same root, *nakar*, translated as "discern." Judah recognizes his error and pronounces a blessing for her and a condemnation for himself. "She hath been more righteous than I" (Genesis 38:26).

The narrative then moves to Joseph in Egypt. First, he is in Potiphar's house, where Potiphar's wife tries to seduce Joseph (Genesis 39:12). This event is meant to be juxtaposed with Judah's actions in Genesis 38. Often, Joseph is praised as the ideal that everyone should aspire to be like, since he flees from temptation.

On the other hand, Judah embodies reality. Everyone makes mistakes, even grave ones, yet there is still room for redemption. Joseph is then imprisoned until he interprets Pharaoh's dream of the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. Pharaoh promotes Joseph to be in charge of preparations for the famine. After the famine begins Joseph's brothers go to Egypt to buy food. Joseph recognizes his brothers, but they don't recognize him (Genesis 42:7–8). The word *nakar* appears here again. During the first visit Joseph takes Simeon hostage until they bring Benjamin to him (Genesis 42:20, 24). It is during Joseph's tests of his brothers that we see the repentant man Judah has become.

Back in Canaan, the family runs out of food and they must go back to Egypt. Jacob does not consent to Ruben's pleading to let them take Benjamin (Genesis 42:36–38). It is Judah who successfully persuades Jacob to release Benjamin into his care. "And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever" (Genesis 43:8–9). Where before Judah was willing to sell and buy other people, here we see Judah is willing to put forward himself as the price or "surety" for another person. Not only

does he say he is willing to do so, but when Joseph ensnares Benjamin in a scheme Judah demonstrates his complete willingness to become Joseph's slave (Genesis 44:33).

Farrell credits Judah's decisive experience with Tamar as the event that reshaped who he was.

> Judah's declaration that 'she [Tamar] hath been more righteous than I' was a changing point for him, and the Judah we read about in the rest of Genesis was a different man. Not only did he rejoin his family and reclaim his blessings, but when his brother Joseph . . . threatened to imprison his younger brother Benjamin, it was Judah who stepped forward and offered to take the place of his brother. It is evident that his heart had been changed and was now in the right place.[342]

It is Judah's heartfelt pleading that ultimately persuades Joseph to give up his ruse and reveal himself to his brothers. This is not the same Judah who used and abused other people in the past. He is a different, more noble man, because he recognized the gravity of his sins and repented.
Sexual assault is horrifically common in the military. Chaplains will counsel both victims and perpetrators. There are plenty of heroic victims in the scriptures. But Judah serves as a model for perpetrators.

Conclusion

This booklet discussed the use of scriptural narratives and psalms in the area of military chaplaincy.

Since military life presents a whole host of challenges and difficulties to military personnel and their families chaplains need to be able to address those challenges with their counselees. As such, this booklet discussed many of the common pertinent topics that chaplains face in their ministry. Having brought attention to these areas of concern and their setting in the military, this booklet then discussed how the scriptures can be used to address these issues from a position of faith.

The Biblical Narrative Model is a form of narrative therapy that seeks to reinterpret a counselee's presenting problem through the lens of a beloved

342 Farrell, *Walking with the Women of the Old Testament*, 87.

scripture story. This allows the chaplain and counselee to draw out meaning and hope from the scriptures to address the presenting problem.

The Use of Psalms in Grief Counseling is a model that allows people to process their grief from a position of faith. The psalms of lament provide grievers a structure to what may normally be a chaotic mass of emotion. This structure allows people to not only process grief but also reach out to God at the same time. This allows them to experience for themselves the transcendent intervention of God at a turbulent moment of their lives.

Using these models as well as the Latter-day Saint understanding of scriptures on the pertinent topics, Latter-day Saint military chaplains will have multiple resources to use when addressing the common challenges of military life.

It is hoped that this booklet provides a beginning template for scripture based pastoral counseling, and also can be utilized as a framework to facilitate insight and change.

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