

Copyright © 2004 by Katherine Padilla. This article is published by **Novaun Novels** at www.zerosilver.com and licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 2.5 License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5). To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5>. This document may be reproduced for personal non-commercial use as long as the text is not altered in any way and the byline and copyright notice are included on every copy.

INTELLIGENCE AND THE ART OF HOMEMAKING

By Katherine Padilla

This text comes from a literary spotlight that was presented at Homemaking Night in the Mt. Airy Ward, Frederick Maryland Stake on September 19, 1996.

President Ezra Taft Benson declared, “My beloved brothers and sisters, we hardly fathom the power of the Book of Mormon, nor the divine role it must play, nor the extent to which it must be moved.” Then quoting Elder Bruce R. McConkie, he said, ““The Book of Mormon shall so affect men that the whole earth and all its peoples will have been influenced and governed by it.””¹ Both quotes testify to the power of language.

Language is so powerful because it is a way of articulating and sharing ideas. Scriptures are full of examples of how both disciples of God and servants of Satan use language with expertise. I have prepared this [“Power of the Word”](#) chart to give you specific examples of how language is used by both Heavenly Father and Satan. I would like to highlight several points:

1. It’s impossible to separate the elements of spirit, content, and structure; they’re interrelated. For example, when we bear our testimonies, we don’t just stand at the pulpit and beam them to the congregation by spirit. We need language to articulate our feelings. Most of us have had the experience of listening to a prayer or testimony in another language. Even though we may feel the Spirit, the prayer or testimony doesn’t have the same power to us personally that one offered in our own language would. In this case, we have spirit without the content, or light

¹ Ezra Taft Benson, “Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, November 1988, p. 5.

without truth. At the other extreme, many people read the Bible and believe it's nothing more than mythology—an example of content without the spirit, or truth without light. This is why it is so important that the major part of our study of the scriptures be reading and not just going through them to pick out information. If we ignore the structure, we're doing ourselves a disservice, because we're going to miss an awfully lot that's there. Why? Because the structure connects not only the pieces of content, it connects the content to the spirit or, in other words, the truth to the light. When we read a novel, do we go through it and just pick out the theme or the details of a historical event? Of course not. To do so would defeat the purpose of reading the novel in the first place.

2. It's obvious what kinds of reading material come from the influence of Satan and which come from the influence of God.
3. The more expert a writer/speaker is in creating or implementing the structure, the greater his or her potential is for influencing others, either for good or for evil.
4. The more we read and act upon material influenced by the power of Satan, the more spiritually blind we become and unable to distinguish between false doctrine and truth, ugliness and beauty.
5. When we create material that incorporates Satan's lies or uses Satan's techniques, our ability to influence using the glory of God is diminished.
6. The more we read and act upon material influenced by the glory of God, the more intelligence we receive until we are "glorified in truth" and know all things.
7. Great intelligence combined with expertise in structure has the greatest potential for influence. Great art in all of its forms (including literature) is just that—a beautiful/extraordinary structure that radiates intelligence.

The scriptures themselves contain many examples of writing that combines great intelligence with outstanding structure: The history of the ancients recorded by Moses, the symbolic prophecies of Isaiah, the letters of Paul to the saints of his time, and the parables of the Savior. Even after thousands of years, these writings are bringing people to God and influencing society in positive ways. Indeed, the finest art we have on this earth seems as if it came straight from Heaven. By the same token, we would expect to find art in its most perfect form in Heaven. My dictionary lists several definitions of the word "art," but this is the one I like the best:

The conscious production or arrangement of sounds colors, forms, movements or other elements in a manner that affects the sense of beauty . . . ²

In a recent article, Elder M. Russell Ballard acknowledges God as the source of true art:

. . . many great artists have humbly acknowledged the source of their inspiration and the power behind their creation. No one can feast his or her eyes on the art of Michelangelo and not see the hand of God. Michelangelo himself knew it, as he expressed in this statement: ‘The true work of art is but a shadow of the divine perfection.’ ³

Heaven is the place in eternity where all of the arts come together in beauty and holiness to create an environment suitable for celestial beings. Home is the place in mortality where all the arts come together to create an environment for *potential* celestial beings. In fact, for years the prophets have been admonishing us to make our homes heaven on earth. Elder Spencer W. Kimball said this:

Heaven is a place, but also a condition; it is home and family. It is understanding and kindness. It is interdependence and selfless activity. It is quiet, sane living; personal sacrifice, genuine hospitality, wholesome concern for others. It is living the commandments of God without ostentation or hypocrisy. It is selflessness. It is all about us. We need only to be able to recognize it as we find it and enjoy it.⁴

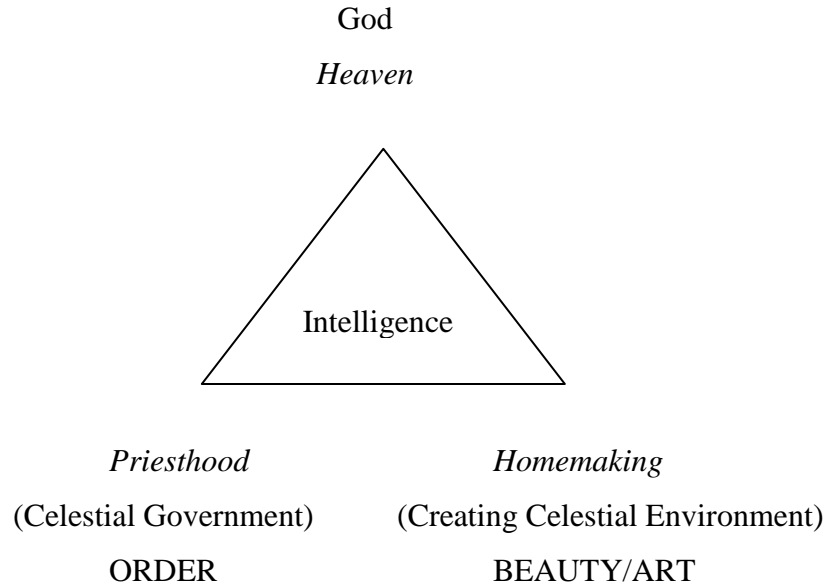
That act of creating a celestial environment is homemaking. It’s often misleading to speak of “homemaking arts,” because all of the arts are homemaking arts. In the eternal scheme of things, homemaking is the grandest art of all, because it’s where all of the arts come together.

This diagram displays my own understanding of homemaking’s relationship to the arts.

² *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 1979.

³ Russell M. Ballard, “Filling the World with Goodness and Truth,” *Ensign*, July 1996, p. 12.

⁴ Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, p. 265.



Of course, this diagram is simplified—priesthood holders create art and homemakers provide order—but it shows how important both roles are in the creation of Heaven and that intelligence is a critical element for success in both realms. The Savior taught this Himself—it is no accident that in section 93 of the D&C He begins with a discourse on intelligence and ends with correcting several of the brethren and telling them to put their houses in order.

This act of creating an environment for potential celestial beings (including ourselves) is the most important work we’ll do in this life next to providing bodies for potential celestial beings. We may not be able to afford all of the beautiful paintings and fine furnishings, but we can provide the “word” in abundance. We have the scriptures and the church magazines and hymnbooks. We all have library cards. I would like to conclude by reading Moses 7:13:

And so great was the faith of Enoch that he led the people of God, and their enemies came to battle against them; and he spake the word of the Lord, and the earth trembled, and the mountains fled, even according to his command; and the rivers of water were turned out of their course; and the roar of the lions was heard out of the wilderness; and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the power of the language which God had given him.

The “word,” language, truly is a great power. As we learn how to use this power and trust in the Lord, he’ll help us, as homemakers, create that celestial environment for ourselves and for our families.