The background of the cover is a photograph of a spiral-bound notebook. The notebook is open, showing its pages and the spiral binding on the left. A pencil is resting on the right page. The notebook has a dark cover and the pages are white. The spiral binding is visible on the left side. The pencil is positioned diagonally across the bottom right of the notebook. The overall color scheme is muted, with a teal overlay on the left side of the notebook.

# DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL

Teacher Manual

RELIGION 430 AND 431

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# DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL TEACHER MANUAL

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RELIGION 430 AND 431

Prepared by the Church Educational System  
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# Introduction

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In Doctrines of the Gospel courses, students will study principles and doctrines of the gospel as revealed in the standard works. The scriptures are the basic texts. The student manual is a guide for individual study of the scriptures, and it provides a basis for classroom discussion.

## *USING THE STUDENT MANUAL*

Study the student manual before you prepare your lessons. Each chapter in the student manual has two sections, Doctrinal Outline and Supporting Statements. Each subject in the Doctrinal Outline is divided into several statements, which are further divided into more specific statements. Supporting scriptural references build on each other in a logical and sequential manner. The second section in each chapter, Supplementary Statements, consists of commentaries from the Prophets and Apostles in this dispensation.

## *USING THE TEACHER MANUAL*

This manual provides the teacher with a variety of ideas that you may use, adapt, or build upon as you prepare your lessons. Each chapter contains more ideas than you can possibly use, so do not try to follow this guide explicitly. For best results, begin by reading each chapter in the student manual, noting the concepts you want to explain and emphasize in your classes. Next, read the corresponding chapter in the teacher manual. Choose only the ideas and methods for lesson presentation that will work best for you and your students. The suggestions in the teacher manual may help you develop other ideas that will work better for your classes. In adapting your lessons, however, do not depart from the doctrinal outlines in the student manual into speculation or subjects of dubious eternal value to the students.

*Introduction.* The first section of each chapter in the teacher manual, Introduction, contains one or more ideas about how to begin your lesson in a way that will motivate your students to study

the doctrinal subject. You should spend no more than five to seven minutes of each class period using ideas from this section. Do not allow the motivational part of the lesson to usurp time you need to teach the substance of the doctrines in each chapter.

*Ideas for Teaching.* The second and longest section of each chapter is Ideas for Teaching. This section corresponds to the doctrinal outline of the corresponding chapter in the student manual. Choose from and adapt the methods and ideas suggested in this section for teaching the doctrines.

*Conclusion.* The third and final section of each chapter, Conclusion, contains a brief suggestion for ending the lesson successfully. These suggestions often include ideas about how to help the students apply a specific gospel principle in their lives.

*Chalkboards.* At the end of some chapters are chalkboard illustrations, which you may use as a guide for what you write on the chalkboard; or you may choose to make bulletin board displays or overhead transparencies from them. Some chalkboards may also be suitable for use in making handouts for the students.

## *ADAPTING THE COURSE TO SEMESTERS OR QUARTERS*

Doctrines of the Gospel is a course easily adapted to either the semester or the quarter system. If you are teaching on the semester system, the following division of the course material is recommended:

*First semester:* Religion 430. Chapters 1–20

*Second semester:* Religion 431. Chapters 21–37

If you teach on the quarter system, this plan is recommended:

*First quarter:* Religion 430. Chapters 1–12

*Second quarter:* Religion 431. Chapters 13–24

*Third quarter:* Religion 432. Chapters 25–37

Both of these divisions of the course material allow time for tests and give you the flexibility to teach some chapters over two or more class periods.



## Introduction

■ Begin the class period by singing with the students “Oh Say, What Is Truth?” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 272). Point out that author John Jaques wrote the words to the hymn as a poem entitled “Truth.” The poem was included in a British mission pamphlet, *The Pearl of Great Price*, published in Liverpool in 1851. The lyrics were set to music composed by Ellen Knowles Melling, a Scottish convert taught by Elder Jacques.

After giving the background of the hymn, read the lyrics and discuss their meaning with the students.

■ Prepare copies of President Spencer W. Kimball’s First Presidency Message, “Seek Learning, Even by Study and Also by Faith” (*Ensign*, Sept. 1983, pp. 3–6), in which he emphasized the importance of seeking and applying truth. Distribute a copy of the article to each student, and assign the students to read it in conjunction with the Doctrinal Outline on page 2 of the student manual. Tell the students to be prepared to discuss their reading in class.

■ When Jesus was brought before Pilate, He said, “For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” (John 18:37.) Pilate then asked the question of the ages: “What is truth?” (John 18:38). Ask the students how they would have answered Pilate. What *is* truth?

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Divine truth is absolute reality.

■ Pilate asked, “What is truth?” Better questions might be, “Who is truth?” and “From whom does truth emanate?” Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). Jesus Christ represents truth and is the embodiment of all truth (see 3 Nephi 15:9). Everything in this world that is true has a divine source, and that source is Jesus Christ.

■ How do the scriptures define truth? Have the students compare Doctrine and Covenants 93:24 with Jacob 4:13. (Truth is the knowledge of things past, present, and future. Truth is that which endures.) How does the word *really* in Jacob 4:13 add to the definition of truth? Discuss the statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell in Supporting Statements A on page 2 of the student manual about basic truths that *really* matter (see *Things as They Really Are*, p. 4). Why are the truths that Elder Maxwell pointed out *really* so important?

■ What is the difference between absolute truth and relative truth? (see Supporting Statements A on pp. 2–3 of the student manual; or Spencer W. Kimball, “Absolute Truth,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1978, pp. 3–4). Ask the students to give examples of each.

■ Read and discuss Alma 7:20. Bear witness that absolute truths are those eternal and immovable truths that have been revealed by God.

### B. All divine truth is possessed by God and imparted by him to his children.

■ Are prophets the only ones to have discovered and disseminated truth? Read the statements by President Joseph F. Smith (see *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 30) and President Brigham Young (see *Discourses of Brigham Young*, pp. 2–3) in Supporting Statements B on page 3 of the student manual. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are the fountain of all truth, and all truth discovered by anyone—philosophers, scientists, inventors, and reformers—has come from that fountain. Point out, however, that although many people have sought the truth and discovered it, not all teach the truth. Each of us must rely on the Holy Ghost to determine whether a teaching is true and comes from the fountain of all truth. Each of us must also measure all secular teachings against the teachings of the standard works. Discuss the scripture references in Doctrinal Outline B 4 on page 2 of the student manual.

■ Is there any value in obtaining knowledge from secular sources? Read the statement by President Kimball in Supporting Statements B on page 3 of the student manual (see “Seek Learning, Even by Study and Also by Faith,” p. 3). Emphasize that secular truths do not bring salvation nor open the doors to the celestial kingdom. They are valuable only when we have put absolute truths first. By so doing, we may use all truth—absolute and relative—to bless ourselves and others.

■ Discuss Doctrine and Covenants 88:77–79. List on the chalkboard the various secular fields of study mentioned by the Lord in verse 79. They include astronomy, geography, geology, history, political science, languages, and international relations. Why are these subjects “expedient” for us to understand? (v. 78). Read verses 80–81, explaining to the students that a study of secular subjects better prepares us to labor in the kingdom of God and share the gospel with the people of the earth.

Each of us has a responsibility to learn enough so that we can better serve the Lord, as Elder John A. Widtsoe wrote: “God does not require all His servants to become doctors, or professors, or even profound students of these subjects, but He expects

them to know enough of these things to be able to magnify their calling as His ambassadors to the world" (*Priesthood and Church Government*, p. 56).

**C. Adherence to revealed truth brings great blessings and, ultimately, salvation.**

■ Why should we struggle to obtain knowledge and truth? Use the scripture references in Doctrinal Outline C on page 2 of the student manual and the quotations from Supporting Statements C on page 3 of the student manual to discuss some of the benefits of obtaining knowledge and truth.

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 93:26–28. What must we do before we can receive a fulness of truth? (Keep the commandments of God.) Read verses 39–40. How are light and truth taken from us? (Satan takes light and truth from us when we disobey the commandments of God.) Note that these scriptures emphasize the importance of rearing our children in light and truth.

## Conclusion

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Challenge the students to make the quest for truth and knowledge a daily, lifelong activity. Too many Latter-day Saints are satisfied with what

they already know and fail to continue in their quest for life-giving truth and light. They may consequently forfeit their chance for eternal life. President Kimball charged the Saints:

"We must do more than ask the Lord for learning. Perspiration must precede inspiration; there must be effort before there is the harvest. We must take thought, work, be patient, acquire competence. . . .

"As a people, we Latter-day Saints have been encouraged by the Lord to progress in the learning of God as well as in the sound learning of the earth. Too many of us spend far too much time watching the television or in habits and activities that do not enlarge ourselves or bless others. Would that we might lift ourselves to higher visions of what we could do with our lives! There should be no people who have a higher desire to obtain truth, revealed and secular, than Latter-day Saints." ("Seek Learning, Even by Study and Also by Faith," pp. 5–6.)

## Introduction

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Discuss with your students Doctrine and Covenants 88:67–68 and Joseph Smith’s statement about revelation in Supporting Statements A on page 5 of the student manual (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 149).

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. God gives truth to his children through revelation.

■ Write the text of 1 Corinthians 2:9–11 on the chalkboard, and ask a student to read it. Discuss how we obtain a knowledge of divine truths and the role of reasoning in the quest for truth from God. The principle Oliver Cowdery learned of studying and then inquiring of the Lord (see D&C 8:1–3; 9:7–9) could add an important dimension to the discussion.

■ Ask the students to silently read Alma 29:8, which explains the universality of the Lord’s love and his desire to reveal truth. Ask the students to comment on the meaning of this verse. Read one or both of the following statements on revelation by Brother Charles W. Penrose and Elder Orson F. Whitney:

“For the inspiration of God in olden times was not confined to the men who wrote the Jewish Scriptures. . . . God has permitted His Spirit, which is the light of truth, and which manifests truth, to be poured out upon all the inhabitants of the earth to some extent; . . . all people of any age, race or country who seek unto God with an honest heart in fervent prayer, desiring truth and to be taught of God, will be enlightened by Him. There have been inspired bards and sages and poets, who have uttered words of truth, words of inspiration concerning things of which they had been enlightened of God. And many things that such men wrote have been recorded and handed down, and scraps of them may be found among all nations and peoples. . . . His Spirit has enlightened mankind in all ages to a certain extent; for the spirit of the Lord, which gives light to the human understanding is the spirit by which we live; it is the spirit of light; it is the spirit of life. . . . This spirit is not confined to one race of people, or to one country, or to one age or generation, but it is universal; it is of Him in whom we live and move and have our being. It is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” (Penrose, in *Journal of Discourses*, 23:346.)

“[God] is using not only his covenant people, but other peoples as well, to consummate a

work, stupendous, magnificent, and altogether too arduous for this little handful of Saints to accomplish by and of themselves. . . .

“All down the ages men bearing the authority of the Holy Priesthood—patriarchs, prophets, apostles and others, have officiated in the name of the Lord, doing the things that he required of them; and outside of the pale of their activities other good and great men, not bearing the Priesthood, but possessing profundity of thought, great wisdom, and a desire to uplift their fellows, have been sent by the Almighty into many nations, to give them, not the fulness of the Gospel, but that portion of truth that they were able to receive and wisely use. Such men as Confucius, the Chinese philosopher; Zoroaster, the Persian sage; Gautama or Buddha, of the Hindus; Socrates and Plato, of the Greeks; these all had some of the light that is universally diffused, and concerning which we have this day heard. They were servants of the Lord in a lesser sense, and were sent to those pagan or heathen nations to give them the measure of truth that a wise Providence had allotted to them.

“. . . These also have been used from the beginning to help along the Lord’s work—mighty auxiliaries in the hands of an Almighty God, carrying out his purposes, consciously or unconsciously.” (Whitney, in Conference Report, Apr. 1921, pp. 32–33.)

### B. God reveals truth in a variety of ways.

■ Use Chalkboard 1 to illustrate the avenues, or methods, of revelation. Ask the students to identify the avenues God uses to reveal truth to his children. Share with the students some examples in the scriptures of how God has used each avenue of revelation.

■ Young people often think that a testimony of the gospel can come only through witnessing a spectacular miracle, having a vision, or hearing a voice from heaven. Ask your students to identify the main avenue the Lord uses to reveal truth. (Inspiration.) Discuss the following statement in which President Spencer W. Kimball admonished us to heed constant personal revelation that does not come in a spectacular way:

“The burning bushes, the smoking mountains, the sheets of four-footed beasts, the Cumorahs, and the Kirtlands were realities; but they were the exceptions. The great volume of revelation came to Moses and to Joseph and comes to today’s prophet in the less spectacular way—that of deep impressions, without spectacle or glamour or dramatic events.

“Always expecting the spectacular, many will miss entirely the constant flow of revealed

communication.” (In Conference Report, Munich Germany Area Conference 1973, p. 77.)

You could use scriptural incidents to show that revelation can come through subtle mental impressions and whisperings of the Spirit. Two excellent examples are Elijah’s encounter with the Lord on Mount Horeb (see 1 Kings 19:4–12) and Nephi’s being led by the Spirit to secure the brass plates (see 1 Nephi 4:6).

The revelation of truth is often prompted by studying and pondering the scriptures.

**C. We must be worthy in order to receive revelation.**

■ Select various scriptures from Doctrinal Outline C on page 4 of the student manual to show how an individual can qualify himself to receive personal revelation. Read and discuss Joseph Smith’s statements on page 5 of the student manual (see *Teachings*, pp. 11, 137). Emphasize the words the Prophet used to describe the process of

knowing the things of God: “time,” “experience,” “careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts” (*Teachings*, p. 137).

Analyze with the students what the Apostle Paul was saying in 1 Corinthians 2:9–16. Point out that—

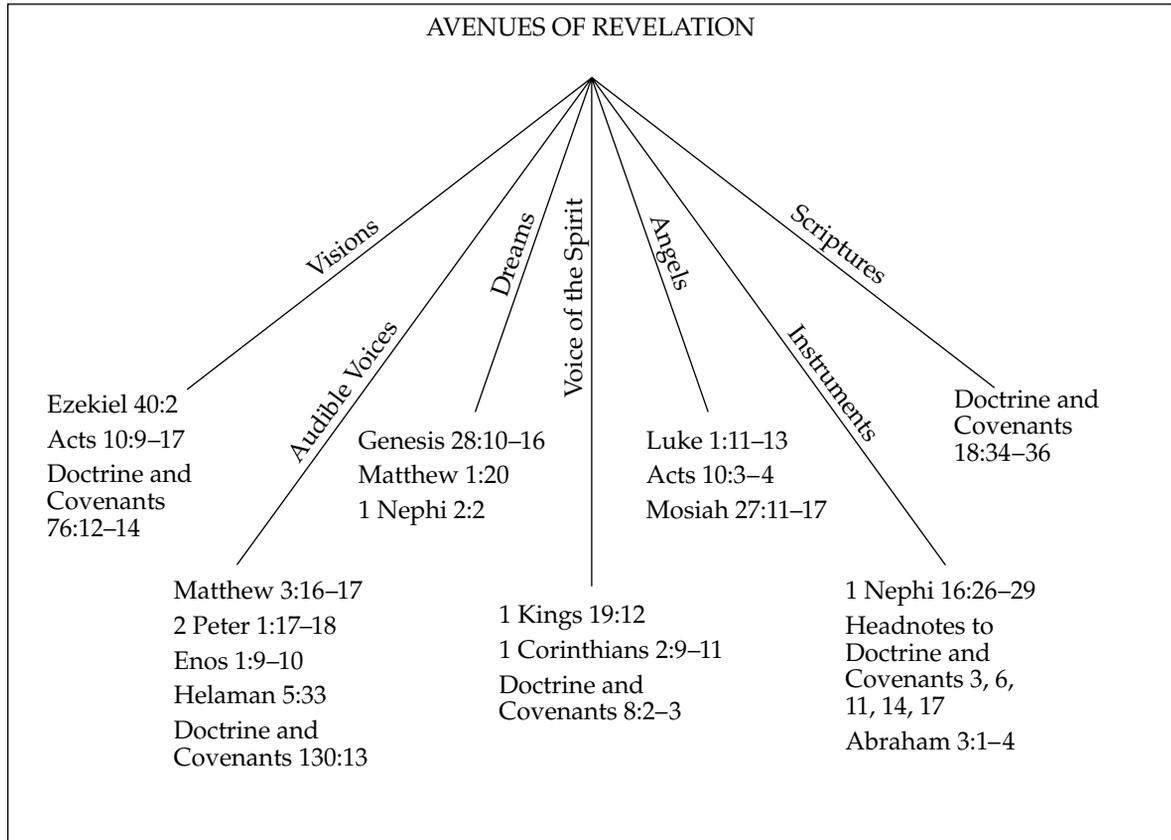
1. We must love God.
2. The things of God are made known by the Spirit of God.
3. The natural man cannot receive the things of God.

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## Conclusion

Read Doctrine and Covenants 76:10, and point out that this passage of scripture applies to every member of the Church. Challenge the students to continue to study and pray as they search for truth that they might have the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of revelation.

Chalkboard 1





## Introduction

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■ Write the text of John 17:3 on the chalkboard, and discuss it with your students. Emphasize that eternal life consists in knowing God and his Son, Jesus Christ. This knowledge involves more than being able to speak intellectually about various aspects of God's divine nature; it also involves developing a relationship with him. How does knowing someone affect the quality of our relationship with him? How does knowing God intensify our relationship with him? Explain that this chapter teaches truth about the nature of God, which will help us to achieve one of the essentials of eternal life.

■ What we know about God is limited to what he has chosen to tell us through his prophets. The Prophet Joseph Smith's first vision in 1820 (see Joseph Smith—History 1:11–20) and the famous King Follett discourse given shortly before Joseph's martyrdom in 1844 (see Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 343–62) are significant doctrinal teachings on the nature of God. From the beginning of his ministry until its end, the Prophet shared his increasing understanding of his Heavenly Father. The First Vision taught us that—

1. God and Jesus Christ have glorified bodies.
2. The Father and the Son are two separate beings.
3. The Father presides and works through the Son.

In the King Follett discourse, Joseph Smith declared that the first principle of the gospel consists of knowing the character of God. Joseph taught that God "was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself" (*Teachings*, p. 346; or Supporting Statements B on pp. 7–8 of the student manual). The twenty-four-year ministry of Joseph Smith was characterized by continual revelation about the nature of God.

Elder James E. Faust gave further insights regarding the nature of God (see Conference Report, Apr. 1984, pp. 92–93; or *Ensign*, May 1984, pp. 67–69).

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. The existence of God is a reality.

■ Use the dialogue between Alma and the anti-Christ, Korihor, to discuss evidences of the reality of God (see Alma 30:37–52). In the dialogue Korihor evolved from atheism (see v. 38) to agnosticism (see v. 48) to an eventual acknowledgment of his sin and a confession that he "always knew that there was a God" (v. 52).

Alma summarized his position beautifully when he stated that "the testimony of all these thy brethren, and also all the holy prophets" and "the scriptures" denote the reality of God (Alma 30:44). Point out that the prophets have not felt the need to debate either the existence or the reality of God; rather, they have boldly testified of their own experiences with him.

Alma added that the earth itself is a witness of a supreme creator (see Alma 30:44). How do the universe and this natural world affirm the existence of God? (see Supporting Statements A on p. 7 of the student manual). The hymn "Our Mountain Home So Dear" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 33) also speaks eloquently of God's handiwork expressed in nature; ask a student to read the lyrics.

### B. God is the father of all mankind.

■ Point out that *Elohim* is a name-title we often use to identify God the Father. Read the explanatory statements of the First Presidency ("The Father and the Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency and the Twelve," in James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith*, p. 466) and of President Brigham Young (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 50) in Supporting Statements B on page 7 of the student manual. Indicate that another name-title for the Father is *Man of Holiness* (see Moses 7:35).

■ Jesus stressed the fatherhood of God. When the disciples sought instruction in prayer, he tutored them to begin by saying, "Our Father which art in heaven" (Matthew 6:9). After his death and resurrection, the Savior explained to Mary Magdalene that he had yet to ascend to "my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20:17).

We are begotten spirit children of our Heavenly Father. We are actually his offspring. Develop that idea with the scriptures in Doctrinal Outline B on page 6 of the student manual and with the statements in Supporting Statements B on pages 7–8 of the student manual. Point out that literally being children of God validates the scriptural claim that we are created in God's image. Read the statement by President Spencer W. Kimball on page 8 of the student manual (see *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 25).

■ Discuss the Prophet Joseph Smith's statement in Supporting Statements B on page 8 of the student manual: "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man" (*Teachings*, p. 345). What does the King Follett discourse teach about the nature of God? Does it teach that God continues to progress throughout the eternities? If so, *how* does

God progress? Ask the students the following questions:

1. Does God progress in attributes and characteristics? (No. He is perfect in these things. See Matthew 5:48; Alma 7:20.)
2. Does God progress in knowledge, light, and truth? (No. He has a fulness of knowledge, light, and truth. See D&C 66:12; 2 Nephi 2:24.)
3. Does God progress in power or in his ability to accomplish his work? (No. He has all power, though he will not violate eternal law nor the agency of man. See Alma 26:35; Luke 1:37; 1 Nephi 7:12; Mosiah 4:9.)

Yet God does progress. To explore the nature of God's progression, read the statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith on page 8 of the student manual (see *Teachings*, pp. 347–48).

### **C. God is perfect in his person, character, and attributes.**

- Write on the chalkboard the following statements to illustrate the nature of God's perfection. Explain that knowing these things about God enables us to trust and obey him.

#### *THE NATURE OF GOD'S PERFECTION*

1. God is a resurrected, exalted personage of flesh and bone.
2. God possesses all characteristics of perfection. He is perfectly kind, truthful, honest, and moral.

3. God has a fulness of intelligence, light, and truth. He knows all things: he is omniscient.
4. God has all power inherent in knowledge: he is omnipotent.

#### *THE CHARACTERISTICS, ATTRIBUTES, AND PERFECTIONS OF GOD*

1. God is the creator and upholder of all things.
2. God is merciful and great, slow to anger, and abundant in goodness.
3. God is consistent and unchanging.
4. God does not lie: he is a god of truth.
5. God is no respecter of persons.
6. God is a god of love, knowledge, power, justice, and judgment.

## **Conclusion**

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To know God we must understand his true nature, the kind of being he is, and the characteristics he has manifested to his children throughout the centuries. This knowledge alone, however, may become too intellectual in nature. If we are to know God, we must accept his fatherhood and develop a relationship with him by responding to his counsel and love. Challenge the students to cultivate a strong love between themselves and their Heavenly Father.

## Introduction

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The personage of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and his role in the Godhead are discussed in this chapter. Other chapters will more fully consider his atonement and his role in the Creation, the Resurrection, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the Second Coming.

- List on the chalkboard the following scripture references: John 14:6; 1 Peter 2:21; 3 Nephi 18:16; 3 Nephi 27:21. Ask the students to read each scripture and identify a common theme, which is the perfect example set by Jesus Christ. Point out that the path to eternal life is the one the Savior walked. We must come to know him, and by doing so we will know the path that leads to eternal life.

- Read and briefly discuss President Spencer W. Kimball's moving testimony of Jesus Christ:

"If we would be eminently successful, here is our pattern. All the ennobling, perfect, and beautiful qualities of maturity, of strength, and of courage are found in this one person. As a large, surly mob, armed to the teeth, came to take him prisoner, he faced them resolutely and said, 'Whom seek ye?'

"The mob, startled, mumbled his name. 'Jesus of Nazareth.'

"'I am he,' answered Jesus of Nazareth with pride and courage—and with power: the soldiers 'went backward, and fell to the ground.'

"A second time he said, 'Whom seek ye?' and when they named him, he said, 'I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these [his disciples] go their way.' (John 18:4–8).

"Perhaps the most important thing I can say about Jesus Christ, more important than all else I have said, is that he lives. He really does embody all those virtues and attributes the scriptures tell us of. If we can come to know that, we then know the central reality about man and the universe. If we don't accept that truth and that reality, then we will not have the fixed principles or the transcendent truths by which to live out our lives in happiness and in service. In other words, we will find it very difficult to be significant leaders unless we recognize the reality of the perfect leader, Jesus Christ, and let him be the light by which we see the way!" ("Jesus: The Perfect Leader," *Ensign*, Aug. 1979, p. 7.)

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. Jesus Christ is literally the son of God the Eternal Father.

- Both the Bible and the Book of Mormon bear witness that Jesus Christ is literally the son of God (see Luke 1:31–35; 1 Nephi 11:14–22); review

Nephi's vision in which he saw the birth of the Son of God, emphasizing 1 Nephi 14:18, 21. Just as each of us has a father, Jesus has a father. Though married to Mary, Joseph was not the father of Jesus; Jesus always turned to Elohim as his Father. The statements by Elder James E. Talmage (see *Jesus the Christ*, p. 81) and President Heber J. Grant (see "Analysis of the Articles of Faith," *Millennial Star*, 5 Jan. 1922, p. 2, *Gospel Standards*, pp. 23–24) in Supporting Statements A on page 9 of the student manual give further testimony of Christ's divine Sonship.

- Read Joseph Smith Translation, John 1:1, 13–14. John said he beheld the glory of the Son "as of the Only Begotten of the Father" (v. 14). What attributes did Jesus inherit from his divine Father? (see v. 14). Jesus inherited all of the Father's power and glory and the ability to live forever. But since Jesus was also born of Mary, who was mortal, he inherited all the weaknesses of the flesh. Jesus was subject to temptation, sickness, hunger, thirst, and fatigue (see Mosiah 3:7). This combination of a divine father and a mortal mother endowed Jesus with the qualities—both mortal and immortal—he needed to fulfill his unique mission on earth.

### B. Jesus Christ is a being of glory, might, and majesty.

- Has Jesus always possessed a fulness of glory, might, and majesty? During his mortal ministry, he grew and developed one step at a time: "He received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace; and he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness" (D&C 93:12–13).

At the age of twelve, Jesus knew enough to reason with the learned of the day in the temple. Obviously, his was no ordinary schooling: "And he served under his father, and he spake not as other men, neither could he be taught; for he needed not that any man should teach him" (JST, Matthew 3:25).

Luke is brief but to the point about Jesus' training from the time He was twelve until the time He began His ministry: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). Luke's description shows the broad and balanced nature of the fulness Jesus obtained: he increased in wisdom (intellectually), in stature (physically), in favor with God (spiritually), and in favor with man (socially). Write on the chalkboard the words *wisdom*, *stature*, *favor with God*, and *favor with man*. Ask the students to give examples of the Savior's growth in these four areas, and list the examples on the chalkboard.

By the end of his ministry, the Lord Jesus Christ had accomplished all he had been sent to earth to do, and he was prepared to receive the glory he had had with God the Father before the world was (see John 17:5). Cite from Supporting Statements B on page 10 of the student manual President Joseph Fielding Smith's statement about Christ's receiving the fulness with His resurrection (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:33).

■ How is the example of Christ's development useful to us as we strive for our own development? Jesus' example teaches the important truth that we cannot achieve a fulness in a single day. Just as Jesus received grace for grace until he had obtained a fulness, we must likewise receive line upon line, or grace for grace, a little at a time, until we ultimately receive a fulness. Such is his charge to us: "For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his [the Father's] fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace" (D&C 93:20). As we progress, Luke's testimony that Jesus grew intellectually, physically, spiritually, and socially (see Luke 2:52) shows us how to remain balanced in our growth and progression.

■ Read and ponder Doctrine and Covenants 88:5–12. Help the students understand Jesus Christ's great power as he sits now upon his eternal throne. He is the source of all light, all truth, and all power that exists upon this earth and throughout all creation. It is impossible for us as mortals to comprehend his fulness.

### **C. As the Son of God, Jesus fills many roles essential to our salvation.**

■ List on the chalkboard as many of Jesus Christ's name-titles as the students can think of. Some you might include are Savior, Redeemer, the Rock, Good Shepherd, the Creator, Deliverer,

the Anointed One, Teacher, Master, Judge, Lord, Mediator, Messiah, Advocate with the Father, Alpha and Omega, and King. Discuss how these name-titles describe his various roles. How are all of these roles important in our obtaining salvation? Use the scripture references in Doctrinal Outline C on page 9 of the student manual to help your students understand the various roles of the Savior.

■ Jesus Christ is the mediator between God and his children (see 1 Timothy 2:5). Could we be saved or return to God's presence without Jesus Christ's intervention between us and the Father? Bear your testimony that there is no other name under heaven whereby man can be saved (see Acts 4:12; Mosiah 3:17). Since Christ offers our only hope for salvation, our time and effort in this life should be used to become acquainted with him, to study his life and mission, and to develop our faith in him.

■ To highlight the roles of Jesus Christ and what our relationship with him ought to be, read the statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell in Supporting Statements C on page 10 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Oct. 1981, p. 9; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, p. 8).

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## Conclusion

Seeking to know and understand the attributes of Jesus Christ is of little worth unless we strive to become like him and obtain the attributes he possesses. "Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect" (3 Nephi 12:48). "Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am." (3 Nephi 27:27.) Challenge the students to make choices based on the answers to these questions: What would Christ have me do? How can I become more like him?

## Introduction

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The personage and mission of the Holy Ghost are discussed in this chapter; the gift of the Holy Ghost and the gifts of the Spirit are discussed in chapter 16.

■ Ask the students to identify the most important goal of mortality. Answers could include marrying the right person in the temple, gaining a testimony, preparing for eternal life, and doing missionary work. Point out that these righteous goals complement the goal given by the Lord:

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent” (John 17:3).

Is it possible for a person to come to know God and his Son, Jesus Christ, without seeing them in the flesh? Such knowledge may come by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Your discussion of the Holy Ghost as the third member of the Godhead could begin with the testimony of President Joseph F. Smith:

“It behooves the Latter-day Saints, and all men, to make themselves acquainted with ‘the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.’ . . . How then can we know ‘the only true and living God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent?’—for to obtain this knowledge would be to obtain the secret or key to eternal life. It must be through the Holy Ghost, whose office is to reveal the things of the Father to man, and to bear witness in our hearts of Christ, and him crucified and risen from the dead. There is no other way or means of attaining to this knowledge.” (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 59.)

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead.

■ Write on the chalkboard the following questions: Who is the Holy Ghost? What does he do? List the

answers. The Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit and is the third member of the Godhead. Read Doctrine and Covenants 130:22, and determine how he differs from the other two members of the Godhead. The Holy Ghost’s specified role is to testify of the Father and the Son, as shown in the scriptures listed in Doctrinal Outline A 3 on page 11 of the student manual.

■ Using the scriptures, teach that the Holy Ghost knows all things (see Doctrinal Outline A 2 on p. 11 of the student manual).

### B. The Holy Ghost performs a special mission to bless and benefit us.

■ Just as there are many name-titles associated with Jesus Christ, so there are a number of name-titles associated with the Holy Ghost. Have the students list them and briefly define each one. These name-titles are significant: Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated that the Holy Ghost’s “mission is to perform all of the functions appertaining to the various name-titles which he bears” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 359). Refer to Chalkboard 1 in your discussion.

■ Discuss the importance of the Holy Ghost’s role as the Holy Spirit of Promise. Read and discuss President Joseph Fielding Smith’s definition of the Holy Spirit of Promise in Supporting Statements B on page 12 of the student manual (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:45).

## Conclusion

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Conclude by reading and discussing 1 Corinthians 12:3. Point out that *all* who have come to know that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ have done so through the power of the Holy Ghost.



## Chalkboard 1

## THE HOLY GHOST

<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Title or Function</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
John 14:26	Comforter Teacher Brings truth to remembrance	Soothes and brings peace, joy Instructs and guides Helps us recall and recognize truth
John 16:8	Reprover of sin	Convinces or convicts
John 16:13	A guide to truth	Acts like a compass
1 Corinthians 12:1–11	Conveyer of gifts	Gives spiritual gifts
2 Nephi 32:3	The power by which angels speak	Brings the word of Christ
2 Nephi 32:5	A personal guide	Directs our decisions
Alma 10:17	Discerner of thoughts	Reveals others' thoughts
Alma 13:12	Sanctifier	Makes clean and pure
Doctrine and Covenants 45:57	Protector from deception	Reveals the deceptions of Satan
Doctrine and Covenants 46:30	A guide in prayers	Prompts us when we pray
Doctrine and Covenants 68:4	Giver of scripture	Gives the word of the Lord, which is scripture
Doctrine and Covenants 132:7	Sealer	Makes valid for time and all eternity



## Introduction

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- You might begin class by singing the popular hymn “O My Father” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 292), written by Eliza R. Snow, and then briefly discussing the lyrics.
- Consider why so many philosophers and poets have expressed a sense of existing before this life. Read to the class or make and distribute copies of the fifth stanza of William Wordsworth’s “Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.” Ask the students to note words or phrases that imply a belief in a premortal life.

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The Soul that rises with us, our life’s Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy;  
The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature’s Priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.*

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. Intelligence, or the light of truth, is eternal and has always existed.

- Read the statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith in Supporting Statements A on page 13 of the student manual (see *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:401). Discuss Abraham 3:18 and Doctrine and Covenants 93:29. Ask the students to list what we learn about intelligence from those scriptures:
  1. Intelligence is the light of truth.
  2. Intelligence cannot be created.
  3. Intelligence has always existed and will always exist.

### B. We lived as spirit children of God in a premortal existence.

- The greatest truth God has revealed regards his type of being and our relationship to him. Discuss the implications of the doctrine that we are children

of God and that we lived with him before we came to this earth.

Read the First Presidency’s Statement in Supporting Statements B on page 14 of the student manual (see Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:203).

- Read Doctrine and Covenants 138:53–56 and Abraham 3:22–25 to show that instructions and preparation for earth life began in the premortal existence, or the world of spirits. Discuss how our premortal schooling and development affect our present opportunities. Read in Supporting Statements B on pages 14–15 of the student manual President David O. McKay’s statement about our premortal advancement (see *Home Memories of President David O. McKay*, pp. 228–30).

### C. God the Father provided the plan of salvation whereby his spirit children could eventually become like him.

- Help the students understand that God the Father was the author of the plan of salvation by reading the statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie in Supporting Statements C on page 15 of the student manual (see *The Mortal Messiah*, 1:48–49, n. 3).
- Using Chalkboard 1, contrast the plan of God the Father with Lucifer’s plan.
- Discuss Satan’s plan in the premortal existence as described by President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., in Supporting Statements C on page 15 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Oct. 1949, p. 193).

## Conclusion

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The war in heaven has not ended; this earth is simply another battlefield. As in heaven, the contest upon the earth is for the soul of man. Discuss how knowledge of our divine origin as children of God can give us the perspective and power to overcome the adversary’s temptations. You may want to refer to the account in Moses 1:12–13 of Moses’ confrontation with Satan. Note in verse 12 that Satan addresses Moses as “son of man.” In verse 13 Moses corrects Satan by declaring himself to be “a son of God.”



Chalkboard 1

**God's Plan**

Man's agency would enable him to choose to obey or to disobey.

The Atonement would be carried out by the Firstborn, who was known as Jehovah.

The glory and honor would be the Father's.

**Lucifer's Rebellious Plan**

Lucifer would compel everyone to obey him.

Lucifer wanted to be the chosen son who would redeem all mankind.

The glory and honor of the Father would be Lucifer's.



## Introduction

- What is the meaning of the word *create*? Many Bible readers think it means “to form out of nothing” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “create”). Did God create the world out of nothing? Discuss the Prophet Joseph Smith’s definition of *create* in Supporting Statements B on page 16 of the student manual (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 350–52).
- It is fruitless for us to speculate on how God created, or organized, the world, when he did it, or how long it took him to do it. The Lord has not revealed this information, but he has promised to reveal the details of the Creation during the Millennium (see D&C 101:32–34; 2 Nephi 27:7, 10). Although we do not yet understand how the Creation occurred, the Lord has revealed to us why he created the earth (see 1 Nephi 17:36; Moses 1:39).
- In discussing the process of the Creation, use Chalkboards 1–4 at the end of the chapter to help the students comprehend the beauty, variety, and wonder of the earth our Father in Heaven created.

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. All things were created spiritually before they were created physically.

- Use Chalkboard 1 to teach the students that all things were created spiritually before they were created physically.
- When discussing the spirit creation, point out that we know only that a spirit creation occurred. The scriptures do not reveal when or how things were created spiritually. Knowledge of the process itself is not important to us at this time. What is important to us is the revealed truth that we are the offspring of God and that all living things existed first as spirit beings. Read Elder Bruce R. McConkie’s statement about the spirit creation in Supporting Statements A on page 16 of the student manual (see *The Millennial Messiah*, pp. 642–43).

### B. The physical creation took place according to the plan of God.

- Discuss Chalkboard 2. Point out that a council of gods made the plans for the Creation (see Abraham 4–5). The Prophet Joseph Smith described that council in his statement in Supporting Statements B on page 16 of the student manual (see *Teachings*, p. 349).
- Who actually created this earth? The scriptures—particularly the New Testament—plainly teach that Jesus Christ, or Jehovah, created this earth

under the direction of the Father (see Doctrinal Outline B 2 on p. 16 of the student manual).

- Adam, who was known as Michael in the premortal existence, helped Jehovah create this earth. Others may also have helped with the Creation, as discussed by President Joseph Fielding Smith in Supporting Statements B on pages 16–17 of the student manual (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:74–77).
- Use Chalkboard 3 to show that the account in Moses and Genesis describes a spiritual-physical creation.
- Ask the students what occurred in each of the six creative periods. List their answers on the chalkboard.

Point out that all three scriptural accounts of the Creation—those in Genesis, Moses, and Abraham—correspond. No scientific discovery disputes the process of the creation as outlined in the scriptures.

- On the seventh day of the Creation, Jehovah rested from his labors. He beheld his labors of creation and noted how beautiful they were; he sanctified that day. Read in Doctrine and Covenants 59:16–21 the Savior’s description of the earth that he made for us. Notice the phrases “to please the eye and to gladden the heart” (v. 18) and “it pleaseth God that he hath given all these things unto man” (v. 20). The Lord expects us to confess his hand in all things and keep his commandments (see v. 21).

### C. We were given a unique role among God’s creations.

- Refer to Chalkboard 4, which explains that the Fall caused all living things to become mortal.
- God created all living things, but only mankind was created in the image of God. The scriptures confirm that we were created in God’s image. Read and discuss those scriptures listed in Doctrinal Outline C 1 on page 16 of the student manual.

Read in Supporting Statements C on page 17 of the student manual the statement given by the First Presidency in 1909 called the “Origin of Man” (see Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:205–6). Knowing that each of us is literally a son or a daughter of a loving Father in Heaven gives us a sense of brotherhood and self-worth.

- Before God created Eve, he told Jehovah, “It [is] not good that the man should be alone” (Moses 3:18). Why is it not good for us to be alone? Why is it so important that there be both men and women?

- Write on the chalkboard the words *help meet*. The Lord used these words to describe Eve when he said, "I will make an *help meet* for him" (Moses 3:18; emphasis added). What does *meet* mean as used in this phrase? (Compatible, equal, proper, suitable.)
- What two commandments did God give in Moses 2:28? Men and women were commanded to multiply and replenish the earth (to have children) and to have dominion over all other creations on the earth. Discuss the responsibilities we have, collectively and individually, to care properly for the resources the Lord has given us.

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## Conclusion

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Challenge the students to read and ponder the scriptural accounts of the Creation and to pray for an understanding of the Creation. We should recognize that we are children of God, that we are all brothers and sisters, that a loving God created this earth and all things on it for our benefit and growth, and that we are expected to use the creations of God profitably and thank him continually for all he has done.

Chalkboard 1

SPIRIT CREATION

*All Things Were Created Spiritually*

“For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth” (Moses 3:5).

The spirit creation involved not only people but plants and animals as well.

Chalkboard 2

THE LORD'S BLUEPRINT OF CREATION

The account in Abraham 4–5 is the Lord's blueprint of the Creation.

Abraham 4–5 records the gods' planning in heaven for this earth and its inhabitants (see also headnotes to Abraham 4–5).



## Chalkboard 3

## SPIRITUAL-PHYSICAL CREATION

*All Things Were Created Physically*

The Creation account is of the spiritual-physical creation (see Genesis 1–2; Moses 2–3).

This stage of the Creation was spiritual, because all life was not yet mortal but was sustained by the Spirit (see Moses 3:9).

This stage of the Creation was also physical, because all life existed in tangible physical form.

Hence, this is the spiritual-physical creation.

## Chalkboard 4

## MAN AND ALL LIVING THINGS BECOME MORTAL

“Man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also” (Moses 3:7).

“By flesh is meant mortality” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:77–78).

With the Fall mankind became the first mortal flesh. All other living things became mortal after the Fall.



## Introduction

Have the students define the term *Fall*. Read in Supporting Statements D on page 21 of the student manual President Joseph Fielding Smith's statement about the Fall: "When Adam was driven out of the Garden of Eden, the Lord passed a sentence upon him. Some people have looked upon that sentence as being a dreadful thing. It was not; it was a blessing." (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:113–14.) How could a deed that warranted a sentence, or a penalty, be considered a blessing?

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Conditions in the Garden of Eden were different from those of mortality.

- Have the students read the scriptures listed in Doctrinal Outline A on page 19 of the student manual. Identify and list on the chalkboard the conditions that existed in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. You could also use Chalkboard 1, which details both the conditions in the Garden before the Fall and the changes that occurred because of the Fall.
- Lehi indicated that Adam and Eve were in a state of innocence before the Fall (see 2 Nephi 2:23). What does it mean to be innocent? Innocence is essentially a state of freedom from guilt or sin in either action, thought, or intent. Because Adam had experienced neither misery nor sin on account of the nature of his life in the Garden, he had not experienced true joy and goodness, either. But though innocence suggests lack of experience, innocence is not synonymous with ignorance. Adam (Michael the Archangel) was taught by God in the Garden because a veil had been drawn over his premortal life. Read in Supporting Statements A on page 20 of the student manual President Smith's description of Adam's knowledge (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:107–8).
- President Smith indicated that Adam had a spiritual body before the Fall (see Supporting Statements A on pp. 19–20 of the student manual; or *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:76–77). Discuss the difference between the body of flesh and bones Adam had before the Fall and the body of flesh and bones he had after the Fall. In 1 Corinthians 15:44–50 Paul compared the mortal body with the resurrected body, calling one natural and the other spiritual. In verse 50, he equated mortality with blood: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and

blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The Fall, then, took man from a nonmortal condition to a mortal one.

### B. Adam and Eve brought about the Fall by their own choice.

- Read Moses 3:17. When God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat the forbidden fruit, why did he add the stipulation, "Nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee"? Was God rejecting Satan's intention to destroy our agency? (see Moses 4:4). The fruit was the passageway into mortality with all of its attendant problems and hazards, and mortality had to be entered into freely. Read in Supporting Statements B on page 20 of the student manual President Joseph Fielding Smith's description of this free choice (see *The Atonement of Jesus Christ*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [Provo, 25 Jan. 1955], p. 2).

### C. The Fall brought about significant changes for all life on earth.

- Using the list you wrote on the chalkboard at the beginning of the lesson, ask the students to note the changes that occurred in the world because of the Fall (see Chalkboard 1).
- Read Moses 6:55, which states that "inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts." What does this verse teach? The students may be confused by this scripture because Latter-day Saints reject the idea that conception is the result of a sinful act or that children are born sinful. Explain that the verse means neither; rather, it means that children are born into a world of sin and that mortal flesh provides a completely new avenue for Satan's temptations. Doctrine and Covenants 93:38–39 teaches that our original innocence is lost not because of birth but because of "the traditions of the fathers" and "disobedience" to God's laws. (See Supporting Statements E on p. 21 of the student manual.)

### D. The Fall was a purposeful step in God's plan of salvation.

- Read 1 Peter 1:19–20, and discuss the idea that Christ was "foreordained before the foundation of the world" to his mission as Savior and Redeemer. If Christ was indeed foreordained, then Adam's fall was obviously an expected and anticipated part of God's eternal plan.

- Ask what results of the Fall are important factors in our earthly probation. Guide the students to the following conclusions:
    1. We acquire a mortal body, which will eventually be resurrected (see D&C 88:15–16).
    2. Worldly opposition and temptations allow us the agency of choice, which is vital for a probationary state (see 2 Nephi 2:11–16, 27; D&C 29:39–40).
    3. We become righteous through exercising agency to overcome the trials and temptations we face: in other words, we become righteous only when we face sin and resist or overcome it (see 2 Nephi 2:13).
  - Read Moses 5:10–11 to demonstrate that once Adam and Eve were away from the Garden, they knew that the Fall was an essential part of the divine plan. Point out that Adam and Eve were convinced that their transgression led to enlightenment, a new awareness of joy, the chance to have children, and the possibility of eternal life through the redemption of Christ.
- E. As a result of the Fall, we have a dual nature.**
- Discuss with the students what is meant by the term *dual nature*. The term *dual nature* refers to our opposing qualities. On the one hand, we are spirit children of God, innocent when we come into the world and endowed with the potential to become divine (see Supporting Statements E on p. 21 of

the student manual). On the other hand, we also have bodies of flesh and bones and are driven by physical urges and demands (see Supporting Statements E on p. 21 of the student manual). The Apostle Paul recognized the conflicting spiritual and physical aspects of man (see Romans 7:15–25; Galatians 5:16–17). Failure to master physical urges results in the emergence of what King Benjamin called the “natural man” (Mosiah 3:19).

- Use Chalkboard 2 to illustrate what King Benjamin was talking about in Mosiah 3:19. After the diagram is drawn on the chalkboard, discuss briefly what happens to an individual when the flesh dominates (he seeks worldliness and physical gratification) in contrast to what happens when the spirit dominates (he responds to the Holy Ghost, who speaks to the spirit of man).

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## Conclusion

Modern-day revelation disproves the libel that Adam and Eve betrayed God and his purposes through the Fall. The Fall was, in fact, part of the divine plan and provided the means whereby Adam and the rest of the human family could have experiences vital to progress. Earth life assumes purpose and meaning as we work to overcome our physical and spiritual challenges.

## Chalkboard 1

CHANGES UPON THE EARTH THAT  
RESULTED FROM THE FALL

**Before the Fall**

Adam, Eve, and other forms of life had immortal bodies quickened by spirit.

Adam and Eve dwelt in God's presence.

The earth was a paradise.

Adam and Eve "would have had no children" (2 Nephi 2:23).

Adam and Eve had no understanding of pain or sorrow.

**After the Fall**

Life on earth became mortal, that is, quickened by blood (see Alma 12:23; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:76–77).

Adam and Eve were cast out of God's presence (see Moses 4:31).

The earth had to be subdued—Adam was obliged to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow (see Genesis 3:18–19).

Adam and Eve "began to multiply and to replenish the earth" (Moses 5:2).

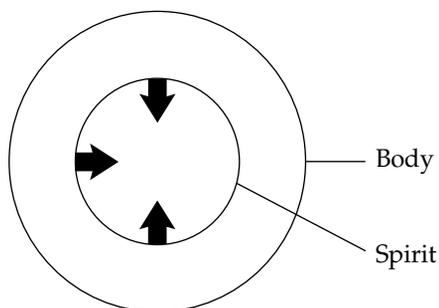
Pain, sorrow, and sickness were introduced upon the earth (see Moses 6:48).

Adam and Eve knew mortal weakness and vulnerability to sin (see Alma 41:11; Ether 3:2).

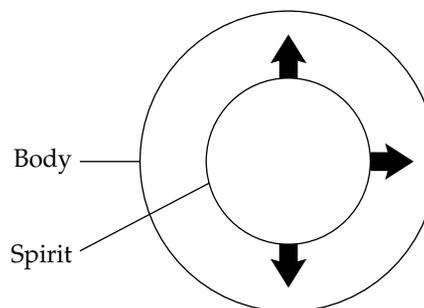
Adam and Eve came to know good from evil and to prize good (see 2 Nephi 2:11; Moses 5:10–11).

## Chalkboard 2

A MATTER OF CHOICE  
*Mosiah 3:19*

**The Natural Man**

The flesh dominates the spirit

**The Saint**

The spirit dominates the flesh



## Introduction

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- You may wish to prepare and show at the beginning of class an audiovisual presentation on Jesus Christ's ministry and atonement such as Slide Set B, *The Atonement* (stock number PMSI0778). No music accompanies this slide set. Or you could select slides to correspond with "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked."
- What would happen to us had Jesus Christ not suffered for our sins and risen from the dead? We would inevitably die, and our bodies would decay in the grave, never to rise again. Our spirits would become subject to Satan forever because we would be eternally stained by our sins. There would be no hope for anyone. (See 2 Nephi 9:7–9.)

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. God governs the universe by law.

- Our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ operate under universal laws that were established before this world was created. The sooner we recognize that we reap blessings by obeying the laws of God and forfeit blessings by disobeying those laws, the happier and more productive we will be. Illustrate this principle by reading Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21; 132:5; 2 Nephi 2:13.
- Use Chalkboard 1 to support your discussion of eternal law.

### B. Because we are fallen, we have need of an atonement.

- Help the students understand the helpless state in which all mankind would remain had the Savior not completed his mission with the Atonement. Refer to the scripture passages listed in Doctrinal Outline B 1 and B 2 on page 22 of the student manual.
- Use Chalkboard 2 to illustrate what would happen to all individuals who have broken the law if Christ had not made the atoning sacrifice. Point out that this dire fate would affect everyone but Jesus Christ, who was without sin.

### C. Only Jesus Christ possessed the qualifications and attributes necessary to perform an infinite atonement.

- Did Jesus endure temptation at times other than on the three occasions when Satan came to Him as described in the New Testament? The scriptures testify of many times that Jesus was tempted "like as we are" (Hebrews 4:15; see also Luke 22:28; Hebrews 2:18; Mosiah 3:7; Alma 7:11). Jesus'

experiences of suffering temptations enable him to understand completely the temptations we suffer (see Hebrews 2:18; Alma 7:11–12; D&C 62:1). Make sure the students understand, however, that even though Christ was tempted severely, he did not submit to temptation. We are told that "he suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them" (D&C 20:22). Jesus remained completely free from sin (see 1 John 3:5; D&C 45:3–4).

■ Discuss the immortal attributes Jesus inherited from his Father, who is also our Heavenly Father. Jesus had power over life and death. No one could take his life unless he chose to lay it down himself (see John 5:26; 10:17–18). As the Son of God, he could have called upon angels at any time to save himself from death.

### D. By means of his divine attributes and the power of the Father, Jesus accomplished the infinite and eternal atonement.

- Identify the Father's motive for the Atonement. Share with the students John 3:16; 1 John 4:8–10; and Doctrine and Covenants 18:10–11, which testify of God's enduring love for his children and the worth of souls in his sight.
- The Atonement is frequently called a vicarious sacrifice. What does the term *vicarious* mean, and how does it apply to the Savior's sacrifice? (Jesus was a substitute for all mankind in meeting the demands of justice.)
- The Atonement is frequently described as an infinite atonement. In what manner was the Atonement *infinite*? Help the students understand the following truths regarding the infinite nature of the Atonement:
  1. The law of Moses was completely fulfilled by the Atonement (see Alma 34:13–14).
  2. The corruptible body could not become an incorruptible body (resurrected in glory) without the infinite capacity of the Atonement (see 2 Nephi 9:7).
  3. An infinite and eternal sacrifice was necessary to atone for the sins of all mankind (see Alma 34:10–11).
  4. The Savior suffered the pains of every descendant of Adam (see 2 Nephi 9:21).
  5. The Savior descended below all things in taking upon himself the sins of all mankind (see D&C 88:6; 122:8).
  6. The suffering the Lord experienced was beyond what any mortal could experience or endure (see Mosiah 3:7; D&C 19:15–20; statements by President John Taylor and Elder Marion G. Romney in Supporting Statements D on pp. 24–25 of the student manual; or Taylor, *The Mediation and*

*Atonement*, pp. 151–52, and Romney, in Conference Report, Oct. 1969, p. 57).

7. The Atonement affects worlds without number (see D&C 76:22–24).

■ When did the Savior actually perform his atoning sacrifice? Many Protestants believe that it was only on the cross; many Latter-day Saints believe that it was only in the Garden of Gethsemane. Both are partly correct, as taught by Elder Neal A. Maxwell and Elder Bruce R. McConkie in Supporting Statements D on pages 24–25 of the student manual (see Maxwell, “The Old Testament: Relevancy within Antiquity,” *A Symposium on the Old Testament*, p. 17; McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4:232 n. 22).

#### **E. The atonement of Christ harmonized the laws of justice and mercy.**

- Define *justice* and *mercy*. *Justice* means “uprightness, equity, vindication of right” and “observance of the divine law”; *mercy* means “kind and compassionate treatment in a case where severity is merited or expected” and “disposition to forgive or show compassion” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “justice” and “mercy”).
- Read Alma 42:13–15, 22–25, and 29–30 to illustrate that mercy cannot rob justice but that justice is satisfied by the Atonement, so that mercy can claim her own (the truly penitent and humble).
- Use Chalkboards 3 and 4 to discuss justice and mercy.
- Read the clarification of the terms *spiritual credit*, *eternal law*, *mercy*, and *mediator* that are given by Elder Boyd K. Packer in Supporting Statements E on pages 25–26 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Apr. 1977, p. 80; or *Ensign*, May 1977, pp. 55–56).

#### **F. The atonement of Jesus Christ is essential for the salvation of all the children of God.**

- Ultimately, what are mankind’s two greatest enemies? (Death and sin.) The atonement of Jesus Christ provides the means to overcome both of these obstacles. As the first fruits of the resurrection, Christ provided for the resurrection of every person who has ever experienced mortality on this earth (see Helaman 14:15–16). How does the Atonement enable us to overcome sin? Christ paid the price for all the sins of mankind, but an individual must repent before his sins are forgiven through the Atonement (see D&C 19:15–19). The wicked who do not repent remain in their sins and do not receive forgiveness of their sins (see Alma 11:37, 41).
- How does the Atonement affect little children who have not sinned? (see Moroni 8:8–12).

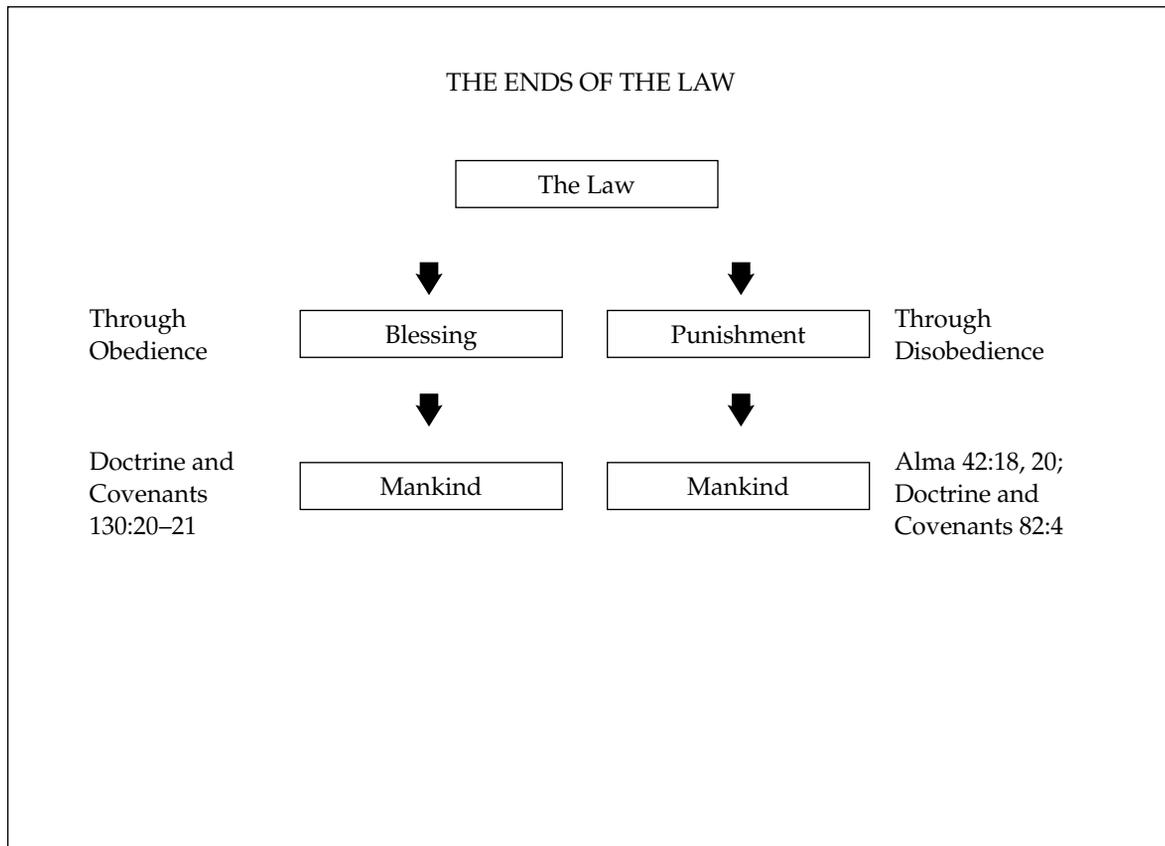
#### **G. We must do the will of the Father and the Son to receive the full benefit of the Atonement.**

- Emphasize that the Atonement will be of relatively little use to us unless we incorporate its principles in our lives. If we are not humble, repentant, and faithful, we will not enjoy the full benefit of the Atonement.

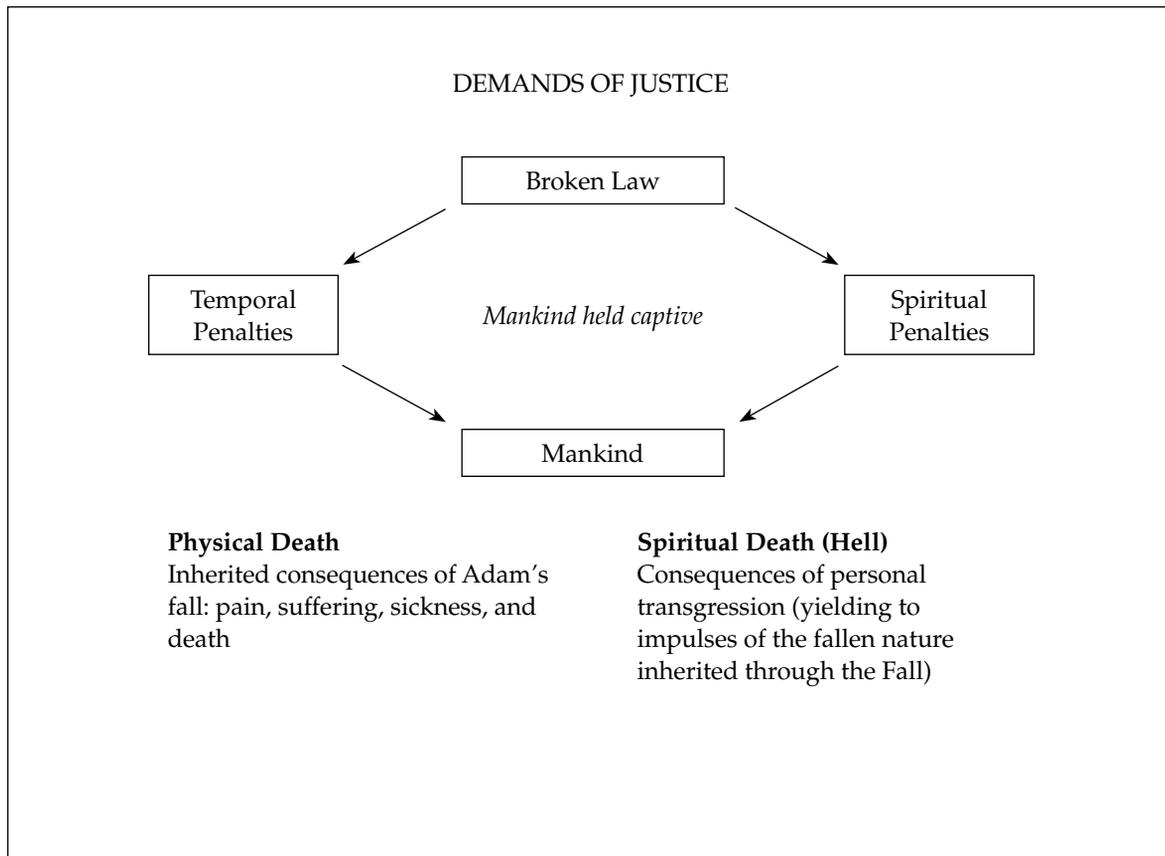
## Conclusion

Bear your own solemn witness of the divinity of Jesus Christ and of your knowledge that he is your personal Savior. You may also want to quote Nephi: “I glory in plainness; I glory in truth; I glory in my Jesus, for he hath redeemed my soul from hell” (2 Nephi 33:6). You may wish to conclude by singing or reading Eliza R. Snow’s “How Great the Wisdom and the Love” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 195).

Chalkboard 1

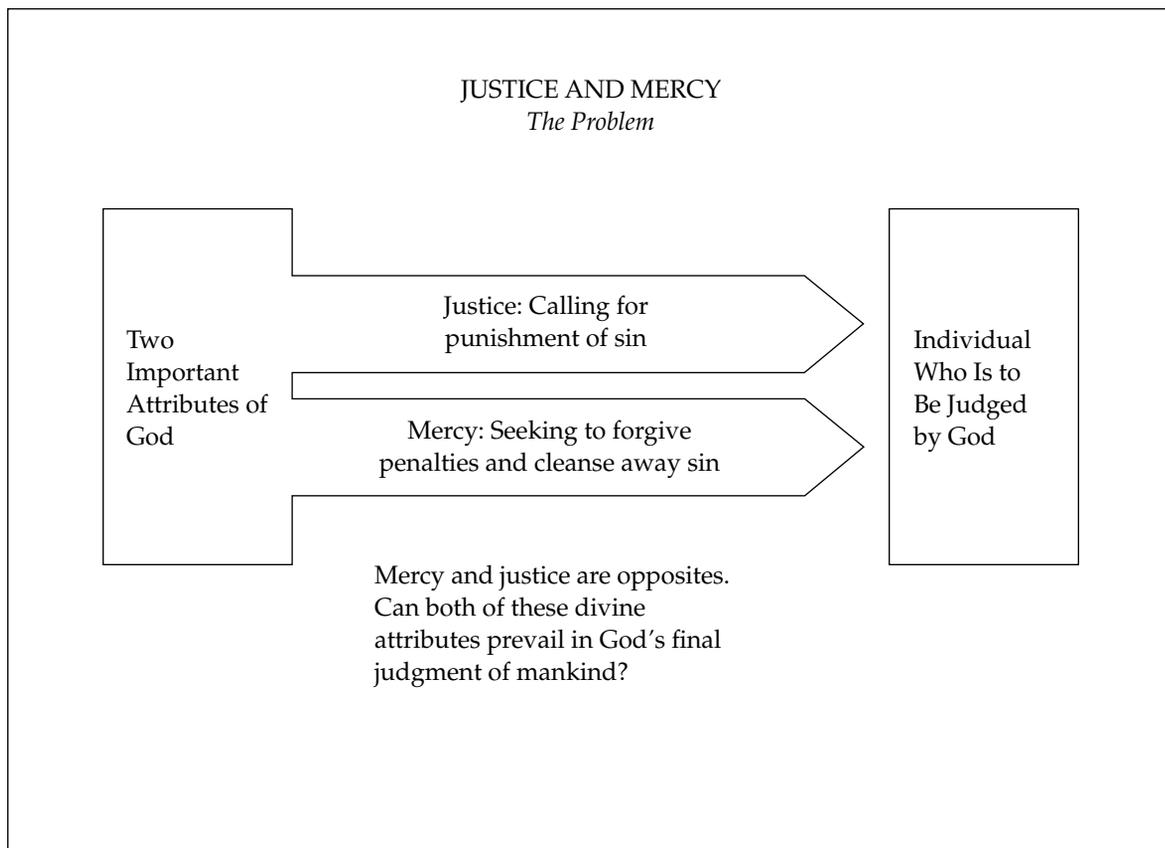


Chalkboard 2

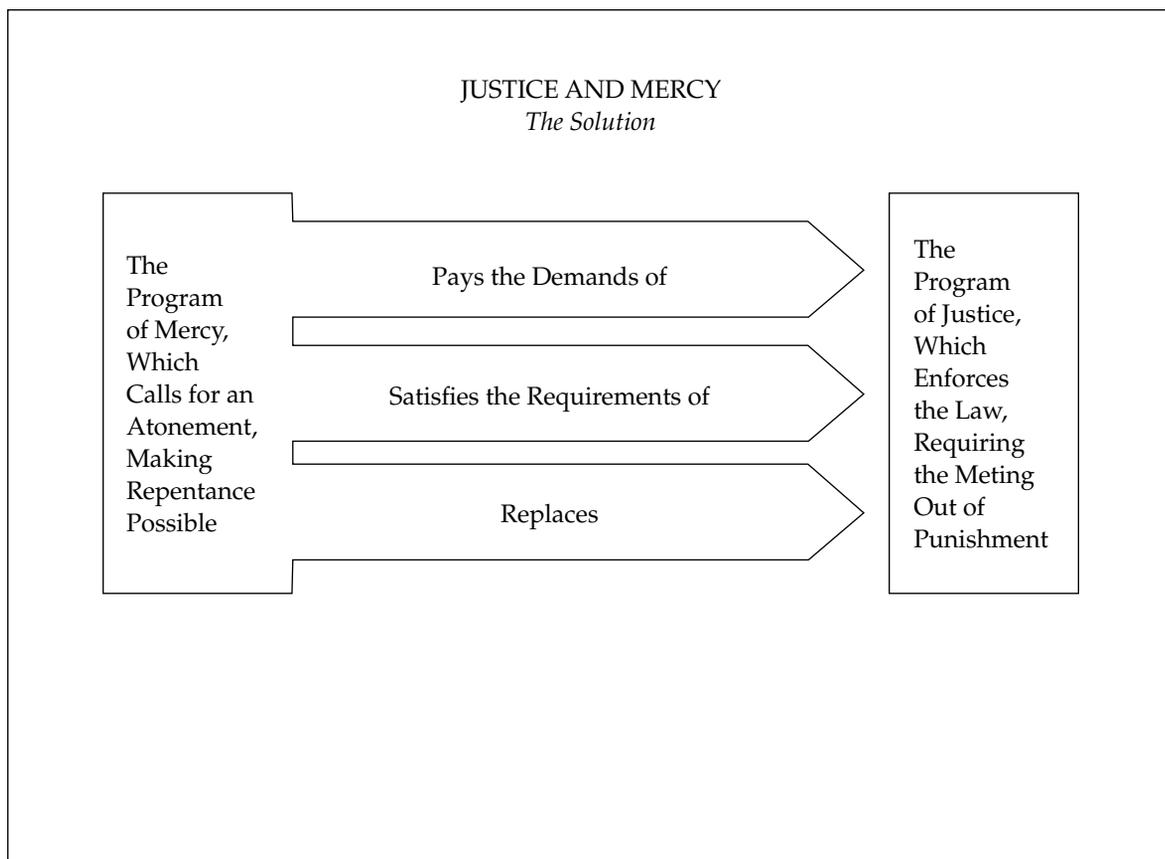




Chalkboard 3



Chalkboard 4





## Introduction

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■ Write on the chalkboard the following questions: Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going?

Only the gospel of Jesus Christ answers mankind's most vital questions. Remind the students that the first question (Where did we come from?) was answered in chapter 6, "Our Premortal Life." Explain that today you will search the scriptures to answer the second question (Why are we here?). The answer to the third question (Where are we going?) will unfold gradually throughout the rest of the course. You may also want to write on the chalkboard the following questions that will be discussed in today's lesson: Why do I need a physical body? Why do we have trials and sufferings in this life? How can I become like God in this life?

■ The earth is a school, not a playground. Our eternal quest involves progressing from one level to another, similar to the experience of advancing from one level to another in school. From an eternal perspective, being on earth indicates an advancement in our eternal schooling. (See Supporting Statements D and E on pp. 28–29 of the student manual.)

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. We are that we might have joy.

- What is God's eternal purpose for his children in providing us with this earth life? Read Moses' questions in Moses 1:30 and God's profound answer to him in verse 39.
- Keep the emphasis of the lesson positive; help the students understand that having a mortal body, even with its weaknesses, is a great and necessary blessing in our eternal progression. Avoid a lengthy discussion about Satan; point out simply that as mankind's adversary he seeks to thwart our eternal progress and destroy the work of God.

### B. God provided the opportunity for us to obtain a physical body in mortality.

- You may wish to use Chalkboard 1, "The Mortal Condition," throughout the rest of your lesson, revealing only certain parts of it as you proceed.
- Read Abraham 3:24–26. Ask the students what is meant by the phrase "added upon."
- Does the human soul consist only of the spirit body? Only of the physical body? Read Doctrine and Covenants 88:15 to show that the soul consists of both. Read Doctrine and Covenants 93:33 and

138:17 to show that the unity of the body and spirit is necessary for obtaining a fulness of joy.

■ Emphasize that our physical body is a gift from our Heavenly Father and should be treated as a sacred temple (see Doctrinal Outline B 1 and B 2 on p. 27 of the student manual).

### C. Mortality is our time of testing.

■ Read in Abraham 3:24–25 about our second estate, and emphasize "we will prove them now herewith." This life is a test to see if we will keep God's commandments and overcome sin and opposition. Illustrate this truth by using the bottom section of Chalkboard 1.

■ Is life supposed to be easy? Joy—the object of our existence—occurs when we recognize that we need to trust in God and do his will daily in order to overcome a variety of challenges. Illustrate this principle by reading Alma's advice to his son Shiblon (see Alma 38:5).

■ Satan will sorely tempt us during our probationary state, but can he ever obtain power over us? Can he tempt us beyond our power to resist? Read 1 Corinthians 13:10 and Alma 13:28–30. The Savior knows what we are going through because he too was tempted, and he wants to help us (see Hebrews 4:14–16). The Savior can serve as our example in overcoming temptation: "He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them" (D&C 20:22). We likewise suffer temptations, but we do not have to give heed to them. If we do, it is because we choose to do so. No one can force us to make that choice. To resist temptation, we need God's help. Read 3 Nephi 18:18.

### D. The tests of mortality are for our good.

- Can we really appreciate happiness if we have never experienced bitterness and sadness? Read and ponder the scriptures in Doctrinal Outline D 1 on page 27 of the student manual.
- Have the students identify and list on the chalkboard the various kinds of tests and trials mankind is subjected to. They may list war, disease, fatal accidents, starvation, mental and physical handicaps, poverty, cruelty, inequality, economic failures, and family disappointments. How can we maintain a Christlike spirit and attitude in the face of trials? How can we justify these tragedies with our knowledge of a kind, loving, merciful, omnipotent, and just God? (See Supporting Statements D on pp. 28–29 of the student manual.) You may invite the students to share examples of individuals who have overcome tremendous obstacles and trials through their faith.

■ Use the example of Joseph Smith and his brethren in the Liberty Jail in Missouri (see D&C 121:1–10; 122:1–9). The Lord confirmed to the Prophet what He had taught the Saints earlier about their experiences in building Zion: “Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation. For after much tribulation come the blessings.” (D&C 58:3–4.)

**E. Mortality provides us with the opportunity to develop the attributes of godliness.**

■ Is it possible for us to become perfect? Is it possible for us to become perfect in this life? Compare Matthew 5:48 with 3 Nephi 12:48 to teach that to become perfect like God and Christ means to go through the resurrection. But we can obtain *finite perfection* in mortality, as taught by Elder Bruce R. McConkie in Supporting Statements E on page 29 of the student manual (see *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 567).

■ Share the following story told by President Spencer W. Kimball:

“Brother Kimball, have you ever been to heaven?”

“My answer seemed to be a shock of equal magnitude to him as I said without hesitation: ‘Why, yes, Brother Richards, certainly. I had a glimpse of heaven just before coming to your studio.’ . . .

“Yes. Just an hour ago. It was in the holy temple across the way. The sealing room was shut off from the noisy world by its thick, white-painted walls; the drapes, light and warm; the furniture, neat and dignified; the mirrors on two opposite walls seeming to take one in continuous likenesses on and on into infinity; and the beautiful stained-glass window in front of me giving such a peaceful glow. All the people in the room were dressed in white. Here were peace and harmony and eager

anticipation. A well-groomed young man and an exquisitely gowned young woman, lovely beyond description, knelt across the altar. Authoritatively, I pronounced the heavenly ceremony which married and sealed them for eternity on earth and in the celestial worlds. The pure in heart were there. Heaven was there.

“When the eternal marriage was solemnized, and as the subdued congratulations were extended, a happy father, radiant in his joy, offered his hand and said, ‘Brother Kimball, my wife and I are common people and have never been successful, but we *are* immensely proud of our family.’ He continued, ‘This is the last of our eight children to come into this holy house for temple marriage. They, with their companions, are here to participate in the marriage of this, the youngest. This is our supremely happy day, with all of our eight children married properly. They are faithful to the Lord in church service, and the older ones are already rearing families in righteousness.’

“I looked at his calloused hands, his rough exterior, and thought to myself, ‘Here is a real son of God fulfilling his destiny.’

“‘Success?’ I said, as I grasped his hand. ‘That is the greatest success story I have heard.’” (In Conference Report, Oct. 1971, pp. 152–53; or *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, p. 36.)

■ Read Mosiah 3:19, and emphasize how important it is to subdue the physical appetites by giving ascendancy to our spiritual nature. By submitting ourselves to the direction of the Spirit, we gain mastery over the physical body.

## Conclusion

Bear testimony of your knowledge that you and all other people are sent to this earth for a wise and noble purpose. Bear witness that by remaining faithful and trusting in God, we can overcome our weaknesses in this life and stay on the straight and narrow path leading to eternal life.

Chalkboard 1

THE MORTAL CONDITION  
2 Nephi 2:13–27

*From Divine  
Parents*



*From Mortal  
Parents*



**Spirit**  
The real  
person

**Body**  
The  
tabernacle  
of the real  
person

Hebrews 12:9

Each person brings to mortality his own individual virtues and personality developed in his premortal life.

Every person born into mortality possesses a body of flesh with appetites and desires that must be mastered.

MORTAL MAN

A dual being  
Doctrine and Covenants 88:15

MORTAL MAN'S TEST  
Alma 34:32–35

“Man’s earthly existence is but a test as to whether he will concentrate his efforts, his mind, his soul upon things which contribute to the comfort and gratification of his physical instincts and passions, or whether he will make as his life’s end and purpose the acquisition of spiritual qualities” (David O. McKay, “Today’s Need—Spiritual Awakening,” *Relief Society Magazine*, June 1941, p. 364).



## Introduction

■ Take to class a chess set, and invite two students to set up the game at the front of the classroom. As they set the chessmen on the board, ask them why they must arrange the pieces a certain way on the board. Ask them to name the pieces and explain to the class how each chess piece moves.

Have each student make a couple of moves to begin the game. Ask them why they chose to move where they did. Why didn't they move at random? Why is each move important in chess? Why is an overall knowledge of the game important in determining the moves?

Ask the class how mortality is like a game of chess. The following are possible parallels:

1. Certain rules are already determined.
2. A wide variety of moves, or choices, is possible.
3. Each move, or decision, carries consequences and helps determine future moves, or choices.
4. Our knowledge of certain principles and conditions influences our ability to make successful choices.
5. We must consider the future consequences of present decisions.

■ You may want to introduce the theme of agency by distributing copies of the following statement:

"There is an old man up there ahead of you that you ought to know. . . . Whether he is miserable or happy, depends on you. For *you* made him. He is *you*, grown older." (Author unknown, in *Richard Evans' Quote Book*, p. 37.)

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Agency is the eternal right of independent choice.

■ Write on the chalkboard the word *agency*, and ask the students to define it. The following points might help broaden the class's definition:

1. Law creates alternatives.
2. We must understand the law and the alternatives it provides.
3. We must understand which alternatives constitute God's will for us.
4. Agency gives us absolute, unfettered freedom to choose between alternatives.

People often say, "I have a right to do anything I want!" What restraints are placed upon the use of agency by society? By God?

■ The Lord has given us laws and wants us to realize fulfillment by exercising agency and obeying his commandments. Read and consider with your class some of the Prophet Joseph Smith's

statements concerning the gifts and blessings of obedience to God's law (see Supporting Statements B on p. 31 of the student manual; or *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 187, 256).

- Read Helaman 14:30–31. According to this passage, freedom includes at least two elements. What are they? (The right to act for ourselves and accountability for our actions; good or evil is restored to us depending on our choices.)
- Read Doctrine and Covenants 29:36. Point out that even as spirits we had agency and that agency was the key to progress in the premortal life just as it is here.

### B. Satan seeks to destroy our agency.

■ Read Revelation 12:7–8 and Moses 4:1–4. According to the scriptures, what happened in the premortal council in heaven? What were the key issues? Discuss the implications of the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"The contention in heaven was—Jesus said there would be certain souls that would not be saved; and the devil said he could save them all, and laid his plans before the grand council, who gave their vote in favor of Jesus Christ. So the devil rose up in rebellion against God, and was cast down, with all who put up their heads for him." (*Teachings*, p. 357.)

- Discuss with the students 1 Corinthians 10:13. Read the quotation from the Prophet Joseph Smith in Supporting Statements B on page 31 of the student manual (see *Teachings*, p. 187).

### C. We are accountable to God for the use of our agency.

■ Write on the chalkboard the word *accountability* opposite the word *agency*. Ask the students to explain the relationship between the two words.

The following questions could be written on the chalkboard to help the students understand the principle of accountability. Have the students look up the scripture references, read them, and discuss them as a class.

1. To what extent is everyone accountable? (see 2 Nephi 9:25–26; Moroni 8:22).
2. How is accountability measured? (see Romans 2:5–8; Alma 4:3–4).
3. Can one person transfer the accountability for his sins to another? Why or why not? (See Articles of Faith 1:2; Galatians 6:4–5.)

### D. Our eternal destiny is determined by the use or misuse of our agency.

■ Study with your students President John Taylor's remarks in Supporting Statements D on page 31 of the student manual (see *The Gospel Kingdom*, p. 341). Emphasize that we have the privilege of

determining our own happiness or misery in the world to come by what we do now on earth.

- Read Doctrine and Covenants 58:26–29, and discuss how this passage of scripture relates to our eternal destiny. Can anyone really plead that he is caught in such a bad web of circumstances that he cannot do good?
- Why would it be impossible to be justly rewarded or condemned for our thoughts, words, and actions without agency? (see Mosiah 4:30).

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## Conclusion

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Discuss the validity of the following statements:

1. We are the result of the use of our agency.
2. We are what we have willed to be.
3. We choose those alternatives that we *want*—that we *love*.
4. In the final analysis, we will end up in the kingdom we *choose*.

## Introduction

- Examine with the students Alma 17:3, which shows that combined prayer and fasting were essential ingredients in the success of the sons of Mosiah. Because the four had *prayed much* and *fasted much*, they obtained important results. What were these results? Could we achieve these same results? The results included the following:
  1. They had the spirit of prophecy.
  2. They had the spirit of revelation.
  3. They taught with power and authority of God.
- Read the following statement by President Brigham Young: “If I did not feel like praying, and asking my Father in Heaven to give me a morning blessing, and to preserve me and my family and the good upon the earth through the day, I should say, ‘Brigham, get down here on your knees, bow your body down before the throne of him who rules in the heavens, and stay there until you can feel to supplicate at that throne of grace erected for sinners’” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 46).

Ask the students what President Young’s statement means to them. Among other things, it teaches an excellent lesson on communication. Nothing is more critical in the relationship of two or more people, including a family, than keeping the lines of communication open. What if we only talked with our loved ones when we felt like it? It is equally important to avoid barriers between ourselves and our Heavenly Father.

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Prayer has been a part of the gospel plan from the beginning.

- Exile from the Garden of Eden meant spiritual death for Adam and Eve (see D&C 29:41), for they were cut off from the presence of the Lord. They began their spiritual recuperation by calling upon the name of the Lord. The Lord answered them and told them to “call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore” (Moses 5:8). Point out that for Adam prayer constituted the first step toward building a relationship with God, and it has been a vital part of gospel living since that time (see Moses 5:12; 6:4–5, 51).

### B. God has revealed why we should pray to him.

- How often should we pray? Has the Lord stipulated the frequency of prayer? Write on the chalkboard the following scriptures, and ask the students to examine and summarize each message.

The students could be divided into groups to read the scriptures.

- Doctrine and Covenants 46:7.* Do all things with prayer.
- Psalms 55:17.* Pray at evening, morning, and noon.
- Luke 18:1–7.* Always pray, and do not faint.
- First Thessalonians 5:17–18.* Pray without ceasing, and give thanks for everything.
- Alma 13:28.* Watch and pray continually.
- Alma 37:37.* Counsel with the Lord in all your doings.

Would our lives be different with prayer an element in all of our decision making?

- Examine Chalkboard 1 with the students, and testify that one sign of true maturity is being able to accept wise counsel and direction in making decisions. Such counsel enhances, rather than detracts from, the exercise of agency.
- Prayer, which is the key to revelation, opens the floodgates that enable God to respond to the myriad needs of his children. We ask, and we indeed receive. Read Elder Bruce R. McConkie’s statement in Supporting Statements B on page 33 of the student manual: Prayer is “essential if men are to be saved; there is no salvation without prayer” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 581). Ask why this statement is true.

### C. The scriptures tell us what we should pray for.

- Doctrinal Outline C on page 32 of the student manual provides a scriptural base for what we might include in our prayers. Ask the students to respond to specific items under the headings listed on Chalkboard 2. Allow the students to make their own lists, including the items listed on the chalkboard. Refer also to Supporting Statements C on page 33 of the student manual and to Alma 34:19–27.
- Using the story of Enos in the Book of Mormon is a most effective way to teach lessons on prayer. One concept illustrated beautifully by the story of Enos is the manner in which prayer can focus attention not only on our own needs but also on the needs of others. Draw a chalkboard sketch showing how Enos began praying over his own concerns (see Enos 1:2), only to have his concerns enlarge to embrace his brethren (see v. 9) and finally his traditional enemies, the Lamanites (see v. 11). Point out that the introspection fostered in prayer often enables us to face our attitudes toward others.

### D. The Lord has told us how to make our prayers more meaningful and efficacious.

- We are commanded to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. Read the scriptures listed in

Doctrinal Outline D 1 on page 32 of the student manual.

■ Improving the effectiveness of prayer requires us to identify the barriers that may stand between us and God. Ask the students to identify barriers they encounter when they pray. A simple chalkboard sketch, such as Chalkboard 3, may help the students visualize the barriers as a wall between themselves and God. Discuss how the barriers can be removed. Supporting Statements D on pages 33–34 of the student manual suggest ways to counter these barriers to successful prayer.

■ True communication includes listening as well as speaking. Discuss with the students the importance of listening during and after prayer. (See Supporting Statements D on pp. 33–34 of the student manual.) The following are part of true listening:

1. Be sensitive to the ways God communicates (such as feelings, flashes of ideas, and impressions).
2. Allow time during and after prayer to receive answers.
3. Be aware that God answers in his own way, in his own manner, and in his own time.

**E. Fasting should sometimes accompany prayer.**

■ What does fasting have to do with effective prayer? Point out that fasting is an act of discipline

and humility. It is also a witness that we accept the maxim proclaimed by Jesus that “man shall not live by bread alone” (Matthew 4:4). It suggests, as well, our dependence upon God to provide us with the nourishment necessary to survive, whether it be physical or spiritual. In Supporting Statements E on page 34 of the student manual, some of the benefits of fasting are pointed out in statements by Elder McConkie (see *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 276) and President Spencer W. Kimball (see *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 98).

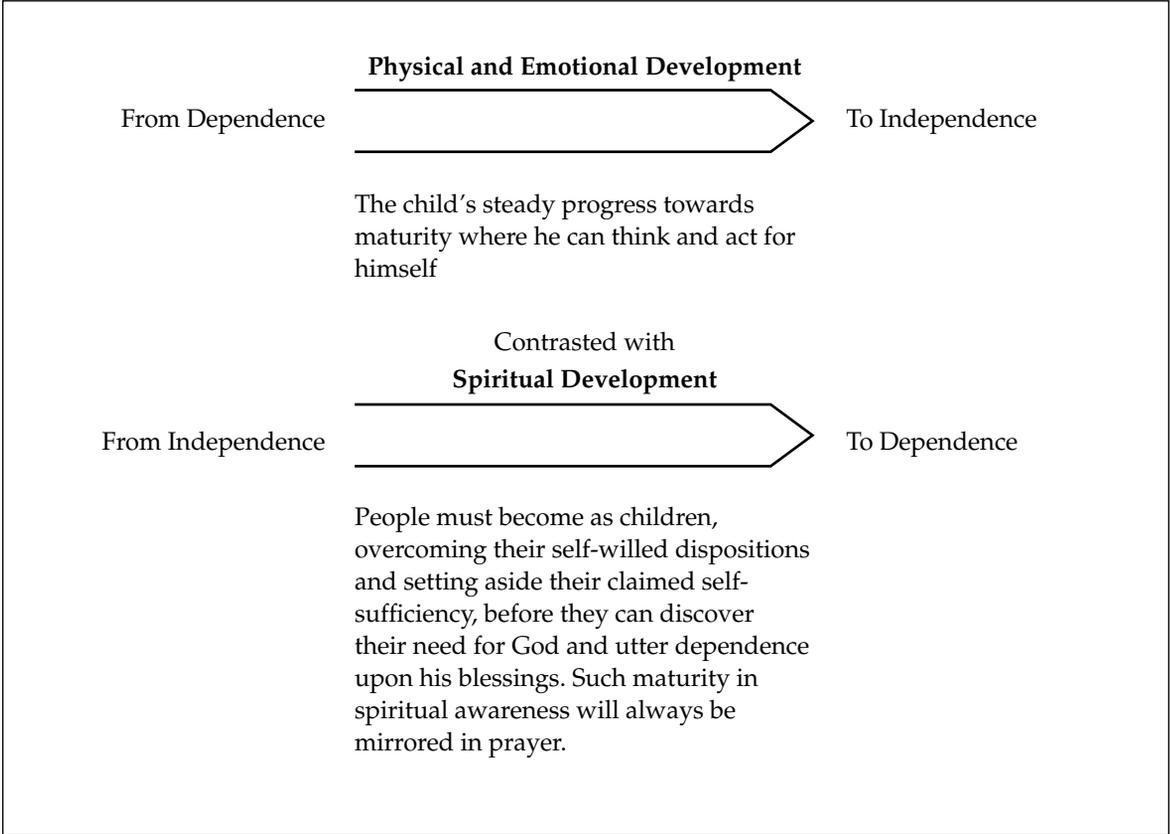
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## Conclusion

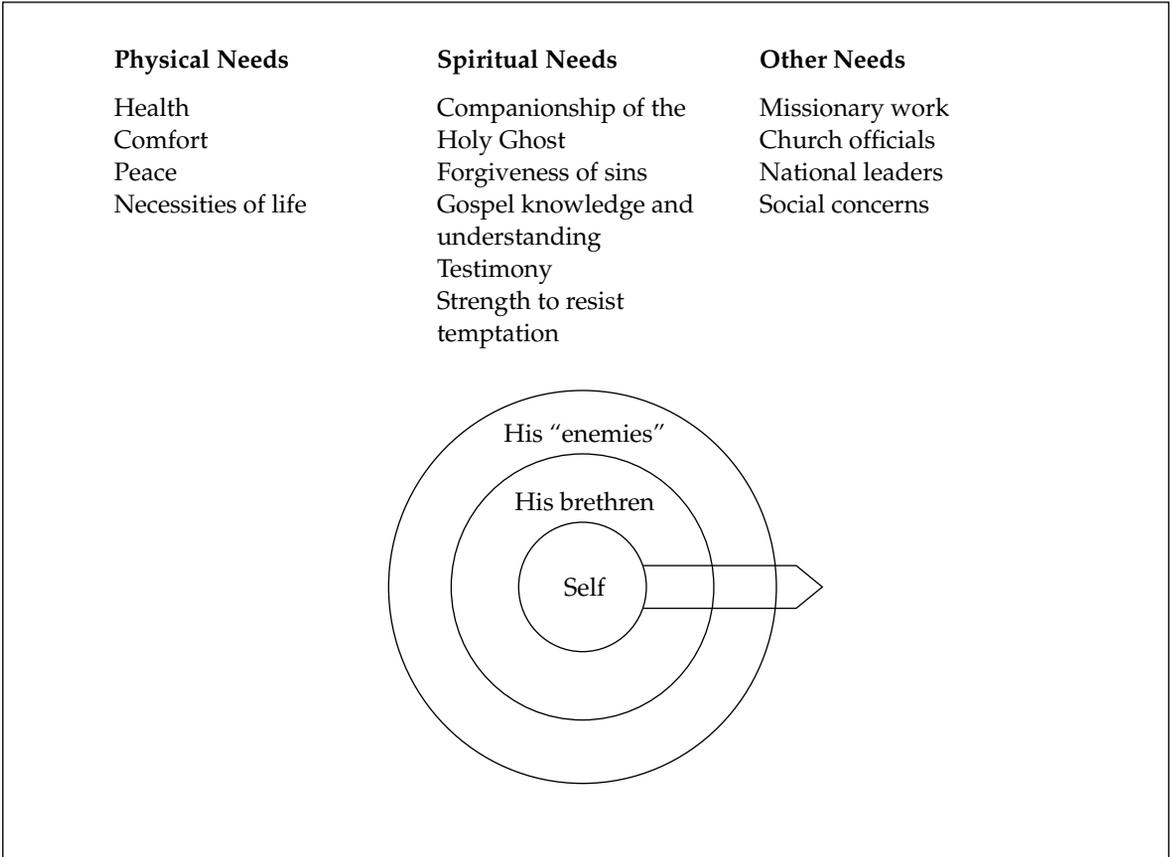
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Prayer is the purest form of communication. It is an emotional and a verbal bridge across the chasm that often separates us from God. As with any form of communication, we need to adjust the fine tuning to clarify the signal and improve the reception. The aspects of prayer discussed in this chapter will provide the tools necessary to improve our prayers.

Chalkboard 1



Chalkboard 2





Chalkboard 3

Lack of time
Hypocrisy—praying to be seen
Lack of sincerity
Sin
Physical disruptions
Failure to listen to answers
Lack of faith



### Introduction

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■ You may wish to share Elder Gordon B. Hinckley's story of simple and devoted faith: "Mine has been the opportunity to meet many wonderful men and women in various parts of the world. A few of them have left an indelible impression upon me. One such was a naval officer from Asia, a brilliant young man who had been brought to the United States for advanced training. Some of his associates in the United States Navy, whose behavior had attracted him, shared with him at his request their religious beliefs. He was not a Christian, but he was interested. They told him of the Savior of the world, of Jesus born in Bethlehem, who gave his life for all mankind. They told him of the appearance of God, the Eternal Father, and the resurrected Lord to the boy Joseph Smith. They spoke of modern prophets. They taught him the gospel of the Master. The Spirit touched his heart, and he was baptized.

"He was introduced to me just before he was to return to his native land. We spoke of these things, and then I said, 'Your people are not Christians. You come from a land where Christians have had a difficult time. What will happen when you return home a Christian and, more particularly, a Mormon Christian?'

"His face clouded, and he replied, 'My family will be disappointed. I suppose they will cast me out. They will regard me as dead. As for my future and my career, I assume that all opportunity will be foreclosed against me.'

"I asked, 'Are you willing to pay so great a price for the gospel?'

"His dark eyes, moistened by tears, shone from his handsome brown face as he answered, 'It's true, isn't it?'

"Ashamed at having asked the question, I responded, 'Yes, it's true.'

"To which he replied, 'Then what else matters?'" (In Conference Report, Apr. 1973, p. 72; or *Ensign*, July 1973, p. 48.)

What is this power that can motivate a person to be true to his ideals under such adverse circumstances?

■ Another story by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley emphasizes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ:

"I spoke one day to a friend escaped from his native land. With the fall of his nation, he had been arrested and interned. His wife and children had been able to get away, but for three years and more he had been a prisoner without means of communication with those he loved. The food had been wretched, the living conditions oppressive, with no prospects for improvement.

"'What sustained you through all those dark days?' I asked.

"He responded: 'My faith; my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I put my burdens on him, and then they seemed so much the lighter.'" (In Conference Report, Apr. 1978, p. 91; or *Ensign*, May 1978, p. 60.)

### Ideas for Teaching

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#### A. Faith in Jesus Christ is the foundation of the gospel.

■ What is the first principle of the gospel? An automatic response is "faith," but the more accurate answer is "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." Faith in Christ leads to repentance and pure and holy works. It can produce true miracles. Use the statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie in Supporting Statements A on pages 35–36 of the student manual to summarize the principle of faith in Christ (see *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 262).

■ Emphasize that faith is a gift from God, and not everyone possesses it. Read in Supporting Statements A on page 36 of the student manual the testimony of President Heber J. Grant about faith as a gift (see *Gospel Standards*, pp. 7–8). How should we seek the gift of faith? How can we lose it?

■ Is faith an active or a passive principle? What makes faith active? Can we truly exercise faith without bearing the fruits of that faith? Consider using the comments by Elder James E. Talmage in Supporting Statements A on page 36 of the student manual (see *The Articles of Faith*, pp. 106–7).

■ Discuss how faith in Jesus Christ is a principle of power. Faith in Christ and power in the priesthood go hand in hand; if used together, they inspire great and mighty works. Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated in the priesthood session of general conference: "[The doctrine of the priesthood] is that we have power, by faith, to govern and control all things, both temporal and spiritual; to work miracles and perfect lives; to stand in the presence of God and be like him because we have gained his faith, his perfections, and his power, or in other words the fulness of his priesthood" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, p. 50; or *Ensign*, May 1982, p. 34).

#### B. Faith comes from a knowledge of God and his teachings.

■ Cite Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Discuss with the students the best ways to hear the word of God. One way is to immerse yourself in the

scriptures by daily reading. Elder Howard W. Hunter counseled us:

“Scriptures contain the record of the self-revelation of God, and through them God speaks to man. Where could there be more profitable use of time than reading from the scriptural library the literature that teaches us to know God and understand our relationship to him? Time is always precious to busy people, and we are robbed of its worth when hours are wasted in reading or viewing that which is frivolous and of little value. . . .

“To understand [the scriptures] requires more than casual reading or perusal—there must be concentrated study. It is certain that one who studies the scriptures every day accomplishes far more than one who devotes considerable time one day and then lets days go by before continuing.” (In Conference Report, Oct. 1979, p. 91; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, p. 64.)

Another excellent way to hear the word of God and thereby build and strengthen faith is to listen to general conference in April and October each year. Elder Howard W. Hunter counseled:

“Conference time is a season of spiritual revival when knowledge and testimony are increased and solidified that God lives and blesses those who are faithful. It is a time when an understanding that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, is burned into the hearts of those who have the determination to serve him and keep his commandments. Conference is the time when our leaders give us inspired direction in the conduct of our lives—a time when souls are stirred and resolutions are made to be better husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, more obedient sons and daughters, better friends and neighbors.” (In Conference Report, Oct. 1981, p. 15; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1981, p. 12.)

■ Read Helaman 3:29 and 15:7–8 for evidence of how the scriptures confirm and strengthen our faith.

### **C. Faith in Jesus Christ always produces good fruits.**

■ What is the connection between faith and works? Can we claim to have faith if righteous works do not accompany our faith? Read the story of John the Baptist crying repentance unto some of the Jews who claimed to be good because of their lineage—they were the children of Abraham—but who did not bear the fruits of righteousness (see

Luke 3:7–11). Then discuss the often quoted “faith without works” passage in James 2:14, 17–26.

■ Faith also has the power to produce mighty miracles. Many want to see signs or miracles before they will exercise faith. Using the quotation from Elder McConkie in Supporting Statements C on page 37 of the student manual (see *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 264), show that miracles, signs, and the gifts of the Spirit do not precede faith but are instead the effects of faith. Doctrine and Covenants 63:7–12 teaches that “signs follow those that believe” and “signs come by faith” (see also Mark 16:17–18). Discuss some of the heroic individuals in the scriptures who performed miracles and mighty works through their faith (see Hebrews 11:1–40; Ether 12:12–22, 30). Ironically, some individuals, such as Laman and Lemuel, saw mighty miracles and visions but their faith was not strengthened. Remind the students that miracles and visions alone do not build faith.

■ Faith can lead to miracles and healings. But why else do we need faith? Faith is even more necessary as a tool to help us meet our daily difficulties and challenges. Read the scriptures in Doctrinal Outline C 4 on page 35 of the student manual and the significant statement about faith by Elder Spencer W. Kimball in Supporting Statements C on page 37 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Oct. 1952, pp. 50–51).

## **Conclusion**

Faith in Jesus Christ is not automatic. It is a gift that will be granted only to the person who opens up his heart to the goodness of the Father and the Son. To receive the gift of faith, we must “press forward with a steadfastness in Christ” and feast “upon the word of Christ” (2 Nephi 31:20). Challenge the students to nourish their faith by prayer, fasting, and daily reading of the word of God as found in the scriptures. You may wish to remind them of Alma’s comparison of building faith to planting a seed and nourishing it until it grows to a mighty tree (see Alma 32:28–43). Point out that if we “neglect the tree, and take no thought for its nourishment, behold it will not get any root; and when the heat of the sun cometh and scorseth it, because it hath not root it withers away” (v. 38). On the other hand, if the tree of faith is nourished, “it shall be a tree springing up unto everlasting life” (v. 41).

## Introduction

■ Ask the students to imagine the following hypothetical situation: the Lord wants to conduct a personal interview with each of them. They have two options: the interview can be conducted either in one hour from now or in one month from now. Which would they choose?

Most of the students will probably choose the month-later option, because it allows them more time to prepare. Use this idea of the students' wanting to prepare themselves in order to introduce the concept of repentance, which is one of the ways we can prepare ourselves to return to God's presence.

■ Why are so many Latter-day Saints afraid of repentance? Repentance is a positive gospel principle, but Satan distorts it and makes it appear negative so that people will fail to repent and will not progress eternally. Show the students how sharply the Lord and Satan differ in their attitude toward sin. The Lord is always positive, and Satan is always negative. Point out the differences. (See Chalkboard 1.)

Read Mosiah 4:3. Emphasize that repentance leads to joy, peace of mind, and a clean conscience. Suffering for sin occurs when there is no repentance (see D&C 19:15–20).

■ Read and discuss the definition of the word *repentance* as given in the dictionary of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible.

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Repentance is an eternal principle of progress.

■ Read Moses 5:14–15. What two things are we required by the law of God to do to gain salvation? (Believe in the Savior and repent.) Those who do not believe in the Savior and repent of their sins are damned. *Damnation* means to be limited in eternal progress and privileges (see Bible Dictionary). Share with your students the Prophet Joseph Smith's expanded definition of the term *damnation* in Supporting Statements A on page 38 of the student manual (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 198).

■ Read and discuss the excellent statements about turning away from sin by President David O. McKay and President Hugh B. Brown in Supporting Statements A on pages 38–39 of the student manual (see McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, pp. 12–13; Brown, *Eternal Quest*, pp. 99, 102).

### B. To return to God's presence, an individual must repent.

■ Read 3 Nephi 11:32–38. What doctrines are emphasized through repetition in this scriptural passage? (Repenting, being baptized, and becoming as a little child.) What is the correlation between a repentant, baptized person and a little child? (Both are free from sin.)

■ President Heber J. Grant's comment about striving to do better may help as you discuss the importance of *attitude* in the repentance process (see Supporting Statements B on p. 40 of the student manual; or *Gospel Standards*, pp. 184–85).

### C. Repentance involves performing certain actions and working to develop Christlike qualities.

■ The Book of Mormon is replete with excellent examples of repentance. A few are listed below; each can be a springboard for a discussion of contemporary examples and application.

*Enos, the son of Jacob.* See Enos 1–8.

*Lamoni's father.* See Alma 22:15–18.

*Alma the Younger.* See Alma 36:6–22.

*Alma's son Corianton.* Read in Supporting Statements C on page 41 of the student manual Elder Marion D. Hanks's statement about the conversation between Alma and his son Corianton that is recorded in Alma 42:27–31 (see "Will I Ever Forget?" *Improvement Era*, Mar. 1966, p. 246).

■ Students are naturally interested in the proper steps of repentance, and they need to understand them. Use the following outline as a guide for discussing the repentance process. These steps are not necessarily taken in the order they are listed; each person's experiences with repentance are individual. Nevertheless, all five steps must be taken. The five steps are as follows:

*Have a "godly sorrow" for the sin.* See 2 Corinthians 7:10.

*Build a genuine desire to change, and make a commitment to clear the problem, regardless of the cost.*

*Abandon the sin completely.* See Doctrine and Covenants 82:7. This step may mean changing friends, avoiding places of temptation, and so on.

*Make restitution insofar as possible.*

*Confess to the proper authority.* See Doctrine and Covenants 58:42–43; Mosiah 26:29. You might want to share a modern prophet's counsel regarding the attitude that accompanies the confession. President Spencer W. Kimball warned, "The voluntary confession is infinitely more acceptable in the sight of the Lord than is forced admission, lacking humility, wrung from an individual by questioning" (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 181).

- Impress upon the students that when a person sins, the sooner he begins to repent, the better. Procrastination merely adds to the sin and the burden of guilt and makes repentance more difficult. (See Alma 34:32–34; Kimball, *Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp. 167–68, 357.)
- Bishop Vaughn J. Featherstone told a story that illustrates the mighty change of heart—in contrast to a shallow, self-serving change of behavior—that must take place as part of repentance:

“Shortly after I had been called to the Presiding Bishopric, an Arizona stake president told me he had a young missionary candidate who needed to be interviewed for worthiness. . . .

“As I invited the young man into my office, . . . I said to him: ‘Apparently there has been a major transgression in your life. That’s why I am involved in this interview. Would you mind being very frank and open and telling me what that transgression was?’

“With head held high and in a haughty manner he responded, ‘There isn’t *anything* I haven’t done.’

“I responded: ‘Well, then, let’s be more specific. Have you been involved in fornication?’

“Very sarcastically, he said, ‘I told you I’ve done *everything*.’

“I asked, ‘Was it a single experience, or did it happen with more than one girl and more than once?’

“And he said again, sarcastically, ‘Many girls and so many times I could not number them.’

“I said, ‘I would to God your transgression was not so serious.’

“‘Well, it is,’ he replied.

“‘How about drugs?’

“‘I told you I’ve done *everything*.’

“Then I said, ‘What makes you think you’re going on a mission?’

“‘Because I have repented,’ he replied. ‘I haven’t done any of these things for a year. I know I’m going on a mission because my patriarchal blessing says I’m going on a mission. I’ve been ordained an elder, I’ve lived the way I should this past year, and I know that I’m going on a mission.’

“I looked at the young man sitting across the desk: twenty-one years old, laughing, sarcastic, haughty, with an attitude far removed from sincere repentance. And I said to him: ‘My dear young friend, I’m sorry to tell you this, but you are *not* going on a mission. Do you suppose we could send you out with your braggadocio attitude about this past life of yours, boasting of your escapades? Do you think we could send you out with the fine, clean young men who have never violated the moral code, who have kept their lives clean and pure and worthy so that they might go on missions?’

“I repeated: ‘You’re not going on a mission. In fact,’ I said, ‘you shouldn’t have been ordained an elder and you really should have been tried for your membership in the Church.’

“‘What you have committed is a series of monumental transgressions,’ I continued. ‘You

haven’t repented; you’ve just stopped doing something. Someday, after you have been to Gethsemane and back, you’ll understand what true repentance is.’

“At this the young man started to cry. He cried for about five minutes, and during that time I didn’t say a word. (By the way, let me suggest that there are times during an interview when it would be inappropriate to say anything—when we should just wait, and listen, and watch, and let the person do some soul-searching and thinking.) I just sat and waited as this young man cried.

“Finally he looked up and said, ‘I guess I haven’t cried like that since I was five years old.’

“I told him: ‘If you had cried like that the first time you were tempted to violate the moral code, you may well have been going on a mission today. Now, I’m sorry, I hate to be the one to keep you from realizing your goal. I know it will be hard to go back to your friends and tell them you are not going on a mission.

“‘After you’ve been to Gethsemane,’ I continued, ‘you’ll understand what I mean when I say that every person who commits a major transgression must also go to Gethsemane and back before he is forgiven.’

“The young man left the office, and I’m sure he wasn’t very pleased; I had stood in his way and kept him from going on a mission.

“About six months later, I was down in Arizona speaking at the institute at Tempe. After my talk many of the institute members came down the aisles to shake hands. As I looked up I saw this young man—the nonrepentant transgressor—coming down the aisle toward me, and at that moment the details of my interview with him came back through my mind. I recalled his braggadocio attitude, his sarcasm, his haughtiness.

“I reached down to shake hands with him, and as he looked up at me I could see that something wonderful had taken place in his life. Tears streamed down his cheeks. An almost holy glow came from his countenance. I said to him, ‘You’ve been there, haven’t you?’

“And through tears he said, ‘Yes, Bishop Featherstone, I’ve been to Gethsemane and back.’

“‘I know,’ I said. ‘It shows in your face. I believe now that the Lord has forgiven you.’

“He responded: ‘I’m more grateful to you than you’ll ever know for not letting me go on a mission. It would have been a great disservice to me. Thanks for helping me.’” (*A Generation of Excellence*, pp. 156–59.)

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## Conclusion

Bear testimony that the principle of repentance has been given to us by a loving Father so that we can take full advantage of the Atonement. Challenge the students to search their souls daily and to make repentance a vital part of their lives.

Chalkboard 1

**Satan**

1. Why try?
2. God doesn't love me after what I have done.
3. I can't be forgiven.
4. I can never live with God again.

**The Savior**

1. Mercy is extended to those who forsake sin (see Proverbs 28:13).
2. There is joy in heaven over a repentant person (see Luke 15:7; D&C 18:13).
3. The Lord will forgive those who repent (see Isaiah 1:18; D&C 58:42).
4. Because of the atonement of the Savior, all who repent can return to God (see D&C 18:11–12).



## Introduction

Give the students the following true-false pretest about baptism. You may correct the test in class and discuss all the answers with the students immediately, or you may use the test as a framework for the class discussion.

### PRETEST QUESTIONS

- \_\_\_ 1. The nature of the covenants made at baptism are personal and vary from one individual to the next.
- \_\_\_ 2. John the Baptist was the first person in scriptural history to perform baptisms.
- \_\_\_ 3. Baptism was taught and practiced by the righteous Nephites and Lamanites.
- \_\_\_ 4. Baptism is required before one can enter the kingdom of God.
- \_\_\_ 5. If a person is not baptized, he is not held accountable for his sins.
- \_\_\_ 6. The scriptures do not specify that a person must have authority in order to perform baptisms.
- \_\_\_ 7. The Lord has revealed the wording to be used in the baptismal ordinance.
- \_\_\_ 8. The phrase “by immersion” is not specifically used in the Bible in connection with baptism.
- \_\_\_ 9. Baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### PRETEST ANSWERS

1. False. Every person who is properly baptized enters into exactly the same covenants. The Lord promises the same blessings to all who are faithful.
2. False. Baptism is an eternal covenant that has been practiced in all gospel dispensations beginning with Adam.
3. True. (See Doctrinal Outline B 5 on p. 42 of the student manual.)
4. True. (See Doctrinal Outline C 1 on p. 42 of the student manual.)
5. False. Everyone who reaches the age of accountability and has at least normal mental capacities will be held accountable for his sins. A baptized person, however, is placed under covenant and therefore takes upon himself greater responsibilities, so the sins for which he does not repent are considered to be more serious.
6. False. (See Doctrinal Outline D 3 on p. 42 of the student manual.)

7. True. (See Doctrinal Outline D 3 on p. 42 of the student manual.)
8. True. The Bible does not mention baptism by immersion, although immersion is implied in a few instances. The specific teachings about immersion are in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. (See Doctrinal Outline D 5 on p. 42 of the student manual.)
9. True. (See Doctrinal Outline E 1 on p. 43 of the student manual.)

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Through baptism we enter into a covenant with the Lord.

- Write on the chalkboard the word *covenant*, and ask the students for a definition. Refer to the definition in the dictionary of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. Note that all ordinances are received by covenant.
- Ask the students how baptism is a covenant between God and man. What agreements does a person make with God when he submits himself to baptism? Doctrinal Outline A 1 and Supporting Statements A on pages 42–43 of the student manual contain references that explain the elements of the covenant. You may wish to list on the chalkboard the agreements associated with the covenant. What does God covenant as a blessing to the person who is baptized and keeps his part of the covenant? (see Doctrinal Outline A 2 on p. 42 of the student manual).
- Each week we have the opportunity to partake of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, which is a renewal of our baptismal covenants. Note in the sacramental prayers that we covenant to take upon ourselves the name of Christ, to always remember him, and to keep his commandments (see D&C 20:77, 79). In return, the Lord promises that we will always have his Spirit to be with us. Why does the Lord provide a way to renew the baptismal covenant each week? Use the scriptures in Doctrinal Outline A 3 on page 42 of the student manual to emphasize that we must obey the commandments if we want the baptismal covenant to be efficacious in our lives.

### B. Baptism is an eternal ordinance that has been practiced in all gospel dispensations.

- Adam was the first person to be baptized (see Doctrinal Outline B 1 on p. 42 of the student manual). How was Adam baptized? Why was it necessary for him to be baptized? Help the students

realize that baptism is an eternal ordinance and that all gospel dispensations in the history of mankind have practiced the first four principles and ordinances of the gospel (see Articles of Faith 1:4). You may also wish to refer to Doctrinal Outline B 2 through B 5 on page 42 of the student manual.

- Jesus was without sin, so why was he baptized? Baptism is an eternal law that all people must obey. Also, Christ is the Great Exemplar who showed us the way. He wants us to follow him and humble ourselves as he humbled himself to be baptized (see 2 Nephi 31:7, 12). If Christ was baptized, being holy, “how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water” (2 Nephi 31:5).

- How do we know that the Latter-day Saints use the proper method and authority of baptism in our day? The authority to baptize was restored 15 May 1829 by John the Baptist to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Instructions about the method of baptism and the wording of the baptismal prayer were revealed to the Prophet before the Church was organized on 6 April 1830. (See D&C 20:37, 72–74.)

### C. Baptism is an essential ordinance.

- Relate the story of Nicodemus, a ruling Pharisee among the Jews, who sought out Jesus by night and learned that a person must be born of the water and the Spirit in order to qualify for the kingdom of heaven (see John 3:1–7). How is baptism symbolic of a rebirth? (see Moses 6:59).

- Write on the chalkboard the following question: Why is baptism essential for our salvation? List all the significant reasons the students can tell you. Then review selected scripture passages from Doctrinal Outline C on page 42 of the student manual.

### D. The ordinance of baptism is acceptable to the Lord only when it is performed as he has prescribed.

- What is the meaning of the word *baptize*? Read the Prophet Joseph Smith’s explanation of the original meaning of the word on page 43 of the student manual (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 262).

- Review the proper steps and requirements for a valid baptism. Refer to selected scriptures in Doctrinal Outline D 1 through D 5 on page 42 of the student manual. Point out that these steps and

requirements were probably lost when some of the “plain and most precious” parts of the Bible were taken away from the original texts (1 Nephi 13:26; see also vv. 27–28). But the Lord promised that he would restore the plain and precious parts (see 1 Nephi 13:35–39). Note that almost all of these important instructions about baptism come from the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

- Church members can assure themselves that their own baptism was performed by the proper authority by tracing to Jesus Christ the priesthood line of authority of the man who performed the baptism. Illustrate this point by using your own line of authority or that of the man who baptized you.

### E. Baptism symbolizes eternal realities.

- What is the symbolic meaning of the person entering the water, going down under the water, and coming out of the water? Baptism symbolizes cleanliness and a newness of life. It also represents the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Refer to the scriptures in Doctrinal Outline E on page 42 of the student manual and the quotation from President Joseph Fielding Smith on page 43 (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:323–24). Baptism, like all other ordinances and many principles of the gospel, is deeply symbolic. The symbolism can teach us many things if we will probe the scriptures and study by the Holy Spirit. Surely baptism is a great example of “that which is earthly conforming to that which is heavenly” (D&C 128:13).

- Discuss the symbolism in the color of clothing used in the baptismal ordinance. White represents cleanliness, innocence, and purity. With its sacred symbolism, baptism can be one of the most wondrous and memorable experiences for us in mortality.

## Conclusion

Bear witness of the importance of your own baptism in your life. Challenge those who are not members of the Church to study the principles of the gospel with all their heart and to ponder the importance of baptism in their lives. You may wish to sing or to recite Parley P. Pratt’s hymn about baptism, “Father in Heaven, We Do Believe” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 180).

## Introduction

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■ Once we exercise faith in Christ, repent, and are baptized, have we accomplished all we were sent to earth to do? What comes next in our eternal progress? To many, the ordinance of the laying on of hands that follows baptism is nothing more than a “confirmation” of Church membership, but the more important part of the ordinance is receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Do we immediately and completely receive the Holy Ghost by the process of the laying on of hands? What does the priesthood charge to “receive the Holy Ghost” imply? The ordinance is only the beginning. Following the ordinance performed by the power of the priesthood, we must live worthily and seek the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. And as the Holy Ghost becomes a vital part of our life, the Lord expects much more of us (see 2 Nephi 31:17–20).

■ A great transformation often occurs in a person who exercises faith, repents, is baptized, and receives the gift of the Holy Ghost. After all, the greatest miracle of all is the miracle of forgiveness. Consider using the following story by Elder John A. Wiltsoe to illustrate the powerful transformation that can occur:

“I remember the man who baptized me into the Church, a very common, ordinary man to begin with, a ropewalker with a jug of beer two or three times a day, a glass of whiskey a little later, and a cud of tobacco mostly all day long, living a useless, purposeless life, except for three meals a day, and the satisfaction of some of the carnal appetites. He heard the gospel and accepted it. It was good. It was something he had been longing for. The man grew in power and stature in the Church. As I recall it, he filled five or six missions and presided over one of the missions of the Church. He was the same man, with the same arms, same feet, same body, same mind, but changed because of the Spirit that comes with the acceptance of eternal truth.” (In Conference Report, Apr. 1952, p. 34.)

Few people change a great deal physically through the baptism of the Spirit. They have the same general appearance, have the same name, are of the same educational background, live in the same neighborhood, and work at the same job. Yet profound changes occur in their lives. What is the nature of these changes?

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. Before an individual receives the gift of the Holy Ghost, he first receives the Spirit, or Light

**of Christ, which is given to every person who is born into the world.**

■ Write on the chalkboard *Light of Christ* and ask for a definition. Students need to understand that the Light of Christ lights the lives of all who are born into this life. Elder Bruce R. McConkie’s statement in Supporting Statements A on page 44 of the student manual clarifies what we do understand about the Light of Christ (see *The Promised Messiah*, pp. 208–9). The Light of Christ is not the same as the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is reserved for those who have fulfilled the necessary prerequisites to receive it (see Doctrinal Outline A on p. 44 of the student manual).

■ The Light of Christ is often correctly equated with our conscience. Everyone has a conscience when he begins his life (see Romans 2:14–15). President Spencer W. Kimball compared the conscience to an individual Liahona within each of us: “You must realize that you have something like the compass, like the Liahona, in your own system. Every child is given it. When he is eight years of age, he knows good from evil, if his parents have been teaching him well. If he ignores the Liahona that he has in his own makeup, he eventually may not have it whispering to him. But if we will remember that everyone of us has the thing that will direct him aright, our ship will not get on the wrong course . . . —if we listen to the dictates of our own Liahona, which we call the conscience.” (In Conference Report, Oct. 1976, p. 117; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1976, p. 79.)

Point out that a person who becomes wrapped up in his sins gradually loses the influence of the Light of Christ in his life.

■ Read John 1:6–9 and Moroni 7:16–19. Point out that we have within us a “light” that helps us judge right from wrong. When we go against that light, our actions accuse and condemn us.

### B. The gift of the Holy Ghost is bestowed upon all who have covenanted with Jesus Christ in baptism.

■ Write on the chalkboard *gift of the Holy Ghost*, and ask the students to define it (see Supporting Statements B on pp. 44–45 of the student manual).

■ Can a person enjoy the influence of the Holy Ghost without actually receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost? Describe the experience of the Roman centurion, Cornelius, who received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized (see Acts 10:1–33). Note in Supporting Statements B on page 44 of the student manual the Prophet Joseph Smith’s statement about

Cornelius's situation (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 199).

All honest seekers of truth have a right to the influence of the Holy Ghost (see Moroni 10:4–5; Supporting Statements B on pp. 44–45 of the student manual). But we must be baptized and confirmed to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and enjoy his constant companionship. The confirmation ordinance signifies that the gift of the Holy Ghost is received by covenant.

■ Can we lose the gift of the Holy Ghost? How? (By sin and neglect.) The companionship of the Holy Ghost must be cultivated daily through scripture study, prayer, meditation, and obedience to the commandments of God. Why is someone who has received the gift of the Holy Ghost more accountable for his sins than someone who has never received that gift?

■ Refer to Chalkboard 1 for a discussion of obtaining the power promised in the gospel ordinances. Use the chalkboard to demonstrate how baptism of water and of the Spirit are linked, and how the two together lead to purification of the soul.

### **C. Those who have the gift of the Holy Ghost may enjoy the gifts of the Spirit.**

■ Ask the students to define *gifts of the Spirit* before you try to list the various gifts. Elder Bruce R. McConkie's definition is in Supporting Statements C on page 45 of the student manual (see *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 314).

■ Ask the class to name as many gifts of the Spirit as they can; list the gifts on the chalkboard. Use the comprehensive listings of spiritual gifts in the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants to complete the students' list (see 1 Corinthians 12; Moroni 10:8–18; D&C 46:10–33).

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 46:11–12. Point out that every worthy member of the Church is entitled to at least one gift of the Spirit. Not every member has the same gift, and not every member possesses all the gifts of the Spirit. With the different gifts the Lord has graciously bestowed upon us as individuals, we can aid and complement each other in unitedly building the kingdom of God.

■ Read Moroni 10:17. Gifts of the Spirit often come in answer to a person's request for a specific gift. Elder Boyd K. Packer explained how such a gift occurs: "If a man wills that the gift should come to him, and he desires it, the gift shall be his."

"Many years ago I read [Moroni 10:7–10, 17] and pondered it. I thought that among the gifts one might have in order to make himself useful to the Lord, the gift to teach by the Spirit would be supreme. The gift to teach the Word of Wisdom and to teach the word of knowledge by the Spirit is much to be desired. Why should such a gift not come to us if we desire it? If we desire to succeed as a teacher and we're willing to earn that ability, why should it not come to us? If we're willing to ask for it and pray for it, and we believe with sufficient faith that we can possess it, why should it be withheld from us?" (*Teach Ye Diligently*, p. 16.)

■ Point out that perhaps the most widely discussed gift of the Spirit is the gift of tongues. Unfortunately, this gift is also one of the most widely misunderstood gifts. Many Christians, reading in Acts 2 about the gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost, believe that they must also exercise the gift of tongues in order to be truly converted. But that line of reasoning is erroneous: gifts of the Spirit *follow*, rather than precede, conversion.

Many also misunderstand the purpose of the gift of tongues. The gift of tongues is *not* a badge of spiritual excellence. This gift exists primarily to disseminate the gospel message to the nations of the earth in their various native languages. If the gift of tongues is used, the interpretation of tongues should always be present (see 1 Corinthians 14:2–5). The house of God is not a house of confusion.

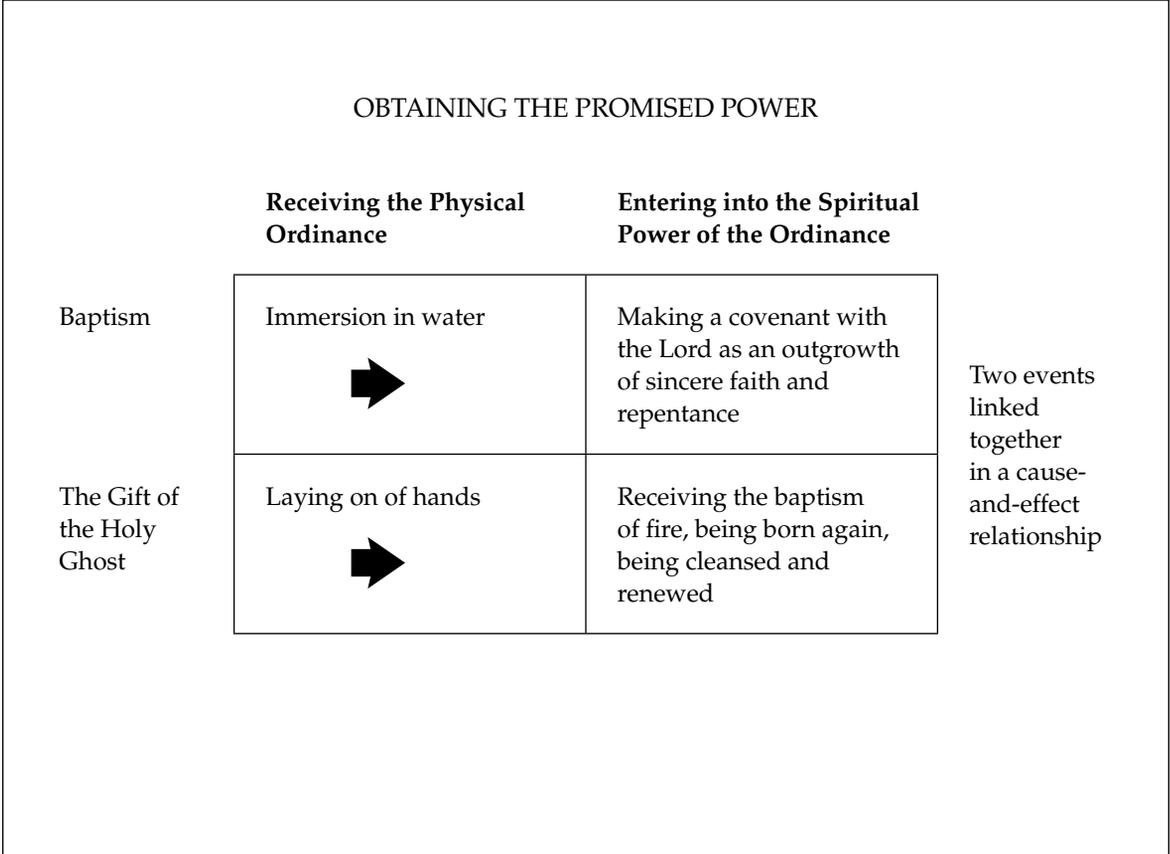
■ Controversy often arises regarding whether a particular "manifestation" is a gift of the Spirit or is inspired by Satan. Satan produces counterfeits to deceive and misdirect man. Read Doctrine and Covenants 46:27–29 and 107:91–92 to show the role of Church priesthood leaders in discerning spiritual gifts. You may also wish to cite Elder Abraham O. Woodruff's comments in Supporting Statements C on page 45 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Apr. 1901, p. 12).

## **Conclusion**

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Urge the students to pray each day that the Holy Ghost will be their constant companion. Challenge them to evaluate their lives and see what spiritual gifts the Lord may have already given them. Bear witness that the Lord has demonstrated the power of spiritual gifts in your life and that you have been privileged to witness the exercise of these gifts in the work of the Lord.

Chalkboard 1





## Introduction

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The following two stories may be used to introduce the law of obedience and to illustrate it. Relate one of the stories, and discuss it in the context of obedience to the counsel of the living prophet today.

"On many occasions [Ephraim] Hanks was rewarded for his obedience to the Prophet, Brigham Young. One spring morning he was at work, building an adobe house in the city. The basement was almost completed and he was just beginning to lay the sun-dried brick when Brigham drove up in his carriage and said, 'Ephraim, how thick is that rock wall?'

"Eph answered that it was eight inches thick.

"Brigham said, 'Tear it all down, Ephraim, and build it twice as thick.' Then, as if to avoid argument, he turned his carriage around and drove away.

"Eph had been hauling rock from Ensign Peak for many days, and had paid a mason a good price to lay it in lime mortar. He dreaded the extra work and expense of doing it all over again.

"The mason, too, showed his disapproval by swearing and remarking, 'Brigham Young may be a saint, but he's no kind of a prophet about building stone walls!'

"Nevertheless, Eph re-contracted with the stone mason to double the wall and the next morning started hauling rock again.

"A month later, they had laid on this sixteen-inch wall much adobe brick and mud. As they were putting up the rafters, a terrific storm started. Rain fell in sheets, causing streamlets of water to run in all directions. In a few minutes the basement of the new house was flooded, but the sturdy, thick walls stood safe and strong, supporting the house. A few days later when the water had drained out and they finished laying the rafters, Eph drove in the nails to the tune of 'We Thank Thee, Oh God, for a Prophet.'" (Sidney Alvarus Hanks and Ephraim K. Hanks, *Scouting for the Mormons on the Great Frontier*, pp. 78–80.)

"My grandfather was assisting in the building of the Temple at Nauvoo and was driving a pair of beautiful high-spirited black mares. One day while backing his wagon in at the quarry which was down by the river's edge, the Prophet came over to him and said: 'Israel, on your next trip, stop and buy yourself a buggy whip,' to which grandfather assented. On his next trip up town he bought a buggy whip and returned for another load of rock. Backing the team in this time, he attempted to stop them as usual by saying, 'Whoa,' to which they paid no attention, but kept backing until Israel, in excitement, was compelled to use the whip

which the Prophet had told him to buy. The horses jumped forward and the wagon stopped right at the edge of the quarry, beyond which they would have plunged below.

"Grandfather frequently told this story as an illustration of what obedience meant. Grandfather accepted everything the Prophet Joseph Smith told him and never questioned 'why?' Some would call this blind obedience, but not so. Israel Barlow knew full well the divine calling of the Prophet and bore that testimony to the day of his death." (In Ora H. Barlow, *The Israel Barlow Story and Mormon Mores*, pp. 195–96.)

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. Obedience is the first law of heaven.

■ In explaining the importance of obedience, read Abraham 3:24–25. As you discuss this important passage, point out that obedience is the first law of heaven.

How does the Lord try our faith? Often a trial of faith involves obedience to a principle of the gospel or to the counsel of Church leaders. Cite a personal example to illustrate this point, or use the story about President Marion G. Romney in Supporting Statements A on page 47 of the student manual (see Harold B. Lee, "Marion G. Romney," *Improvement Era*, Oct. 1962, p. 742).

■ Who was the first to suggest that the principle of obedience is negative? Read Moses 4:7–11, and discuss the implications of Satan's words to Eve: "Hath God said—Ye shall *not* eat of every tree of the garden?" (emphasis added). What do the words "for God doth know" imply? (Satan implied that Eve was not completely free because she had to obey a commandment to refrain from eating the fruit of one tree.)

■ Ask the students the following questions to help them realize what obedience is *not*:

1. Does God simply want us to obey a set of commandments, or does he hope our obedience will build certain character traits?

2. Does doing the right thing with a bad attitude build the character traits necessary for advancement toward exaltation? (How do the experiences of Laman and Lemuel help answer this question? Did they obey? With what attitude?)

3. How many roads to happiness and joy exist? Which label better fits the road: "Doing the Right Things" or "Being the Right Kind of Person"? Are the labels related?

4. How is obedience related to attitude? To behavior?

**B. The Lord promises great blessings to those who obey his commandments.**

■ Are there eternal physical laws that rule the universe? As man has come to understand and obey physical laws, have those laws limited his freedom or increased it? In matters of physical law, obedience involves compliance with true principles. The result is increased freedom. Is this relationship also true of spiritual laws? From page 46 of the student manual, write on the chalkboard the following statement by Cecil B. DeMille: “[God] made man free—and then gave him the Commandments to keep him free” (“Commencement Address,” in *Commencement Exercises*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [Provo, 31 May 1957], pp. 4–5). How is this statement true?

Discuss the truth that obedience involves putting our life in harmony with divine truth in order to gain increased freedom (see D&C 93:26–28).

■ Does obedience bring specific blessings? Identify in the scriptures some commandments that promise specific blessings for obedience. Use Chalkboard 1 as you discuss these commandments. A few examples are—

*The fast.* See Isaiah 58:3–12.

*The Sabbath.* See Doctrine and Covenants 59:9–19.

*The Word of Wisdom.* See Doctrine and Covenants 89:4–21.

Read Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21, wherein we are told that “any blessing from God” is obtained “by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.”

**C. Disobedience is a serious offense in the eyes of the Lord.**

■ Why is God displeased by disobedience? Disobedience brings misery, and God desires all his children to be happy. He is sorrowful when they choose the wrong path.

Enoch was overwhelmed by the Lord’s sorrow over his children at the time of Noah. Read Moses 7:32–33, and discuss the implications of the Lord’s explanation to Enoch.

**D. Jesus Christ set the pattern for obedience.**

■ Discuss how Christ set the example of the righteous attitude of obedience. Why did the Savior obey the Father? Can you imagine Jesus obeying the Father out of fear? Desire for reward? Pity? Tradition? Self-righteousness? How do the following scriptures give us insight into the true attitude of obedience?

*John 8:28–29.* “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me. . . I do always those things that please him.”

*John 5:19–20.* “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do . . . for the Father loveth the Son.”

*John 7:16–18.* Knows the doctrine is of God, and seeks the Father’s glory.

*John 10:15.* “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.”

*John 10:30.* “I and my Father are one.”

*John 14:10.* “I am in the Father, and the Father in me . . . ; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.”

*John 14:15, 21, 23.* “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

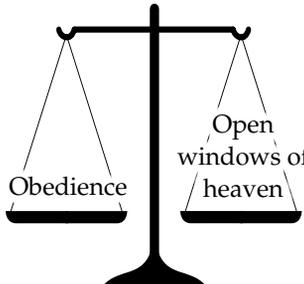
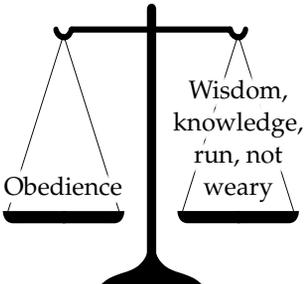
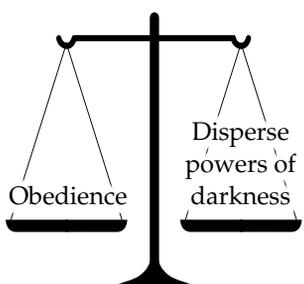
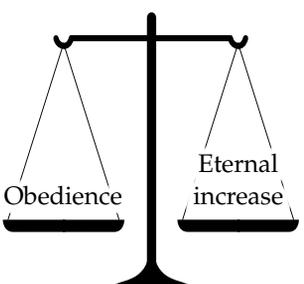
How do the words *love, trust, please, example, knowledge of God,* and *oneness* help us understand the righteous attitude of obedience?

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## Conclusion

Share a few powerful examples in the scriptures of the true attitude of obedience. You might discuss the obedience of Adam, as recorded in Moses 5:6, or Nephi and the brass plates, as recorded in 1 Nephi 3:6–7. Challenge your students to evaluate the degree of their obedience and to make the commitment to change as needed.

Chalkboard 1

<p><b>Law of Tithing</b> <i>Malachi 3:8-12</i></p>  <p>Obedience</p> <p>Open windows of heaven</p>	<p><b>Word of Wisdom</b> <i>Doctrine and Covenants 89</i></p>  <p>Obedience</p> <p>Wisdom, knowledge, run, not weary</p>
<p><b>Law of Prophets</b> <i>Doctrine and Covenants 21:4-6</i></p>  <p>Obedience</p> <p>Disperse powers of darkness</p>	<p><b>Law of Eternal Marriage</b> <i>Doctrine and Covenants 131:1-4</i></p>  <p>Obedience</p> <p>Eternal increase</p>



### Introduction

Read 3 Nephi 27:19–20. Write on the chalkboard a portion of the first verse: “And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom.” This scripture succinctly points out what is required of us, but is the requirement realistic? Is it possible for mortals, who are subject to the temptations of the flesh, to walk through life without becoming spiritually unclean? Has anyone other than Jesus Christ ever achieved this feat? Christ himself indicated that spotlessness is the product of faith, repentance, perseverance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and reliance upon the Atonement.

### Ideas for Teaching

#### A. All accountable persons must be born again of water and of the Spirit.

- At variance with the teachings of many other Christian churches, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that children are born in a state of innocence (see D&C 93:38). Innocence is defined as the state of being free from guilt or sin, free from blame or censure, spotless or unsullied. During a child’s infancy and before the child reaches the age of accountability, Satan is not able to tempt him directly (see D&C 29:47). Children who die before the age of eight years are received into the celestial kingdom (see D&C 137:10). The innocence of a child is, at least in part, what provoked Jesus to say, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3).
- Before class begins, write on the chalkboard or on an overhead transparency a list of the natural man’s characteristics that you can later compare with a list of the fruits of the spiritual man (see Chalkboard 1). Ask the students what causes us to lose the innocence we are born with. Doctrine and Covenants 93:39 indicates that innocence is lost through following the traditions of the fathers and disobeying the commandments of God. People who lose their innocence are referred to in the scriptures as spiritually dead (see D&C 29:41) and as carnal, sensual, and devilish (see Moses 5:13; 6:49). Benjamin referred to them as “the natural man” (see Mosiah 3:19). Paul indicated that such people will produce what he called the works of the flesh, which he listed in Galatians 5:16–21 and Colossians 3:2–9.
- Carefully read John 3:1–5. Nicodemus asked Jesus, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s

womb, and be born?” Nicodemus asked his question in response to Jesus’ statement that a man would have to be born again to see the kingdom of God. Was Nicodemus’s question naive or sarcastic? His subsequent behavior would suggest not. Rather, Nicodemus was voicing a question deeply felt by many people. How is it possible for a mature person to regain the innocence of the newly born? How is it possible to begin life anew, fortified against the pitfalls that cause mankind to be declared carnal, sensual, and devilish? Jesus answered that there must be a two-fold birth that would allow us to enter into the kingdom of God. (See Supporting Statements A on p. 49 of the student manual.)

Write on the chalkboard the phrases “born of the water” and “born of the Spirit.” Ask for a definition of each.

Being born of the water occurs when a person acting in faith and repentance accepts baptism by immersion at the hands of an authorized servant of Jesus Christ (see Alma 9:27; 3 Nephi 7:25; Moroni 6:2–4). Being born of the water is an immediate, single event.

Being born of the Spirit begins with the ordinance of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. When a person yields to the promptings of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit works a “mighty change” within the innermost part of the person, causing a constant desire to do good (Mosiah 5:2; see also Mosiah 27:25; Alma 19:33). Being born of the Spirit is a gradual process.

The Apostle Paul listed the characteristics of the spiritual person, one who yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and contrasted them to the characteristics of a person dominated by the flesh. Write these spiritual characteristics on the chalkboard so the students can see the contrast with those of the natural man (see Chalkboard 1).

#### B. Justification is being forgiven by the Lord and set upon the path of righteousness.

- Read Doctrine and Covenants 20:30: “And we know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true.” *Justification* is a term closely related to forgiveness. Read the explanations given in Supporting Statements B on page 50 of the student manual. Ask the students to explain what is promised a new convert when he is baptized by proper authority into membership in the Church. Point out that through the exercise of faith, genuine repentance, and proper baptism, a person is forgiven of past sins and begins life in the Church as guiltless as a child. Ask the students to share examples from

their experience of investigators who were able to put off their past and become virtually different people when baptized.

As suggested in Doctrine and Covenants 20:30, justification is possible through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Paul stated it this way: “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:24–25; see also Mosiah 3:19; Moses 6:59).

■ Justification can also be defined as proving the validity of or vindicating the motivation or results of a certain act. It is in this light that the students should read Elder Bruce R. McConkie’s definition of justification in Supporting Statements B on page 50 of the student manual. A justified act, according to Elder McConkie, is one sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, that is, ratified and approved by the Holy Ghost. (See *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 50.)

### **C. Sanctification is a state of saintliness and purity.**

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 20:31: “And we know also that sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their might, mind, and strength.” *Sanctification* is a word that means holiness or the process by which a person becomes holy (purification from sin). The verse suggests that sanctification is a process and that it has at least two aspects:

First, sanctification is possible through the Atonement. By exercising faith, repenting, and accepting baptism, we become innocent of past transgressions.

Second, sanctification as a life-style is possible when we are prompted to love and serve God with all our might, mind, and strength. It results from spiritual growth nourished by the reception of the Holy Ghost. Helaman indicated that fasting, praying, waxing stronger in humility, and exercising faith resulted in the purifying and sanctifying of the heart (see Helaman 3:35). Read in Supporting Statements C on page 50 of the student manual the statement of President Brigham Young in which he declared that a sanctified person is one who is “perfectly submissive to God and His requirements” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 2:123).

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## **Conclusion**

Alma compressed the major theme of his preaching among the Nephites into this piercing challenge:

“And now behold, I ask of you my brethren of the church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?” (Alma 5:14.)

Alma’s questions ring effectively over the centuries to our time and circumstances and deserve our thoughtful answer. Alma’s questions should lead each Latter-day Saint into a quest to be truly born again and to live a Christlike life.

Chalkboard 1

NATURAL MAN		SPIRITUAL MAN	
<b>Galatians 5:16-21</b>	<b>Colossians 3:2-9</b>	<b>Galatians 5:22-25</b>	<b>Colossians 3:10-15</b>
Adultery	Fornication	Love	Mercies
Fornication	Uncleanness	Joy	Kindness
Uncleanness	Inordinate affection	Peace	Humbleness of mind
Lasciviousness	Evil concupiscence	Long-suffering	Meekness
Idolatry	Covetousness	Gentleness	Long-suffering
Witchcraft	Disobedience	Goodness	Forbearance of one
Hatred	Anger	Faith	another
Variance	Wrath	Meekness	Forgiveness
Emulations	Malice	Temperance	Charity
Wrath	Blasphemy	Walking in the Spirit	Peace
Strife	Filthy		Thankfulness
Seditions	communication		
Heresies	Lying		
Envyings			
Murders			
Drunkenness			
Revelings			



## Introduction

**Caution:** Exercise caution while discussing the doctrine of having our calling and election made sure. Avoid speculation. Use only the sources given here and in the student manual. Do *not* attempt in any way to discuss or answer questions about the second anointing.

■ To begin a discussion of eternal life, read the following anecdote about Elder LeGrand Richards and his wife, Sister Ina Richards:

“On their thirty-fifth wedding anniversary (1944), LeGrand said to Ina, ‘Mommy, what do you think we’ll be doing thirty-five million years from today?’ With typical spunk she answered, ‘Where’d you get such an idea? It makes me tired to think of it.’

“‘Well,’ he said, ‘you believe in eternal life. We’re told that time is measured only to man, and that with God there is no such a thing as time. It’s one eternal round, there’s no beginning and there’s no end. Now, Mother, if you believe that, you and I ought to be pretty well acquainted with each other thirty-five million years from today.’” (Lucile C. Tate, *LeGrand Richards: Beloved Apostle*, pp. 228–29.)

How do your students respond to Elder Richards’s sentiments? Were these sentiments presumptuous? Not at all. Why? Faithfulness and a study of the scriptures establish hope in eternal blessings.

■ Read 2 Timothy 4:7–8, in which Paul exclaims, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

Discuss how Paul’s statement relates to Doctrine and Covenants 76:56: “They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory.”

Point out that the crown, which represents the rewards of receiving a fulness of God’s glory, is attainable if we “fight a good fight,” finish the course, and keep the faith. This chapter details the nature of the promise of eternal life as well as the means by which it can be realized.

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Our quest for eternal life began in the premortal existence.

■ Read Moses 1:39. As God revealed the vastness of his creations, he taught Moses that His work and glory consist of bringing “to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” Write on the chalkboard

the words *immortality* and *eternal life*. Are they synonymous terms? How do they differ? Point out that *immortality* refers to the inseparable linking of body and spirit that is a result of the resurrection. Whereas the quality of our resurrection is profoundly affected by how we live and what we achieve in mortality, everyone who lives will be resurrected because of the Atonement (see 1 Corinthians 15:22). Point out that on the other hand, *eternal life* describes a quality of life attainable only within the framework of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated that “only those who obey the fulness of the gospel law will inherit eternal life. . . . Thus those who gain eternal life receive exaltation; they are sons of God, joint-heirs with Christ, members of the Church of the Firstborn; they overcome all things, have all power, and receive the fulness of the Father. They are gods.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 237.)

Read Titus 1:2–3 to show that eternal life was discussed and promised in the premortal existence.

■ In Romans 11:1–2 Paul outlined God’s relationship with the seed of Abraham. What did Paul mean when he said that God “foreknew” His people? Paul also indicated that some people were chosen in Christ “before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4). This statement suggests that many were called in the premortal world and chosen to receive special blessings contingent upon their faithfulness. These special blessings assume at least two dimensions.

First, wrote Elder McConkie, “this election to a chosen lineage is based on pre-existent worthiness and is thus made ‘according to the foreknowledge of God.’ (1 Pet. 1:2.)” Elder McConkie explained that “to bring to pass the salvation of the greatest possible number of his spirit children the Lord, in general, sends the most righteous and worthy spirits to earth through the lineage of Abraham and Jacob. This course is a manifestation of his grace or in other words his love, mercy, and condescension toward his children.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 216.) Thus, those born into the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have through the centuries heard the testimony of prophets, had access to the sacred scriptures and ordinances, and been at the forefront of the work of God upon the earth. (See Harold B. Lee, in Conference Report, Oct. 1973, pp. 7–8; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, p. 5.)

Second, “as part of this election, Abraham and others of the noble and great spirits were chosen before they were born for the particular missions assigned them in this life” (McConkie, *Mormon*

*Doctrine*, p. 216). Doctrine and Covenants 138:56 indicates that the noble and great ones “received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth in the due time of the Lord . . . for the salvation of the souls of men” (see also Abraham 3:22–23; Jeremiah 1:4–5).

**B. Those who come to mortality are called and elected to receive added blessings in this life.**

■ To be elected simply means to be chosen. Point out and discuss with the students that because of their faithfulness and obedience in the premortal life, they were elected to—

1. Receive a physical body of flesh and bones. This body is essential to eventually becoming like God and receiving a fulness of the life he enjoys. (See Supporting Statements B on p. 52 of the student manual.)

2. Receive the saving ordinances and be part of the family of Christ in mortality, that is, members of the Church of Jesus Christ.

**C. Making our calling and election sure is an important quest of mortal life.**

■ By virtue of our membership in the Church of Jesus Christ, we stand in a position through our obedience to receive eternal life, the Father’s greatest gift. What must we do to make our calling and election sure? Point out that the word *sure* means “will not fail; . . . can be relied or depended upon; . . . can be counted on to be or happen” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*, 2d college ed., s.v. “sure”). Read Supporting Statements C on page 52 of the student manual, and ask the students to identify the requirements for making our calling and election sure. Have a student list on

the chalkboard the requirements that are identified (Chalkboard 1 lists some possibilities). Then ask the students what rewards result from complete obedience (see Chalkboard 2). Emphasize that the obedience required to make our calling and election sure is not half-hearted; rather, it is total dedication to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**D. Those who make their calling and election sure inherit eternal life.**

■ Read Romans 8:17. What does it mean to be an heir? What does it mean to be a joint heir? Point out that both terms refer to the privilege of living with the Father and sharing with him the type of life he lives. As heirs we receive this privilege as a gift. (See Supporting Statements D on p. 52 of the student manual; Mosiah 5:15.)

■ What does the “more sure word of prophecy” have to do with making our calling and election sure? Read Doctrine and Covenants 131:5. Point out that we can in this life receive the witness of the Holy Spirit that we have satisfied God’s requirements and are entitled to eternal life in his presence (see Supporting Statements C on p. 52 of the student manual).

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## Conclusion

The principles of eternal life have been revealed to us in mortality by a loving Heavenly Father who is solicitous that his children receive a fulness of joy. The promise is extended to all that learn righteousness that they shall receive “peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

Chalkboard 1

REQUIREMENTS FOR MAKING  
CALLING AND ELECTION SURE

Hunger and thirst after righteousness  
Live by every word of God  
Be thoroughly proved by the Lord  
Be determined to serve God at all hazards  
Be devoted wholly to righteousness

Chalkboard 2

REWARDS OF OBEDIENCE

Calling and election made sure  
Inheriting the fulness of gospel rewards in the  
life to come (exaltation)



### Introduction

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- Ask the students the meaning of the word *sacrament*. The word originally meant “a result of consecration” or “a means of consecrating, dedicating, or securing by a religious sanction” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “sacrament”). *Sacrament* eventually came to designate a sacred religious observance.
- Discuss some reasons why many Latter-day Saints fail to participate fully in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. Since we can partake of the sacrament every week, many take the ordinance for granted or fail to prepare properly for it each time. External disturbances may prevent complete concentration on spiritual things during the sacrament. Some do not understand the true nature of the sacrament.

Almost all Latter-day Saints could better use the ordinance of the sacrament to help purge their souls in preparation for eternal life. President David O. McKay stated: “The partaking of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is one of the most sacred ordinances of the Church of Jesus Christ. Associated with it are principles fundamental in character building and essential to man’s advancement and exaltation in the kingdom of God. Too few communicants attach to this simple though sublime rite the importance and significance that it merits. Unfortunately, the *form* of worship is frequently an outward compliance without the true soul acknowledgment of its deep spiritual significance.” (*Gospel Ideals*, p. 71.)

### Ideas for Teaching

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#### A. Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament as a memorial ordinance.

- Throughout the history of this world, the Lord has used symbolic ordinances to teach and remind his chosen people of important gospel principles. What principle of the gospel is emphasized in the ordinance of the sacrament? (The atonement of Christ.) Before the coming of Christ, were any ordinances or sacred observances performed to remind the Israelites of the coming atoning sacrifice? “To replace the ordinance of sacrifice (which pointed the attention of the saints forward to the coming sacrifice of the Son of God), our Lord during his mortal ministry taught the ordinance of the *sacrament* (to point the attention of his saints, after his death, back to the great atoning sacrifice which he had wrought)” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 660). Use Chalkboard 1 to

further illustrate how the Atonement was taught through important ordinances both before and after Christ’s mortal ministry. Today, the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is a sacred memorial service to commemorate the sacrifice of the Son of God.

- Read Matthew 26:26–29, in which the Savior taught the Twelve about the sacrament at the Last Supper. Read and discuss Luke 22:15–21 and 1 Corinthians 11:24–25. Point out that the emblems of the sacrament are taken in remembrance of the body and blood of the Lord.
- Share selected scriptures from Doctrinal Outline A 2 on page 53 of the student manual to further demonstrate that the sacrament was instituted in *remembrance* of Christ’s atoning sacrifice.

#### B. When we partake of the sacrament, we make a covenant with God.

- Read and discuss Doctrine and Covenants 20:68. Emphasize that individuals need to be taught the meaning of the sacrament before it can have significance for them. Missionaries should teach prospective members about the sacrament before baptism, and parents should teach their children.
- Review the definition of a gospel covenant. (A sacred agreement, or promise, between God and man.) What covenant do we renew when we partake of the sacrament? (Baptism.) How are the covenants of baptism and of the sacrament the same? As a class member reads the sacramental prayers in Doctrine and Covenants 20:77 and 79, have another student list on the chalkboard the elements of each prayer. What do we promise to do when we partake of the emblems? What does the Father promise us? You may also wish to share the comments of President Joseph Fielding Smith and Elder Bruce R. McConkie in Supporting Statements B on page 54 of the student manual (see Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:344–45; McConkie, *The Promised Messiah*, p. 386).
- How often should we partake of the sacrament? The Lord revealed, “It is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus” (D&C 20:75). The righteous Saints in the Book of Mormon also met together often to fast, pray, partake of the sacrament, and speak with each other about the welfare of their souls (see Moroni 6:5–6).

Sacrament meetings were held in the early days of the Church (see D&C 46:4–5) but not necessarily always on Sunday. In Doctrine and Covenants 59:9–10 the Lord revealed, “And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world,

thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day; for verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High." "Sacraments" include the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which we partake of in sacrament meeting. Members of the Church are commanded to attend sacrament meeting and partake of the sacrament.

Elder L. Tom Perry testified of the importance of regular sacrament meeting attendance when he said: "Weekly we should each seek a personal experience, a closeness to our Lord and Savior, which, when remembered each week, will help us to become more like Him. . . .

"I've always been impressed with the renewed strength and dedication which come from weekly participating in the sacrament." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1984, p. 22; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, p. 19.)

### **C. The bread and the water are important symbols.**

■ Point out that the Savior often used metaphors in his teachings and parables. What was Jesus suggesting when he declared, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger" (John 6:35)? What did he mean when he called himself the source of "living water" (John 4:10; see also vv. 11–14)? The Savior taught by these metaphors that his life, mission, atonement, and doctrines are the source of eternal life. Never were his references to bread and water intended literally. The bread and water used in the sacrament are symbolic representations that teach us and remind us of the Atonement. Read Mark 14:20–25 in the Joseph Smith Translation to identify the symbolic meaning of these emblems.

■ Perhaps more than any other food and drink, bread and water represent sustenance for the human body. But partaking of the bread and water of the sacrament provides no purposeful sustenance for the body. If the sacrament is not designed to sustain the body, then what is to be sustained? Read 3 Nephi 20:8–9. Emphasize that the emblems of the sacrament are for the sake of the *soul*, not of the body. The Savior promised that if we partake of the sacrament with fullness of heart and purity of intent, our soul "shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled" (3 Nephi 20:8).

■ Discuss why we now use water rather than wine for the sacrament. The issue is clarified in the headnote to Doctrine and Covenants 27 and in Doctrine and Covenants 27:2.

### **D. Standards and safeguards are given regarding those who would partake of the sacrament.**

■ Write on the chalkboard the following statement: "The sacrament should not be partaken of unworthily." Ask why the statement is true; read 1 Corinthians 11:27 and 3 Nephi 18:29. A person who partakes of the sacrament worthily nourishes his soul. A person who partakes unworthily brings damnation to his soul because his spiritual progression is damned, or halted. Partaking of the sacrament unworthily is referred to in the scriptures as crucifying the Savior anew (see 1 Corinthians 11:27). Note the spiritual consequences of partaking of the sacrament unworthily (see 1 Corinthians 11:30).

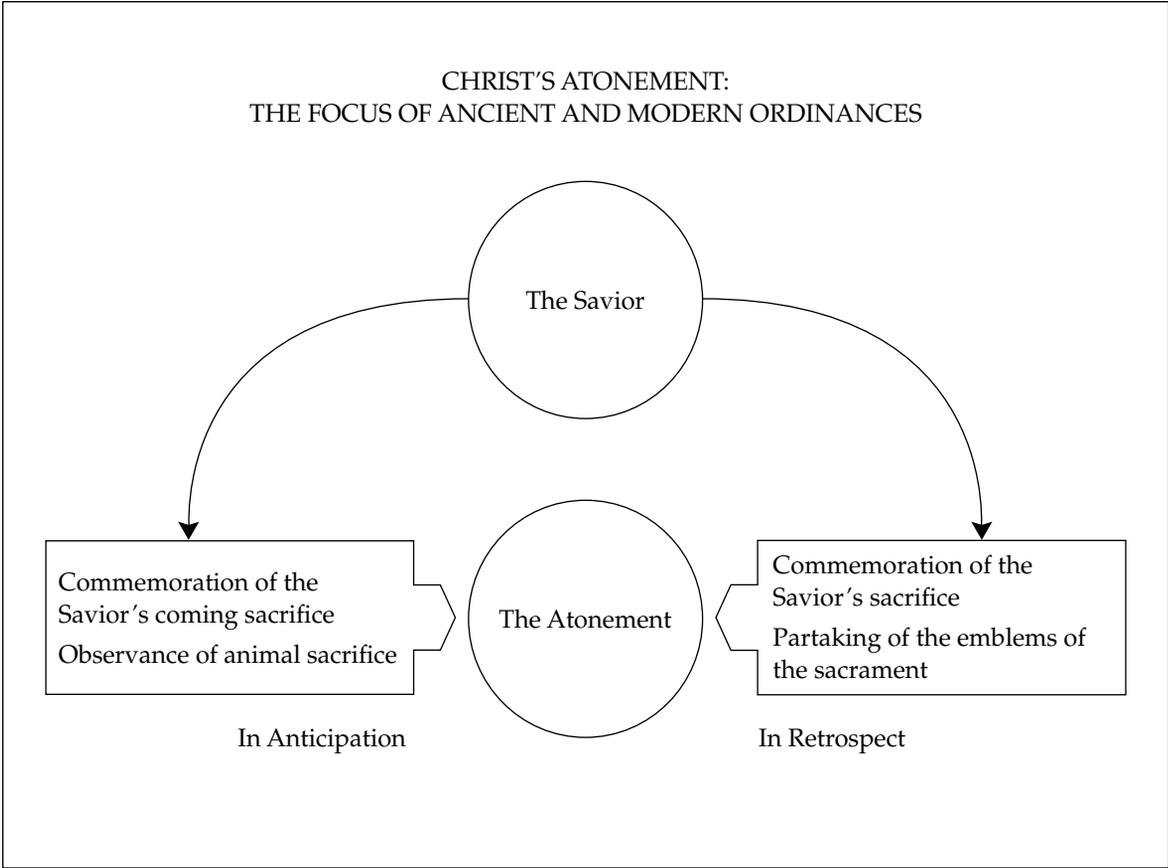
■ What is the individual's responsibility for determining his own worthiness to partake of the sacrament? Read 1 Corinthians 11:28. Share President George Albert Smith's criteria for worthiness found in Supporting Statements D on page 55 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Apr. 1908, p. 35).

*Caution:* Do not unnecessarily discourage your students from partaking of the sacrament. If a student wonders whether he should partake of the sacrament, he should ask his bishop. A person who comes to sacrament meeting with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, sincerely trying to overcome his weaknesses, is worthy to partake of the sacrament unless he is guilty of sins that need to be confessed to his bishop. Elder Melvin J. Ballard made this suggestion: "We want every Latter-day Saint to come to the sacrament table because it is the place for self-investigation, for self-inspection, where we may learn to rectify our course and to make right our own lives, bringing ourselves into harmony with the teachings of the Church and with our brethren and sisters" (in Bryant S. Hinckley, *Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin Joseph Ballard*, p. 150).

## **Conclusion**

Challenge the students to make the sacrament a more meaningful part of their worship experience: one way is to concentrate on the sacrament wholeheartedly as it is being administered to the congregation. Through the sacrament, we can develop closer communion with Deity and put our lives in harmony with the will of God.

Chalkboard 1





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# The Foreordination of Covenant Israel and Their Responsibilities

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## Chapter 21

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### Introduction

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- Define the terms *Jew*, *Gentile*, and *Israel* using the dictionary in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible.
- Conduct a role play of the hiring of people who have acquired the necessary knowledge and have developed the necessary skills to qualify for such positions as cardiac surgeon, chemical engineer, corporate lawyer, or presidential cabinet member. Point out that certain knowledge and skills are required for certain jobs; without them, the job cannot be done. Liken this temporal preparation to the premortal preparation of the family of Israel, who received a premortal calling to take the gospel to all mankind.

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### Ideas for Teaching

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#### **A. The people of Israel were a distinct and noble people in the premortal existence.**

- Read in Supporting Statements A on page 56 of the student manual President Harold B. Lee's statement concerning premortal Israel's stature (see Conference Report, Oct. 1973, pp. 7–8; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, p. 5). Read the scripture references from those in Doctrinal Outline A 1 on page 56 of the student manual.

#### **B. God reestablished his covenant with Israel in mortality.**

- Abraham was called before this world was created to be a leader during his mortal existence (see Abraham 3:22–23). He was the father of Isaac, who was the father of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Even though Abraham was the father of many nations (he had many sons), it is through the lineage of Israel that the Lord blesses all nations. The covenant God made with Abraham pertains to all members of the house of Israel and is known as the Abrahamic covenant. Read Genesis 17:3–9. List on the chalkboard the promises God makes as part of the Abrahamic covenant. Read in Supporting Statements B on page 57 of the student manual President Joseph Fielding Smith's explanation of the ways in which all nations of the earth will be blessed through Abraham's seed (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:246). Point out that the Lord has revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith that

Abraham's seed will also be granted the blessing of eternal increase if they are faithful in this life (see D&C 132:28–31).

- If the purpose of earth life is to prepare for exaltation, what would be the greatest gifts God could give a chosen people? What blessings did covenant Israel obtain as a result of their premortal righteousness? List the following blessings on the chalkboard, and discuss them:

1. Prophets
2. Scriptures
3. The gift of the Holy Ghost
4. Priesthood and priesthood ordinances

Explain that these blessings and their attendant responsibilities came to Israel through the Abrahamic covenant (see Abraham 2:6–11). God's priesthood, covenants, and gospel were the blessings promised to Abraham's seed and are also the blessings given to covenant Israel. Read in Supporting Statements B on page 57 of the student manual President Joseph Fielding Smith's statement about the duration of the Abrahamic covenant (see *The Way to Perfection*, p. 96).

- The Abrahamic covenant was renewed with Isaac and Jacob; you may wish to discuss the scriptures listed in Doctrinal Outline B 3 on page 56 of the student manual. The chosen people are called the house of Israel after Israel, a name given to Jacob later in his life. Read Alma 7:25 to show the preeminent role of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The blessings promised to the house of Israel are often called the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, terminology we use today to describe the blessings promised to a couple sealed in the temple.

#### **C. Covenant Israel today means anyone who covenants to accept and live the gospel.**

- During the ministry of Christ in mortality, the gospel was taken to the members of the house of Israel, or the literal descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Matthew 15:24). After the Savior's resurrection, the Apostle Peter was shown in a vision that the time had come to take the gospel to the Gentiles (see Acts 10). Since then, those not of the blood of Israel who accept the gospel by repentance and baptism are accepted into the house of Israel by adoption and are also heirs to all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant (see Doctrinal Outline C 3 on p. 56 and Supporting Statements C on pp. 57–58 of the student manual).

**D. As God's covenant people, Israel has been given a special charge and commission.**

■ Read Abraham 2:6–11, and identify the responsibilities of covenant Israel. (To bear this ministry and priesthood unto all nations of the earth.) Consider Elder John A. Widtsoe's statement in Supporting Statements D on page 58 of the student manual about our responsibility as God's covenant people (see *Evidences and Reconciliations*, p. 400).

■ If we fail to carry the gospel to all nations, are we still considered a chosen and a covenant people? President Spencer W. Kimball gave us a three-fold charge to proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, and redeem the dead (see Conference Report, Apr. 1981, p. 3; or *Ensign*, May 1981, p. 5). How does this challenge enable us to fulfill our responsibility as covenant Israel to bless the families of the earth?

■ Point out that Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33 contain the patriarchal blessings given to the twelve sons (or tribes) of Jacob (Israel). Read and discuss part of the blessing given to Joseph as recorded in Deuteronomy 33:17. List the following symbols on the chalkboard, and explain them:

1. Firstling = firstborn
2. Bullock = domestic ox
3. Unicorn = wild ox
4. Horns = power
5. Pushing the people = gathering Israel

This verse is being fulfilled in this, the last dispensation, as Joseph steps forward to claim his birthright as the firstborn son, which includes the responsibility of the priesthood. It is by the power of the priesthood that Israel will be gathered and that the saving ordinances will be administered under the direction of the tribe of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh). The ox as the symbol of work, strength, power, and endurance fits latter-day Ephraim, who must carry the heavy burden and tremendous responsibility of taking the gospel to the world.

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## Conclusion

Why have the prophets continually urged the youth of the Church—especially the young men—to prepare themselves to serve missions to the nations of the earth? Ask the students to consider what they as Latter-day Saints are doing individually to carry the gospel to Heavenly Father's children.

## Introduction

- What is meant by *apostasy*? Write on the chalkboard the students' definitions. Point out that the Greek word *apostasia* means a revolt or defection, in this case from the Church. Apostasy is either rejection of the authority of the Church and the Lord's legitimate representatives, or rejection of the doctrines and ordinances accepted by the Church as binding upon its members, or both. In any case the apostate often stands in opposition to the Church and is in confrontation with it. (See Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 42–46.)
- Refer to Chalkboard 1, which illustrates Catholic, Protestant, and Latter-day Saint views about the continuity of the church that Jesus organized.

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. The Savior organized his church and taught saving principles and ordinances during his earthly ministry.

- What evidence do we have that Jesus organized a church during his lifetime? Point out that *church* is defined as a religious organization with some form of administrative authority. *Church* is also defined as a body of believers having common beliefs, teachings, creeds, and rites. (See *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, s.v. "church.") With these definitions in mind, examine the evidence that Jesus organized a church. Two Apostles wrote anciently that in the meridian of time, Jesus chose Apostles (see Matthew 10:1–10) and Seventies (see Luke 10:1, 17). Apostles in the latter days have also written about Jesus' organizing his church in his own day (see Supporting Statements A on p. 59 of the student manual).

Along with an elemental church structure, Jesus also emphasized certain teachings and ordinances that would mark discipleship in his Church. On the day of Pentecost, Peter declared that faith in Christ, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost are necessary steps in joining the Savior's church and receiving the promised blessings (see Acts 2:37–38). The Savior taught during his ministry that certain ethical and moral requirements are also marks of discipleship (see Luke 14:26; John 8:31; John 13:35).

- Steady growth led to rapid expansion of Church organization. But growth was not the only factor: revelation unquestionably led to the structural growth of the Church.

Refer to Chalkboard 2, which illustrates the Church organization as a perfectly formed

building. Point out that each Church office is mentioned in a scriptural passage. Have the students read 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 2:19–21; 4:11–14. What office in the priesthood appears central in each of these references? (Apostle.) Why was this office, as well as the others, so critical? Paul taught that the Church's structure existed to bring perfection to the Saints, for the work of the ministry, and to bring unity to the Church (see Ephesians 4:12–13).

### B. A great apostasy from the Savior's church was foretold.

- Study Isaiah 24:5 and Amos 8:11–12. What do these two Old Testament scriptures teach about the Apostasy? Show how they are classic definitions of apostasy. They prophesy that the ordinances will be changed and the covenants broken and that the people will experience a famine of hearing the word of the Lord (see Supporting Statements B on p. 59 of the student manual).

- Many evidences suggest that while the Apostles continued preaching and testifying of Jesus, they knew a general apostasy would take place. Write on the chalkboard the following references, and allow the students time to read them silently:

*Acts 20:29–30*. "Grievous wolves" will enter the Church, and men will speak "perverse things."

*2 Thessalonians 2:1–4*. A "falling away" will precede Christ's second coming.

*2 Timothy 4:3–4*. "They will not endure sound doctrine," and "they shall turn away their ears from the truth . . . unto fables."

*2 Peter 2:1–3*. "False prophets" and "false teachers . . . shall bring in damnable heresies," and "many shall follow their pernicious ways."

Discuss the warnings of the coming apostasy as Paul spoke of them.

### C. A universal apostasy occurred after the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

- Point out that a great burden to the Apostles was their knowledge that the Apostasy was occurring even as they ministered. As Paul traveled from city to city preaching the gospel, he occasionally communicated with members he had previously taught. In his epistles he lamented over those who were removed from the truth and had turned away from his teachings. Where there had been unity, there was division and contention. Paul constantly faced challenges from false leaders who denied his apostolic calling and the legitimacy of his teachings and advice. Read Galatians 1:6–8; 1 Corinthians 1:10–12; 11:18–19; 2 Timothy 1:15.

The apostasy that Paul saw attacking the stability of the Church gradually became universal and complete. For further evidence of the universal nature of the Apostasy, read several statements from Supporting Statements C on pages 59–60 of the student manual.

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## Conclusion

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The foretold apostasy that enveloped the world in darkness ended when the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820. Now once again Apostles walk the earth, having a divine commission to take the gospel to all nations.

Chalkboard 1

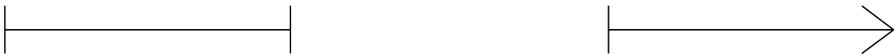
View 1: Unbroken line of authority, doctrine, truth



View 2: Partial apostasy—corrected by the Reformation

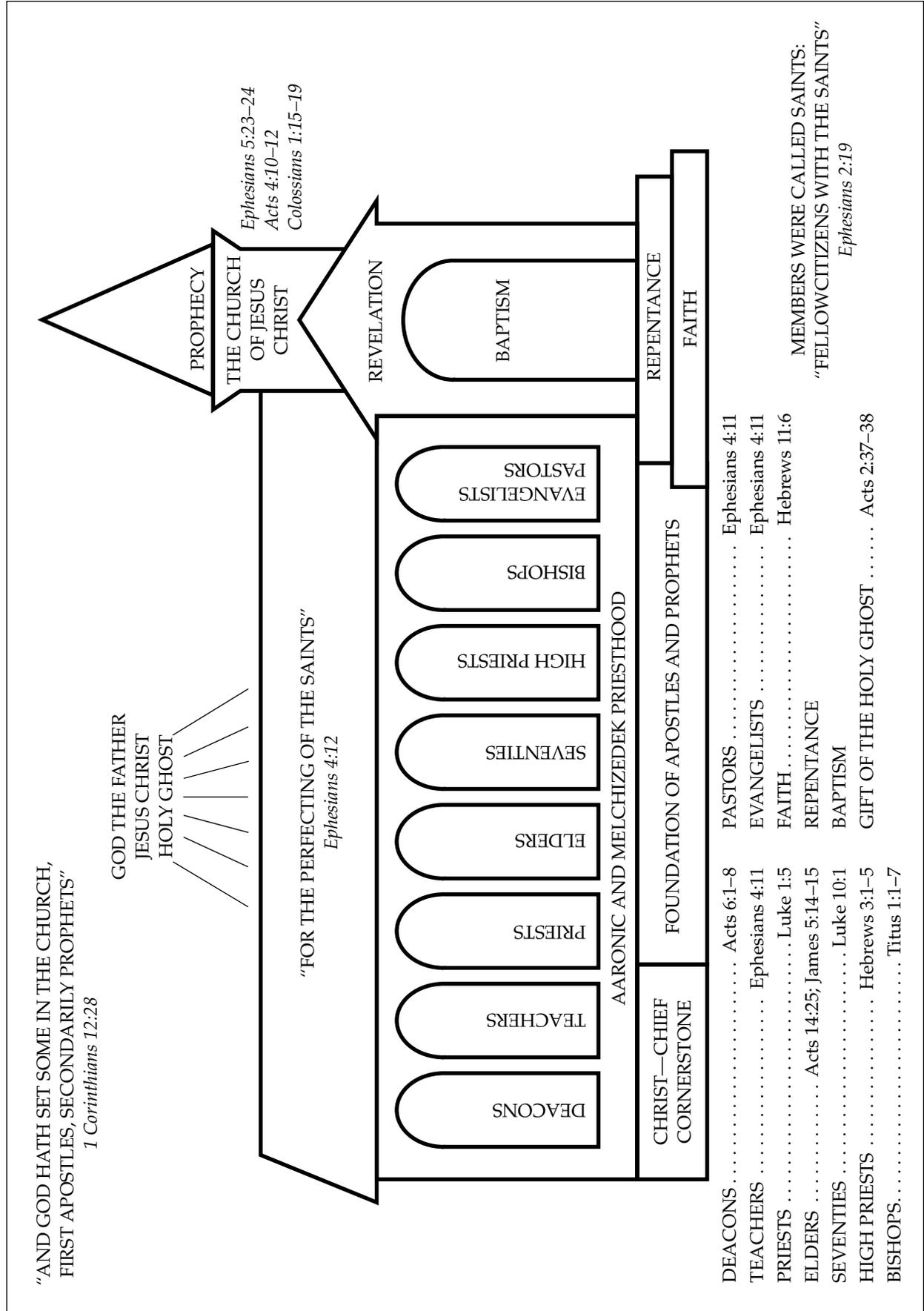


View 3: Complete apostasy—restoration of structure, authority, doctrines, ordinances





Chalkboard 2





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# The Restoration of the Gospel in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times

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## Introduction

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■ Ask for a definition of the word *restoration*. To restore means to make restitution of anything previously taken away or lost. The Restoration, as we use the term in the Church, means the restitution of the gospel, the priesthood, the ordinances, and the Lord's church itself upon the earth after they were all taken away.

■ Ask for a definition of the word *dispensation*. "Whenever the Lord reveals the plan of salvation anew so that men do not have to rely solely upon prior dispensings from heaven of the same glories and wonders, it is called a dispensation of the gospel. This may or may not involve a restoration of keys and powers and priesthoods." (Bruce R. McConkie, "This Final Glorious Gospel Dispensation," *Ensign*, Apr. 1980, pp. 21–22.)

We are now living in the last dispensation upon the earth before the second coming of Christ. The Prophet Joseph Smith declared, "It is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time" (D&C 128:18). Doctrine and Covenants 128:20–21 contain the Prophet's list of heavenly beings who returned to restore powers and keys of the priesthood for this dispensation.

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. The great apostasy after the meridian dispensation necessitated a restoration of the gospel in the last days.

■ What important differences exist between the dispensation of the meridian of time and the dispensation of the fulness of times? Regarding the dispensation of the meridian of time, Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: "Our Lord's mortal ministry took place in the *meridian of time*. . . . The *meridian* is the middle or high point of the day; the sun passes the meridian at noon. . . . Since Christ lived, ministered, and worked out the atonement in time's meridian, such era was truly the high point of history." (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 486.) Regarding the dispensation of the fulness of times, Elder McConkie explained: "We live in the dispensation

of the fulness of times. That is to say, we live in the dispensation of the fulness of dispensations. . . .

"All of the rivers of the past have or will flow into the ocean of the present; already all of the keys and powers have fallen to our lot; in due course all of the doctrines and truths will be manifest to us." ("This Final Glorious Gospel Dispensation," p. 22.) Why do we talk of two different dispensations instead of only one? (The Great Apostasy took place after the dispensation of the meridian of time, thus necessitating a new dispensation during which the gospel could be restored.)

■ Read and discuss the scripture references in Doctrinal Outline A on page 61 of the student manual. Point out that Isaiah saw the conditions of the earth prior to and including the time of Joseph Smith. Show how the Prophet Joseph Smith's description of conditions in his day coincides with Isaiah's prophecies (see Isaiah 24:5; 29:13).

### B. Ancient prophets foretold the restoration of the gospel in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

■ On the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter testified of the restoration of all things. Read Peter's prophecy in Acts 3:21, and emphasize that Peter testified that the restoration would take place at a future time, that all of the prophets beginning with Adam knew and prophesied about the latter-day restoration, and that the latter-day restoration would take place before the Lord's second coming. Share the comment by President Wilford Woodruff about each of the prophets having his eye on this dispensation (see Supporting Statements B on p. 62 of the student manual; or *Journal of Discourses*, 13:324). The Prophet Joseph Smith also taught this same idea: "The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 231).

### C. The dispensation of the fulness of times began with the appearance of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith.

■ Write on the chalkboard the word *theophany*, and ask for a definition. A theophany is a manifestation or appearance of God to man. Ask the students to compare the theophany experienced by Joseph Smith with others described in the scriptures.

■ You may wish to show the video *The Restoration* (item no. 54742).

■ What truths were revealed in the First Vision?

Discuss Elder James E. Faust's answers to that question:

"1. The existence of God our Father as a personal being, and proof that man was made in the image of God.

"2. That Jesus is a personage, separate and distinct from the Father.

"3. That Jesus Christ is declared by the Father to be his Son.

"4. That Jesus was the conveyor of revelation as taught in the Bible.

"5. The promise of James to ask of God for wisdom was fulfilled.

"6. The reality of an actual being from an unseen world who tried to destroy Joseph Smith.

"7. That there was a falling away from the Church established by Jesus Christ—Joseph was told not to join any of the sects, for they taught the doctrines of men.

"8. Joseph Smith became a witness for God and his Son, Jesus Christ." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1984, pp. 92–93; or *Ensign*, May 1984, p. 68.)

**D. The restoration of the gospel has commenced in this dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness of times.**

■ Read Revelation 14:6–7. Was only one angel, or heavenly messenger, involved in the Restoration of the everlasting gospel? Read Doctrine and Covenants 27:5–12; 110:11–16; 128:18–21, and list on the chalkboard some of the heavenly messengers who appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith. If

possible, also list what truth or key was restored by each of these messengers.

■ In 1918 President Joseph F. Smith received a glorious vision of the redemption of the dead (see D&C 138). In the vision he beheld a great assembly of righteous dead, among whom were some of the leaders of this dispensation. Point out that these leaders were among the noble and great leaders in the premortal spirit world (see D&C 138:53–56). Emphasize that your students were also foreordained to come to the earth at this time, and that each has important assignments from the Lord.

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## Conclusion

Many of our beloved hymns are anthems of the Restoration. Ask the students to name some of these hymns. Three of the most popular were written by William W. Phelps, an early associate of the Prophet Joseph Smith. They are "The Spirit of God" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 2); "Now Let Us Rejoice" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 3); and "Praise to the Man" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 27). Other Restoration hymns are "The Morning Breaks" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 1), "The Glorious Gospel Light Has Shone" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 283), and "See, the Mighty Angel Flying" (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 330). You may wish to review the words to some of these hymns and to sing one of them at the conclusion of the discussion. Remind the students that "the song of the righteous is a prayer unto [the Lord], and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads" (D&C 25:12).

### Introduction

Early on Sunday morning, 24 October 1841, Orson Hyde climbed the Mount of Olives and found a suitable place at its summit. There, “in solemn silence, with pen, ink, and paper,” he “wrote and delivered the prayer dedicating the Holy Land for the return of the Jews and for the building of a temple in the future” (Howard H. Barron, *Orson Hyde*, p. 128). What historical events preceded Elder Hyde’s dedication? Why had he been sent to Palestine by the Prophet Joseph Smith? How important to a complete understanding of the gospel is an understanding of the scattering and the gathering of Israel?

### Ideas for Teaching

#### A. Ancient Israel was scattered throughout the earth because the people rejected God’s covenant.

■ Moses is honored today by all Israelites. Under his leadership, several hundred years of Israelite bondage ended, the tribes of Israel were united in their exodus, and a national identity emerged. Through Moses the Lord promised Israel, “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests [and kings], and an holy nation” (Exodus 19:6).

Have the students read Deuteronomy 28:9–10, 13 and Leviticus 26:13–16. What conditions did the Lord impose upon Israel to guarantee their survival as a nation and a people? (Faithfulness, obedience, and willingness to hearken to God.) Have the students read Deuteronomy 4:23–27; 28:25, 37, 63–65; 1 Nephi 10:12–13. Are the reasons given for the scattering consistent with the consequences the Lord warned of if Israel failed to meet the conditions God had set them for nationhood?

Refer to Chalkboard 1, which illustrates four major scatterings of the house of Israel that the Lord has told us about (there may have been other scatterings as well as groups being led away that the Lord has not told us about). Reinforce your discussion of the phases of the scattering by referring to Chalkboard 1.

In 721 B.C. the Northern Kingdom was taken captive by Assyria. Read 2 Kings 15:29 and 17:6–18, 23. What justification is given in the scriptures for the destruction of the Northern Kingdom? Israel had walked after the statutes of the heathen, burned incense in all the high places, and served idols. Israel would not believe in God and had rejected his covenants and commandments (see 1 Nephi 22:3–5; Supporting Statements A on pp. 64–65 of the student manual).

■ The Babylonian captivity occurred over a period of years. Have the students read 2 Kings 24:10–16; 25:1,

7, 11; 1 Nephi 10:3. Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians during the reign of King Jehoiachin (about 600 B.C.). The temple was pillaged, captives were carried into Babylon, and Zedekiah was enthroned as a Babylonian vassal to replace Jehoiachin. Within two years Judah was crushed, Jerusalem’s walls were toppled, the temple was destroyed, and thousands were deported to Babylon.

■ To what extent was Lehi’s family a part of the Babylonian scattering? At times the scattering of Israel was the result of invasion and captivity, but at other times the Lord removed the righteous from a wicked environment. Point out that the Nephites considered their colony a branch broken from the main trunk of Israel (see 1 Nephi 15:12; 19:24; Supporting Statements A on pp. 64–65 of the student manual).

■ In the meridian dispensation, the Savior prophesied that Jerusalem would be destroyed and the Jews would be scattered. Read Luke 21:20–24, noting specific details of the prophecy:

1. Jerusalem would be surrounded by armies.
2. It would be a time of great distress and wrath.
3. The inhabitants of Jerusalem would fall by the sword and be led away captive.
4. Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles.

Jacob testified that these calamities would come upon Jerusalem because the Jews will “stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified” (2 Nephi 10:5; see also vv. 3–4, 6).

Jesus’ words were completely fulfilled.

The following information can be used to provide any supporting historical data you may want to share with your class:

This phase of destruction began with a revolt against Rome in A.D. 64. Roman legions under Titus finally conquered Jerusalem in September of A.D. 70. The last of the Zealot revolutionaries held out in the fortress of Masada until A.D. 73. When Roman troops finally breached the fortifications at Masada, they discovered that nearly one thousand defenders had taken their own lives rather than be captured.

Emperor Hadrian’s attempt to build a Roman city, Aelia Capitolina, on the ruins of Jerusalem resulted in another Jewish revolt in A.D. 132. Led by a charismatic leader named Simon bar Koseba (bar Kochba), the rebels were momentarily able to free much of Judah and the city of Jerusalem from Roman control. The Romans returned in strength, however, and reconquered the land until only a small area around Jerusalem remained free. In A.D. 135 bar Koseba and all his men were killed. A Roman military colony replaced Jerusalem, and the land was renamed Palestine. In every sense, the prophecy of Jesus had

been fulfilled. (See Harry Thomas Frank, *Discovering the Biblical World*, pp. 268–75.)

**B. Through his prophets God promised to gather scattered Israel once again.**

■ Throughout the centuries Israel has been scattered throughout all nations. The gathering, then, is from all the earth. (See Jeremiah 31:8; 32:37; Deuteronomy 28:64–65; 2 Nephi 10:8–9.)

According to the Old Testament, what will the spiritual condition of scattered Israel be when the gathering begins? A spiritual rejuvenation will take place among the house of Israel. The following scriptures detail this spiritual awakening:

*Deuteronomy 4:29–31.* They will be seeking the Lord and turning to him.

*Jeremiah 50:4–5.* In humility they will seek God and Zion, striving to be a covenant people.

*Ezekiel 11:17–20.* Detestable things will be put away; they will walk in the statutes and keep the commandments.

■ Have the students read the following scriptures silently and then determine to what extent acceptance of Christ and his gospel is involved in the gathering of Israel:

*2 Nephi 10:7–8.* The Jews will begin to believe in Christ.

*2 Nephi 9:2.* They will be restored to the true Church.

*2 Nephi 25:15–16.* They will be persuaded to believe in Christ.

*2 Nephi 30:5–7.* Both Lamanites and Jews will begin to believe in Christ.

*1 Nephi 10:12–14.* Israel will come to a knowledge of the true Messiah.

In the fullest sense, as Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, the gathering takes place when Christ and his gospel are accepted: “The gathering of Israel . . . consists, first, of receiving the restored gospel and of joining The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Next it consists of assembling to whatever places are appointed for the worship of the Lord and the receipt of the fulness of his blessings.” (*The Millennial Messiah*, p. 198.)

■ Nephite prophets taught the people that they were a part of the scattered remnant and that the gathering prophesied in scriptures referred to them (see Alma 46:23, 27; 2 Nephi 20:20–23).

Write the following scripture references on the chalkboard: Isaiah 10:20–22; 11:11; Jeremiah 23:1–4. Read the scriptures as a class. Has God promised that every descendant of Israel would be gathered? Would such a gathering violate the concepts of free agency and personal accountability? What does it mean when we read that a remnant will return? Is it possible that many in Israel may choose not to be gathered? Share Elder McConkie’s statement: “The gathering of Israel results from the Holy Spirit of God working in the hearts of contrite souls. ‘Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel’ Isaiah acclaimed. (Isa. 27:12.) Converts come

one at a time; people are baptized as individuals; every person must make his own decision.” (*Millennial Messiah*, p. 201.)

■ What role does the Church have today in the gathering? Read 3 Nephi 21:26–29. Preaching the gospel is the beginning of the gathering of the house of Israel. The restored Church is an ensign, or a banner, around which scattered Israel gathers. Read the statements by Elder Bruce R. McConkie and President Spencer W. Kimball in Supporting Statements B on page 66 of the student manual (see McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 228; Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, pp. 438–39). Elder McConkie also wrote of the role missionaries have in the gathering of the Jews: “Israel is to be gathered by the power of God, by the authority of the priesthood, by the preaching of the gospel, by the servants of the Lord going forth two by two into all the nations of the earth. The Lord’s sheep hear his voice, and they follow him, and another they will not follow. Israel is gathered by the missionaries of the kingdom.” (*Millennial Messiah*, p. 201.)

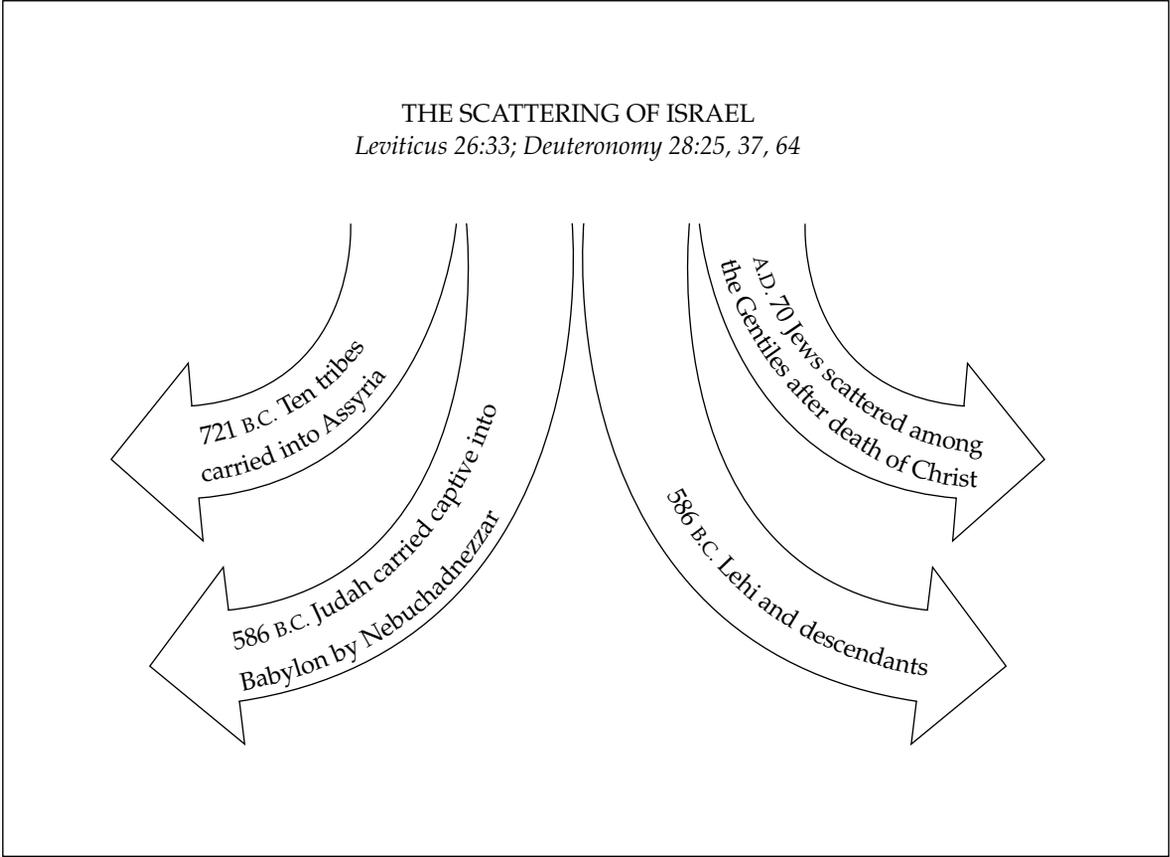
■ Are the Gentiles part of the gathering? Gentiles become heirs to the promises of Israel by adoption through the waters of baptism. When they join the Church, they become “fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). They gather to the wards and stakes of modern Israel. Read President Kimball’s statement on this point in Supporting Statements B on page 66 of the student manual (see *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, pp. 438–39; see also 1 Nephi 14:2; 3 Nephi 21:6, 22).

■ The spiritual gathering into the Church is a gathering that is now progressing, as evidenced by the growth of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The gathering will also be a geographical one: the tribe of Joseph will be gathered to America to receive their land inheritance, and the tribe of Judah and part of the lost tribes will gather to the Middle East (see Ether 13:3–11).

## Conclusion

The doctrine of the scattering and the gathering has at least three important elements. First, we see historically God’s dealings with the house of Israel as a consequence of their violation of covenants, which led to the dispersion. Second, the gathering is an ongoing movement evidenced today by the return of thousands of Jews to Palestine and the creation of the state of Israel. Even more significant is the spiritual gathering of millions into the restored Church and their identification as members of the house of Israel. Third, our individual role in the gathering includes our responsibility to carry the gospel message to the world and to provide an ensign around which modern Israel might rally.

Chalkboard 1





### Introduction

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This chapter is closely related to chapter 26, “The Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood.” Reviewing both chapters together may give you some ideas for your lesson presentations.

■ Share the following story by Elder Paul H. Dunn to illustrate the importance of bearing the priesthood:

“Just the other day another father told me of a great experience. He said he was sitting in his living room, visiting with his family late Sunday afternoon, when his little eight-year-old son asked him this question, ‘Daddy, are you going to sacrament meeting tonight?’ The father replied, ‘Yes, son.’ The son then asked, ‘Why?’

“And while the father contemplated what profound answer he might give to the question, the little seven-year-old sister who was sitting also at the father’s knee said very quickly and simply, ‘Because he is a priesthood man, that’s why.’ The father could not have been more proud.

“And may I say tonight, brethren, that more important than being a Princeton man, a Yale man, a Harvard man, or any other kind of man, is the honor of being a ‘priesthood man.’ That is the great lesson I have learned tonight again as I have listened to the testimony of President McKay, who has exemplified these very principles in deed.” (In Conference Report, Apr. 1967, pp. 92–93.)

What does being a “priesthood man” mean to your students? Why would it be more important to be a “priesthood man” than a Yale man or a Harvard man? Tell the students that this chapter should help increase their understanding of the priesthood.

### Ideas for Teaching

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#### A. The priesthood is divine power and authority.

■ Ask the students to brainstorm with you to make a list of everything they know about the priesthood. List on the chalkboard the students’ comments. Make sure the list includes the official title of the priesthood: “the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God” (D&C 107:3).

Now ask for a definition of the word *priesthood*. After a brief discussion, read President Joseph F. Smith’s definition given in Supporting Statements A on page 67 of the student manual (see *Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 139–40).

■ Read Matthew 16:19 and Helaman 10:6–7. Discuss the meaning of the sealing power of the priesthood. Ask the students how they would feel to know the Lord trusted them as he did Nephi, to know that whatever they asked would be

according to the will of God. Point out that this blessing is ultimately possible with the priesthood if we are completely obedient and if we seek to do only our Heavenly Father’s will.

■ Ask the students to list everything that will be eternally binding in the heavens when it has been bound on earth by priesthood authority. (All priesthood ordinances.) You may want to discuss Doctrine and Covenants 132:7.

#### B. Priesthood authority is conferred only by the laying on of hands.

■ Pull out your checkbook, and ask what would be required if a student wanted to use your checkbook legally. You would have to authorize him to use it, and you both would need to fill out signature cards so he could sign your checks. Discuss the eventual consequences if he signed and used your checks without the proper authorization.

Just as certain things must be done before we can legally use a checking account, certain things must also occur before we can legitimately use the priesthood. The priesthood can be conferred upon righteous males who are members of the Church only by the laying on of hands by a worthy priesthood bearer who is authorized to perform the ordinance.

Develop the following scripture chain concerning the conferring of the priesthood:

*Hebrews 5:4.* A man must be called of God, as was Aaron.

*Exodus 28:1.* Aaron was called by revelation through a prophet.

*Alma 6:1.* Ordination occurs by the laying on of hands according to the order of God.

*Articles of Faith 1:5.* All priesthood holders must be called of God by prophecy and by the laying on of hands.

*Doctrine and Covenants 20:73.* A person who has the priesthood is called of God and has authority from Jesus Christ.

#### C. There are two orders of priesthood.

■ Read and discuss with the students Doctrine and Covenants 107:6.

Read Doctrine and Covenants 107:18–20, and discuss the keys each order of the priesthood holds. You may also want to refer to Supporting Statements C on page 68 of the student manual to help explain the different keys of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods.

#### D. The work of God is performed by the power of the priesthood.

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 64:29, and explain that priesthood holders are agents of the Lord,

given full power to act in his name. Ask what God's primary work is; refer to Moses 1:39. Using Doctrinal Outline D on page 67 of the student manual, list four general areas in which priesthood holders help our Heavenly Father perform his work. You might use the following passages:

*Doctrine and Covenants* 107:8. Preside over and direct the affairs of God on earth.

*Alma* 17:3. Teach and instruct others with the power and authority of God.

*Doctrine and Covenants* 42:11. Build up, strengthen, and bless the Church.

*Doctrine and Covenants* 107:18–20. Administer gospel ordinances and spiritual blessings.

■ Have the students read President David O. McKay's comment in Supporting Statements D on page 68 of the student manual (see *Gospel Ideals*, p. 168). Ask the students to explain the sentence, "You represent God in the field to which you are assigned."

### **E. Through the keys of the priesthood, God directs and correlates his work.**

■ The keys God uses to direct his work on earth are the keys of presiding and directing the work of the kingdom. Read *Doctrine and Covenants* 81:2, and then share the following story told by Elder Boyd K. Packer to illustrate that the keys of the kingdom belong to the President of the Church:

"In 1976 an area general conference was held in Copenhagen, Denmark. Following the closing session, President Kimball expressed a desire to visit the Vor Frue Church, where the Thorvaldsen statues of the Christ and of the Twelve Apostles stand. . . .

"To the front of the church, behind the altar, stands the familiar statue of the Christ with his arms turned forward and somewhat outstretched, the hands showing the imprint of the nails, the wound in his side clearly visible. Along each side stand the statues of the Apostles. Peter at the front on the right side of the church, and the other Apostles in order. It is not a large building, and these beautiful statues make an impressive sight indeed. . . .

"I stood with President Kimball, Elder Rex Pinegar, and President Bentine, the stake president, before the statue of Peter. In his hand, depicted in marble, is a set of heavy keys. President Kimball pointed to them and explained what they symbolized. Then, in an act I shall never forget, he turned to President Bentine and with unaccustomed sternness pointed his finger at him and said with firm, impressive words, 'I want you to tell every Lutheran in Denmark that they do not hold the keys! I hold the keys! We hold the real keys and we use them every day.'" (*The Holy Temple*, p. 83.)

■ Using the scriptures in Doctrinal Outline E 4 and E 5 on page 67 of the student manual, review how the keys of presidency, or presiding, were bestowed upon Peter, James, and John and in turn upon Joseph Smith, down to the present-day prophet. You may want to read in Supporting Statements E on page 68 of the student manual President Wilford Woodruff's statement about the priesthood keys that were restored to Joseph Smith (see *Journal of Discourses*, 16:267.)

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## Conclusion

Challenge the students to learn more about the priesthood and the blessings it can bring into their lives. To help the class appreciate the power of the priesthood, you may want to conclude with an insight President Spencer W. Kimball gave at the 1974 Stockholm area conference:

"This is not a plaything. The priesthood of God is the most serious thing in the world. It was by the priesthood the world was created. And it is by the priesthood that your world will be created; and if you ever become a God in a world of your own, with your wife, your family, it will be through the magnifying of this priesthood which you hold." (In Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference, Aug. 1974, p. 100.)

### Introduction

One power with great influence on our physical lives is electricity, which is derived from many sources such as oil, gas, coal, and uranium. Ask the students how their lives would be different if they could not use electricity. Write their suggestions on the chalkboard. Point out that electricity functions according to certain laws, or principles, and that failure to follow those laws can result in loss of electrical power or even in physical harm.

Point out that priesthood power is similar to electricity: without it, we are deprived of great blessings. You may want to list things that are lost when there is no priesthood. Point out that laws, or principles, also govern the priesthood, and failure to adhere to them can result in a loss of priesthood power. Misuse of priesthood power can even result in serious spiritual consequences. (You may want to use some other analogy to illustrate the concept of priesthood power.)

### Ideas for Teaching

#### A. The Melchizedek Priesthood is received by an oath and a covenant.

- Ask the students to define the words *oath* and *covenant*. You might want to use Elder Marion G. Romney's definition of an oath: "An oath is a sworn attestation to the inviolability of the promises in the agreement" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1962, p. 17). For a good definition of *covenant*, refer to Elder ElRay L. Christiansen's definition in Supporting Statements A on page 69 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Oct. 1972, p. 44; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, p. 50).
- Read in Supporting Statements A on pages 69–70 of the student manual the statements by President Joseph Fielding Smith and President Spencer W. Kimball about receiving the priesthood by covenant (see Smith, in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, p. 91; Kimball, in Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference 1974, p. 99). Have the students also read in Supporting Statements A on page 70 of the student manual President Kimball's perspective on the individual's responsibility to the Lord when he receives the oath and covenant of the priesthood (see Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference 1974, p. 100). Then have the students read Doctrine and Covenants 84:33–44, looking for at least three promises an individual makes when he receives the priesthood. Prepare Chalkboard 1 to use while you discuss these promises.

President Marion G. Romney's statement in Supporting Statements A on page 70 of the student manual provides an excellent definition of what it means to magnify one's calling and could be used in your discussion (see Conference Report, Oct. 1980, p. 64; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1980, p. 44). The last two statements by President Kimball in Supporting Statements A on page 70 of the student manual help explain God's promises listed on Chalkboard 1 (see Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference 1974, pp. 99, 100).

- Read Doctrine and Covenants 82:10, and remind the students that it is never the Lord who breaks the oath and covenant of the priesthood. The seriousness of breaking the covenant of the priesthood is explained in Doctrine and Covenants 84:40–42. You may also want to read in Supporting Statements A on page 70 of the student manual President Spencer W. Kimball's explanation of how the priesthood covenant is broken (see *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 497).
- Help the young women understand that the promises of the oath and covenant of the priesthood also apply to them. The Lord promises them glorious blessings equal to those promised to the priesthood holders. President Joseph Fielding Smith clarified the promises made to women:  
"I think we all know that the blessings of the priesthood are not confined to men alone. These blessings are also poured out upon our wives and daughters and upon all the faithful women of the Church. These good sisters can prepare themselves, by keeping the commandments and by serving in the Church, for the blessings of the house of the Lord. The Lord offers to his daughters every spiritual gift and blessing that can be obtained by his sons, for neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1970, p. 59.)

#### B. Righteousness is the key to priesthood power and eternal life.

- Ask the students to describe the differences between *power* and *authority*. Illustrate the significant difference by authorizing a student who has no musical ability to play the piano or sing a solo. Relate what you have done to the way in which power and authority are used in the priesthood by reading Elder Boyd K. Packer's statement in Supporting Statements B on page 71 of the student manual (see "That All May Be Edified," pp. 28–29).
- Have the students read Doctrine and Covenants 121:34–39 silently. Ask what principles they learn from these verses. Use Chalkboard 2 to illustrate

that the greater our obedience to the principle of righteousness, the greater will be our power in the priesthood.

■ Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone related an experience that shows how righteous priesthood holders can draw upon the powers of heaven:

“Seeking to walk in the Lord’s footsteps recently brought me in contact with a young man and his father. The young man and a friend were up hiking in the lower foothills near Cody, Wyoming. The friend jumped across a high-power line that was down, but the young man got tangled in it and was electrocuted. The friend turned and ran all the way back down to where the father lived—and it wasn’t a short distance—and told the father that his son had been electrocuted and that he was dead. The father, who was not a young man, ran all the way back up, taking about fifteen minutes. When he got up to where the boy was lying across the wires, he somehow removed the boy from the wires with a board or a large branch. Then he picked his son up in his arms and held him, saying, ‘In the name of Jesus Christ and by the power and authority of the holy Melchizedek Priesthood, I command you to live.’ The dead boy opened up his eyes in his father’s arms and was taken to the University of Utah Medical Center, where he recovered.” (“Where Following Him Can Lead Us,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1981, p. 8.)

On another occasion, Bishop Featherstone briefly referred to this same father:

“This great brother could not have possibly done that [healed his son] had he been looking at a pornographic piece of material a few nights before or if he had been involved in any other transgression of that kind. The priesthood has to have a pure conduit to operate.” (In Conference Report, Apr. 1975, p. 100; or *Ensign*, May 1975, p. 66.)

This story involves a dramatic event that most will not experience for themselves, but your students should realize that it is not out of reach—every priesthood holder can be blessed with inspiration in blessing others. Each priesthood holder can receive inspiration in fulfilling his priesthood assignment, and as a father he will be given wisdom to govern in his home if he is faithful.

■ Using Doctrine and Covenants 121:35–46, have the students give as many answers as possible to each of the following questions:

*What causes a man to lose the power of the priesthood?*

1. Kicking against the pricks (fighting or ignoring the promptings of the Spirit)
2. Seeking the honors of men
3. Covering sins
4. Gratifying pride
5. Exercising unrighteous dominion

*What qualities or characteristics are essential if a priesthood bearer is to lead or govern?*

1. Persuasion and long-suffering
2. Gentleness and meekness
3. Love unfeigned
4. Kindness
5. Proper discipline—reproving betimes (quickly) when moved upon by the Holy Ghost and showing an increase of love afterwards
6. Charity toward everyone
7. Virtue that garnishes (adorns) his thoughts unceasingly

*What is promised to a priesthood bearer who develops the essential characteristics for priesthood leadership?*

1. His confidence will wax strong in the presence of God.
2. The doctrine of the priesthood will distill upon his soul.
3. The Holy Ghost will be his constant companion.
4. He will have an everlasting dominion, or eternal kingdom.

■ Using the scripture references in Doctrinal Outline B 4 on page 69 of the student manual, identify the differences between *priestcraft* and *priesthood*.

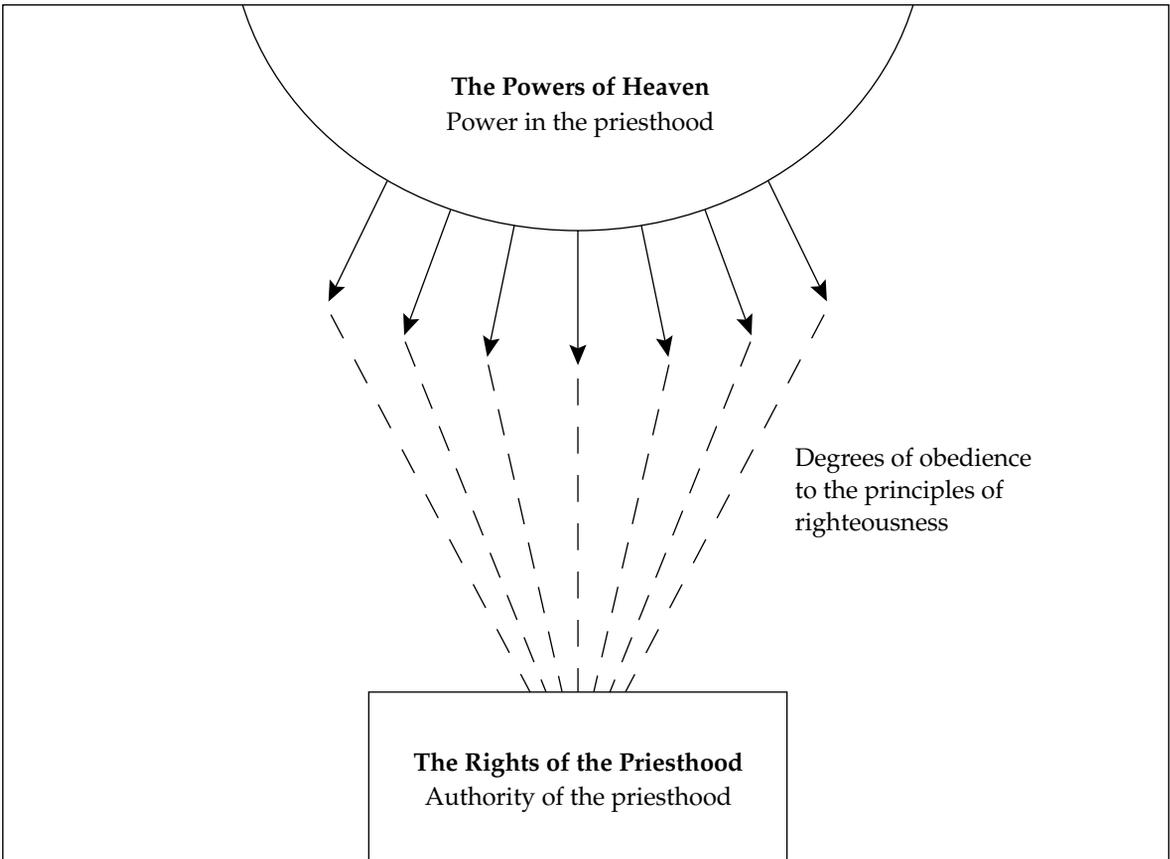
## Conclusion

Have the students read Doctrine and Covenants 82:3. Because the Lord has blessed us as Latter-day Saints with the priesthood, he expects more from us. The Lord will give us greater power when we learn to use the power we already have. Just as we have learned little by little to harness and use electricity, so we will grow line upon line as we keep our covenants until we are able to harness the fulness of priesthood power. To truly *hold* the priesthood, we must let go of the world. Conclude by having the students suggest ways to let go of the world.

Chalkboard 1

<p><b>God's Promises</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. You will be sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of your body (see D&amp;C 84:33).</li><li>2. You will become the chosen seed and the elect of God (see v. 34).</li><li>3. All that the Father has will be given unto you (see v. 38).</li></ol>	<p><b>Man's Promises</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Magnify callings in the priesthood (see D&amp;C 84:33).</li><li>2. Give diligent heed to the words of eternal life (see v. 43).</li><li>3. Live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (see v. 44).</li></ol>
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Chalkboard 2





## Introduction

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Why has the Lord given us holy days such as the Sabbath? Why have holidays developed among different nations and cultures? What are the differences in purpose between holidays and holy days? What are some of your favorite holidays? If the anticipation and enthusiasm individuals feel about a holiday could be directed toward the Sabbath day, what might be the effect on the individual? On the community?

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. Sabbath observance is a law of God.

- Using the scripture references listed in Doctrinal Outline A 1 through A 3 on page 72 of the student manual, briefly establish observance of the Sabbath as an eternal law of God.
- Read in Supporting Statements A on page 72 of the student manual Elder Mark E. Petersen's statement about the esteem in which God holds the Sabbath (see Conference Report, Apr. 1975, p. 70; or *Ensign*, May 1975, p. 47). Emphasize that when we consider the purposes of the Sabbath, we can better understand why Elder Petersen referred to the law of the Sabbath as "one of the laws most dear to the heart of God."
- Read Luke 4:16. What evidence does it give that the Savior regularly observed the Sabbath? ("As his custom was.")
- Ask the students to find scriptures indicating that the Sabbath is still to be observed in our own dispensation. Have the students look up "Sabbath" in the Topical Guide in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. Have them read the passages that apply to our times (D&C 59:9; 68:29).

### B. The Sabbath day was changed in the meridian dispensation.

- Discuss with your class the observance of the Sabbath on the seventh day in ancient times.  
*Exodus 20:10.* Which day was observed as the Sabbath during Old Testament times? (The seventh.)  
*Exodus 20:11.* What had been accomplished before the hallowing of the seventh day? (The creation of the earth and those things associated with it.)  
*Deuteronomy 5:15.* What else was to be commemorated by observing the Sabbath? (It was another reminder of the Lord's work in behalf of his children. Ancient Sabbath observance included praise and thanksgiving for those blessings. See verses 12–14, which are a repetition of the commandment to keep the Sabbath.)

- Have half of the class look up "Sabbath" in the Topical Guide and locate scriptural evidence that the Saints in New Testament times began meeting on the first day of the week. Have the other half of the class look up "Sabbath" in the Bible Dictionary and find similar evidence. Read in Supporting Statements B on page 73 of the student manual Elder James E. Talmage's explanation of the changing of the Sabbath day (see *The Articles of Faith*, p. 449).

### C. The Lord has given some general guidelines for proper Sabbath observance.

- Consider Doctrine and Covenants 59:8–14. This revelation, which suggests proper Sabbath activities, was given on 7 August 1831, a Sunday. Analyze selected phrases and words by allowing the students to suggest meanings and applications. Write on the chalkboard such key words and phrases as "broken heart," "unspotted," and "joy may be full." Refer to them during the discussion. Ask what activities are proper on the Sabbath day. Suggest that the following four questions can be used to help determine proper Sabbath observance:

1. Will this activity bring me closer to God?
2. Is it unselfish?
3. Does it keep me unspotted from the world?
4. Does it prevent others from keeping the Sabbath day holy?

- Select inspired counsel from Supporting Statements C on pages 73–74 of the student manual to further enrich your discussion of appropriate Sabbath day attitudes and activities.

### D. Blessings come to those who observe the Sabbath.

- Refer again to Doctrine and Covenants 59, and pay particular attention to verses 15–19. Discuss the blessings that result from faithful Sabbath observance. Explore the great promise that "the fulness of the earth is yours." How is the fulness of the earth ours? Does this promise refer to spiritual or temporal possession, or to both?
- Invite your class to share Sabbath day worship and service experiences that have given them joy and helped them to grow.

## Conclusion

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Challenge your students to evaluate individually their Sabbath worship. Do they feel uncomfortable about certain activities and attitudes? Invite them to more fully commit themselves to keeping the Lord's day holy and thereby realize the promised spiritual refreshment and refinement.



## Introduction

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Write on the chalkboard the following statements for opening a discussion of celestial marriage:

1. In his wisdom and mercy, our Father in Heaven made man and woman dependent on each other for the full realization of their potential.
2. When a couple kneels at the altar in the temple, another important family unit in the kingdom of God is begun.

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. Marriage is ordained of God.

■ Ask the students why marriage is ordained by our Heavenly Father. (He wants us to enjoy the blessings of family life—eternal marriage and eternal parenthood.) President Spencer W. Kimball pointed out that marriage is part of the eternal plan:

“The Lord has ordained that each of these mature spirits which he has created shall be permitted to come to this earth at a proper time, be provided with a small, pure body and a mind uncluttered, be given a loving home with two parents to teach and train him, and come to maturity through numerous, varied growth experiences, then in turn to marry, provide bodies for another generation, and go through the same process, working toward this eternal plan” (“Marriage Is Honorable,” in *Speeches of the Year, 1973*, p. 258).

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 49:15–17; look closely at verse 17, which explains why God ordained marriage between man and woman on earth. Read in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible some of the sources listed in the Topical Guide under “marriage, husbands” and “marriage, wives.”

### B. A marriage must be performed with the sealing power of the priesthood to be valid after this life.

■ Read in Supporting Statements B on pages 75–76 of the student manual President Harold B. Lee’s statement about the marriage of Adam and Eve by the Lord (see *Decisions for Successful Living*, p. 125). Discuss this quotation with the class.

In Supporting Statements B on page 76 of the student manual, Elder Boyd K. Packer illustrated the meaning of “to seal” and “keys” (see *The Holy Temple*, p. 82). His explanation may suggest other analogies that will help the class more fully understand these terms.

### C. Celestial marriage is essential to exaltation.

■ Use Chalkboard 1 to help you discuss how gospel principles and ordinances relate to eternal life.

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 131:1, which indicates that there are three separate degrees of glory within the celestial kingdom. To inherit the highest degree of the celestial kingdom means to be exalted, or to receive exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Revelation spells out an important requirement for entrance into the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. What is that major requirement for exaltation? (Entering into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage.) Read Doctrine and Covenants 131:2–4. What does verse 4 mean when it states, “He cannot have an increase”? (He will not have the privilege of being a parent throughout eternity.) The requirements for entering the celestial kingdom are more fully discussed in chapter 33, “Kingdoms of Glory and Perdition.”

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 132:19–21, and discuss the far-reaching implications of man’s and woman’s divine destiny as designed by God. You may want to discuss the meaning of the phrase “eternal lives” and why the Church places such emphasis on complete chastity before marriage and full fidelity to one’s spouse after marriage. Read also Elder James E. Talmage’s statement in Supporting Statements C on page 77 of the student manual (see “The Eternity of Sex,” *Young Woman’s Journal*, Oct. 1914, p. 604).

## Conclusion

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President Kimball shared the following two experiences that help impress upon us the desirability of celestial marriage. Conclude the discussion by reading or retelling one or both experiences.

“Let me close with a little story that I told after returning from Europe in 1955. I had been to the temple dedication. One German woman whom I knew had lost her husband in the war. When I was in the temple at its dedication in Bern, this sweet German woman told me her story. Her husband had disappeared ten years before. That was in 1945, when the war ended. No word was ever had from him or news of his whereabouts. It was presumed that he was dead. After the dedication, having talked to President McKay about it and having the permission, this sweet woman went through the temple for endowments. I saw her again as she went to the counter to get her clothing. I saw her in

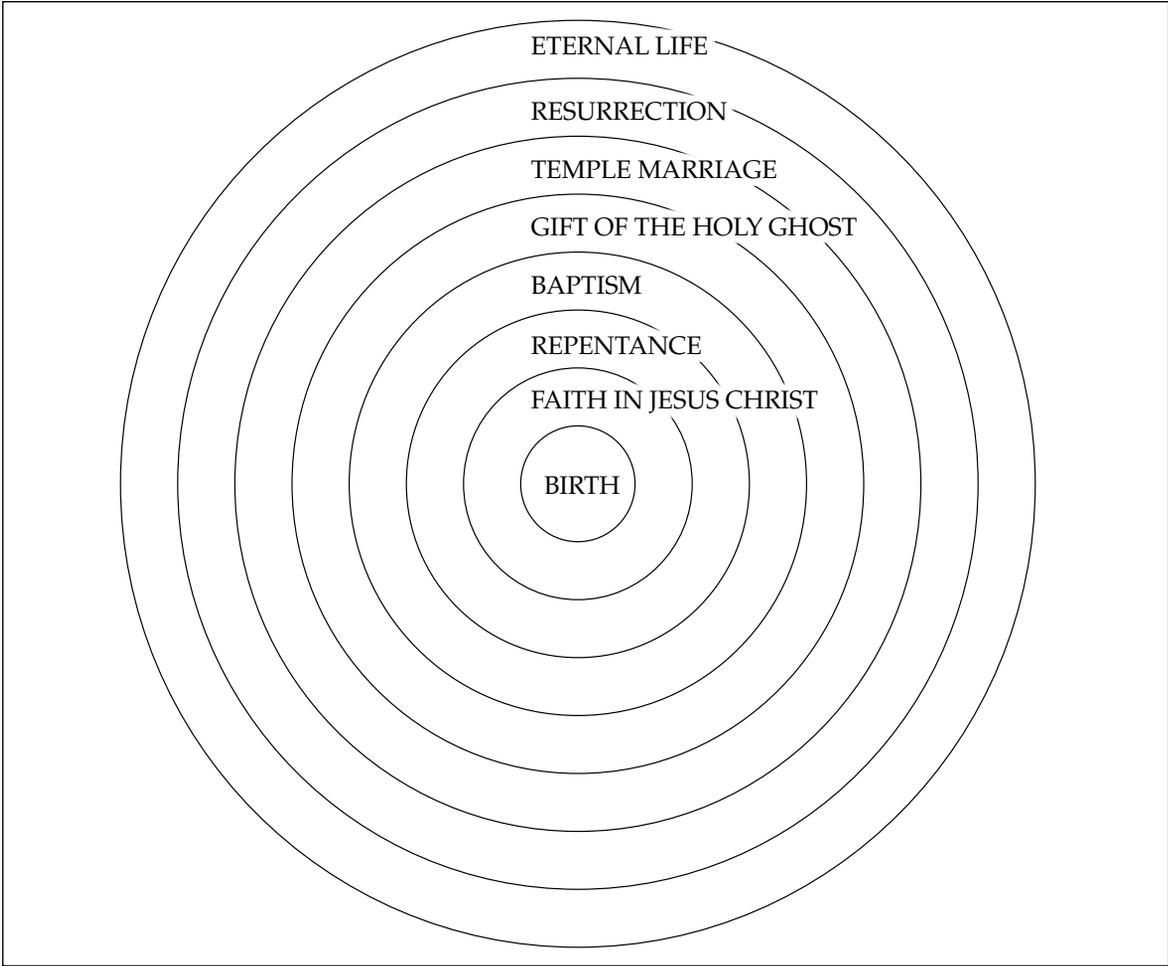
the session with contentment and peace upon her face. I saw her after the temple service, and she said to me with great satisfaction, 'Brother Kimball, I have now been sealed to my husband. Let the war come. Let the persecutions pile up. Let the bombs burst. Let whatever need be come that war brings on. I'm all right now. I'm sealed to my husband and I am at peace and life is good.'" ("Marriage Is Honorable," pp. 281–82.)

"I remember an article in a local newspaper, telling of a young couple married in Salt Lake by a man who had only civil authority—no power beyond the grave. They had a brilliant wedding breakfast. They got into the car to travel to another city for an evening wedding reception,

where hundreds of friends and relatives would come to wish them well. They did not reach their destination. There was no reception. A car accident took their lives. Their mortality was ended. An eternal life had not been provided for. About three hours of marriage, and the end of it came like a flash of lightening. And the sad thing was that their three-hour marriage was performed within a mile of the holy Temple, where a man with the sealing power would gladly have saved them from the bitter cup.

"They're in eternity now. I don't know what they're thinking or what they're doing, but they're not prepared for eternity." ("Marriage Is Honorable," p. 271.)

Chalkboard 1





## Introduction

If it is available, you could show the filmstrip *Families Are Forever* (stock number VVOF3131) to introduce this chapter and to set the tone of the discussion.

## Ideas for Teaching

### A. Families are ordained of God.

- Who established the institutions of the home and family? President Spencer W. Kimball told us that our Father in Heaven was the one who established families (see Supporting Statements A on p. 78 of the student manual; or *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 324). We enjoyed family relationships in our premortal existence, and God's divine plan dictates that we live, learn, and grow in families in this our second estate. President Joseph F. Smith commented on the origin of families when he wrote "There is no substitute for the home. Its foundation is as ancient as the world, and its mission has been ordained of God from the earliest times." ("Home Life," *Juvenile Instructor*, 1 Mar. 1903, p. 144.)
- Some of your students will not have the opportunity to marry while in mortality, so you should use sensitivity as you emphasize early in the lesson that not every faithful Latter-day Saint will have the privilege of rearing a family in this life. You might discuss President Kimball's promise that those who remain unmarried through no fault of their own will receive a fulness of blessings in eternity (see Supporting Statements A on p. 80 of the student manual; or *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, pp. 294–95).
- After Adam was placed upon the earth, God said that "it was not good that the man should be alone" (Moses 3:18). Why is it not good for a man or a woman to be alone? List some possible reasons why God provided Adam with a "help meet for him" (v. 18). Point out that Adam and Eve are prototypes for the rest of mankind and that the Lord's instruction to Adam and Eve regarding marriage and families applies to all the human race. Emphasize that eternal progression ultimately cannot occur without an eternal partnership between a righteous man and a righteous woman. The Apostle Paul taught that "neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:11).
- Read and discuss Matthew 19:4–6. Use this passage of scripture to emphasize the following important principles about eternal marriage:

1. God created both male and female for an important purpose.
2. Children should eventually leave their parents to begin a new family with their mate.
3. The husband is to "cleave to" his wife (v. 5).
4. Husband and wife are to become "one flesh" (v. 6).
5. Those whom God has joined together in marriage should not be lightly "put asunder" (v. 6; see also vv. 7–10).

Ask the students what they think it means for a husband to "cleave to" his wife. Among other things, it means that a husband should be dedicated to the happiness, growth, and eternal advancement of his beloved wife. She should come first in her husband's life: Church work, occupation, clubs, sports, and even other family members should be lower in priority for him.

Discuss what it means for a husband and wife to become "one flesh." Emphasize that unity and harmony between husband and wife come only through much effort and through a variety of means. A married couple should strive for unity and harmony physically, emotionally, spiritually, socially, and intellectually.

- You may wish to cite selected quotations from President Kimball, President David O. McKay, and President Harold B. Lee in Supporting Statements A on page 78 of the student manual to help you stress the proper place of home and family life in the priorities of Latter-day Saints (see Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 324; McKay, in Conference Report, Apr. 1964, p. 5; Lee, *Strengthening the Home*, p. 7).
- What was God's commandment to Adam and Eve concerning children after he placed Adam and Eve upon the earth? He told them, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Moses 2:28). This charge is given to every couple sealed in eternal marriage in the temple. Read in Supporting Statements A on page 79 of the student manual President Spencer W. Kimball's teaching that bearing and rearing children is the most important responsibility of marriage and that we should do all in our power to bring children into our home (see Conference Report, Melbourne Australia Area Conference 1976, p. 21; untitled fireside address delivered at San Antonio, Texas, 3 Dec. 1977, pp. 24–26).

### B. Husbands and wives should love and support one another.

- The Lord established the pattern for a husband-and-wife relationship; the Apostle Paul compared a husband's responsibility toward his wife with

Christ's responsibility toward the Church (see Ephesians 5:22–33; Colossians 3:18–19). Would the Savior ever belittle or harm the Church in any way? Should a husband, then, belittle or harm his wife in any way? A righteous husband would love his wife "even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). You might invite the students to discuss President Spencer W. Kimball's commentary on Ephesians 5:25 in Supporting Statements B on page 80 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference 1974, pp. 46–47).

■ What duties or responsibilities does a husband have toward his wife? List on the chalkboard the students' responses. If your students do not offer them, you might want to include some or all of the following:

1. Love your wife with all your heart (see D&C 42:22).
2. Cleave to her and to no one else (see D&C 42:22).
3. Provide for her temporal needs (see D&C 83:2).
4. Do not ridicule or embarrass her.
5. Lead your wife and family with righteous use of the priesthood (see D&C 121:36).
6. Exercise persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, kindness, and unfeigned love in your marriage (see D&C 121:41–42).
7. Let virtue garnish your thoughts unceasingly (see D&C 121:45).
8. Support your wife in all her righteous endeavors, including her Church callings.
9. Be a full partner with your wife in rearing the children.

■ What responsibilities and duties does a wife have toward her husband? List on the chalkboard the students' responses. If your students do not offer them, you might want to include some or all of the following:

1. Submit yourself to your husband in righteousness as you would submit to the Lord (see Ephesians 5:22; Supporting Statements B on p. 80 of the student manual; or Kimball, in Conference Report, Stockholm Sweden Area Conference, pp. 46–47).
2. Do not ridicule or embarrass him.
3. Support your husband in his priesthood callings.
4. Provide your husband with comfort and tenderness (see D&C 25:5).
5. Share with your husband the duties of rearing the children.

■ Soon after the Prophet Joseph Smith organized the Relief Society, he gave its members the following counsel on how the women could be better wives to their husbands:

"Let this Society teach women how to behave towards their husbands, to treat them with mildness and affection. When a man is borne down with trouble, when he is perplexed with care and difficulty, if he can meet a smile instead

of an argument, or a murmur—if he can meet with mildness, it will calm down his soul and soothe his feelings; when the mind is going to despair, it needs a solace of affection and kindness." (*History of the Church*, 4:606–7.)

■ You may wish to discuss the duties of husbands and wives as outlined in "On the Duty of Husband and Wife" (*Elders' Journal*, Aug. 1838, pp. 61–62; or Supporting Statements B on p. 81 of the student manual).

### C. Parents are responsible to teach, discipline, provide for, and care for their children.

■ What responsibilities do parents have toward their children? List on the chalkboard the students' responses. If your students do not offer them, you might want to include some or all of the following:

1. Provide for their temporal needs (see D&C 83:4; 1 Timothy 5:8; Mosiah 4:14).
2. Provide a good example (see Proverbs 20:7; Jacob 3:10).
3. Teach them the principles of the gospel as found in the scriptures (see D&C 68:25–28).
4. Teach them to love one another and to refrain from quarreling with each other (see Mosiah 4:14–15).
5. Teach them the consequences of sin (see Mosiah 4:14; 2 Nephi 9:48; Alma 42:29–30).
6. Teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness (see Mosiah 4:15; Alma 38:15).
7. Teach them to be humble and to overcome pride (see Alma 38:11, 14; 42:30).
8. Teach them to bridle their passions (see Alma 38:12).
9. Teach them how to work (see Alma 38:12; D&C 42:42; 68:30–31).
10. Teach them how to pray, and hold regular family prayer (see D&C 68:28; 3 Nephi 18:21; Alma 34:21).
11. Discipline them with love (see Proverbs 19:18; 23:13; D&C 121:41–44).
12. Put your house in order when there are problems (see D&C 93:43–44, 50).

In detailing the temporal things parents do for their children, President Kimball asked, "But what do they do for their souls?" (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 332; or Supporting Statements C on p. 81 of the student manual). Emphasize that as important as a child's material needs are, his or her spiritual needs are even more critical. Use other quotations from Supporting Statements C on pages 81–82 of the student manual to reinforce your discussion of the responsibilities of parents toward their children.

■ You might want to discuss the fact that all parents make mistakes but that it is important to keep trying. Elder Howard W. Hunter counseled us that parents should not consider themselves failures, nor should they ever give up on their children (see Supporting Statements C on p. 82 of the student manual; or Conference Report, Oct. 1983, pp. 92–93; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, pp. 64–65).

**D. Children should honor their parents and be obedient to them.**

■ What responsibilities do children have toward their parents? List on the chalkboard the students' responses. If your students do not offer them, you might want to include some or all of the following:

1. Respect and honor your parents (see Doctrinal Outline D 1 on p. 78 of the student manual).
  2. Be subject to your parents (see Doctrinal Outline D 2 on p. 78 of the student manual).
  3. Do not rebel against your parents.
  4. Encourage your parents in righteousness.
  5. Show and express love to your parents.
  6. Be as self-reliant as you can.
  7. Care for your parents in their old age.
  8. Help with your brothers and sisters, and be a good example to them.
- What does it mean to "honor your parents"? Should a child do something wrong because his parents requested it? To honor means "pay worthy respect to (by some outward action)" (*Oxford*

*English Dictionary*, s.v. "honour"). Regardless of our parents' weaknesses, the best way to honor them is to express our love for them and to keep the commandments of God.

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## Conclusion

Ask the students to evaluate individually where they now stand with respect to family life. Challenge unmarried students who are living at home to contribute to the peace, happiness, and progress of each family member. Challenge them further to prepare in every way to assume the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood. Challenge unmarried students who are living away from home to express love to their families through letters, telephone calls, and visits. Challenge married students to build the righteous habits of successful family living early in their marriage—it is much easier to strengthen good habits than to break bad ones.



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# Death and the Postmortal Spirit World

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## Chapter 30

### Introduction

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■ Have a student read a dictionary definition of *death*, such as “a permanent cessation of all vital functions: the end of life” (*Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, s.v. “death”). What in this definition does not harmonize with the Latter-day Saint understanding of death? (The most obvious difference is the phrase “permanent ending of all life.”)

How is the Latter-day Saint view of death different from the view held by those without the light of the restored gospel? Share your own view of life after death, the resurrection, and eternal life with God—concepts revealed by God.

■ Pioneer William Clayton was forty-three days out of Nauvoo on his way to Winter Quarters; his wife Diantha had remained behind because of the nearness of the birth of their expected child. On Wednesday, 15 April 1846, Brother Clayton received word that Sister Clayton had given birth to a son. As a release for the anxiety he had felt, he composed a hymn that became a source of inspiration to the Saints as they made their way to the Salt Lake Valley. Read or have your students sing the final stanza of “Come, Come, Ye Saints”:

*And should we die before our journey’s through,  
Happy day! All is well!  
We then are free from toil and sorrow, too;  
With the just we shall dwell!  
But if our lives are spared again  
To see the Saints their rest obtain,  
Oh, how we’ll make this chorus swell—  
All is well! All is well!  
(Hymns, 1985, no. 30.)*

What attitude toward death is expressed in the hymn? Point out that for the early Latter-day Saints death was not the ultimate disaster. In a real sense, the hymn embodies the sentiments of the Apostle Paul, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

Remember that the Fall and death as a consequence of it are the subject of chapter 8, “The Fall.” Do not worry about covering the many aspects of the Fall when you teach this chapter. Here it is important only that the students understand the origin of death.

### Ideas for Teaching

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**A. Physical death is a universal condition and is part of the plan of salvation.**

■ Read Genesis 2:17 and 3:19. What does the tree of knowledge of good and evil have to do with death on the earth? Indicate that death was the

penalty imposed if Adam or Eve ate the fruit. After the Fall, Adam and Eve were told that they would live by their labor on the fallen earth until they returned “unto dust” (Genesis 3:19). Jacob taught that without the Fall there would have been no change or death on the earth: things would have “remained forever, and had no end” (2 Nephi 2:22).

Write on the chalkboard the text of 1 Corinthians 15:21–22. Point out that verses 21 and 22 contain parallel thoughts:

*1 Corinthians 15:21.* “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.”

*1 Corinthians 15:22.* “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

The words “by man” in verse 21 refer to Adam. Adam, through the Fall, initiated on the earth the process called death. As both these verses indicate, this death comes upon everyone (see also Romans 5:14, 17; Supporting Statements A on p. 83 of the student manual; or Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 428).

■ Even without the scriptures, we know that everyone dies. A stroll through any cemetery clearly illustrates that death awaits us all at the end of our mortal probation. The great people of the earth buried beneath impressive monuments of stone have died just as surely as have the humble in their unmarked, weed-choked plots. You may want to reinforce the universality of death by reading 2 Nephi 9:16; Alma 12:24; Romans 5:12. Read also the statement by President Smith in Supporting Statements A on page 83 of the student manual (see *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 428).

■ Provide the students with copies of Elder Boyd K. Packer’s sermon in the April 1983 general conference. Elder Packer described the body as a glove, the spirit as a hand. While the hand is in the glove, there is movement and capability. When the hand is removed, the glove becomes inanimate; yet the hand lives on. Elder Packer quoted the First Presidency of Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, and Charles W. Penrose: “A spirit born of God is an immortal thing. When the body dies, the spirit does not die.” (In Conference Report, Apr. 1973, p. 79; or *Ensign*, July 1973, p. 51.)

■ Why is death sometimes feared? Allow the students time to express their feelings. There may be concern over lingering illness, pain, or disability preceding death; the sense of loss among loved ones left behind; or difficulty in actually facing the process of dying. The students are certain to mention fear of the unknown. Even watching someone die does not remove the element of the unknown: death is, or will be, a unique experience for each person. Much of what we otherwise would not know about death, however, has been revealed through the gospel. President Smith wrote that by having a testimony of the atonement

of Jesus Christ and a knowledge of what happens at death, we can have “joy even in death” (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 428; or Supporting Statements A on p. 84 of the student manual). Read Alma 27:28; Doctrine and Covenants 42:46; 101:35–36. What do these scriptures have in common? The theme of all three is that in Christ death is swallowed up, death is sweet, and there is joy in the life to come (see also Supporting Statements A on p. 83 of the student manual; or Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 17:142).

If the unknown aspect of death is reduced by knowledge of the gospel and the Atonement, why could death still be fearsome? Point out that it is not so much a fear of the experience as much as it is a fear of accountability for one’s life. Death for the wicked may well be frightening as they await God’s judgment in the spirit world. Write on the chalkboard the scripture references from Chalkboard 1.

### **B. At death our spirits enter the world of spirits to await the resurrection.**

■ Read Alma 40:11; 24:16; 2 Nephi 9:38. According to these verses, what happens to the spirit body at death? Point out that each verse suggests in slightly different words that the spirits are “taken home to that God who gave them life” (Alma 40:11). What does it mean to be “taken home to God”? Is it true that the spirits of all will enter the presence of God and see him where he dwells? To help answer that question, read the following statements:

“‘Taken home to God,’ simply means that their mortal existence has come to an end, and they have returned to the world of spirits, where they are assigned a place according to their works with the just or with the unjust, there to await the resurrection” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 2:85).

“Alma, when he says that ‘the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, . . . are taken home to that God who gave them life,’ has the idea, doubtless, in his mind that our God is omnipresent—not in His own personality but through His minister, the Holy Spirit.

“He does not intend to convey the idea that they are immediately ushered into the personal presence of God.” (George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth*, 1:73; see also Joseph F. Smith in Supporting Statements B on p. 84 of the student manual; or *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 448.)

■ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the terms we often use in describing life after death—such as *Hades*, *Sheol*, *paradise*, and *spirit prison*—all refer to “world of spirits” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 310).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said, “Since disembodied spirits cannot gain a fulness of joy until their resurrection (D&C 93:33–34), they consider their habitation in the spirit world as one of imprisonment, and so the whole spirit world (including both paradise and hell) is a *spirit prison*” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 755).

■ Read Alma 40:12, 14 and Doctrine and Covenants 138:12–13. Which spirits are consigned to paradise? Write on the left-hand side of the chalkboard the

heading *Paradise* and the words *Who?* and *What is life like there?* (see Chalkboard 2). Let the students provide the answers from the verses above.

What is implied in Doctrine and Covenants 138:19? Is paradise a place of growth and learning? Jesus preached the everlasting gospel to the spirits in paradise (see 4 Nephi 1:14; Moroni 10:34; 2 Nephi 9:13; Bruce R. McConkie in Supporting Statements B on p. 84 of the student manual; or *The Mortal Messiah*, 4:222).

■ Read Alma 40:13–14; Doctrine and Covenants 76:103–106; 138:20, 29. On the right-hand side of the chalkboard, write the heading *Spirit prison (Hell)* and the words *Who?* and *What is life like there?* (see Chalkboard 2). Again, let the students provide the answers from the verses above.

Examine Doctrine and Covenants 138:29–35. In what way do these verses demonstrate the great love that God has for his children? What better example of his love do we have than the effort being made in the spirit world to teach, testify, and change the condition of those who suffer? (See Supporting Statements B on p. 84 of the student manual; or McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 349.)

■ Draw on the chalkboard a sketch illustrating the spirit world before Christ’s visit (see Chalkboard 3). Before Christ’s visit, a gulf separated the righteous and the wicked. Explain this gulf by reading 1 Nephi 15:27–29 and Luke 16:19–31. Because of the visit of Christ to the spirit world, his righteous servants have now been commissioned to teach the gospel to those in the spirit prison. “Now that the righteous spirits in paradise have been commissioned to carry the message of salvation to the wicked spirits in hell, there is a certain amount of mingling together of the good and bad spirits. Repentance . . . enables those bound with the chains of hell to free themselves from darkness, unbelief, ignorance, and sin. As rapidly as they can overcome these obstacles—gain light, believe truth, acquire intelligence, cast off sin, and break the chains of hell—they can leave the hell that imprisons them and dwell with the righteous in the peace of paradise.” (McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 755.)

## Conclusion

Death is not the end of life; death is merely a change in living. After death, the mortal body is temporarily returned to the earth to await the resurrection. The spirit, or the real person, enters the world of spirits in a condition that is determined by God’s mercy and judgment. *Paradise* and *hell* are terms that indicate the quality of life of those who live in the spirit world.

Because of their knowledge of the plan of salvation, Latter-day Saints should not fear death. “If we could glimpse, for even a moment, the glory and excitement that a departed one faces when his eyes close on time and open on eternity—if only we could glimpse this, perhaps there would be more understanding in our sorrow and more joy in our grief” (Paul H. Dunn and Richard M. Eyre, *The Birth That We Call Death*, p. 53).

## Chalkboard 1

Mosiah 16:8	<i>sting</i> of death
Doctrine and Covenants 42:47	death is <i>bitter</i>
Alma 5:7	<i>bands</i> of death
3 Nephi 28:38	<i>taste</i> of death
2 Nephi 9:10	<i>monster</i> , death and hell

## Chalkboard 2

**Paradise***Who?*

1. The spirits of those who are righteous
2. The spirits of the just
3. Those who are faithful in their testimony
4. Those who suffer tribulation for His name's sake

*What is life like there?*

1. A state of happiness
2. A state of rest
3. A state of peace
4. A place of rest from troubles, cares, and sorrow
5. A place filled with joy and gladness

**Spirit Prison (Hell)***Who?*

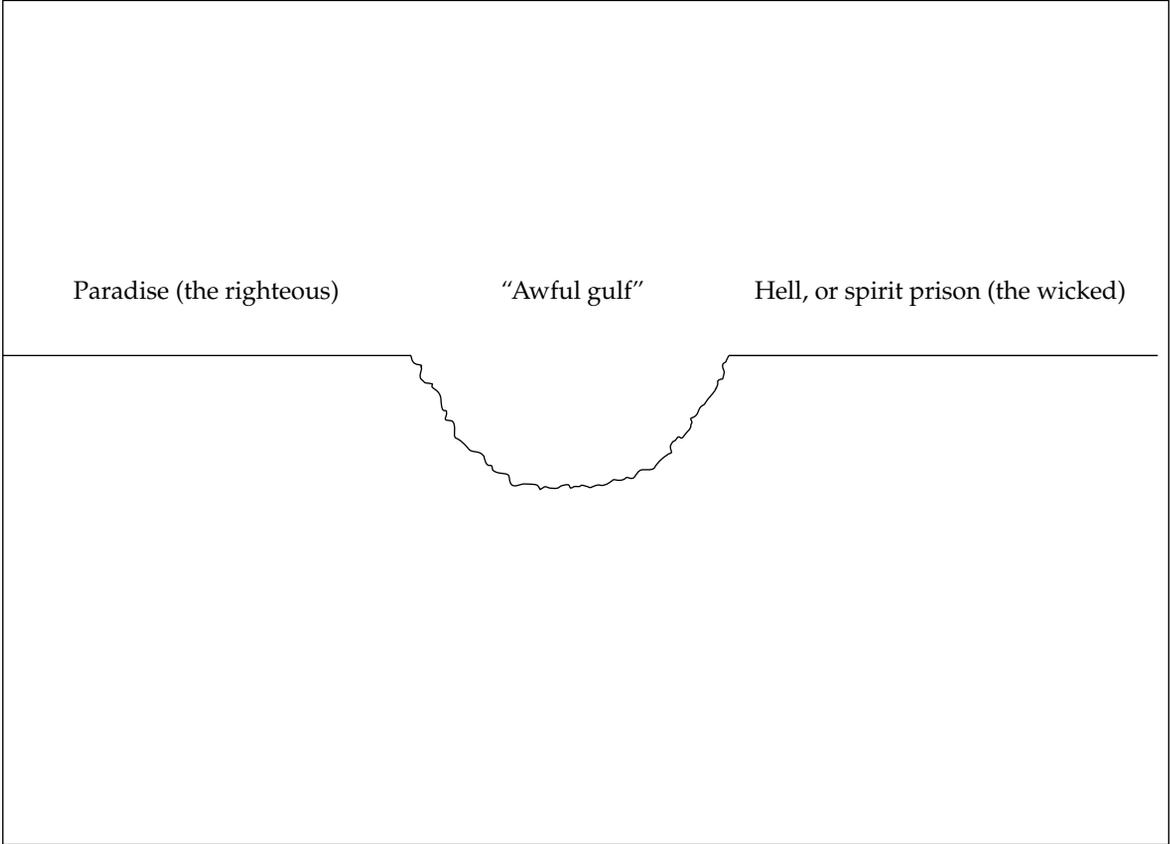
1. The spirits of the wicked
2. Those who have no part or portion of the Spirit
3. Those who chose evil works
4. Those whom the spirit of the devil took possession of
5. The ungodly
6. The unrepentant
7. Those who rejected the testimonies and the truth

*What is life like there?*

1. It is a place of darkness.
2. There is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.
3. There is fearful looking forward to God's indignation.
4. It is an "awful hell."
5. It is a place where spirits suffer the wrath of Almighty God.



Chalkboard 3





## Introduction

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The building of temples that enable us to perform vicarious ordinances for the dead is increasing rapidly. Forty temples were in operation with the dedication of the Denver Temple in October 1986. The number of temples will continue to increase, with perhaps billions of ordinances being performed in thousands of temples. President Brigham Young prophesied of that day, "To accomplish this work there will have to be not only one temple but thousands of them, and thousands and tens of thousands of men and women will go into those temples and officiate for people who have lived as far back as the Lord shall reveal" (in *Journal of Discourses*, 3:372).

## Ideas for Teaching

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### **A. In accordance with the plan of salvation, everyone will at some time hear the gospel.**

- Discuss with the students Doctrine and Covenants 1:2; 90:11.
- President Joseph Fielding Smith taught about the universality of the gospel message. One of his statements can be found in Supporting Statements A on page 85 of the student manual (see *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:133).

### **B. The way has been opened for those who die without the gospel to receive it.**

- An important revelation concerning the redemption of the dead was received by President Joseph F. Smith and is found in Doctrine and Covenants 138. In his biography, written by his son Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, we learn the circumstances behind this revelation: "At the October General Conference, 1918, President Joseph F. Smith declared that during the five months just past he had dwelt in the presence of the Spirit of the Lord. During much of that time he had been confined to his room because of illness. In his opening address at the conference, he said:

"I will not, I dare not, attempt to enter upon many things that are resting upon my mind this morning, and I shall postpone until some future time, the Lord being willing, my attempt to tell you some of the things that are in my mind, and that dwell in my heart. I have not lived alone these five months. I have dwelt in the spirit of prayer, of supplication, of faith and determination; and I have had my communications with the Spirit of the Lord continuously; and I am glad to say to you, my brethren and sisters, that it is a happy meeting this morning for me to have the privilege of joining

with you in the opening of this eighty-ninth Semi-annual Conference of the Church.'" (*The Life of Joseph F. Smith*, p. 466.)

On 31 October 1918 President Smith submitted the revelation to his counselors, to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and to the Patriarch. They unanimously accepted it. During general conference in April 1976, this revelation was accepted by the Saints as canonized scripture, and it was printed as part of the Pearl of Great Price that same year. In 1978 the revelation was removed from the Pearl of Great Price and placed in the Doctrine and Covenants.

- Read as a class the scriptures listed in Doctrinal Outline B on page 85 of the student manual. Emphasize the scriptures from Doctrine and Covenants 138 that record the principles revealed to President Smith concerning the redemption of the dead. You may decide to use more verses from section 138 than are in the Doctrinal Outline. Use verses 56 and 57 to help the students understand their individual assignment and responsibility in this great work on earth and in the spirit world.

### **C. Ordinances performed vicariously provide the dead with the opportunity to receive full salvation.**

- Using the statement by President Ruderger Clawson in Supporting Statements C on page 85 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Apr. 1933, pp. 77–78) and the diagram on Chalkboard 1, show that the Church on earth and the spiritual organization in the spirit world are engaged in the same great work: the exaltation of Heavenly Father's children.

### **D. Latter-day Saints have the authority and the responsibility to perform temple ordinances in behalf of the dead.**

- Have your students name the threefold mission of the Church: "To proclaim the gospel, to perfect the Saints, and to redeem the dead" (Spencer W. Kimball in Conference Report, Apr. 1981, p. 3; or *Ensign*, May 1981, p. 5). Why are we individually, as families, and as a church responsible for doing work for the dead? List on the chalkboard the responses the students give. Highlight and discuss those that are applicable to your students.

- The following analogy given by Elder Boyd K. Packer helps explain our efforts in behalf of the dead:

"We cannot know the full outcome of our efforts. We are commanded to bring the gospel message to the living, and to make provision for ordinance work to be performed for those who have died. We

do not know how many of them will be redeemed in the celestial kingdom. We only make it possible for those to progress who can qualify.

“It might be likened to putting spiritual resources in a bank to be held in escrow under the name of an ancestor. When and how much he will be eligible to withdraw and claim we do not know. We just know that we are to provide the account for the use of the worthy.” (*The Holy Temple*, p. 213.)

■ Read Doctrine and Covenants 128:15, and ask why neither we nor the dead can be made perfect without one another. Does our attention as individuals to this redemptive work for the dead have implications for our own salvation? Why? Read in Supporting Statements D on page 86 of the student manual President Ezra Taft Benson’s statement about the requirements for our salvation and our individual responsibility in redeeming the dead (see Regional Representatives’ seminar, 3 Apr. 1981, p. 2).

## Conclusion

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Although the task that lies ahead may seem overwhelming, we must nevertheless accept the challenge. Elder Boyd K. Packer reminded us of the need to accomplish that task with love:

“We come now to that time, perhaps for the first time in this dispensation, when we must step back and consider the full proportion of the work.

“If we are staggered by it, we must catch ourselves and straighten ourselves up and face it.

“When we contemplate how big it is, it is astonishing; it is past astonishing, it is overwhelming!

“But it is *not* discouraging.

“One day while pondering prayerfully on this matter I came to a realization that there is something that any one of us can do for all who have died.

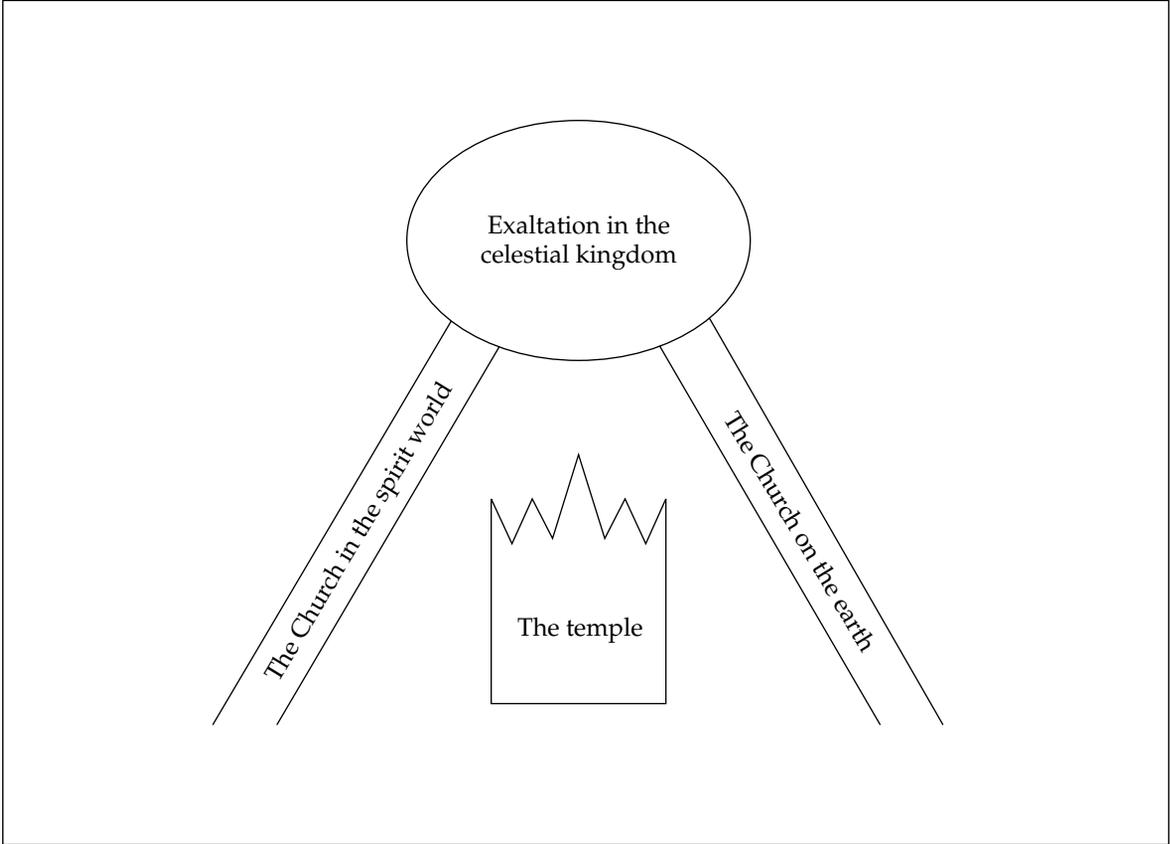
“I came to see that any one of us, by himself, can care about them, all of them, and love them. That came as a great inspiration, for then I knew there was a starting point.

“Whatever the number, we can love them, and desire to redeem them. Any one of us has within us the power to expand our concern to include them all. If a billion more are added, we can care for them also.

“If the numbers seem staggering, we will move ahead. If the process is tedious, we will move ahead anyway. If the records have been lost, if the obstacles and opposition are overwhelming, we will move ahead anyway.

“But now we must adopt a different *attitude*, different procedures, and technology. We must redeem the dead, all of them, for we are commanded to do it.” (*That They May Be Redeemed* [address delivered at Regional Representatives’ seminar, Apr. 1977], pp. [2–3].)

Chalkboard 1





### Introduction

Give the students the following true-false pretest about the resurrection and the Judgment. You may correct the test in class and discuss all the answers with the students immediately, or you may use the test as a framework for the class discussion.

#### PRETEST QUESTIONS

- \_\_\_ 1. Every mortal being will be resurrected.
- \_\_\_ 2. All parts of the body will be restored in the resurrection.
- \_\_\_ 3. No one was resurrected before Jesus Christ was resurrected.
- \_\_\_ 4. There are two resurrections.
- \_\_\_ 5. All will appear before the Great Judge, Jesus the Christ.
- \_\_\_ 6. God knows even the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

#### PRETEST ANSWERS

1. True. See Doctrinal Outline A 1 and Supporting Statements A on pages 87 and 88 of the student manual (see also Joseph F. Smith, in *Millennial Star*, 12 Mar. 1896, p. 162).
2. True. See Doctrinal Outline A 5 and Supporting Statements A on pages 87 and 88 of the student manual (see also Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 5:339).
3. True. See Doctrinal Outline B 1 and Supporting Statements B on pages 87 and 88 of the student manual (see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:260).
4. True. See Doctrinal Outline B 2 and Supporting Statements B on pages 87 and 88–89 of the student manual (see also Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 640).
5. True. See Doctrinal Outline C 1 and Supporting Statements C on pages 87 and 89 of the student manual (see also Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1:190, 192, 195; John Taylor, *The Mediation and Atonement*, p. 155).
6. True. See Doctrinal Outline C 2 and Supporting Statements C on pages 87 and 89 of the student manual (see also John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 16:301–2; Joseph F. Smith, in *Journal of Discourses*, 24:78).

### Ideas for Teaching

#### A. As part of his eternal plan, God has provided a resurrection for everyone.

- Ask the students to define the word *resurrection* (see Doctrinal Outline A 2 on p. 87 of the student manual). Simply stated, *resurrection* means the reuniting of the body and the spirit after

death. Ask the students to contemplate how miraculous resurrection actually is. No mortal power can restore life to a body that has lain dead for only a brief time, let alone reunite the parts of a body after it has crumbled to dust. Yet that is what occurs in resurrection, and there will be a resurrection that includes all mortals (see the word *all* in 1 Corinthians 15:22 and the emphasis upon “yea, even all” in D&C 29:26). If no mortal power can accomplish resurrection, by what power is resurrection brought about? The scriptures say it is accomplished by the power of the “Holy One of Israel,” or Jesus Christ. (See 2 Nephi 9:12; see also Supporting Statements A on pp. 87–88 of the student manual; or Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:128.)

- How complete will the resurrection be? Read the testimonies of Amulek and Alma in Alma 11:43–44; 40:23; 41:2 and of President Joseph F. Smith in Supporting Statements A on page 88 of the student manual (see *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 23).

- In 1918 President Joseph F. Smith was privileged to behold a vision of the world of departed spirits (see headnote to D&C 138). What is the attitude of the spirits in the spirit world toward their physical bodies? Read Doctrine and Covenants 138:50; 45:17; 93:33–34; 138:51–52. All of these passages describe the joy that accompanies the resurrection of the righteous. Ask the students why the Lord has revealed as much as he has about the nature of the resurrection. He undoubtedly wants to offer us hope for the reuniting of our body and our spirit and for a glorious reunion with our loved ones.

#### B. There is order to the resurrection.

- What did the Apostle Paul mean when he said, “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept”? (1 Corinthians 15:20). He was the first person to be resurrected. He was the only one who ever came into mortality with the power to be resurrected on his own. (See 2 Nephi 2:8.) It was Christ who provided the opportunity for all to be resurrected (see Alma 40:2–3; 1 Corinthians 15:21–23).

We should be forever grateful for the many things our Savior has made possible for us, not the least of which is the gift of resurrection. As we consider the resurrection, we should feel to exclaim, as did the Apostle Paul, “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:54–55, 57.)

■ Read John 5:28–29. Christ taught that there will be two resurrections, one for the just and one for the unjust. But what constitutes the resurrection of the just? When did it begin? How long will it last? The Lord revealed much about the order of the two resurrections in Doctrine and Covenants 88:96–102. This revelation is summarized and explained by Elder McConkie in Supporting Statements B on page 88 of the student manual (see *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 640). Refer to Chalkboard 1 as you discuss this summary.

■ What is meant by the phrase “morning of the first resurrection”? One of the blessings pronounced upon those who are sealed in the temple for time and all eternity is the power to come forth “in the morning of the first resurrection.” Elder McConkie explained: “Those being resurrected with celestial bodies, whose destiny is to inherit a celestial kingdom, will come forth in the *morning* of the first resurrection. Their graves shall be opened and they shall be caught up to meet the Lord at his Second Coming. They are Christ’s, the firstfruits, and they shall descend with him to reign as kings and priests during the millennial era.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 640.)

Later another trump will sound (see D&C 88:99): “This is the *afternoon* of the first resurrection; it takes place after our Lord has ushered in the millennium. Those coming forth at that time do so with terrestrial bodies and are thus destined to inherit a terrestrial glory in eternity.” (McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 640.)

■ Is there a difference in the quality of bodies received in the resurrection? Will those resurrected to a celestial glory receive a more glorified body than those resurrected to terrestrial or telestial glories? Discuss 1 Corinthians 15:40–42; Doctrine and Covenants 76:96–98; 88:22–31.

■ Can we take anything we accumulate in this mortal life to our resurrected state? Can we take any money or material possessions? Will our lands and gold be of any value to us in the resurrection? Read Doctrine and Covenants 130:18–19; what things should we emphasize acquiring in this life that will be of value in the resurrection?

### **C. Everyone will appear before the Lord to be judged.**

■ Write on the chalkboard the word *judgment*. Ask the students to list several judgments that occur in our lives as we move toward the final judgment. The list might include crises, or turning points, when we are called upon to make significant decisions or choices; grades on our academic work; and interviews with priesthood leaders

for baptism, priesthood advancement, temple recommends, missions, and temple marriage.

■ Alma 11:43–44 pertains to the last great judgment, which will occur after our resurrection. What will be in our memory as we stand before the judgment bar? (A bright recollection of all our guilt.) What a motivation for us to labor to repent all the days of our lives, so that we can stand guiltless at the judgment bar!

■ According to Alma 11:44, who will be the Great Judge at the last judgment? Help the students understand that the Father has committed the keys of judgment to the Son. (See Doctrinal Outline C on p. 87 of the student manual.) Have a class member read 2 Nephi 9:41. The Savior wants to receive us “with open arms” (Mormon 6:17). Rather than being a time of terror, the Judgment will be one of the greatest events in all of our existence if we pay the price of proper preparation and repentance.

■ According to Alma 11:44, on what basis will our judgment be rendered? *Works* refer to more than actual deeds: we will also be judged according to our words and thoughts (see Alma 12:14). Perhaps the most succinct statement about our judgment is found in Doctrine and Covenants 137:9: “For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.” We should work now to turn our hearts to the Lord and seek always to do his will rather than centering our thoughts and intentions on evil or material things, “for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21).

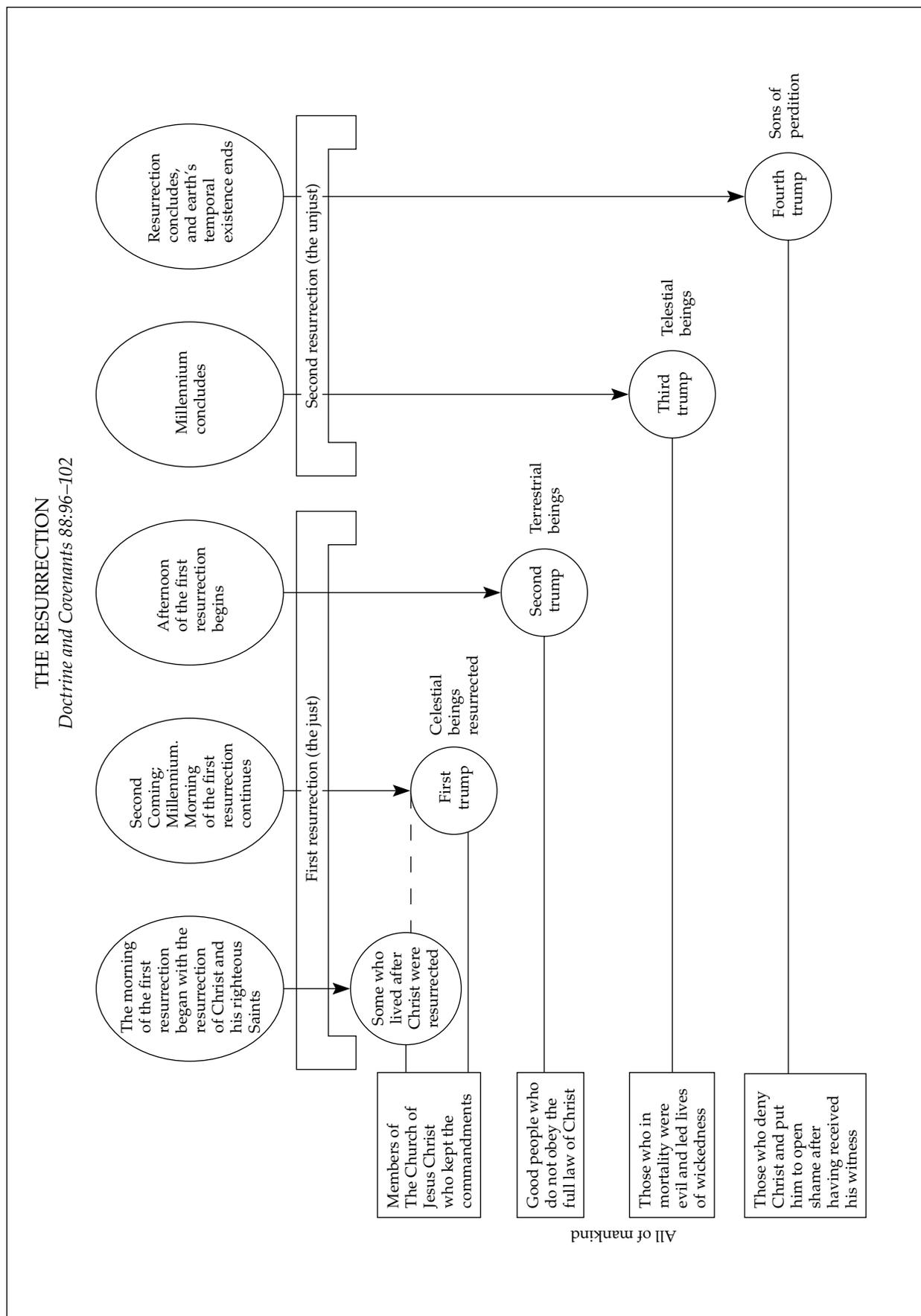
■ How can we be sure that our great judgment will be just? The Lord loves all of us, and as a perfect being he would not render judgment out of mere vengeance. We will receive what we deserve according to the law of restoration (see Alma 41:10–13). We will all exclaim at our judgment, “Holy, holy are thy judgments, O Lord God Almighty” (2 Nephi 9:46; see also 2 Nephi 9:47–48). It is because of the reality of the Judgment that Jacob warned us of the consequence of our sins and invited us to repent.

## **Conclusion**

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Discuss the warning by President Taylor in Supporting Statements C on page 89 of the student manual (see *Journal of Discourses*, 16:301–2). Urge your students to humble themselves in prayer before God to ask for forgiveness of their sins and to seek his help in overcoming their weaknesses. Stress that *now* is the time to prepare for the resurrection and the Judgment.

Chalkboard 1





### Introduction

Elder Sterling W. Sill told a story that you could use to lead the class into a discussion of the kingdoms of glory:

“We might learn a great many important lessons from the story told many years ago by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick entitled ‘On the Wrong Bus.’ It tells of a man who got on a bus with the intention and desire of going to Detroit. But when he arrived at the end of a long trip, he found himself in Kansas City. At first he would not believe it. When he asked for Woodward Avenue and was told there was no Woodward Avenue, he was indignant—he knew there was. It was some time before he could face the fact that in spite of his good intentions and his earnest desire, he was not in Detroit at all but in Kansas City. Everything was fine except for one little detail; he had just caught the wrong bus.

“Isn’t it interesting that so many human beings arrive at some port in life where they never intended to go. We pick out goals of honor and success and happiness, and then we sometimes get on the buses that take us to destinations loaded with dishonor, failure, and unpleasantness. A primary purpose of our mortal existence is to prepare for the life that lies beyond. And our possible destination has been separated into three great subdivisions, which Paul compares in desirability to the light of the sun, the moon, and the stars. . . .

“We may have the highest objectives in our hearts, but when we get on that bus that takes us to the wrong destination, we can’t very well change our situation merely by pointing out to ourselves that we had the best of intentions. It will then be the facts that will be important. We are going to be judged by our works, not by our intentions, and it may seem pretty empty then to hear the old cliché that ‘the path to hell is paved with good intentions.’ . . .

“And so we come back again to this great idea which is one of the most important in the world: first, that we know where we want to go; and second, that we get on the bus that will take us there.” (“On the Wrong Bus,” *New Era*, July 1983, pp. 4–6.)

### Ideas for Teaching

**A. There are three kingdoms, or degrees, of glory, which are compared to the sun, the moon, and the stars.**

- Ask the students to name three persons in the Bible who saw or testified of the degrees of glory. *Jacob* (see *Genesis 28:12–16*). “Paul ascended into the third heavens, and he could understand

the three principal rounds of Jacob’s ladder—the telestial, the terrestrial, and the celestial glories or kingdoms, where Paul saw and heard things which were not lawful for him to utter” (Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 304–5).

*Jesus Christ* (see *John 14:1–2*; see also *History of the Church*, 6:365). The Prophet Joseph Smith changed *John 14:2* to read, “In my Father’s kingdom are many kingdoms.”

*Paul* (see *1 Corinthians 15:40–42*; *2 Corinthians 12:1–4*). Why is the information in the Bible concerning the degrees of glory so scanty? To whom did the Lord again reveal the information concerning the destiny of mankind? (Joseph Smith; see *D&C 76*.)

**B. The Lord has prescribed requirements for eternal life in the celestial kingdom.**

- Make it clear that we rely upon the mercy and atonement of Jesus Christ in order to obtain the celestial kingdom, “for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (*2 Nephi 25:23*).

- Have the students read *Doctrine and Covenants 131:1* and the scriptures in *Doctrinal Outline B* on page 90 of the student manual. Use the statements by Elder Bruce R. McConkie and President George Q. Cannon in *Supporting Statements B* on pages 91–92 of the student manual to help the students understand why they must strive always to achieve exaltation (see McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 116; Cannon, in *Conference Report*, Apr. 1900, pp. 55–56).

**C. Great opportunities and rewards have been promised to those who inherit the celestial kingdom.**

- Ask the students what they think the celestial kingdom will be like. Read *Doctrine and Covenants 137:1–4*, in which the Prophet Joseph Smith described his vision of the celestial kingdom.

- Using *Chalkboard 1*, discuss the conditions and rewards of those who inherit the celestial kingdom. Read with your students the verses of scripture listed on *Chalkboard 1*.

- From *Supporting Statements C* on page 92 of the student manual, read and discuss President Lorenzo Snow’s overview of what our Heavenly Father wants for each of his children and what we must do to obtain it (see *Journal of Discourses*, 5:313).

**D. The Lord has described those who will inherit the terrestrial kingdom.**

- Refer to *Chalkboard 2* to describe the kind of people who will inherit the terrestrial kingdom.

- Read in Supporting Statements D on page 92 of the student manual President Joseph Fielding Smith's definition of what it means to "die without law" (see *Church History and Modern Revelation*, 1:287–88). In a poetic version of Doctrine and Covenants 76, the Prophet Joseph Smith wrote:

*Behold, these are they that have died without law;  
The heathen of ages that never had hope, . . .  
These are they that are hon'rabable men of the earth;  
Who were blinded and dup'd by the cunning of men;  
They receiv'd not the truth of the Savior at first;  
But did, when they heard it in prison, again.*  
("The Answer," *Times and Seasons*, 1 Feb. 1843, p. 84.)

Do not be afraid to admit that we do not know all there is to know about each of the kingdoms. We *are* certain, however, that those who did not receive the gospel in this life, but who would have received it had the opportunity been given, will be heirs of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 137:7–8).

- Read Doctrine and Covenants 76:79. Ask what it means to be valiant in our testimony. After a brief discussion, read Elder Bruce R. McConkie's thought-provoking explanation in Supporting Statements D on page 92 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Oct. 1974, p. 46; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, p. 35).

**E. The Lord has told us some of the conditions in the terrestrial kingdom.**

- Using Chalkboard 2 and the scripture references listed on it, help the students understand what has been revealed about the terrestrial kingdom.

**F. The Lord has described those who will inherit the telestial kingdom.**

- Have the students search Doctrine and Covenants 76:99–103 and identify the kinds of

people who will receive a telestial inheritance. Compare the students' discoveries with what is listed on Chalkboard 3.

**G. The Lord has outlined the conditions and limitations of the telestial kingdom.**

- Using Chalkboard 3 as a guide, discuss what has been revealed concerning the telestial kingdom.

**H. The scriptures explain who the sons of perdition are and what their fate will be.**

- Use Doctrinal Outline H and Supporting Statements H, on pages 91 and 93 of the student manual, to help explain what we know about the sons of perdition. Since little is said or known about the fate of the sons of perdition, stay with what is suggested in the student manual. Remember that the emphasis in this chapter is on the celestial kingdom.

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## Conclusion

A critical purpose in our coming to earth was to determine what level of law and glory we would abide in eternity. Elder Sterling W. Sill made a statement that magnifies our personal responsibility to strive for exaltation: "There is no power in the universe that can come between us and the celestial kingdom, except our own power" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1975, p. 42; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1975, p. 30).

## Chalkboard 1

## CELESTIAL KINGDOM

**Attitudes and Behaviors of Exaltation**

Those who received a testimony of Jesus (see D&C 76:51)

Those who received baptism (see v. 51)

Those who received the Holy Ghost (see v. 52)

Those who kept the commandments (see v. 52)

Those who overcame all things (see v. 60)

Those who were sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise (see v. 53)

Those who complied with the new and everlasting covenant of marriage (see D&C 131:1–3)

**Conditions and Rewards of Exaltation**

Descend with Christ at his second coming (see D&C 76:63)

Come forth in the morning of the first resurrection (see vv. 64–65; 88:28–29)

Become members of the Church of the Firstborn (see v. 54)

Become kings and priests to God and receive of the Father's fulness, glory, and grace (see vv. 56–57, 94)

Receive all things from the Father (see vv. 55, 59)

Dwell forever in the presence of God and Christ (see v. 62)

Become gods (see v. 58; 132:19–20)

## Chalkboard 2

## TERRESTRIAL KINGDOM

**Attitudes and Behaviors**

Those who died without law (see D&C 76:72)

Those kept in spirit prison who were not receptive to the testimony of Jesus on earth, but who afterwards accepted it (see vv. 73–74)

Those honorable men of the earth who were blinded by the craftiness of others (see v. 75)

Those who received a testimony of Jesus but were not valiant therein (see v. 79)

**Conditions, Rewards, and Limitations**

Receive of the presence of the Son but not of the fulness of the Father (see v. 77)

Come forth in the first resurrection, after the resurrection of celestial beings (see v. 78; 88:99)

Serve as ministers to those in the celestial kingdom (see D&C 76:86)

Dwell in a kingdom whose glory, power, and dominion exceed those of the celestial kingdom (see v. 91)

Receive of the Holy Ghost through ministrations of celestial beings (see v. 87)



## Chalkboard 3

## TELESTIAL KINGDOM

**Attitudes and Behaviors**

Those who willfully reject the gospel, the testimony of Jesus, the prophets, and the everlasting covenant (see D&C 76:99–101)

Those who once were murderers, liars, sorcerers, adulterers, and whoremongers (see v. 103; Revelation 22:15)

Those who deny not the Holy Spirit (see v. 83)

**Conditions, Rewards, and Limitations**

Will not be resurrected until the second, or last, resurrection (see v. 85)

Are cast into hell until the last resurrection (see vv. 84, 104–6)

Can never go where God and Christ dwell (see v. 112)

Receive the Holy Ghost through the ministration of terrestrial beings (see v. 86)

Will be servants of the Most High (see v. 112)



## Introduction

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At the mouth of a large canyon gorge lay a village that for many years had enjoyed a blissful existence. Some of the village fathers, however, had long maintained that the village was in continual danger of being flooded with the water held in reserve high above the village. The large mountain dam holding back the water had been constructed at the time the village was founded, but to them it had never seemed adequate. These village fathers worried about the increased water runoff each spring when the winter snow began to melt. They had long asserted that the village should be relocated on higher ground, but the great majority of the villagers were indifferent to such warnings and remained oblivious to the danger of possible destruction. One precaution was, however, agreed upon by all—a watchman was stationed high on the mountain slopes above the dam. In the event of imminent danger, he was to warn the people so they could escape disaster.

For many years watchmen observed conditions at the dam and periodically warned the people that their situation was increasingly precarious. Some heeded their declaration and moved to higher ground, but the majority remained, blindly confident that life would continue without distress as it had for so many years.

Finally, a watchman saw the dam begin to give way. He issued a fervent warning to the people below. Their indifference to his warning voice sealed their doom, and those who remained in the little village perished.

As with all worthy parables, this parable has meaning for us. In the gospel sense, what is the symbolic meaning of the watchmen? (They are prophets.) Who are the villagers? (They are the inhabitants of the earth.) As in the parable, some will heed the prophetic warnings about calamities that will take place in the last days, but others will pay no attention.

The Doctrine and Covenants was revealed as a “voice of warning . . . unto all people” of the last days (D&C 1:4). Section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants was revealed as the Lord’s preface to that great body of revelations. Read verses 2–4, 11–14, 17, 34–36. The theme of warning is sounded repeatedly throughout the Doctrine and Covenants, describing the judgments that are to come upon the world and the means whereby God’s children can be saved from them. By heeding the signs of the times, we as a people may avoid the judgments God will pour out upon the wicked; instead, we can be prepared for the glorious second coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Many of the events that are signs of the times are dealt with in greater detail in other chapters. The Apostasy is discussed in chapter 22, the restoration of the gospel in chapter 23, the scattering and the gathering of Israel in chapter 24, and the fall of Babylon and the establishment of Zion in chapter 35. Help the students see the “big picture.” The purpose of this chapter is to give an overview of the signs of the times and how those signs have been, are being, and will be fulfilled.

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. The signs of the times in our day are events that were prophesied to take place in the latter days before the second coming of Christ.

- Ask the students to define *signs of the times* (see D&C 68:11). Read Elder Bruce R. McConkie’s definition of the words *signs*, *times*, and *signs of the times* in Supporting Statements A on page 94 of the student manual (see *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 715–16). The signs of the times are given to us by the Lord to help us prepare for his second coming. Prophecies in the scriptures and teachings of the living prophets help us recognize these signs. Since we are living in the last days before the Second Coming, we need to recognize these signs and their importance; if we do recognize them and heed their message, we will be able to abide the Second Coming and avoid the judgments of God when he cleanses the earth of its wickedness.
- Point out that a common misconception about the signs of the times is that all of them are frightening calamities. Actually, many signs are some of the most positive and uplifting events ever to take place on the earth. Some of the truly glorious signs of the times include the Spirit being poured out on all flesh, the discovery and colonization of America, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the gathering of Israel, the return of the ten tribes, the building of latter-day temples, the return of Judah to Jerusalem, and the blossoming of the Lamanites. Elder McConkie listed fifty-one separate signs of the times. Of these, thirty are positive. Twenty-one are somewhat negative or calamitous, but even these are positive inasmuch as they help cleanse the earth in preparation for the Savior’s second coming. (See *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 715–34.)
- One prophetic statement about the signs of the times is found in Joel 2:28–32. This passage captures the spirit of the signs of the times and how they prepare us for “the great and the terrible

day of the Lord" (v. 31), or the Lord's second coming. Only in Zion will there be safety when the great and the terrible day of the Lord comes. If we are faithful and call upon the Lord, we will be delivered in the last days. (See v. 32.)

- Moroni, the last prophet of the Book of Mormon, beheld visions of the latter days. Read Mormon 8:35, in which Moroni clearly stated that he saw us. Then read Mormon 8:27–41, in which he graphically described evil practices of the last days, which are among the negative signs of the times.

- Certain chapters in holy writ list many of the signs of the times (see Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:22–55; D&C 29:14–28; 43:17–35; 45:15–59; 88:86–98). Your students may enjoy reading in these prophetic chapters and identifying the signs under one of these three categories: *Already Occurred*, *Occurring Now*, and *Yet to Occur*. Do not try to make an in-depth study of the various signs, but help the students realize that many of the signs prophesied of in the scriptures have already occurred and others are occurring today. This realization should add to their conviction that all the signs will eventually occur.

- Read and discuss the Prophet Joseph Smith's remarks about the signs of the times in Supporting Statements A on page 95 of the student manual (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 286–87).

### **B. A knowledge of the signs of the times can help us turn to the Lord and prepare ourselves for his second coming.**

- Dangers in discussing the signs of the times include the tendency to sensationalize the nature of the signs, to speculate about their exact meaning, or to try to predict exactly when certain events are to occur. Speaking to students at Brigham Young University, President Ezra Taft Benson emphasized the importance of following the scriptures when discussing signs of the times "because of rumors, writings, and tape recordings that have recently circulated among the Saints and that have created among some of our Church members a feeling of uncertainty" ("Prepare Yourselves for the Great Day of the Lord," in *Brigham Young University 1981–82 Fireside and Devotional Speeches*, p. 64).

Read in Supporting Statements B on page 96 of the student manual President Harold B. Lee's counsel about study of the signs (see Conference Report, Oct. 1972, p. 128; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1973,

p. 106). Challenge the students to follow the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, whose duty it is to testify of and warn about the impending crises facing mankind. They will guide us in understanding the signs of the times and in preparing for the Savior's second coming.

- Help the students realize that we do not know the exact order in which the signs will occur or the time when they will occur. You could compare the signs of the times with putting together a jigsaw puzzle: we do not know exactly when each piece will be used, but as more pieces are used, the final picture becomes clearer and we draw closer to the conclusion. Likewise, as each sign occurs, we are brought a step closer to the Lord's second coming.

Chapter 36 deals in more detail with the Savior's second coming, but you may want to emphasize now that no one, not even the angels in heaven, knows when the Savior will come again. Those of us who are now living may or may not be alive at that glorious time. Much more important than knowing the time or living in mortality at that time will be how we conduct our lives in preparation for the Second Coming: "You must be *wise* and *virtuous*. You must govern your natures by the doctrines of his kingdom. You must be valiant in your testimony of Christ by keeping all his commandments." (Benson, "Prepare Yourselves for the Great Day of the Lord," p. 68.)

- One of the signs of the times is that many people will be deceived about the second coming of the Lord. Even some Latter-day Saints are and will be deceived. Yet this deception need not be the case. If we follow the living prophet and feast upon the words of Christ as found in the holy scriptures, we can avoid being deceived (see 2 Nephi 31:20). Read Doctrinal Outline B 3 and Supporting Statements B on pages 94 and 95–96 of the student manual.

## Conclusion

"The youth and all members of the Church need to accept the reality of Christ's return in majesty and power *before* that event occurs; for, as C. S. Lewis put it, it will do men little good to kneel down when it is no longer possible to stand up, for when the 'Author of the play comes on stage, the play is over!' " (Neal A. Maxwell, *New Era*, Jan. 1971, p. 9).

### Introduction

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Sing or recite the words to “Ye Elders of Israel” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 319). Ask what is meant by the phrases “O Babylon, O Babylon, we bid thee farewell” and “And point them to Zion and life evermore.” Point out that you will discuss more fully the symbolic meaning of *Babylon* and *Zion*, which represent opposites on the spiritual scale. You may wish to write the two words on the chalkboard in a continuum to refer to during the discussion.

### Ideas for Teaching

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#### A. Babylon symbolizes evil.

■ Point out the location of Babylon on Map 5 in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. Note that Babylon was the chief city and capital of the Babylonian Empire. Elder Bruce R. McConkie identified the ancient city of Babylon as a “center of iniquity” that “will not rise again” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 69; *The Millennial Messiah*, p. 424; see Supporting Statements A on pp. 97–98 of the student manual).

Ancient Babylon was rich and powerful but also morally corrupt and wicked. Because of its corruption, the Lord directed several prophets to prophesy of its destruction. With your students’ help, summarize Isaiah’s prophetic statements concerning Babylon in Isaiah 13:19–22. Point out that Isaiah’s prophecy was literally fulfilled. Today, heaps of stone are all that remain of once-mighty Babylon. Nothing except wild desert animals inhabit its ruins. Note that other mighty ancient cities—such as Rome, Jerusalem, Damascus, and Athens—still exist, even though they have suffered various destructions.

■ There is often a dual interpretation to Isaiah’s prophecies: that is, a prophecy being fulfilled in two separate ways. Many prophecies had a first fulfillment close to Isaiah’s time and another fulfillment in the latter days. Such is the case with Isaiah’s prophecies about Babylon. (See the headnotes to Isaiah 13 and 14.)

Read Doctrine and Covenants 1:16 and 133:14. “Babylon the great” or “spiritual Babylon” symbolizes wickedness and evil and “the world” of sin that surrounds us in the latter days. Refer to the continuum on the chalkboard, and write under *Babylon* such words as *wickedness*, *worldliness*, and *sin*. Point out that sections 1 and 133 of the Doctrine and Covenants were revealed by the Lord as his preface and appendix, respectively, to the Doctrine

and Covenants. Hence the idea of fleeing from Babylon, “from the midst of wickedness,” is one of the major themes of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### B. Spiritual Babylon will fall in utter ruin.

■ Ask for examples of civilizations or cities that were destroyed by God; list the examples on the chalkboard. Note that God did not destroy any of these peoples until he had first warned them to repent. Furthermore, he did not destroy them until they had “ripened in iniquity,” or become completely engrossed in their sins (Ether 9:20).

You may wish to analyze the following seven examples of peoples who were destroyed because they had immersed themselves so thoroughly in wickedness. Point out that God gave us these examples of wickedness and worldliness so that we can avoid their practices and escape their punishment. As you discuss these groups, note that the same evils exist today and that many groups are presently ripening in iniquity.

#### THE PEOPLE OF NOAH’S TIME

Noah warned the people to repent (see Moses 8:20). People boasted of their own power (see Moses 8:21). Everyone thought only of evil (see Moses 8:22). The earth was filled with violence (see Moses 8:28).

#### THE JAREDITE CIVILIZATION

Many prophets, including Ether, were sent to warn the people but were rejected (see Ether 7:23–24; 9:28–29; 11:1–2; 12:1–3).

Secret combinations helped bring about their downfall (see Ether 8:16–25; 11:15; 14:10).

The people waged bloody and terrible war (see Ether 14:18–22; 15:2, 16–19).

#### SODOM AND GOMORRAH

The scriptures do not clearly state who warned the people of these cities of the plain; however, we assume that servants of the Lord (perhaps Melchizedek and his people, as well as Abraham), were sent by the Lord to warn them and to testify against their wickedness. Their sins were “very grievous” (Genesis 18:20; see also 18:20*b*; 19:5; 19:5*a*; Ezekiel 16:49).

Not even ten righteous people inhabited the cities (see Genesis 18:32).

God destroyed the cities with fire and brimstone out of heaven (see Genesis 19:24).

#### THE CANAANITES

They “had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity” (1 Nephi 17:32–35).

They practiced all manner of immorality (see Leviticus 18; 20).

The Lord used the Israelites to destroy them and drive them from the face of the land (see 1 Nephi 17:33, 35).

#### THE WICKED NATION OF ISRAEL

Moses forewarned Israel of the possibility of apostasy and consequent destruction (see Deuteronomy 8:19–20).

Many prophets warned Israel to repent.

Israel was guilty of performing evil acts while worshiping false gods (see Deuteronomy 8:19; 2 Kings 17:7–18).

#### THE CITY OF AMMONIAH

Alma and Amulek warned the people but were rejected (see Alma 8–14).

The people of Ammoniah were guilty of misusing the law (see Alma 10:13–15).

The lawyers and judges loved lucre more than they loved God (see Alma 11:24).

They persecuted and killed the righteous (see Alma 14:8–9, 14–19).

The city was destroyed by the Lamanites despite the boasts of its people that it could not be destroyed (see Alma 16:2–3, 9).

#### THE NEPHITE NATION

Mormon and Moroni warned the people (see Mormon 3:2–3; Moroni 9:4, 6).

Never was there such great wickedness among the house of Israel (see Mormon 4:12).

There was a “horrible scene” of “blood and carnage” among the Nephites and the Lamanites (Mormon 4:11).

Secret combinations led to the destruction of the Nephites (see Ether 8:19–21).

They thirsted for blood continually (see Moroni 9:5).

- Just as God destroyed wicked peoples in the past, so will he destroy the wicked in these latter days. For that reason the Lord has called prophets to warn us, just as he did in the past. The wickedness of the world is symbolically represented by Babylon the Great. Use scriptures from Doctrinal Outline B 1 and B 2 on page 97 of the student manual to illustrate that God has prophesied the downfall of spiritual Babylon and that the Saints are to flee from her midst.
- Fleeing from Babylon does not mean leaving one community and going to another. Even though some communities may have more righteous people and fewer wicked people than others, each of us is in some way surrounded by Babylon. Actually, Babylon has more to do with our individual internal condition. What, then, does it mean to flee from Babylon? (To repent of all our sins; to refrain from becoming contaminated with worldliness; to keep the commandments and be true to our covenants.) How is it possible to be in the world but not of the world?
- What will happen to members of the Church who do not flee from Babylon? (They will be destroyed with the wicked in the destructions leading up to the second coming of Christ; see D&C 64:24.) Many Church members remain in Babylon

without really realizing it. In the last several decades numerous aspects of Babylon (similar to those described in the seven wicked civilizations or cities) have been portrayed on television, in movies, in music, and in literature. Can we fully flee from Babylon if we continue to participate vicariously in Babylon through these media? Many Church members spend more time and money on the entertainment of Babylon than on supporting the building of Zion. Review the wholesome objectives of Latter-day Saints as detailed in the thirteenth article of faith. Challenge the students to flee completely from Babylon by being selective about television, movies, music, and literature.

#### C. Zion is the name given by the Lord to his righteous Saints.

- Refer again to the continuum of Babylon and Zion. Point out that in the symbolism of the scriptures, *Zion* is the opposite of *Babylon*. Once we have fled from Babylon, as we have been commanded, we should go to Zion. What is Zion? Is it a place? Or is it a condition? The name *Zion* actually has several definitions and can refer to a number of locations, but to be properly identified as Zion in the fulness of the word, all locations must have the same condition of righteousness. Discuss the definitions of Zion given by President Harold B. Lee and President Spencer W. Kimball in Supporting Statements C on page 98 of the student manual (see Lee, in Conference Report, Oct. 1968, pp. 61–62; Kimball, in Conference Report, Apr. 1978, p. 122; or *Ensign*, May 1978, p. 81).
- Anciently the patriarch Enoch established a city where the righteous of the earth gathered. You may wish to read the inspiring story in Moses 7:12–21, which describes people fleeing spiritual Babylon and forming a righteous society called Zion. According to Moses 7:18, what were the characteristics of that Zion? Compare this definition of Zion with the one in Doctrine and Covenants 97:21. Write the key words about Zion under *Zion* on the continuum. For Zion to be fully established in these last days, the same characteristics must exist.
- After the Church was established in the Rocky Mountains under the direction of President Brigham Young, the command was given to the Saints throughout the world to gather to Zion. Read the words of an early gathering hymn, “Israel, Israel, God Is Calling” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 7). Now the charge to Church members throughout the world is to build up Zion wherever they are living. Instead of coming to Utah to find Zion, the Saints are gathering to the stakes of Zion, which are multiplying rapidly throughout the earth. All the blessings of Zion, including the temples, are given to the people where they are living. Elder Bruce R. McConkie declared:
 

“Stakes of Zion are also being organized at the ends of the earth. In this connection, let us ponder these truths: A stake of Zion is a part of Zion. You

cannot create a stake of Zion without creating a part of Zion. Zion is the pure in heart; we gain purity of heart by baptism and by obedience. A stake has geographical boundaries. To create a stake is like founding a City of Holiness. Every stake on earth is the gathering place for the lost sheep of Israel who live in its area.

“The gathering place for Peruvians is in the stakes of Zion in Peru, or in the places which soon will become stakes. The gathering place for Chileans is in Chile; for Bolivians it is in Bolivia; for Koreans it is in Korea; and so it goes through all the length and breadth of the earth. Scattered Israel in every nation is called to gather to the fold of Christ, to the stakes of Zion, as such are established in their nations.” (“Come: Let Israel Build Zion,” *Ensign*, May 1977, p. 118.)

Elder Boyd K. Packer similarly counseled: “There are dangers all around. Some of you may say, ‘If things get really tough, we will move here, or we will move back there, and then we will be safe; everything will be all right there.’ If you do not fix it so that you are safe and in good company when you are alone, or when you are with your own husband or your own wife and your own children, you will not be safe or find happiness anywhere. There is no such thing as geographical security.” (“*That All May Be Edified*,” p. 201.)

#### **D. As spiritual Babylon ripens in iniquity, a great latter-day Zion will be established.**

- Read the scriptures listed in Doctrinal Outline D 1 on page 97 of the student manual that describe Zion and her stakes as a place of refuge for Latter-day Saints. You may wish to refer to Isaiah 33:20 and 54:2, which are the first references to stakes in the scriptures. According to the symbolism, the stakes of a tent can enlarge the size and capacity of the tent, or Zion. As new stakes of Zion are created, Zion increases. As was prophesied, “Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments” (D&C 82:14). Doctrine and Covenants 115:6 tells us that in the stakes of Zion we can find refuge from the storm when the wrath of God is poured out upon all the earth. Discuss how participating in the righteous activities of wards and stakes fortifies us against worldliness, or spiritual Babylon.

- Remind the students that although Zion is growing, it cannot be established thoroughly until Church members are living according to the principles of Zion. Remind them of Moses 7:18. Read Doctrine and Covenants 105:5. Emphasize the importance of living the celestial law—the Lord cannot receive Zion unto himself until it is

pure in heart and abides “the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom” (D&C 105:5).

- Where will the center of Zion eventually be located? As early as the summer of 1831, only a little more than a year after the Church was restored, the Lord revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith the location of the land where Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be located in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri (see D&C 57:1–3; Articles of Faith 1:10). The latter-day Zion in Independence will be called the New Jerusalem (see Doctrinal Outline D 4 on p. 97 of the student manual). Elder McConkie cautioned those who might be tempted to move to Independence now in anticipation of what is to come:

“As we are aware, the building of the New Jerusalem lies in the future, at a time yet to be designated by revelation. There is no present call for the saints to purchase land or to live in Jackson County or in any place connected therewith. The revealed word relative to the gathering to Independence and its environs will come through the prophet of God on earth. When it does come—with the consequent return of the saints to that Zion which shall not be moved out of its place—that call will not be for the saints in general to assemble there. The return to Jackson County will be by delegates, as it were. Those whose services are needed there will assemble as appointed. The rest of Israel will remain in their appointed places. The Lord’s house is a house of order, and faithful saints do as they are told and go at the bidding of their prophet, for his voice is the voice of the Lord.” (*Millennial Messiah*, p. 294.)

- Read the scriptures listed in Doctrinal Outline D 6 on page 97 of the student manual regarding the Zion of Enoch and the Zion of the latter days being united at the time of Christ’s second coming. President John Taylor’s comments in Supporting Statements D on page 99 of the student manual also describe this glorious union (see *Journal of Discourses*, 10:147).

## Conclusion

Conclude by singing “Israel, Israel, God Is Calling” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 7). Urge the students to ponder the message of the hymn and resolve to leave Babylon and come to Zion in their thoughts and actions. It was important for the early Saints to physically leave their native lands and gather to Zion in the tops of the mountains. Today we are to gather to spiritual Zion by teaching and practicing the principles and laws of the celestial kingdom in our homes and in the stakes of Zion.



## Introduction

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Ask the students which topics are most frequently mentioned in the Bible. After listing on the chalkboard their suggestions, read Elder Sterling W. Sill's observation in Supporting Statements A on pages 100–101 of the student manual (see Conference Report, Apr. 1966, p. 19).

## Ideas for Teaching

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### A. The Savior's second coming has been prophesied throughout the ages.

- Point out that the Second Coming is mentioned frequently in the scriptures because prophets in all ages have been commissioned to prophesy of this great event.

Invite the students to use the Topical Guide in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible (s.v. "Jesus Christ, Second Coming") to locate at least one prophecy of Christ's second coming made by Malachi, Isaiah, Ezekiel, John, Paul, and Joseph Smith. Have the students share their findings. Add insights about the Second Coming given by other prophets and by the Lord himself.

- Help the students understand that prophets in all ages prophesied about the second coming of Christ so that the faithful could be prepared to meet him. Discuss what we must do to be prepared for the second coming of the Savior.

### B. The Savior will make several appearances before his second coming to all the world.

- Display a map of the world. Ask the students to identify where the Savior will make his appearances. Help them understand that the Savior will make several appearances before his second coming to all the world. Refer to Doctrinal Outline B on page 100 of the student manual. Read Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14; Doctrine and Covenants 45. List on the chalkboard the four separate appearances referred to in those passages of scripture. You may also want to read Supporting Statements B on page 101 of the student manual. For the location of Adam-ondi-Ahman and Independence, Missouri (the New Jerusalem), refer your students to Church history map 5 in the triple combination.

### C. The Lord has spoken about his final appearance in some detail.

- Point out that most of the information found in the scriptures about the Second Coming refers to the final glorious appearance of the Savior. Ask

the students what they think of when the Second Coming is mentioned. What do they believe it will be like? List their ideas on the chalkboard. Do not draw any conclusions yet; this activity is intended to help the students evaluate their present understanding of the Second Coming.

- Many students may have questions about when the Savior will come. Read Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:40; 1 Thessalonians 5:2–4; Doctrine and Covenants 106:4–5. Discuss how a thief comes. Point out that there is no telegram or telephone call in advance to warn of his arrival. Read Doctrine and Covenants 77:12–13 and Revelation 12–13. Then read Elder Bruce R. McConkie's comments in Supporting Statements C on page 102 of the student manual (see *The Millennial Messiah*, pp. 21–22).

- Many events described in the scriptures will occur in conjunction with the Savior's final appearance. Some pertinent scriptures are listed in Doctrinal Outline C 3 through C 10 on page 100 of the student manual. You could assign the students to look up certain scriptures and determine what event or sign is described. List the events and signs on the chalkboard as the students explain them.

- Elder Richard L. Evans made a statement that could help the students understand the attitude they should take in preparing for the Second Coming:

"I recall a reported statement, attributed, as I remember it, to President Wilford Woodruff. Some of the brethren of his time are said to have approached him (they had their troubles also) and to have inquired of him as to when he felt the end would be—when would be the coming of the Master? These, I think, are not his exact words, but they convey the spirit of his reported reply: 'I would live as if it were to be tomorrow—but I am still planting cherry trees!' I think we may well take this as a page for our own book and live as if the end might be tomorrow—and still plant cherry trees!" (In Conference Report, Apr. 1950, pp. 105–6.)

- Ask why the Savior's second coming is both a great and a terrible day. For the righteous, it is a day of rejoicing (see Revelation 19:6–7); for the wicked, it is a day of sorrow and destruction (see D&C 45:49–50; 29:15).

- Ask your students to describe the purposes of the Second Coming:
  1. To cleanse the earth of wickedness
  2. To bring peace and establish the kingdom of God on the earth
  3. To reward the righteous

## Conclusion

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Read and discuss Doctrine and Covenants 38:30. Note particularly the phrase "if ye are prepared, ye shall not fear." Point out that this statement is an injunction as well as a promise.

### Introduction

■ Read the following quotation, and ask the students if they can guess who said it and when it was said:

“Have we increased in knowledge or intelligence? Where is there a man that can step forth and alter the destiny of nations and promote the happiness of the world? Or where is there a kingdom or nation that can promote the universal happiness of its own subjects, or even their general well-being? Our nation, which possesses greater resources than any other, is rent, from center to circumference, with party strife, political intrigues, and sectional interest; our counselors are panic stricken, our legislators are astonished, and our senators are confounded, our merchants are paralyzed, our tradesmen are disheartened, our mechanics out of employ, our farmers distressed. . . .

“. . . the world itself presents one great theater of misery, woe, and ‘distress of nations with perplexity.’ All, all, speak with a voice of thunder, that man is not able to govern himself, to legislate for himself, to protect himself, to promote his own good, nor the good of the world.” (Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 249–50.)

Tell the students that this quotation is from an editorial written by the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1842. Considering the similarities of world conditions between the time of Joseph Smith and the present, what can we conclude about man-made governments? What conclusion did Joseph Smith reach?

- Display a recent newspaper, and pinpoint the articles that would not be published in a millennial newspaper. Discuss what kind of headlines would be typical in a newspaper published during the Millennium.
- You may want to sing or read the words of the hymn “Adam-on-di-Ahman” (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 49).

### Ideas for Teaching

**A. The thousand years of the Millennium will be ushered in when the Savior comes in power and glory.**

■ For six thousand years, God has given people the opportunity of governing themselves righteously. Most people throughout history have failed in this attempt. According to the following scriptures, what responsibility will the Savior assume when he comes the second time?

*Isaiah 2:1–4.* “Out of Zion shall go forth the law.”

*Isaiah 9:6–7.* “The government shall be upon his shoulder: . . . Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, . . . to establish it with judgment and with justice.”

*Articles of Faith 1:10.* “Christ will reign personally upon the earth.”

*Doctrine and Covenants 29:11.* He will “dwell in righteousness with men on earth.”

*Doctrine and Covenants 133:25.* “The Lord . . . shall reign over all flesh.”

**B. The earth will be renewed for the millennial day.**

- Review with the students the tenth article of faith.
- What will be the life expectancy of a mortal person during the Millennium? (see *Isaiah 65:20*). What might contribute to this longer life?
- Ask the students to read *Jeremiah 31:31–34* and *Doctrine and Covenants 84:98*. What great promise is contained in both of these passages? (All righteous Israelites will know the Lord personally.)

**C. The Millennium will be a time of peace.**

- Are there some who would choose to live lives of wickedness even in a righteous society under righteous rulers? What happens when the wicked rule? What happens when the wicked influence not only government but also economics, the arts, entertainment, fashion, education, and science? Does this circumstance explain in part why the Savior will destroy the wicked when he comes? (See *Mosiah 29:17–23*; *Alma 46:9*.)
- Discuss what happens when the righteous rule. What does *Isaiah* indicate will occur? (see *Isaiah 26:9*).

Which evils do the following scriptures indicate will be eliminated in the Millennium?

*Isaiah 2:4* and *Doctrine and Covenants 101:26.* War and enmity

*Moses 7:18* and *Isaiah 65:21–23.* Poverty

*Doctrine and Covenants 101:32–34* and *Isaiah 11:9.* Ignorance

*Isaiah 11:9.* Crime

- Indicate that Satan will be bound during the Millennium. Satan often claims to be the prince, or ruler, of this world. Who gives him the power to rule? (The Lord allows Satan to tempt mankind, but it is mankind’s wickedness that gives Satan the power to rule.) If mankind is no longer wicked, Satan can no longer rule. Discuss President George Q. Cannon’s comments in Supporting Statements C on page 104 of the student manual (see *Gospel Truth*, 1:86–87). How will Satan be bound during the Millennium?

**D. During the Millennium the Savior will reign personally upon the earth.**

■ Use Doctrinal Outline D on page 103 of the student manual to organize a scripture study session. Select one or two verses from each section, and encourage the students to read the pertinent footnotes and references in the Topical Guide in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible.

**E. The final glorification of the earth will take place sometime after the Millennium.**

■ Was there a period in scriptural history during which near-millennial conditions prevailed? (Among the righteous Nephites and Lamanites after the Savior's visit.) How long did it last? (Nearly two hundred years.) What brought this

condition to an end? Discuss the gradual loosening of Satan as righteousness among the Nephites and Lamanites deteriorated (see 4 Nephi 1:24–42). Will the peace of the Millennium be destroyed in a similar way—that is, because our righteousness deteriorates? What will the reversal of millennial harmony eventually lead to? (see D&C 88:111–15; 29:22). What will be the eventual end of the earth? (see D&C 88:17–20; 130:8–11; 77:1).

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## Conclusion

The Millennium is the Saints' day with the Savior. For one thousand years he will tutor us in preparation for celestial life with our Heavenly Father.

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