

## Marriage Covenant

The purpose of Sunday School is to inspire class members to learn, teach, and live the gospel of Jesus Christ every day.

As we come to understand the importance the Lord places on the eternal marriage covenant, we will strive to make and keep this covenant faithfully. President Thomas S. Monson teaches, “If you are committed to the success of your marriage, there is nothing in this life which will bring you greater happiness” (“[Priesthood Power](#),” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 67). Our families will be strengthened, and generations yet unborn will be blessed.

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### Prepare

As you study [Genesis 24](#) and [28–30](#), consider asking yourself:

- What truths do I learn from the accounts of the marriages of Isaac and Jacob? How are these truths relevant to me?
- How can the marriage covenant bless my family and me? How can faithful marriages bless our society?
- As I prepare to teach, what can I do to live or prepare for the marriage covenant more fully?
- What could class members do to deepen their understanding of the marriage covenant?
- How can I teach about marriage while being sensitive to the circumstances of class members?
- How will I inspire class members to learn, teach, and live principles related to the marriage covenant in the coming week?

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### Encourage personal and family scripture study

Each week you have the opportunity to encourage class members to have meaningful scripture study individually and with their families. You could do one of the following:

- Invite one or more class members to explain how they teach the gospel to their family. As part of this discussion, you could spend a few minutes showing class members the many resources available in the [Gospel Topics](#) section of LDS.org.
- Invite class members to share what study skills or methods they use to understand the scriptures and the teachings of living prophets.
- Ask class members to share and explain verses in [Genesis 22–50](#) that they find particularly meaningful. You may invite several members to participate ahead of time. This activity could take the majority of the time in class.

#### Teaching in the Savior’s Way

The Savior invited others to testify of truths they learned so the Spirit could touch their hearts. “Whom say ye that I am?” He asked. As Peter responded, his testimony was strengthened: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” ([Matthew 16:15–16](#)). How can sharing the gospel strengthen the testimonies of class member?

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### Learn together and invite to act

Follow the guidance of the Spirit as you select one or more of these activities or create your own based on the scriptures in this outline and the needs of your class.

- **What qualities are important in a marriage partner?**



Show a picture of Rebekah at the well (see *Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 10). Divide the class into two groups, and assign each group to read silently one of the following: [Genesis 24:1–14](#), [Genesis 24:15–28](#). Ask class members to discuss what they learn about the story depicted in the picture. Why did Abraham send his servant such a great distance to find a wife for Isaac? What made Rebekah such a good choice as a wife? As you discuss these questions, you may want to refer to [Sister Elaine S. Dalton’s retelling of this account](#) or Elder F. Burton Howard’s statement commentary (see “Additional learning resources” below). What truths in this story are relevant for us?

- **Why is it important to marry in the covenant?**

Class members could search [Genesis 28:1–5](#) and [Genesis 29:1–20](#) and discuss what Jacob did to show how important it was to him to marry in the covenant. What are some sacrifices we might have to make in order to marry in the covenant? To emphasize the importance of temple marriage, you could share the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley: “There is no substitute for marrying in the temple. It is the only place under the heavens where marriage can be solemnized for eternity. Don’t cheat yourself. Don’t cheat your companion. Don’t shortchange your lives. Marry the right person in the right place at the right time” (“[Life’s Obligations](#),” *Ensign*, Feb. 1999, 2). In addition, you could study [Doctrine and Covenants 131:1–4](#) and discuss what it teaches.

- **How do we honor the marriage covenant?**

Class members could silently read [Moses 5:1–12](#) and make lists of ways husbands and wives can honor the marriage covenant. They could then share their lists with others in the class and add other principles they have learned from their own experience. As part of this discussion, you could show the video “[Expression of Love](#).”

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### Learning and living the gospel every day

Encourage class members to think about what they learned and felt today. What do they feel impressed to do? For instance, they could:

- Share something from today’s discussion with their families.
- Continue studying this doctrine in their homes and act on what they learn.
- Determine one thing they could do to honor the marriage covenant.

During the coming week, you could send class members suggestions for home study in preparation for next week’s discussion. Encourage them to consider using one of the ideas listed under “Basic Scripture Study Strategies” or “Family Study Ideas” as they review these resources.

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### Additional learning resources

- [D&C 130:20–21; 132:5, 19–20](#)
- Elder Russell M. Nelson, “[Celestial Marriage](#),” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 92–95
- Elder Russell M. Nelson taught: “I realize that many mature members of the Church are not married. Through no failing of their own, they deal with the trials of life alone. Be we all reminded that in the Lord’s own way and time, no blessings will be withheld from His faithful Saints” (“Nurturing Marriage,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2006, 36).
- Elder F. Burton Howard taught: “He wanted Isaac to be an heir of the covenant which he had made with the Lord. He knew that the blessings of that covenant could not be realized if Isaac didn’t marry a good and worthy woman who believed in God. No woman in the land of Canaan was capable of being the mother of Israel. So Abraham asked his servant to promise that he would not permit his son to marry a Canaanite. Instead Abraham sent him to the land of his fathers to find a wife for Isaac” (“[Commitment](#),” *Ensign*, May 1996, 28).
- Sister Elaine S. Dalton, “[Be Not Moved!](#)” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 121–24
- Video: “[Expression of Love](#)” (3:27)
- “[Marriage](#),” [lds.org/topics](#)

### Additional insights

- Did Abraham have his servant put his hand under his thigh?

According to the Joseph Smith Translation of [Genesis 24:2](#), Abraham told his servant, “Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my hand” (see also [verse 9](#)). “The gesture seems to have been a token of the covenant being made between the two men, perhaps similar to our shaking hands” (*Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel*, [2003], 84).

- Why has the Lord commanded plural marriage at certain times in history?

The Bible and the Book of Mormon teach that the marriage of one man to one woman is God’s standard, except at specific periods when He has declared otherwise. We don’t know all of the reasons the Lord sometimes commands plural marriage, but we do know that the Lord said, “If I will . . . raise up seed unto me, I will command my people [to practice plural marriage]; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things” ([Jacob 2:30](#)). In other words, the Lord’s general command is to not participate in plural marriage. However, He may command His people to participate in plural marriage for a time when He deems it necessary to “raise up seed” unto Him—to bring more children into the world who will be born in the covenant and raised in gospel-centered homes.