

Lesson
4

“Because of My Transgression My Eyes Are Opened”

Moses 4; 5:1–15; 6:48–62

Purpose To help each class member understand that the Fall was a necessary part of Heavenly Father’s plan for us.

Preparation

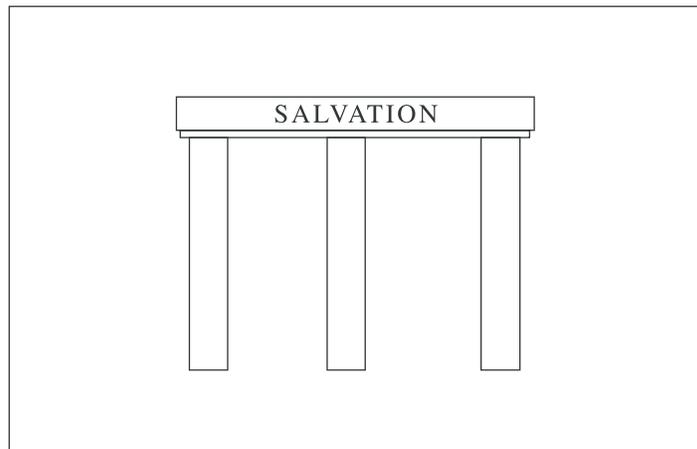
1. Prayerfully study the following scriptures:
 - a. Moses 4; 5:10–11; 6:48–49, 55–56. Satan comes to the Garden of Eden and seeks to deceive Eve. Eve and Adam partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (4:5–12). Having fallen, Adam and Eve are cast out of the garden (4:13–31). Adam and Eve later rejoice in the blessings of the Fall (5:10–11). Enoch teaches about the effects of the Fall (6:48–49, 55–56).
 - b. Moses 5:14–15; 6:50–54, 57–62. Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, mortals are saved from physical death through the Resurrection and may be saved from spiritual death through faith, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and obedience to the commandments.
 - c. Moses 5:1–9, 12. Adam and Eve begin life as mortals. They have children and teach them the truths they have learned (5:1–4, 12). Adam offers sacrifices in similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten (5:5–9).
2. Additional reading: Genesis 2–3; 1 Corinthians 15:20–22; 2 Nephi 2:5–30; 2 Nephi 9:3–10; Helaman 14:15–18; Doctrine and Covenants 19:15–19; 29:34–44; Articles of Faith 1:2; “Fall of Adam,” Bible Dictionary, page 670.
3. You may want to ask a class member to prepare to summarize the account of the Fall of Adam and Eve (Moses 4:6–31) and another class member to prepare to summarize the account of Adam offering sacrifices (Moses 5:5–9).
4. If the following audiovisual materials are available, you may want to use them as part of the lesson:
 - a. “The Fall,” a six-minute segment from *Old Testament Video Presentations* (53224).
 - b. The picture Adam and Eve (62461; Gospel Art Picture Kit 101).

**Suggested Lesson
Development**

Attention Activity You may want to use the following activity (or one of your own) to begin the lesson.

Draw the illustration on page 13 on the chalkboard. Tell class members that Elder Bruce R. McConkie said that our salvation is made possible because of “three divine events—the three pillars of eternity” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 81). Then ask the following question:

- What are some events that are important enough to be the “pillars of eternity” that make salvation possible? (Elder McConkie said that these pillars are the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement, which are all part of God’s plan for our salvation. Write the words *Creation*, *Fall*, and *Atonement* in the three pillars on the chalkboard.)



Explain that this lesson helps us understand how the Fall was a necessary part of Heavenly Father’s plan to bring to pass our immortality and eternal life (Moses 1:39).

Scripture Discussion and Application

As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how they apply to daily life. Encourage class members to share experiences that relate to the scriptural principles.

1. The Fall of Adam and Eve and its effects on them and us

Teach and discuss Moses 4; 5:10–11; 6:48–49, 55–56.

In the Garden of Eden, God commanded Adam and Eve to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Moses 2:28). He also commanded them not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Moses 3:17). As long as they did not partake of the forbidden fruit, they would remain in the garden and would not die. But they also would not be able to obey the command to multiply (Moses 5:11; 2 Nephi 2:23). Heavenly Father gave them agency to choose between the two commands.

Briefly review the account of the Fall of Adam and Eve from Moses 4:6–31, or have an assigned class member do so.

- What were the results of the Fall for Adam and Eve—and for us? (See Moses 4:22–29; 5:10–11; 6:48–49, 55–56; 2 Nephi 2:22–23; 9:6; Genesis 3:16–23.) You may want to list some of these results on the chalkboard. Point out that many of these truths about the Fall have been restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith and are not generally known in the world.
 - a. Adam and Eve were able to have children, which allowed us to come to earth and receive mortal bodies (Moses 5:11; 6:48; 2 Nephi 2:23, 25).
 - b. We experience physical death, or separation of the physical body from the spirit (Moses 4:25; 6:48; 2 Nephi 9:6).
 - c. We experience spiritual death, or separation from God’s presence (Moses 4:29; 6:49; 2 Nephi 9:6).
 - d. We are partakers of misery and woe (Moses 6:48; Genesis 3:16–17).
 - e. We are capable of sinning (Moses 6:49, 55; 2 Nephi 2:22–23).

- f. The ground is cursed, causing us to need to work (Moses 4:23–25; Genesis 3:17–19).
- g. We can learn to recognize good and evil (Moses 4:28; 6:55–56; 2 Nephi 2:23; Genesis 3:22).
- h. We can have joy in mortality (Moses 5:10; 2 Nephi 2:23, 25).
- i. We can know the joy of our redemption (Moses 5:11).
- j. We can obtain eternal life (Moses 5:11).

As you discuss these results of the Fall, emphasize how the Fall is beneficial to us. Latter-day revelation clarifies that even before the Creation, Heavenly Father intended our earth life to be a time of testing and proving so we could become more like him (Abraham 3:24–26). This required that we be mortals, able to learn to choose between good and evil, which was made possible through the Fall.

- How can a correct understanding of the Fall help us during mortality?
- Why is it important to understand that God foresaw the Fall and that it was a necessary part of his plan for our salvation?
- Satan hoped that by getting Adam and Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit, he would frustrate God’s plan (Moses 4:6). What does the account of the Fall teach us about Satan’s ability to frustrate the purposes of God? (See D&C 3:1–2.)

2. The Atonement of Jesus Christ saves us from physical and spiritual death.

Teach and discuss Moses 5:14–15; 6:50–54, 57–62.

The Fall of Adam and Eve brought physical and spiritual death into the world. Physical death is the separation of the body and the spirit that occurs at the end of our mortal lives. Spiritual death is the separation from the presence of God, which occurred when Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden. Explain that we cannot overcome death by ourselves. For that reason, Heavenly Father sent his Only Begotten Son to redeem us from death through his atoning sacrifice (Alma 22:14).

- When prophets teach about the Fall of Adam and Eve, they often also teach about the Atonement of Jesus Christ (Moses 5:10–15; 6:48–62; 2 Nephi 9:6–10). Why is it important to teach the Atonement along with the Fall? (The Fall made the Atonement necessary in God’s plan for our salvation. Teaching the Atonement along with the Fall helps us understand how we are redeemed from physical and spiritual death.)

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The plan of redemption must start with the account of the fall of Adam. In the words of Moroni, ‘By Adam came the fall of man. And because of the fall of man came Jesus Christ, . . . and because of Jesus Christ came the redemption of man’ (Mormon 9:12). Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ. No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 106; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 85).

- How are we saved from physical death? (See 1 Corinthians 15:20–22; 2 Nephi 2:8; 9:6. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we will be resurrected.)

- How can we be saved from spiritual death? (See Moses 5:14–15; 6:50–52, 59; Helaman 14:15–18; D&C 19:15–19. Because of the Atonement, we can be made clean and worthy to dwell with God through faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and obedience to the commandments.)

The Book of Mormon prophet Jacob rejoiced in the redemption from death that comes through the Savior’s atoning sacrifice (2 Nephi 9:10). You may want to read this passage and share your testimony and some of your feelings about the blessings we receive through the Atonement. Invite class members to do the same.

3. Adam and Eve begin life as mortals, bear children, teach them the gospel, and worship and obey God.

Teach and discuss Moses 5:1–9, 12.

- What did Adam and Eve do after they were cast out of the Garden of Eden? (See Moses 5:1–5, 12.) In what ways were the lives of Adam and Eve like our lives today? What can we learn from Moses 5:1–9, 12 about the purposes of our mortal lives?
- Review the account in Moses 5:5–9, or have an assigned class member do so. What commandment did the Lord give to Adam? (See Moses 5:5.) Why did Adam offer sacrifices even though he did not know the reason for doing so? (See Moses 5:6.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Whatever God requires is right, . . . although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 256).

- Why is it important to obey the Lord’s commandments even when we do not understand all the reasons for them? How have you been blessed for keeping a commandment you did not completely understand?
- What was the purpose of the sacrifices that Adam offered? (See Moses 5:7–9. They were a similitude, or likeness, of the sacrifice that Heavenly Father would make of his Only Begotten Son. Offering such sacrifices was a reminder to Adam and his posterity that all mortals can be redeemed from the Fall through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.) What reminders of this doctrine have we been given? How can we show our gratitude for the Fall and the Atonement?

Conclusion

Reread Eve’s testimony of the blessings of the Fall (Moses 5:11). Express gratitude for the actions of Adam and Eve, for the Fall, and for the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

1. Partaking of the forbidden fruit was not a sin

To help explain that Adam and Eve did not sin when they partook of the forbidden fruit, read the following statement from Elder Dallin H. Oaks:

“It was Eve who first transgressed the limits of Eden in order to initiate the conditions of mortality. Her act, whatever its nature, was formally a transgression but eternally a glorious necessity to open the doorway toward eternal life. Adam showed his wisdom by doing the same. . . .

“ . . . We celebrate Eve’s act and honor her wisdom and courage in the great episode called the Fall. . . . Elder Joseph Fielding Smith said: ‘I never speak of the part Eve took in this fall as a sin, nor do I accuse Adam of a sin. . . . This was a transgression of the law, but not a sin.’ . . .

“This suggested contrast between a *sin* and a *transgression* reminds us of the careful wording in the second article of faith: “We believe that men will be punished for their own *sins*, and not for Adam’s *transgression*” (italics added). It also echoes a familiar distinction in the law. Some acts, like murder, are crimes because they are inherently wrong. Other acts, like operating without a license, are crimes only because they are legally prohibited. Under these distinctions, the act that produced the Fall was not a sin—inherently wrong—but a transgression—wrong because it was formally prohibited. These words are not always used to denote something different, but this distinction seems meaningful in the circumstances of the Fall” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 98; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 73).

2. Distinction between the *consequences of* and *responsibility for* the Fall

All of Adam and Eve’s posterity inherited the *consequences* of the Fall, including physical and spiritual death, but not the *responsibility* for the Fall. The second article of faith teaches that “men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression.” See also Moroni 8:5–23.

3. “Thy desire shall be to thy husband”

The following statements may help class members understand the Lord’s statement to Eve when he said, “Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Moses 4:22).

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “I have a question about the word *rule*. It gives the wrong impression. I would prefer to use the word *preside* because that’s what he does. A righteous husband presides over his wife and family” (“The Blessings and Responsibilities of Womanhood,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1976, 72).

Elder M. Russell Ballard said: “God has revealed through his prophets that men are to receive the priesthood, become fathers, and with gentleness and pure, unfeigned love they are to lead and nurture their families in righteousness as the Savior leads the Church (see Eph. 5:23)” (“Equality through Diversity,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 90).