

## AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE



# Feasting Upon the Words of Christ

**D**uring the last nine years, one of the blessings I enjoy as a Seventy is the opportunity to teach during stake conferences, mission tours, and devotionals with my sweetheart, Grace. I have been blessed by her very insightful talks and comments. She is a good teacher because of her diligence in keeping the commandments, service to others, regular study of the scriptures, and reliance on the Spirit.

One of her talks that I really enjoyed and which left a deep impression on me was when she shared her own journey in studying the scriptures. I am sure that other members who have heard her felt the same way I did. What I will share here will include much of her thoughts with a few of my own feelings about studying the scriptures. Think of it as if Grace and I are team-teaching you today.

***“Feast upon the words of Christ.” (2 Nephi 32:3)***

When we hear the word *feast*, only one thing comes to our minds—food. When we feast upon something we don’t just nibble or take a bite, we partake of it freely and thoroughly enjoy the experience. It involves not only the sense of taste but involves other senses as well. When one feasts upon the words of Christ, the experience transcends from

that of a physical and intellectual to one that is emotional and spiritual.

***“Yea, it beginneth to be delicious to me.” (Alma 32:28)***

Before we can feast upon a particular dish, it has to be delicious to us. Now, we all know that not all adobos are created equal. Some adobos are definitely better than others. That is why we collect, keep, and use only the best recipes of any dish. The same is true with the scriptures. We will never get to a point of feasting upon them unless they are delicious to us. Although we must find our own recipe for making the scriptures delicious to us, there are some ingredients that are fundamental and apply to everyone who seek for this blessing. Alma 32:28 certainly teaches us a little bit of how this is achieved.

**The following are some practical things that will help enhance your experience in studying the scriptures:**

**English is not the first language of Filipinos**

Many of us prefer reading the scriptures in English and have a very good understanding of the language. However, because it is not our first language and because many English



**By Elder Michael John U. Teh**  
Philippines Area  
Presidency

***When one feasts upon the words of Christ, the experience transcends from that of a physical and intellectual to one that is emotional and spiritual.***



*A first step in understanding both parables and symbolism is knowing which meaning of the word is being referred to.*

words have multiple meanings, it is often possible for us to miss parts of the lesson that God is teaching us through parables and symbolism. A first step in understanding both parables and symbolism is knowing which meaning of the word is being referred to. The following is an example:

***Word of God - Quick and Powerful (Helaman 3:29)***

The most common meaning of the word *quick* is “acting or capable of acting with speed”. But another meaning is “living or alive”. Which of those meanings do you think fits better and is being referred to by the prophet Mormon in this passage?

Another step in understanding parables and grasping symbolism is by becoming familiar with the characteristics, nature, or tendencies of people, things, places, or animals being referred to.

***“And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.” (Matthew 25:33)***

Have you ever asked yourself why the Lord uses the sheep to represent the righteous and the goats the unrighteous? An understanding of the characteristics of these two animals will provide additional insights into our own characteristics and desires. After all, we all intend to find ourselves on the right hand of the Lord. The following are characteristics of these two animals that we have found in the encyclopedia. We have inserted questions in some of them that will help us evaluate our own tendencies.

## **SHEEP**

**Requires clean drinking water.** (Are we dependent upon the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives?)

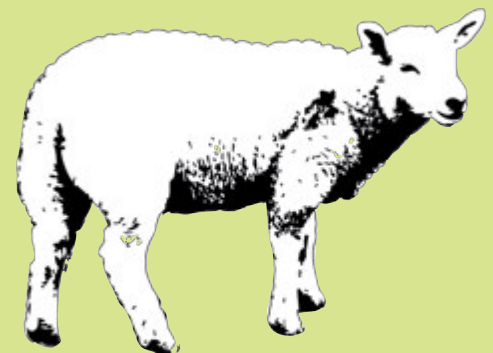
**Tendency to move out of darkness into well-lit places.** (Are we careful to always find ourselves in holy places and stay away from questionable places or situations? - D&C 87:8)

**Runs uphill when disturbed.** (How do we react to trials and challenges?)

**Follows the shepherd.** (Do we sustain our prophets and local leaders and follow their counsel?)

**Silent when in pain.** (When we are suffering, do we exercise faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement and look to the future with hope?)

**Primary defense mechanism is to run away from danger.** (Are we wise like Joseph in Egypt or are we foolish enough to linger and test our strength?)



Follows the shepherd.

Easily reverts  
to the wild.



## GOAT

**Eats anything including cardboard and cans.** (Do we embrace everything that the world offers us or are we wise in our choices?)

**Always tests the fence for weakness.** (Do we often find ways to obey a commandment or an excuse to disobey it?)

**Easily reverts to the wild.** (Are we always true to our covenants no matter what the circumstances and surroundings are?)

We are confident that this additional understanding will help you read Matthew 25:32-33 in a different light. We will now conclude with some spiritual insights from the scriptures that will help make the word delicious to us:

*"I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning."*  
(1 Nephi 19:23)

*"And now, if you believe all these things see that ye do them".* (Mosiah 4:10)

*"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him*

*unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:"* (Matthew 7:24-27; see also verses 25-27; Luke 6:46-49; 3 Nephi 14:24-27).

*"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."*  
(James 1:22)

*"I sat in my room pondering over the scriptures."* (Doctrine and Covenants 138:1, 11)

*"And now behold, if ye nourish it with much care it will get root, and grow up, and bring forth fruit."* (Alma 32:37; see also verses 29-43)

It is our prayer that we will take the steps to make the scriptures become delicious unto us that we may feast upon it. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■



*"I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning."*  
(1 Nephi 19:23)

# Tips for Successful Scripture Study

By Ma. Teresa Canadalla-Pangilinan

I testify that the scriptures have the power to change lives, they can help us overcome weaknesses, conquer contention and continually trust in the Lord.

But in our busy days we tend to just scan over a verse or a page just to say we have read something for the day. Setting your pattern of daily scripture study with understanding and application makes it more meaningful and worthwhile.

Here are some tips shared by members to have successful scripture study:

## 1. TAKE DOWN NOTES.

I read the scriptures every morning. After reading I write in my study journal what principle and commandment I have learned so that I will know my reading progress.

### Marjorie B. Gumayao

Quirino 1st Ward  
QC South Phils Stake



## 2. READ IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

Read the scripture in the dialect or language that you fully understand.

### John Fitz Gerald S. Cruz

San Jose Ward  
Montalban Phils Stake



## 3. READ AT YOUR BEST TIME.

My mission has taught me to set a time for personal scripture study. Choose a time of the day that helps you focus and understand what you read. Doing this will help you be worthy to be guided by the spirit. I'm now in Jacob focusing on the topic of faith.

### Lyra Grace S. Yoro

Makati 2nd Ward  
Makati Philippines Stake



## 4. READ EARLY.

An early morning scripture study is effective for me, I receive more revelations during such time.

### Jared B. Barong

Fairview Ward  
Fairview Philippines Stake



## 5. SEEK THE SPIRIT.

I always start and end my scripture study with an earnest pray for better understanding. I imagine myself as part of the story like what I normally do when I read a regular book. Highlighting verses and taking notes are helpful too!

### Lorelei Ordanza

Narra Branch  
Narra Philippines District



## 6. TAKE TIME FOR EXTRA STUDY.

When I read the scriptures I look at the footnotes, cross references and word definitions so that I will have a full understanding of what I am studying.

### Jonathan M. Baquiran

Cabiao Ward  
Gapan Philippines Stake



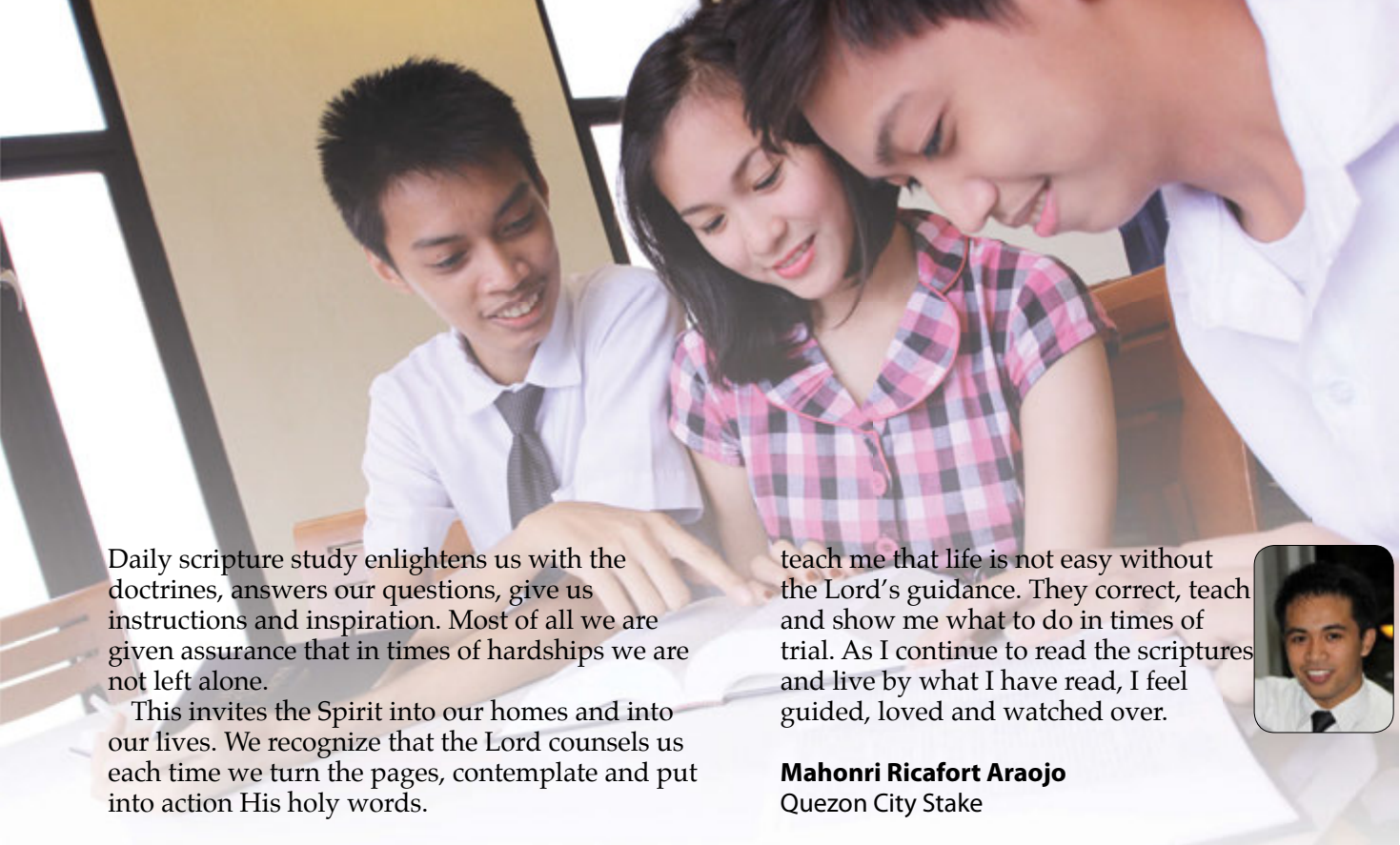
## 7. READ WITH FAMILY.

Habitual reading and discussing scriptures together with family members are effective ways of having fruitful study.

### Jessie D. Calixto

Bacoor Ward  
Bacoor Philippines Stake





Daily scripture study enlightens us with the doctrines, answers our questions, give us instructions and inspiration. Most of all we are given assurance that in times of hardships we are not left alone.

This invites the Spirit into our homes and into our lives. We recognize that the Lord counsels us each time we turn the pages, contemplate and put into action His holy words.

*"..if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life" (2 Nephi 31:20).*

## How have the scriptures helped you in times of trials and adversities?

The scriptures have strengthened me when trials were overwhelming. The promises found therein reminded me that every suffering, disappointment and challenge has its equivalent blessing in the end. Learning from the lives of wonderful people in the scriptures gave me strength that I too, am loved by a loving and merciful Father and that through the Atonement of His Son, Jesus Christ, each of us could return to His presence. That is a simple truth with a profound impact on each individual seeking peace in the midst of tribulations.



**Camela Ann Londres-Valdez**  
Makati Philippines Stake

As a college student after my mission, peer pressure became a common trial. Continuous reading of the scriptures is a way to be strong and be a light to those around you. The scriptures

teach me that life is not easy without the Lord's guidance. They correct, teach and show me what to do in times of trial. As I continue to read the scriptures and live by what I have read, I feel guided, loved and watched over.



**Mahonri Ricafort Araojo**  
Quezon City Stake

The scriptures constitute my number one reference for answers to life's tough situations (be it parenting, marriage troubles, etc.). They are more valuable and helpful than Google and all those search engines combined. For example, when I feel sad or burdened, I remember what I've read about the experiences of Lehi's family in the wilderness or the hardships of the pioneers. I find myself thinking how much harder it was for them than for me and how they were able to endure it well. The scriptures are truly a source of answers, comfort and perspective.



**Kristine Acobera Lopez**  
Quezon City South Stake

The scriptures fortify my agency in choosing and doing what is right. Through learning and studying the gospel, I am reminded of what Jesus Christ said. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30) There is indeed a great peace in my heart when I personally study my scriptures.



**Rogelio Saygo Jr.**  
Baguio Philippines Stake

The scriptures invite the Spirit in such a powerful way that gives me hope and assurance that no matter how hard life gets, all things will work out in the end. The scriptures also testify of the Savior's redeeming grace that enables me to endure my trials.



**Liel Maala**

Quezon City South Philippines Stake

Whenever I feel troubled or whenever there are challenges that I am facing, I take time to pray and read the scriptures. Reading the scriptures gives me comfort, enlightenment, wisdom and peace. There is this indescribable feeling that gives me relief which lets me face my trials with lightness and trust in God.



**Edleanne Garcia**

Caloocan Philippines Stake

It is comforting to know that people who lived centuries before me went through the same challenges that I am going through right now, and reading about how they conquered those challenges gives me hope that everything will be alright if you keep the commandments. We may be in the modern age but the stories and lessons we learn from the scriptures are timeless.



**Kristelle Glodo**

Mandaue Philippines Stake

Even strong foundations cannot prevent life's challenges. The scriptures help me to build a strong foundation upon the rock of Christ, our Redeemer. The deeper we understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, the stronger our testimonies will be and the brighter our eyes shall see. As recorded in Ether 12:27 "...I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that

humble themselves before me ... then will I make weak things become strong unto them." We, human beings, are not perfect but as we humble ourselves and read the scriptures we become stronger in facing all the challenges that come into our life as we continue to endure to the end.



**Jidilea Asuro Baluyot**

Valenzuela Philippines Stake

The scriptures always remind me that I am never alone. When I'm going through life's trials I can't help but to feel alone and feel that there's no way out. The scriptures never fail to show me what to do. They show me step by step that Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father are here with me, talking directly to me through the scriptures telling me what to do, explaining why challenges come and reminding me to keep my heart strong because there is something great waiting for me if I just endure and obey.



**Chezca del Rosario**

Caloocan Philippines Stake

Consistent scripture study not only helps me during trying times, but also prepares me for it. It has greatly expanded my understanding of God's plans and purposes so that I can be at peace in spite of challenges. The scriptures also bring to my mind words I haven't thought of before when I kneel in prayer. They have also increased my capacity to love and forgive which helps me see beauty even in the most difficult circumstances. Through the scriptures, I have been blessed with patience that hasn't failed me so far. I am so thankful for the scriptures. They are an essential part of our lives.



**Gracielle Dela Cruz Bassig**

Valenzuela Philippines Stake

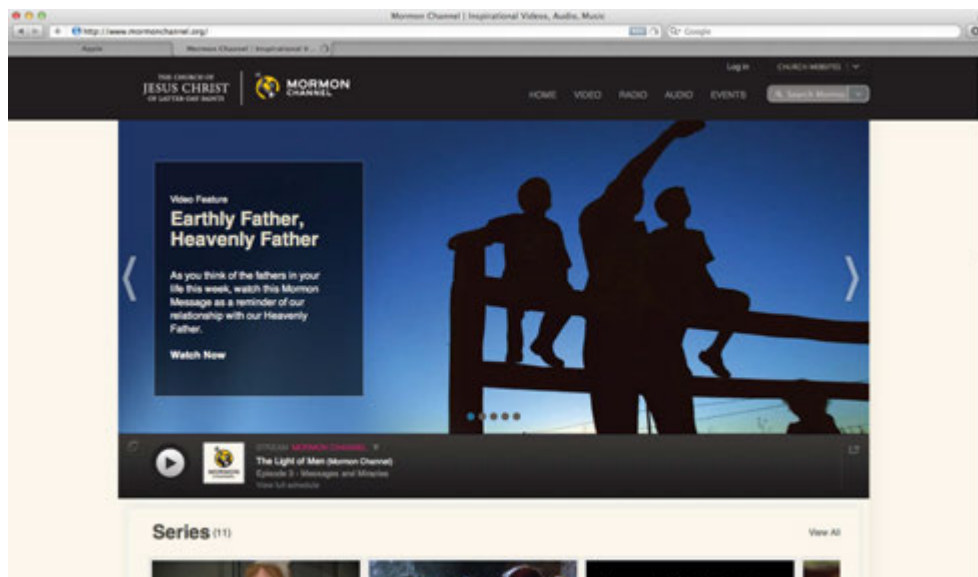
# Websites and Mobile Applications to Help Members in Scripture Reading

## For Children

1. <http://www.lds.org/friend/online-activities/videos/scripture-stories?lang=eng>  
Videos and readings of scripture stories from the Old Testament, New Testament, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants.



2. <http://www.mormonchannel.org/scripture-stories>  
A weekly radio series for children to listen to scripture stories. Children share their favorite experience with the scriptures along with music and readings of stories from the scriptures.

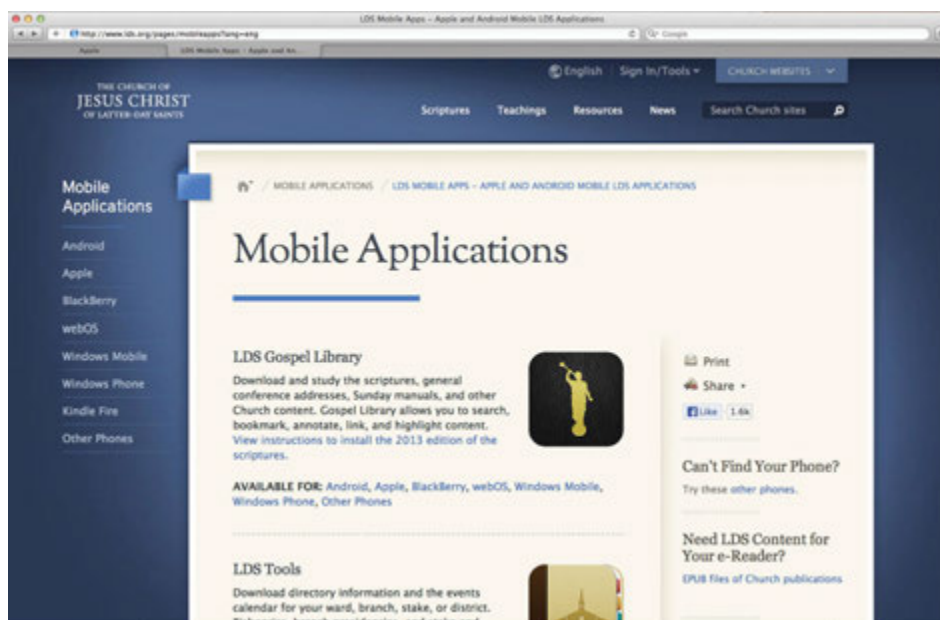


# For Adults

## 1. <http://mobile.lds.org>

### Gospel Library App

At mobile.LDS.org, members can download the Gospel Library app to gain instant access to Church materials on their mobile devices. After downloading the app, they could access scriptures, general conference addresses, Sunday manuals, and other Church materials on their mobile devices. The Gospel Library App allows users to search, mark and underline, bookmark, link, tag, add personal notes, copy content to documents, and sync annotations with LDS.org.



## 2. <http://www.ldscripturetools.com/>

This website has two features: the reading plan tool and the memorization tool. The reading plan tool helps you plan the chapter you plan to start at from the four standard works, the date you plan to begin, and the date you plan to end. The site then calculates how many chapters and how many pages per day you have to read to finish your goal on time. The memorization tool helps you memorize a verse of your choice from the scriptures.

