



# Old Testament

## Seminary Teacher Manual



# Old Testament

## Seminary Teacher Manual

Published by  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Comments and corrections are appreciated. Please send them, including errors, to:

Seminaries and Institutes of Religion Curriculum Services

50 East North Temple Street

Salt Lake City, Utah 84150-0008

USA

Email: [ces-manuals@ldschurch.org](mailto:ces-manuals@ldschurch.org)

Please list your complete name, address, ward, and stake.  
Be sure to give the title of the manual. Then offer your comments.

© 2015 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

English approval: 1/14

# Contents

Introduction to the <i>Old Testament Seminary Teacher Manual</i> . . . . .	vi	Lesson 30 Genesis 25–27 . . . . .	103
Our Purpose . . . . .	vi	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Genesis 19–27 (Unit 6)</i> . . . . .	106
Seminary and the Sunday Youth Curriculum . . . . .	vi	Lesson 31 Genesis 28–30 . . . . .	108
Lesson Preparation . . . . .	vii	Lesson 32 Genesis 31–32 . . . . .	111
Using the Daily Teacher Manual . . . . .	viii	Lesson 33 Genesis 33–34 . . . . .	114
Daily Seminary Program (Released-Time and		Lesson 34 Genesis 35–37 . . . . .	117
Early-Morning) . . . . .	x	Lesson 35 Genesis 38–39 . . . . .	120
Using the Home-Study Lessons . . . . .	xii	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Genesis 28–39 (Unit 7)</i> . . . . .	123
Home-Study Seminary Program . . . . .	xiii	Lesson 36 Genesis 40–41 . . . . .	125
Other Resources . . . . .	xiv	Lesson 37 Genesis 42–43 . . . . .	128
Daily and Home-Study Lessons		Lesson 38 Genesis 44–46 . . . . .	131
Lesson 1 Introduction to the Old Testament . . . . .	1	Lesson 39 Genesis 47–49 . . . . .	134
Lesson 2 The Plan of Salvation . . . . .	4	Lesson 40 Genesis 50 . . . . .	137
Lesson 3 The Role of the Learner . . . . .	8	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Genesis 40–50 (Unit 8)</i> . . . . .	140
Lesson 4 Studying the Scriptures . . . . .	11	Introduction to the Book of Exodus . . . . .	142
Lesson 5 The Bible . . . . .	15	Lesson 41 Exodus 1–2 . . . . .	143
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Introduction to the</i>		Lesson 42 Exodus 3–4 . . . . .	146
<i>Old Testament—Studying the Scriptures (Unit 1)</i> . . . . .	18	Lesson 43 Exodus 5–6 . . . . .	150
Introduction to the Book of Moses . . . . .	20	Lesson 44 Exodus 7–11 . . . . .	153
Lesson 6 Moses 1:1–23 . . . . .	21	Lesson 45 Exodus 12–13 . . . . .	156
Lesson 7 Moses 1:24–42 . . . . .	24	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Exodus 1–13 (Unit 9)</i> . . . . .	159
Introduction to the Book of Genesis . . . . .	27	Lesson 46 Exodus 14–15 . . . . .	161
Lesson 8 Moses 2 (Genesis 1; Abraham 4) . . . . .	28	Lesson 47 Exodus 16:1–17:7 . . . . .	164
Lesson 9 Moses 3 (Genesis 2; Abraham 5) . . . . .	31	Lesson 48 Exodus 17:8–19:25 . . . . .	167
Lesson 10 Moses 4 (Genesis 3) . . . . .	34	Lesson 49 Exodus 20, Part 1 . . . . .	171
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Moses 1–4 (Unit 2)</i> . . . . .	37	Lesson 50 Exodus 20, Part 2 . . . . .	174
Lesson 11 Moses 5:1–11 . . . . .	39	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Exodus 14–20 (Unit 10)</i> . . . . .	177
Lesson 12 Moses 5:12–59 (Genesis 4) . . . . .	42	Lesson 51 Exodus 21–24 . . . . .	179
Lesson 13 Moses 6:1–47 (Genesis 5) . . . . .	45	Lesson 52 Exodus 25–27; 30 . . . . .	182
Lesson 14 Moses 6:48–68 . . . . .	48	Lesson 53 Exodus 28–29; 31 . . . . .	185
Lesson 15 Moses 7 . . . . .	51	Lesson 54 Exodus 32 . . . . .	188
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Moses 5–7 (Unit 3)</i> . . . . .	54	Lesson 55 Exodus 33–34 . . . . .	191
Lesson 16 Moses 8 (Genesis 6:1–13) . . . . .	56	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Exodus 21–34 (Unit 11)</i> . . . . .	194
Lesson 17 Genesis 6:14–9:29 . . . . .	59	Lesson 56 Exodus 35–40 . . . . .	196
Lesson 18 Genesis 10–11 . . . . .	62	Introduction to the Book of Leviticus . . . . .	200
Introduction to the Book of Abraham . . . . .	65	Lesson 57 Leviticus 1–7 . . . . .	201
Lesson 19 Abraham 1 . . . . .	66	Lesson 58 Leviticus 8–11 . . . . .	204
Lesson 20 Abraham 2; Genesis 12 . . . . .	69	Lesson 59 Leviticus 12–18 . . . . .	208
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Moses 8; Genesis 6–12;</i>		Lesson 60 Leviticus 19–27 . . . . .	211
<i>Abraham 1–2 (Unit 4)</i> . . . . .	72	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Exodus 35–40; Leviticus (Unit 12)</i> . . . . .	214
Lesson 21 Abraham 3 . . . . .	74	Introduction to the Book of Numbers . . . . .	216
Lesson 22 Genesis 13–14 . . . . .	77	Lesson 61 Numbers 1–10 . . . . .	217
Lesson 23 Genesis 15–16 . . . . .	80	Lesson 62 Numbers 11–12 . . . . .	220
Lesson 24 Genesis 17 . . . . .	83	Lesson 63 Numbers 13–14 . . . . .	223
Lesson 25 Genesis 18 . . . . .	86	Lesson 64 Numbers 15–19 . . . . .	226
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Abraham 3; Genesis 13–18 (Unit 5)</i> . . . . .	89	Lesson 65 Numbers 20–21 . . . . .	229
Lesson 26 Genesis 19 . . . . .	91	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Numbers 1–21 (Unit 13)</i> . . . . .	232
Lesson 27 Genesis 20–21 . . . . .	94		
Lesson 28 Genesis 22 . . . . .	97		
Lesson 29 Genesis 23–24 . . . . .	100		

Lesson 66	Numbers 22–29	234	Lesson 101	2 Kings 21–25	365
Lesson 67	Numbers 30–36	237	Introduction to the Books of 1 Chronicles;		
Introduction to the Book of Deuteronomy		241	2 Chronicles		368
Lesson 68	Deuteronomy 1–13	242	Lesson 102	1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles	369
Lesson 69	Deuteronomy 14–19	246	Introduction to the Book of Ezra		373
Lesson 70	Deuteronomy 20–26	249	Lesson 103	Ezra 1–6	374
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Numbers 22–36; Deuteronomy 1–26</i>			Lesson 104	Ezra 7–10	377
(Unit 14)		252	Introduction to the Book of Nehemiah		380
Lesson 71	Deuteronomy 27–34	254	Lesson 105	Nehemiah	381
Introduction to the Book of Joshua		257	<i>Home-Study Lesson: 2 Kings 21–25; 1 Chronicles;</i>		
Lesson 72	Joshua 1–2	258	2 Chronicles; Ezra; Nehemiah (Unit 21)		384
Lesson 73	Joshua 3–5	261	Introduction to the Book of Esther		386
Lesson 74	Joshua 6–10	264	Lesson 106	Esther	387
Lesson 75	Joshua 11–24	267	Introduction to the Book of Job		390
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Deuteronomy 27–34; Joshua</i>			Lesson 107	Job 1–16	391
(Unit 15)		270	Lesson 108	Job 17–37	394
Introduction to the Book of Judges		272	Lesson 109	Job 38–42	397
Lesson 76	Judges 1–5	273	Introduction to the Book of Psalms		400
Lesson 77	Judges 6–9	276	Lesson 110	Psalms, Part 1	401
Lesson 78	Judges 10–21	279	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Esther; Job; Psalms, Part 1</i>		
Introduction to the Book of Ruth		282	(Unit 22)		404
Lesson 79	Ruth 1–2	283	Lesson 111	Psalms, Part 2	406
Lesson 80	Ruth 3–4	286	Lesson 112	Psalms, Part 3	409
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Judges; Ruth (Unit 16)</i>		289	Introduction to the Book of Proverbs		412
Introduction to the Book of 1 Samuel		291	Lesson 113	Proverbs 1–9	413
Lesson 81	1 Samuel 1–2	292	Lesson 114	Proverbs 10–31	416
Lesson 82	1 Samuel 3	295	Introduction to the Book of Ecclesiastes		418
Lesson 83	1 Samuel 4–8	298	Introduction to the Song of Solomon		418
Lesson 84	1 Samuel 9–11	301	Lesson 115	Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon	419
Lesson 85	1 Samuel 12–15	304	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Psalms, Parts 2–3; Proverbs;</i>		
<i>Home-Study Lesson: 1 Samuel 1–15 (Unit 17)</i>		307	Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon (Unit 23)		422
Lesson 86	1 Samuel 16	309	Introduction to the Book of Isaiah		424
Lesson 87	1 Samuel 17	312	Lesson 116	Isaiah 1–2	425
Lesson 88	1 Samuel 18–24	315	Lesson 117	Isaiah 3–5	428
Lesson 89	1 Samuel 25–31	318	Lesson 118	Isaiah 6–9	431
Introduction to the Book of 2 Samuel		321	Lesson 119	Isaiah 10–16	434
Lesson 90	2 Samuel 1–10	322	Lesson 120	Isaiah 17–23	437
<i>Home-Study Lesson: 1 Samuel 16–31; 2 Samuel 1–10</i>			<i>Home-Study Lesson: Isaiah 1–23 (Unit 24)</i>		440
(Unit 18)		325	Lesson 121	Isaiah 24–28	442
Lesson 91	2 Samuel 11:1–12:9	328	Lesson 122	Isaiah 29	445
Lesson 92	2 Samuel 12:10–24:25	331	Lesson 123	Isaiah 30–35	448
Introduction to the Book of 1 Kings		334	Lesson 124	Isaiah 36–41	451
Lesson 93	1 Kings 1–10	335	Lesson 125	Isaiah 42–47	454
Lesson 94	1 Kings 11–16	338	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Isaiah 24–47 (Unit 25)</i>		457
Lesson 95	1 Kings 17	341	Lesson 126	Isaiah 48–50	459
<i>Home-Study Lesson: 2 Samuel 11–24; 1 Kings 1–17</i>			Lesson 127	Isaiah 51–52	462
(Unit 19)		344	Lesson 128	Isaiah 53	465
Lesson 96	1 Kings 18–22	346	Lesson 129	Isaiah 54–57	468
Introduction to the Book of 2 Kings		350	Lesson 130	Isaiah 58	471
Lesson 97	2 Kings 1–4	351	<i>Home-Study Lesson: Isaiah 48–58 (Unit 26)</i>		474
Lesson 98	2 Kings 5–13	354	Lesson 131	Isaiah 59–66	476
Lesson 99	2 Kings 14–17	357	Introduction to the Book of Jeremiah		479
Lesson 100	2 Kings 18–20	360	Lesson 132	Jeremiah 1–6	480
<i>Home-Study Lesson: 1 Kings 18–22; 2 Kings 1–20</i>			Lesson 133	Jeremiah 7–16	483
(Unit 20)		363	Lesson 134	Jeremiah 17–29	486

Lesson 135	Jeremiah 30–33	489
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Isaiah 59–66; Jeremiah 1–33</i>		
	(Unit 27)	492
Lesson 136	Jeremiah 34–41	494
Lesson 137	Jeremiah 42–52	497
Introduction to the Book of Lamentations . . . . . 500		
Lesson 138	Lamentations	501
Introduction to the Book of Ezekiel . . . . . 504		
Lesson 139	Ezekiel 1–3	505
Lesson 140	Ezekiel 4–32	508
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Jeremiah 34–52; Lamentations; Ezekiel 1–32 (Unit 28)</i>		
		511
Lesson 141	Ezekiel 33–36	513
Lesson 142	Ezekiel 37	516
Lesson 143	Ezekiel 38–48	519
Introduction to the Book of Daniel . . . . . 522		
Lesson 144	Daniel 1	523
Lesson 145	Daniel 2	526
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Ezekiel 33–48; Daniel 1–2</i>		
	(Unit 29)	529
Lesson 146	Daniel 3–5	531
Lesson 147	Daniel 6–12	534
Introduction to the Book of Hosea . . . . . 537		
Lesson 148	Hosea	538
Introduction to the Book of Joel . . . . . 541		
Lesson 149	Joel	542
Introduction to the Book of Amos . . . . . 545		
Lesson 150	Amos	546
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Daniel 3–12; Hosea; Joel; Amos</i>		
	(Unit 30)	549
Introduction to the Book of Obadiah . . . . . 551		
Lesson 151	Obadiah	552
Introduction to the Book of Jonah . . . . . 555		
Lesson 152	Jonah	556

Introduction to the Book of Micah . . . . . 559	
Lesson 153	Micah . . . . . 560
Introduction to the Book of Nahum . . . . . 563	
Introduction to the Book of Habakkuk . . . . . 564	
Introduction to the Book of Zephaniah . . . . . 564	
Lesson 154	Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah . . . . . 565
Introduction to the Book of Haggai . . . . . 568	
Introduction to the Book of Zechariah . . . . . 569	
Lesson 155	Haggai; Zechariah 1–2 . . . . . 570
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Obadiah; Jonah; Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah 1–2</i>	
	(Unit 31)
	573
Lesson 156	Zechariah 3–8 . . . . . 575
Lesson 157	Zechariah 9–14 . . . . . 578
Introduction to the Book of Malachi . . . . . 581	
Lesson 158	Malachi 1–2 . . . . . 582
Lesson 159	Malachi 3 . . . . . 585
Lesson 160	Malachi 4 . . . . . 588
<i>Home-Study Lesson: Zechariah 3–14; Malachi 1–4</i>	
	(Unit 32)
	591
Appendix . . . . . A1	
Scripture Reading Charts . . . . . A1	
Pacing Guide for Daily Teachers . . . . . A2	
Suggestions for Flexible Days . . . . . A4	
Pacing Guide for Home-Study Teachers . . . . . A5	
Introduction to Scripture Mastery . . . . . A7	
Scripture Mastery Activities . . . . . A9	
100 Scripture Mastery Passages . . . . . A13	
Introduction to Basic Doctrines . . . . . A14	
Basic Doctrines . . . . . A15	
Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at	
	Mount Sinai . . . . . A20
Old Testament Selected Images . . . . . A21	

# Introduction to the Old Testament Seminary Teacher Manual

## Our Purpose

The Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion states:

“Our purpose is to help youth and young adults understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven” (*Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* [2012], 1).

To achieve our purpose, we teach students the doctrines and principles of the gospel as found in the scriptures and in the words of the prophets. These doctrines and principles are taught in a way that leads to understanding and edification. We help students fulfill their role in the learning process and prepare them to teach the gospel to others.

To accomplish these aims, you and the students you teach are encouraged to incorporate the following Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning as you study the scriptures together:

- Teach and learn by the Spirit.
- Cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose.
- Study the scriptures daily, and read the text for the course. [Charts for tracking scripture reading of the entire Old Testament can be found with the Old Testament Scripture Mastery Cards on LDS.org and on store.lds.org (item no. 10555).]
- Understand the context and content of the scriptures and the words of the prophets.
- Identify, understand, feel the truth and importance of, and apply gospel doctrines and principles.
- Explain, share, and testify of gospel doctrines and principles.
- Master key scripture passages and the Basic Doctrines” (*Gospel Teaching and Learning*, 10).

In addition to accomplishing these aims, you are to help students be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ and learn to discern truth from error. Students may have questions about the Church’s doctrine, history, or position on social issues. You can prepare students to address such questions by helping them to “seek learning, even by

study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118) and by using the resources in the Seek Truth section of si.lds.org.

This teacher manual has been prepared to help you be successful in accomplishing these aims.

## Seminary and the Sunday Youth Curriculum

*Helping the youth become converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ*

### A United Effort

The First Presidency has called upon parents, teachers, and leaders to “help youth learn the gospel by their own study and faith, to discover the truthfulness of the gospel for themselves, and to strengthen their families and others by sharing their experiences, insights, and testimony.” Doing so will help them follow the path that “will lead them to conversion” (*Teaching the Gospel in the Savior’s Way* [2012], 2).

Under priesthood direction, the Young Men, Young Women, Sunday School, and Seminary organizations, working in a cooperative effort, have developed curriculum to help youth accomplish these aims. While each organization has a unique role in strengthening the youth, the central purpose of all youth curriculum is to lead the youth to the Savior and bring about their conversion to His gospel. The curriculum for each youth organization is designed to work in harmony with that of other youth organizations. For example:

- “Teaching in the Savior’s Way” (a section published in both the seminary materials and the Sunday youth curriculum) was jointly developed by the youth organizations to help teachers, parents, and leaders learn about how the Savior taught (see *Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* [2012], v–vii; *Teaching the Gospel in the Savior’s Way* [2012], 4–5). “Teaching in the Savior’s Way” explores how the Savior helped others internalize the sacred truths He taught by encouraging them to act in faith and take an active role in the learning process. These principles of gospel teaching and learning are incorporated into the curriculum for all youth organizations.

- The curriculum for all youth organizations emphasizes the same fundamental doctrines. The Basic Doctrines emphasized in the seminary curriculum correspond to the Basic Doctrinal Principles taught in the youth curriculum. In Sunday classes, the youth curriculum focuses on one of these doctrines each month. In seminary, these doctrines are emphasized as youth study each of the standard works. This united effort helps reinforce truths that the youth learn on Sundays with what they are learning in the seminary classroom and vice versa. Emphasizing these same core doctrines in all youth curriculum allows for a more seamless experience for youth, teachers, and parents.
- The curriculum for each organization is designed to help the youth deepen their understanding and testimony of the gospel and learn how to teach it to others. To accomplish this, both the seminary materials and youth curriculum are aimed at helping the youth take a more active role as gospel learners, discover truths of the gospel for themselves, and explain, share, and testify of these truths to others.
- Those who have been called to teach Sunday School, Young Men, Young Women, or seminary classes will likely see a consistency in the approach to gospel teaching and learning. Both the seminary materials and youth curriculum focus on helping the youth deepen their conversion. As part of this shared objective, many of the training materials and media developed for those who teach the Sunday youth curriculum are also used by seminary teachers. These materials are available on LDS.org.

### Unique Aspects

Each youth organization has a unique role in helping youth become converted to the gospel (see *Teaching the Gospel in the Savior’s Way*, 12–13). For example, the curriculum used in Sunday School, Young Men, and Young Women classes focuses on one basic doctrinal principle each month. In contrast, students in seminary learn doctrines and principles of the gospel as they study the standard works sequentially.

By studying the gospel topically in Sunday classes, youth can deepen their

understanding of specific doctrines by exploring the different facets of those truths and teaching them to one another. In seminary, youth are able to discover and understand those same doctrines in the context of related truths in the scriptures and see them illustrated in the lives and teachings of individuals in the scriptures. Furthermore, by studying the scriptures from beginning to end, youth can grow in their confidence that “Heavenly Father is really speaking to them through the scriptures, and [gain] confidence that they can turn to the scriptures and find answers to their problems and their prayers” (Howard W. Hunter, “Eternal Investments” [address to Church Educational System religious educators, Feb. 10, 1989], 2, si.lds.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 20, LDS.org). As youth become familiar with the scriptures, they learn to use them effectively as future missionaries, leaders, and parents. Studying the doctrines of the gospel both topically and sequentially helps youth deepen their understanding of the gospel and prepares them to teach the gospel to others.

## Lesson Preparation

The Lord commanded those who teach His gospel to “teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel” (D&C 42:12). He further instructed that these truths should be taught as “directed by the Spirit,” which “shall be given . . . by the prayer of faith” (D&C 42:13–14). As you prepare each lesson, prayerfully seek the guidance of the Spirit to help you understand the scriptures and the doctrines and principles they contain. Likewise, follow the promptings of the Spirit as you plan how to help your students understand the scriptures, learn to be taught by the Holy Ghost, and feel a desire to apply what they learn.

In this course, the book of Moses, the book of Abraham, and the Old Testament are your primary texts as you prepare and teach. Prayerfully study the chapters or verses you will be teaching. Seek to understand the context and content of the scripture block, including the story line, people, places, and events. As you become familiar with the context and content of each



scripture block, seek to identify doctrines and principles it contains, and decide which truths are most important for your students to understand and apply. Once you have identified what your focus will be, determine which methods, approaches, and activities will best help your students learn and apply the sacred truths found in the scriptures.

This manual is designed to aid you in this process. Carefully review the lesson material corresponding to the scripture block you will teach. You may choose to use all or part of the suggestions for a scripture block, or you may adapt the suggested ideas to the needs and circumstances of the students you teach.

It is important that you help students study the entire scripture block in each lesson. Doing so will help students grasp the full message the scripture writer intended to convey. However, as you plan your lesson, you may discover that you do not have enough time in a class period to use all the teaching suggestions in the manual. Seek the direction of the Spirit and prayerfully consider the needs of your students as you determine which portions of the scripture block to emphasize in order to help students feel the truth and importance of gospel truths and apply them in their lives. If time is short, you may need to adapt other portions of the lesson by briefly summarizing a group of verses or by guiding students to quickly identify a principle

or doctrine before moving on to the next group of verses.

As you consider how to adapt lesson materials, be sure to follow this counsel from Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“President Packer has often taught, in my hearing, that we first adopt, then we adapt. If we are thoroughly grounded in the prescribed lesson that we are to give, then we can follow the Spirit to adapt it” (“A Panel Discussion with Elder Dallin H. Oaks” [Seminaries and Institutes of Religion satellite broadcast, Aug. 7, 2012]; LDS.org).

As you prepare to teach, be mindful of students who have particular needs. Adjust activities and expectations to help them succeed. Communication with parents and leaders will help you be aware of students’ needs and help you succeed in providing a meaningful and edifying experience for the students.

During your lesson preparation, you might choose to use the Notes and Journal tools on LDS.org or in the Gospel Library for mobile devices. You can use these tools to mark scriptures, conference addresses, Church magazine articles, and lessons. You can also add and save notes for use during your lessons. To learn more about how to use these tools, see the Notes and Journal Help page on LDS.org.

## Using the Daily Teacher Manual

### Book Introduction

Book introductions provide an overview of each book. Among other things, they explain who wrote each book, describe some distinctive features of each book, and provide a summary of the content of each book.

### Scripture Block Introduction

Scripture block introductions give a brief overview of the context and content of the scripture block for each lesson.

### Verse Grouping and Contextual Summary

Scripture blocks are often divided into smaller segments or groups of verses that focus on a particular topic or action. The reference for each verse grouping is followed by a brief summary of the events or teachings within that group of verses.

### Teaching Helps

Teaching helps explain principles and methods of gospel teaching. They can assist you in your efforts to improve as a teacher.

### Lesson Body

The body of the lesson contains guidance for you as you study and teach. It suggests teaching ideas, including questions, activities, quotations, diagrams, and charts.

### Doctrines and Principles

As doctrines and principles naturally arise from the study of the scripture text, they are highlighted in bold to help you identify and emphasize them in your discussion with students.

### Pictures

Pictures of Church leaders and events from the scriptures represent visual aids you could display, if available, as you teach.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of 1 Samuel

### Why study this book?

The book of 1 Samuel recounts the ministry of the prophet Samuel, who “restored law and order and regular religious worship in the land” (Bible Dictionary, “Samuel”) after the Israelites had forgotten the Lord and worshipped idols many times throughout the reign of the judges. One of the major themes of 1 Samuel is the importance of honoring the Lord. In 1 Samuel 2:30 we read, “Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed” (see also 1 Samuel 2:9). In other words, the Lord will bless those who honor Him and keep His commandments, but He will not bless those who do not will not

which necessitated putting the book on two scrolls instead of one” (Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Dana M. Pike, and David Rolph Seely, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament* [2009], 190).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of 1 Samuel can be divided into three main sections, each of which focuses on a different person. Chapters 1–7 recount the actions of Samuel, the righteous priest, prophet, and judge. Chapters 8–15 focus on Saul, the first king of Israel. Chapters 16–31 describe

### Outline

**1 Samuel 1–7** Hannah pleads with the Lord to have a son. The Lord grants her request, and she bears Samuel. Early in his childhood she presents Samuel at the tabernacle to serve under Eli. The Lord appears to Samuel and blesses him. The Philistines smite Israel and capture the ark of the covenant. Samuel preaches to the Israelites and exhorts them to stop worshipping idols and begin serving the Lord. The Israelites return to the Lord.

## LESSON 88

# 1 Samuel 18–24

### Introduction

Saul appointed David leader over his armies but became jealous of David's success and sought to kill him. David fled from Saul, and he and the men who joined him

received help from several people. While hiding in a cave, David had the opportunity to kill Saul but chose to let him live because a prophet of God had anointed Saul.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### 1 Samuel 18

*As David behaves wisely and is blessed by the Lord, Saul grows increasingly jealous*

Invite students to name some poor choices that people could make because of anger or jealousy. Explain that as students study 1 Samuel 18, they will learn principles that will help them better understand the dangers of anger and jealousy and help them know how to respond when others are angry or jealous.

Summarize 1 Samuel 18:1–5 by explaining that after David defeated Goliath, he became close friends with Saul's son Jonathan. Saul set David over the army. Jonathan could have been jealous of David's success, but he instead rejoiced. When Jonathan gave his clothing and weapons to David, he was showing his friendship and his support of David becoming the next king (see 1 Samuel 23:16–17).

Invite a few students to read 1 Samuel 18:6–9 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for how Saul felt about David's success.

- How did Saul respond to David's success and recognition in battle?

Point out the phrase “Saul eyed David from that day and forward” in verse 9, and explain that it refers to Saul's growing jealousy and anger toward David.

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 18:10–11 silently, looking for what Saul did because of his jealousy and anger toward David. Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase “the evil spirit from God” in verse 10 to “the evil spirit which was not of God” (in 1 Samuel 18:10, footnote *a*).

- According to verse 11, what did Saul do because of his jealousy and anger toward David?
- Based on this account, what happens to us when we allow ourselves to be jealous and angry? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **When we are jealous and angry, we allow the influence of the adversary into our lives.**)
- Why do you think jealousy and anger allow the influence of the adversary into our lives? Provide each student with a copy of the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read the statement aloud, and ask the class to follow along.



“There are going to be times in our lives when someone else gets an unexpected blessing or receives some special recognition. May I plead with us not to be hurt—and certainly not to feel envious—when good fortune comes to another person? We are not diminished when someone else is added upon. . . . We are not in a race against each other. . . . The race we are really in is the race against sin, and surely envy is one of the most universal of those” (“The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 31).

- What reasons did Elder Holland give for why we should not feel envious when others receive blessings?

### Remember the purpose of seminary

The purpose of seminary is to help youth understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven. As you prepare your lessons, prayerfully determine how you can help achieve this objective each day.

## Scripture Mastery

The 25 scripture mastery passages found in the book of Moses, the book of Abraham, and the Old Testament are highlighted in context in the lessons in which they appear. Each of these lessons also contains a teaching idea for each of these passages. To help you be consistent in teaching scripture mastery passages, scripture mastery review activities are scattered throughout the manual. For additional scripture mastery teaching ideas, see the appendix of this manual or the Seminary Student Resources on LDS.org.

## Column Space

Column space in the printed teacher manual can be used for lesson preparation, including writing notes, principles, experiences, or other ideas, as you feel prompted by the Holy Ghost.

## Commentary and Background Information

Additional quotations and explanations are provided at the end of some lessons to give you additional understanding of historical context, specific concepts, or scripture passages. Use the information in this section to prepare to answer questions or give additional insights as you teach. Additional commentary items can be found in the digital versions of this manual on LDS.org.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

Supplemental teaching ideas appear at the end of some lessons. These provide suggestions for teaching doctrines and principles that may not be identified or emphasized in the body of the lesson. They may also provide suggestions for using visual media, such as DVD presentations and videos found on LDS.org. Additional teaching ideas can be found in the digital versions of this manual on LDS.org.

LESSON 72

---

**Scripture Mastery Review**

If time permits, you may want to use the following activity to review the scripture mastery passages you have taught so far this school year:

Give students a few minutes to review the scripture mastery passages they have learned. Invite a student to come to the front of the classroom with his or her scriptures. Ask the student to turn to one of the scripture mastery passages without showing it to anyone else. (If scripture mastery cards are available, you might consider providing one to the student.) Invite the student to write one word from the scripture mastery passage on the board. (Encourage him or her to choose key words from the passage rather than less distinguishing words such as and or the.) Invite the class to search their scriptures for the scripture mastery passage they think the word comes from. If no one can find the correct passage using one word, ask the student to write another word from the passage on the board. Repeat this process until at least one student has located the correct passage. Invite the rest of the class to turn to the passage, and ask students to recite it together. Then repeat the activity with another student and a different scripture mastery passage.

**Commentary and Background Information**

Leviticus 11. Why did the Lord designate “clean” and “unclean” animals?

“Doubtless sanitary and nutritional factors were among the criteria for designating clean and unclean flesh, but all the reasons are not known. Almost all the ‘unclean’ beasts and fowl were carnivores. Some flesh can cause diseases unless it is thoroughly cooked, and that may have been a factor” (Ellis T. Raumnussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* [1993], 132).

However, as with the Lord’s laws of health in our day, there are also spiritual implications. In the revelation establishing the Word of Wisdom, the Lord explained that those who obey this law of health “shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19) and that “the destroying angel shall pass by them” (D&C 89:21). Though the Lord does not always explain the exact reasons why He gives laws of health, it is evident that He expects us to follow them and thereby demonstrate our faith in Him.

**Supplemental Teaching Idea**

▶ **Leviticus 11. Video presentation—“A Brand New Year: Physical Health”**

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle about obeying the Lord’s law of health, you may want to show the video “A Brand New Year: Physical Health” (7:28) as part of this lesson. You could use this video after the discussion of the statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. The video features youth from around the world discussing the blessings of following the Lord’s law of physical health. This video can be found on LDS.org.

## Daily Seminary Program (Released-Time and Early-Morning)

This manual contains the following elements for daily seminary teachers: 160 daily teacher lessons, teaching helps, book introductions, and resources for teaching scripture mastery and Basic Doctrines.

### Book Introductions

Book introductions are placed before the first lesson for each book of scripture. The book introductions provide an overview of each book by answering the following questions: Why study this book? Who wrote this book? When and where was it written? and What are some distinctive features of this book? The introductions also briefly outline the content of each book. Teachers should integrate the context and background information from the book introductions into the lessons as needed.

### Daily Teacher Lessons

#### Lesson Format

Each lesson in this manual focuses on a scripture block rather than on a particular concept, doctrine, or principle. This format will help you and your students study the scriptures sequentially and discuss doctrines and principles as they arise naturally from the scripture text. As students learn the context in which a doctrine or principle is found, their understanding of that truth can deepen. In addition, students will be better able to see and understand the full scope of the messages the inspired scripture writers intended to convey. Teaching the scriptures in this way will also help students learn how to discover and apply eternal truths in their personal scripture study.

In each lesson, not all segments of a scripture block are emphasized. Some segments receive less attention because they are less central to the overall message of the inspired writer or because they might be less applicable to youth. You have the responsibility to adapt these materials according to the needs and interests of the students you teach. You might adapt lesson ideas in this manual by choosing to give greater emphasis to a particular doctrine or principle than is given in the lesson material or by choosing to give less emphasis to a segment of the scripture block that is developed in depth in the manual. Seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost to help you make these adaptations as you prepare and teach.

#### Doctrines and Principles

In the body of each lesson, you will find that several key doctrines and principles are highlighted in bold. These doctrines and principles are identified in the curriculum because (1) they reflect a central message of the scripture block, (2) they are particularly applicable to the needs and circumstances of the students, or (3) they are key truths that can help students deepen their relationships with the Lord. Be aware that the Old Testament teaches numerous truths beyond those identified in the curriculum. President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that the scriptures contain “endless combinations of truths that will fit the need of every individual in every circumstance” (“The Great Plan of Happiness” [CES Symposium on the Doctrine and Covenants/Church History, Aug. 10, 1993], LDS.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 69, LDS.org).

As you teach, consistently provide students with opportunities to identify doctrines and principles in the scriptures. As students express the truths they discover, they may often use words that differ from how a doctrine or principle is stated in this manual. They may also discover truths that are not identified in the lesson outline. Be careful not to suggest that students’ answers are wrong simply because the words

they use to express them differ from those used in the manual or because they identify a truth that is not mentioned in the curriculum. However, if a student’s statement is doctrinally incorrect, it is your responsibility to gently help the student correct his or her statement while maintaining an atmosphere of love and trust. Doing so may provide an important learning experience for the students in your class.

#### Pacing

This manual contains 160 daily seminary lessons. You may adapt the lessons and pacing as needed for the length of time you have to teach this course. See the appendix at the end of this manual for a sample pacing guide. The pacing guide is based on a 36-week or 180-day school year and includes 20 “flexible days” that you may use to adapt daily lessons, help students master key scripture passages and Basic Doctrines, review previous material, administer and review required learning assessments, and allow for schedule interruptions.

#### Makeup Work

The *Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* can be used in the daily seminary programs as a resource to provide students with makeup work. The lessons in the study guide for home-study students parallel those presented in this manual. Students who have excessive absences could be assigned to complete the assignments in the study guide that correspond with the content they missed in





class. Assignments can be printed from LDS.org, so you do not need to provide the entire manual to students who need to do makeup work. More information concerning the *Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* is provided in the section titled "Home-Study Seminary Program" in these introductory materials.

### Teaching Helps

Teaching helps appear in the margins of this manual. These teaching helps explain and illustrate how you and the students you teach can apply the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning in your study of the Old Testament. They also offer suggestions on how to effectively use a variety of teaching methods, skills, and approaches. As you come to understand the principles contained in the teaching helps, look for ways to practice and apply them consistently in your teaching.

### Scripture Mastery and Basic Doctrines

To help students treasure up eternal truths and to increase their confidence in learning and teaching from the scriptures, Seminaries and Institutes of Religion (S&I) has selected a number of scripture passages for students to master during each course of study. In addition, a list of Basic Doctrines has been included to highlight key doctrines that students should come to understand, believe, and live throughout their four years in seminary and for the rest of their lives. The manual for each course was prepared to highlight the Basic Doctrines as they emerge during a student's sequential study

of the scriptures. Many of the scripture mastery passages were chosen with the Basic Doctrines in mind, so as you teach the scripture mastery passages to students, you will teach the Basic Doctrines as well.

As individuals treasure up eternal truths in their minds and hearts, the Holy Ghost will bring these truths to their remembrance in times of need and give them courage to act in faith (see John 14:26). President Howard W. Hunter taught:

"I strongly encourage you to use the scriptures in your teaching and to do all within your power to help the students use them and become comfortable with them. I would like our young people to have confidence in the scriptures. . . .

". . . We want the students to have confidence in the strength and truths of the scriptures, confidence that their Heavenly Father is really speaking to them through the scriptures, and confidence that they can turn to the scriptures and find answers to their problems and their prayers. . . .

". . . We would hope none of your students would leave your classroom fearful or embarrassed or ashamed that they cannot find the help they need because they do not know the scriptures well enough to locate the proper passages" ("Eternal Investments" [address to CES religious educators, Feb. 10, 1989], 2, si.lds.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 20, LDS.org).

See the appendix of this manual for more information about scripture mastery and the Basic Doctrines.

## Using the Home-Study Lessons

### Summary of Student Lessons

The summary will help you familiarize yourself with the context and the doctrines and principles students studied during the week in the student study guide.

### Lesson Introduction

The introduction to the lesson will help you know which portions of the scripture block will be emphasized in the lesson.

### Verse Grouping and Contextual Summary

Verses are grouped according to where changes in context or content occur throughout the scripture block. The reference for each verse grouping is followed by a brief summary of the events or teachings within that group of verses.

### Lesson Body

The body of the lesson provides guidance for you as you study and teach. It suggests teaching ideas, including questions, activities, quotations, diagrams, and charts.

### Doctrines and Principles

As doctrines and principles naturally arise from the study of the scripture text, they are highlighted in bold to help you identify and emphasize them in your discussion with students.

### Introduction to the Next Unit

The last paragraph of each lesson provides a glimpse into the next unit. Share this paragraph with your students at the conclusion of each lesson to help them look forward to studying the scriptures during the coming week.

## Home-Study Lesson

### Moses 1–4 (Unit 2)

#### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

##### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Moses 1–4 (unit 2), along with Genesis 1–3 and Abraham 4–5, is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Moses 1)

As students read about Moses's spiritual experiences, they learned that we are all children of Heavenly Father. They also learned that after we have spiritual experiences, Satan may seek to tempt or deceive us. Students discovered that by having faith in our previous spiritual experiences and praying for guidance and help, we can resist these deceptions.

#### Day 2 (Moses 2)

In this lesson, students learned that Jesus Christ created the earth under the direction of Heavenly Father and that we were created in the image of God. They also discovered that God has commanded that husbands and wives have children.

#### Day 3 (Moses 3)

As students continued their study of the Creation, they learned that we can sanctify the Sabbath day as we rest from our labors and focus on sacred things. In addition they discovered that God created the spirits of all living things before they were created physically on the earth. Students learned that Adam and Eve were married and that marriage is a sacred ordinance.

#### Introduction

After Moses beheld the earth and its inhabitants in vision, he asked God about the purpose of His creations. As students study the Lord's answers to this question, they can learn about the purpose of life and their understanding and feelings of God's love for them can increase.

#### Suggestions for Teaching

##### Moses 1:24–39

*Moses converses with the Lord and learns the purpose behind God's creations*

Show students a small container of sand and a small container of water. Ask a student to come to the front of the class and put his or her finger into the container of water and then dip the moistened finger into the container of sand. (If possible, you could have all of the students dip a moistened finger into the container of sand.) Then ask the student to begin counting the grains of sand on his or her finger. (It should be difficult for the student to count them all). After the student has counted for a while, point to the container of sand and ask:

- How many grains of sand do you think are in this container?
- How many grains of sand do you think are on a seashore?

Ask a student to read Moses 1:27–29 aloud, and invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord showed Moses that relates to the sand.

- How many of Heavenly Father's children did Moses behold?
- What questions might you ask if you had seen this vision?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two questions Moses asked the Lord.

- What were the two questions Moses asked the Lord? (Write them on the board. *Why were there inhabitants created? By what power were they created?*)

#### HOME-STUDY LESSON

- Why would it be important for Heavenly Father's children to understand the purposes of the earth and our lives here?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:31–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's answer to Moses's second question.

- What doctrine do we learn from verses 32–33 concerning who created the earth and "worlds without number"? (After students respond, invite them to write the following doctrine in their scriptures next to verse 33: **Under the direction of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ created worlds without number.**)

Ask several students to take turns reading verses from Moses 1:34–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional details the Lord gave to Moses about the creation of this and other worlds. Ask students to report what they find. To ensure they understand the content of these verses, you may want to ask questions like the following:

- How many worlds did the Lord say had been created "by the Son" (Moses 1:33)? (To help students try to comprehend the meaning of "innumerable" [Moses 1:35], you may want to review the activity with the sand in the container.)
- According to verse 35, which of these worlds did the Lord say He was going to teach Moses more about?

Direct students' attention to the first question Moses asked the Lord, which you wrote on the board. Explain that an answer to this question can be found in Moses 1:39. Before students read this verse, explain that Moses 1:39 is a scripture mastery passage. Also explain that throughout the year, students will focus on 25 scripture mastery passages. These passages will help them understand and explain basic doctrines of the gospel. (For more information on scripture mastery and the Basic Doctrines, see the appendix in this manual). The 25 scripture mastery references are listed on the back of the seminary bookmark for the Old Testament. (You may want to invite your students to look at these scripture mastery references on their bookmarks.)

Invite a student to read Moses 1:39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for God's purpose in creating the worlds and their inhabitants.

- What is Heavenly Father's purpose in creating the worlds and their inhabitants? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father's purpose is to bring about the immortality and eternal life of man.**)

To help students understand this doctrine, ask the following questions:

- What is immortality? (The condition of living forever in a resurrected state.)
- What is eternal life? (Becoming like God and living forever as families in His presence.)
- How can it influence our lives now to know that Heavenly Father's purpose is to bring to pass our immortality and eternal life?

If hymnbooks are available, invite students to sing the hymn "How Great Thou Art" (*Hymns*, no. 86) together as a class. Invite them to consider, as they sing, how the words of the hymn relate to what they have learned in Moses 1. Following the singing of the hymn, ask students to write a few sentences in their notebooks or on a piece of paper about their feelings of gratitude for what Heavenly Father has created and done to bring to pass their immortality and eternal life. You may want to invite a few students to share what they wrote.

#### Next Unit (Moses 5–7; Genesis 4–5)

Ask students if they have ever wondered what happened after Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden. How was Satan able to influence Adam and Eve's children to be carnal, sensual, and devilish? How did Enoch respond to his calling to be a prophet? What happened to the people of Enoch, and where are they today? Tell students that in the next lesson they will learn about our first parents and what occurred during generations that followed their leaving the Garden of Eden.

## Home-Study Seminary Program

Under the direction of local priesthood leaders and the S&I representative, home-study seminary classes can be organized in places where students cannot attend a daily class because of distance or other factors (such as a disability). Home-study seminary classes are generally not available where daily (weekday) classes are provided through early-morning or released-time seminary.

The home-study program allows students to receive credit in seminary by completing individual lessons at home rather than attending weekday classes. These lessons are found in a separate manual called the *Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students*. Once a week, students meet with a seminary instructor to submit their work and participate in a classroom lesson. The student study guide and weekly classroom lessons are further explained below.

### Study Guide for Home-Study Students

The *Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* is designed to help the home-study student receive an experience in studying the Old Testament similar to that of the seminary student who attends weekday classes. Therefore, the pacing of the student study guide as well as the doctrines and principles it emphasizes parallel the material in this manual. The student study guide also includes scripture mastery instruction. Scripture mastery passages are addressed in context as they appear in the scripture text, and often writing activities are provided in the lessons in which the passages are covered.

Each week, home-study seminary students are to complete four lessons from the student study guide and participate in a weekly lesson given by their seminary teacher. Students complete the numbered assignments from the study guide

in their scripture study journals. Students should have two scripture study journals so they can leave one with their teacher and continue working in the other. As students meet with their teacher each week, one journal is turned in to the home-study teacher and the other is given back to the student to use for the next week's lessons. (For example, during one week, the student completes assignments in journal 1. The student then brings this journal to class and gives it to the teacher. During the next week, the student completes assignments in journal 2. When the student hands in journal 2, the teacher will return journal 1. The student then uses journal 1 to complete the next week's assignments.)

All seminary students are encouraged to study the scriptures daily and read the text for the course, but home-study students should understand that they are expected to spend an additional 30 to 40 minutes on each of the four home-study lessons in each unit and attend the weekly home-study lesson.

### Weekly Home-Study Teacher Lessons

Each unit in the *Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* corresponds to five lessons in the daily teacher manual. After every fifth lesson in this manual, you will find one weekly home-study teacher lesson. The home-study lessons will help students review, deepen their understanding of, and apply the doctrines and principles they learned as they completed the lessons in the student study guide during the week. These lessons may also explore additional truths not covered in the student study guide. (For help in planning your lesson schedule, see the pacing guide for home-study teachers in the appendix of this manual.)

As a home-study teacher, you should have a thorough understanding of what your students are studying at home each week so you can answer questions and create meaningful discussions when you meet with them. Ask students to bring their

scriptures, scripture study journals, and student study guides to the weekly class so they can refer to them during the lesson. Adapt the lessons according to the needs of the students you teach and according to the guidance of the Holy Ghost. You may also want to refer to the daily teacher lessons in this manual as you prepare and teach. A study of the teaching helps and methods used in the daily lessons can help enrich your weekly teaching. Accommodate any particular needs of the students you teach. For example, if a student has difficulty writing, allow him or her to use a voice-recording device or dictate thoughts to a family member or friend who can write down his or her responses.

At the end of each weekly lesson, collect students' scripture study journals and encourage them in their continued study. Provide them with a scripture study journal for the next week's assignments, as explained above in the section called "Study Guide for Home-Study Students." (Under the direction of priesthood leaders and parents, stake [called] seminary teachers may communicate electronically with seminary students enrolled in home-study seminary.)

As you read through assignments in students' scripture study journals, respond periodically to their work by writing a small note or commenting the next time you see them. You may also want to seek other ways to provide support and meaningful feedback. This will help students know that you care about their work and will help motivate them to be thorough in their answers.

Most of students' efforts to master key scripture passages will be made as they complete their home-study lessons. Home-study teachers can follow up on students' efforts during the home-study lessons by inviting students to recite or review scripture mastery passages that arise in the text for that week's unit of study.

## Other Resources

### LDS.org

The *Old Testament Seminary Teacher Manual* ([ottm.lds.org](http://ottm.lds.org)) and the *Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* are available on LDS.org and in the Gospel Library for mobile devices. The digital versions of the teacher manual contain additional Commentary and Background Information, Supplemental Teaching Ideas, and media resources that are not included in this printed manual because of space limitations.

### si.lds.org

Teachers can visit the Seminaries and Institutes of Religion website ([si.lds.org](http://si.lds.org)) for help in preparing lessons and to find additional teaching ideas.

### Notes and Journal Tools

Teachers and students may use the online and mobile Notes and Journal tools to mark and add notes to the digital versions of these manuals as they prepare lessons and study the scriptures. Teacher manuals and student study guides are also available on LDS.org for download in alternate formats (such as PDF, ePub, and mobi [Kindle] files).

### Additional Items

The following resources are available online, through your supervisor, through local Church distribution centers, and through the Church’s online store ([store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org)):



*Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* (item no. 00492; English, Spanish, and Portuguese only)



*Old Testament DVD Presentations* (item no. 54140)



Media Library at [medialibrary.lds.org](http://medialibrary.lds.org)



*Gospel Art Book* (item no. 06048)



*Scripture Study Journal* (item no. 09591)



Old Testament Bookmark (includes a timeline and a list of scripture mastery references and key words) (item no. 10554)



Old Testament Scripture Mastery Cards and Scripture Reading Charts (item no. 10555)



*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (item no. 36863)



Gospel Topics at [topics.lds.org](http://topics.lds.org)



*For the Strength of Youth* booklet (item no. 09403)



*Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel* (Church Educational System manual) (item no. 32489)



*Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi* (Church Educational System manual) (item no. 32498)



Seminary Folders (for students to keep handouts and other loose items) (item no. 09827; English only)





## LESSON 1

# Introduction to the Old Testament

### Introduction

The Old Testament contains images, symbols, and teachings about the Lord Jesus Christ and His role as the Savior of Heavenly Father's children. As students study daily from its pages, they will increase their

understanding of prophets, covenants and ordinances, the scattering and gathering of Israel, and many other doctrines and principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### The Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ

The *Gospel Art Book* (item no. 06048) contains images that depict a variety of Old Testament accounts. You may want to display these images throughout the year as you teach the lessons they pertain to.

Before class, place several pictures depicting Old Testament accounts in a circular pattern on the board (see *Gospel Art Book* [2009], nos. 4–27; see also LDS.org). In the center of these pictures, place a picture of Jesus Christ and write the following statement by President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency. (This statement is found in “The Message of the Old Testament” [Church Educational System Symposium on the Old Testament, Aug. 17, 1979], 4; si.lds.org.)

*“The message of the Old Testament is the message of Christ and his coming and his atonement”*  
(President Marion G. Romney).

Begin by asking students if they recognize any of the stories represented in the pictures on the board. Invite them to explain what they know about the stories they recognize. After a few students have commented, draw an arrow pointing from each picture toward the picture of Christ and the statement in the middle. Invite a student to read the statement aloud.

- How can the events depicted in these pictures teach of Jesus Christ, His coming, and His Atonement?
- As you begin your study of the Old Testament, why do you think it might be helpful to know that this book of scripture testifies of Jesus Christ?

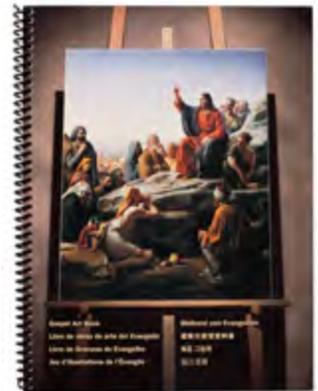
Point out that although the Old Testament may seem to focus on topics such as covenants, prophets, repentance, the law of Moses, and commandments, there is one theme that weaves through them all: Jesus Christ. Write the following truth on the board: **As we learn to see how the Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ, our faith in Jesus Christ will increase.**

Invite two students to read Mosiah 3:15 and Moses 6:63 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for ways the Lord tried to help His people learn of Jesus Christ during Old Testament times. After students report what they have found, explain that as they study the Old Testament this year, they will learn to see Jesus Christ in the prophecies, events, and symbols of the Old Testament.

To help students understand how the Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ through symbols, show the class a picture of a lamb. Explain that one of the early commandments given to Adam and Eve was to sacrifice the firstborn males of their flocks of sheep as an offering to the Lord (see Exodus 12:5). They would kill the animal and then place it on an altar to be burned. Invite a student to read Moses 5:5–7 aloud.



- According to the angel, why did the Lord command Adam to offer sacrifices?



#### Invite the Spirit through effective devotionals

A brief devotional at the beginning of class can help teachers and students feel the Spirit and prepare to learn. A devotional generally includes a hymn (see D&C 25:12), a prayer, and a thought from the scriptures. Devotionals are most effective when students bear testimony and share feelings and insights they have had during their personal scripture study. Consider how you might organize devotionals so that all students have opportunities to participate throughout the year.

Explain that in the book of Leviticus we learn additional details about animal sacrifices. These details were meant to teach of Jesus Christ and His Atonement. Invite a student to read Leviticus 1:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to look for words or phrases about the animal to be sacrificed that also describe the Savior and His Atonement. Ask students to report what they find. Ask questions such as the following to help students deepen their understanding of these verses:

- What does “without blemish” mean? (Free of flaws or imperfections.) How does this symbolize Jesus Christ?

Point out that the offerings and sacrifices explained in the book of Leviticus are part of what was known as the law of Moses. Invite a student to read 2 Nephi 11:4 aloud. Ask students to look for what Nephi said was the purpose of the law of Moses.

- What does the word “typifying” mean? (To symbolize or represent.)

**Encourage daily scripture study**

Encourage students to set aside time every day for personal study of the Old Testament. You can help them account for their daily study by providing an appropriate tracking system (see the reading charts in the appendix of this manual). Give students regular opportunities to share what they are learning and feeling during their personal scripture study. Take care not to embarrass or discourage students who struggle to study the scriptures on their own.

**In the Old Testament, Jesus Christ is known as Jehovah**

Write the following titles on the board, and ask students if they know whom they refer to: *Anointed One, Creator, Deliverer*. If students need help answering this question, explain that these titles refer to the Savior Jesus Christ. Explain that as they study the Old Testament they will learn to recognize additional names and titles for Jesus Christ.

To help students become familiar with a few of these titles, write the following scripture references on the board: *Job 19:25, Psalm 16:10, Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 49:26*. Invite students to select one of the passages and read it silently, looking for a name or title used for Jesus Christ. (For additional names and titles for Jesus Christ, see Topical Guide, “Jesus Christ.”) Then ask students to report what they find. Write the names they discover on the board. (The meaning of the name “Immanuel” can be found in the Bible Dictionary.)

Ask a student to read Genesis 2:4 aloud, and invite the class to look for a title of the Savior in this verse. After students locate the title “LORD God,” explain that this title implies supreme authority and that “when the word [LORD] appears in the Old Testament, it [usually] means Jehovah” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Jehovah”; scriptures.lds.org). *Jehovah* is the name of the premortal Jesus Christ, who is the God of Israel.

This may be a good time to encourage students to study the scriptures daily and read the Old Testament this year. Teachers and students are encouraged to read and study the portions of the Old Testament that have been selected for the seminary curriculum. Instruct students to begin their study of the Old Testament by reading Moses 1, which is part of Joseph Smith’s translation of the book of Genesis (see Bible Dictionary, “Joseph Smith Translation”).

**Additional themes in the Old Testament**

Write the following heading on the board: *Additional themes in the Old Testament*. Explain to the class that in addition to finding that the mission of Jesus Christ is a theme in the Old Testament, they will discover other themes as they study this book of scripture.

Assign each student a partner and invite them to share with each other about a time when they were left behind or got separated from family or friends. Ask them to explain how or why they got left behind or separated and how they felt during the separation.

Explain that ever since Adam and Eve were cast out from the Garden of Eden, Heavenly Father’s children have lived in a fallen condition and are physically and spiritually separated from God.

- How does Heavenly Father let us know that we are not forgotten?
- How does Heavenly Father help us find our way back to Him?

Display a picture of an Old Testament prophet (consider using Building the Ark [*Gospel Art Book* (2009), no. 7; see also LDS.org]). Explain that one of the ways Heavenly Father helps us return to Him is by calling prophets.

- How do prophets help us return to our Heavenly Father?

After students respond, write the following doctrine under the heading on the board:

**God calls prophets to preach the gospel and administer His covenants and ordinances.** Ask students to explain what covenants and ordinances are.



To help students deepen their understanding of covenants and ordinances, organize them into pairs. Assign one student to learn about covenants and the other student to learn about ordinances. Give them time to study their assigned topics using a copy of the Basic Doctrines document from the appendix of this manual, the Bible Dictionary, or the Guide to the Scriptures. Ask them to prepare to explain their assigned topics to their partners. Then give them time to teach one another what they have learned. (After this exercise, students should understand that a covenant is a sacred agreement between God and man and that an ordinance is a sacred, formal act that has spiritual meaning. You may also want to explain that an ordinance can connect the person who receives it with the power of God. A modern revelation explains that “in the ordinances . . . the power of godliness is manifest” [D&C 84:20].)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for the purpose of covenants and ordinances.

“Heavenly Father has always helped his children by offering them covenants and empowering his servants to offer ordinances. . . .”

“. . . Every covenant with God is an opportunity to draw closer to him” (“Making Covenants with God” [Brigham Young University fireside, Sept. 8, 1996], 2, 3; speeches.byu.edu).

- How do covenants and ordinances help us overcome our separation from God?

Testify that making and keeping eternal covenants is essential in order to return to live with God. Explain that the prophet Abraham entered into a covenant with God that would help him “walk before [God]” and become perfect (see Genesis 17:1–2).

- How well do you think the covenant-making and covenant-keeping process worked for Abraham?

Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 132:29 aloud. Ask students to listen for where Abraham is.

Explain that when people in Old Testament times kept their covenants with God they were blessed and preserved. Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 29:25–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what would happen to God’s covenant people if they chose to break their covenants. Ask students to report what they find.

After students respond, write the following truth under the heading on the board: **God’s covenant people were scattered because they broke their covenants with Him.**

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 36:24–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord promised to do for His scattered people as they repented and turned to Him. Ask students to report what they find.

- How would you relate the Lord’s words in these verses to us?

Write the following truth under the heading on the board: **God has promised to gather His covenant people.** Point out that the term *gather* refers not only to a physical gathering of God’s people but also to the spiritual condition of being gathered to the Lord. We gather to Him as we receive sacred ordinances and covenants and worship the Lord at church, in temples, at home, and in our daily lives.

- When have you been able to help someone else gather to the Lord? What feelings did you experience in that process? (You may also want to share an experience of your own.)

 After students have shared their experiences and feelings about gathering others to the Lord, consider showing the video “Inviting All to Come unto Christ: Sharing the Gospel” (4:30), found on LDS.org. Invite students to look for how the young men in the video participated in the gathering.

Testify that as students study the Old Testament, they can learn more about their Savior Jesus Christ, the role of prophets, the importance of ordinances and covenants, and the Lord’s efforts to gather and bless His children. Remind students to begin their study of the Old Testament by reading Moses 1 before the next class.

## LESSON 2

# The Plan of Salvation

### Introduction

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles instructed seminary teachers to present a brief overview of the plan of salvation at the beginning of each school year:

“A brief overview of the ‘plan of happiness’ . . . , if given at the very beginning and revisited occasionally, will be of immense value to your students. . . .

“Young people wonder ‘why?’—Why are we commanded *to do* some things, and why are we commanded *not to do* other things? A knowledge of the plan of

happiness, even in outline form, can give young minds a ‘why’” (“The Great Plan of Happiness” [CES Symposium on the Doctrine and Covenants/Church History, Aug. 10, 1993]; si.lds.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 69, 70).

This lesson provides a brief overview of the plan of salvation, highlighting the three main elements of the plan—the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Each of these elements will be taught in more depth in coming lessons as they arise in the text of the Old Testament.

### *Cultivate an environment of love and respect*

As the course begins, look for ways to cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose. Help students feel comfortable with each other and with you by learning each other’s names and by learning about one another’s interests, talents, challenges, and abilities. One way to cultivate this type of environment is to invite students to share with each other experiences and insights from their personal scripture study.

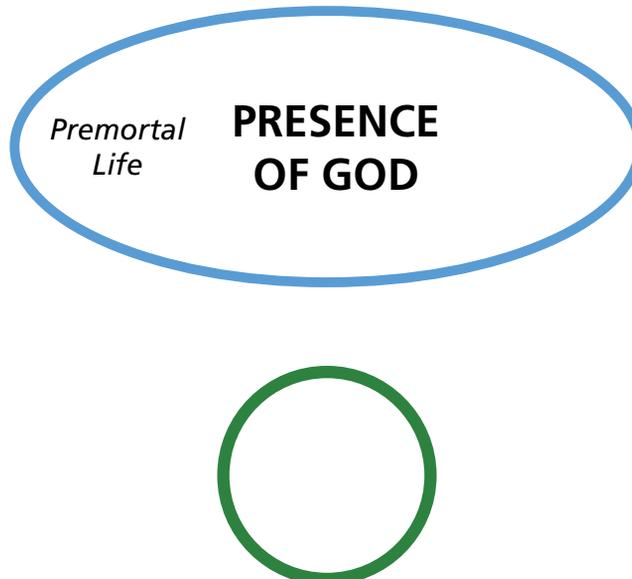
### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* You may want to follow up with students about their efforts to begin reading the scripture text for the course. You could invite them to share with another student what they learned during their personal scripture study, including a favorite verse. Consider inviting a few students to share with the class.

### Heavenly Father’s work and glory

Invite students to think about times when they have worked to become better in some way. For example, an individual may have worked to better his or her time or skill in a particular sport. Another may have worked to speak more kindly about others or use more uplifting language. Ask a few students to explain to the class how they have worked to improve themselves and how it felt when they accomplished their goal.

As shown in the accompanying diagram, draw an oval on the board and label it *Presence of God*. Write *Premortal Life* in the left side of the oval. Then draw a circle underneath the oval. (You will label this circle later in the lesson.)



You may want to invite students to copy the diagram in their class notebooks or scripture study journals and add to it throughout the lesson.

Explain that we have been improving and progressing since before we were born. Ask students to explain what they know about our premortal life. As part of this discussion, you may want to give students time to read the “Premortal Life” section of the Basic Doctrines document (found in the appendix of this manual) or the paragraphs about premortal life in *True to the Faith* (see *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 115–16). Make sure they identify the following truths about premortal life: We lived in the presence of our Heavenly Father as His spirit children. We developed our identities and increased our spiritual capabilities. We learned that Heavenly Father would provide us with an opportunity to become like Him. We chose to follow our Heavenly Father and progress toward eternal life even though Lucifer and many others chose to rebel against Him. We accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior.

- In the premortal life, how were we different from our Heavenly Father? (We did not have physical bodies or the knowledge and attributes of Heavenly Father.)

Invite a student to read Moses 1:39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for Heavenly Father’s purpose for His children.

- What is Heavenly Father’s purpose for His children? (**Heavenly Father’s purpose is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of His children.** You may want to suggest that students mark the words *immortality* and *eternal life* in their scriptures.)
- What is immortality? (Living forever with a resurrected body.) What is eternal life? (To become like our Heavenly Father and to live as families eternally in His presence.)

Invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“*Eternal life* is the name given to the kind of life that our Eternal Father lives. . . . *God’s life is eternal life; eternal life is God’s life*—the expressions are synonymous” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 237).

On the diagram, label the right side of the oval *Eternal Life*. Explain to students that we were unable to progress further in our premortal life without additional help from Heavenly Father. As spirit children we participated in a grand council before we were born. There Heavenly Father presented His plan for our immortality and our progression toward eternal life.

## The Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ

Write *Essential Elements of God’s Plan* next to the diagram on the board. Explain that Heavenly Father’s plan consists of three main elements that make it possible for us to become like Him.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for and identify the three essential elements of Heavenly Father’s plan.



“A great council in heaven was once convened, in which it seems that all of us participated [see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (1976), 348–49, 365]. There our Heavenly Father announced His plan. . . . The enabling essence of the plan is the Atonement of Jesus Christ. As it is central to the plan [see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 121], we should try to comprehend the meaning of the Atonement. Before we can comprehend it, though, we must understand the Fall of Adam. And before we can fully appreciate the Fall, we must first comprehend the Creation. These three events—the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement—are three preeminent pillars of God’s plan, and they are doctrinally interrelated” (“Constancy amid Change,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 33).

- What did Elder Nelson say are the three “pillars” of Heavenly Father’s plan? (Students should express the following truth: **Heavenly Father’s plan for our immortality and eternal life includes the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ.** Invite a student to list these three elements under the heading on the board.)

To help students understand the doctrines of the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, divide the class into three groups and assign each group to study one of these three doctrines. Provide them with copies of the Basic Doctrines document (see

### Scripture study journals

A scripture study journal can be a bound journal, a notebook, or pages in a binder. It could also be the notes and journal tool on LDS.org or a note-taking app on a smartphone or tablet device. In scripture study journals, students may take notes and record impressions during lessons, personal study, and other Church meetings. As they record and organize their thoughts and impressions, they will improve their understanding of the gospel, receive personal revelation, and be better prepared to participate in class.

the appendix of this manual) or with copies of *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (see LDS.org). Ask the students in each group to study their assigned doctrine individually, looking for how that part of Heavenly Father’s plan helps us to receive immortality and eternal life. After sufficient time, invite students to discuss the following questions in their groups. You may want to write these questions on the board or prepare them on a handout.

- How does this part of Heavenly Father’s plan help us to receive immortality and eternal life?
- What would happen if this aspect of the plan were missing?

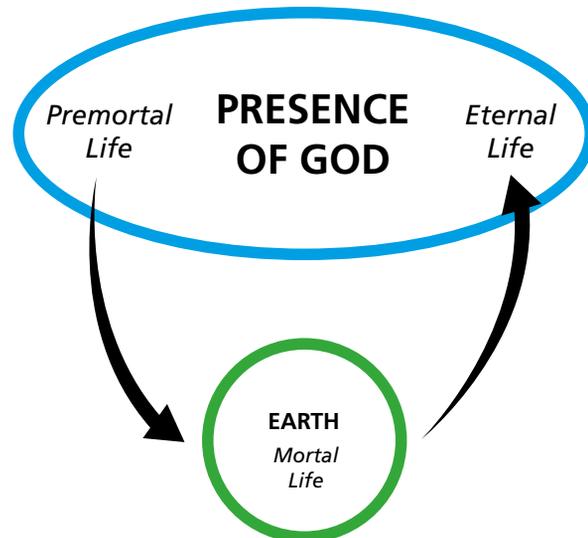
After sufficient time, invite one or two members of each group to present to the class a summary of what they learned about their assigned topic. Ask them to share how their group answered the two questions above. (As students report on the Creation, label the circle underneath the oval with the word *Earth*, as shown in the accompanying diagram. As they report on the Fall, draw an arrow from *Premortal Life* to *Earth*.)

To help students feel the truth and importance of these doctrines, invite them to answer one or more of the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What difference does it make in your life to know about the Creation and how it fits into the plan of salvation?
- What difference does it make in your life to know about the Fall and how it fits into the plan of salvation?
- What difference does it make in your life to know about the Atonement of Jesus Christ and how it fits into the plan of salvation?

**Purposes of mortal life**

Write *Mortal Life* in the circle representing earth. Explain that mortal life provides a way for us to progress toward immortality and eternal life. When we are born into mortality, we receive a body and have experiences that allow us to develop faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ showed us how to progress through mortality toward eternal life (see John 14:6; 2 Nephi 31:7–10, 19–21).



**Essential Elements of God’s Plan**

1. Creation of the Earth
2. Fall of Adam and Eve
3. Atonement of Jesus Christ

On the board, draw an arrow from *Mortal Life* to *Eternal Life*, as shown in the diagram. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what we must do in mortality to progress toward eternal life.



“We are now being tried and tested to see if we will do all the things the Lord has commanded us to do. These commandments are the principles and ordinances of the gospel, and they constitute the gospel of Jesus Christ. Every principle and ordinance has a bearing upon the whole purpose of our testing, which is to prepare us to return to our Heavenly Father and become more like Him. . . .

“. . . Only through the gift of the Atonement and our obedience to the gospel can we return and live with God once again” (“The Plan of Salvation,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 71).

- According to Elder Perry’s statement, what must we do to progress toward eternal life? (Students may give a variety of correct responses, but they should identify the following truth: **We must obey Heavenly Father’s commandments to receive eternal life.** Write this principle next to the circle representing the earth in the diagram.)
- How does obeying Heavenly Father’s commandments help us to become more like Him?

To help students feel the truth and importance of this principle, you may want to invite them to think of commandments or standards that have helped them become better people. Invite a few students to share their experiences. You might also consider sharing how obeying commandments and following standards have helped you on your journey toward becoming more like Heavenly Father.

To help students apply this principle, invite them to think about any commandments or standards they need to obey more fully. Do not ask them to share this with the class, since this may be very personal. Encourage them to write on a piece of paper a goal to live that commandment or standard. You might suggest that they keep the paper in a place where they can refer to it often to help them remember their goal. Assure them that every effort they make to be more obedient to the commandments brings them closer to their Heavenly Father and a life like He lives.

Invite any who would like to do so to testify of the doctrines or principles they learned today. You may also want to share your testimony of the doctrines and principles taught in the lesson today.

Conclude by explaining to students that as they study the Old Testament this year, they will have opportunities to learn more truths about Heavenly Father’s plan and deepen their testimonies of it.

## Commentary and Background Information

### The Atonement of Jesus Christ

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles listed some of the reasons the Atonement of Jesus Christ is invaluable to the plan of our Heavenly Father:

“If there had been no atonement of Christ, there would be no resurrection, no breaking of the bands of death, no coming forth from the grave.

“If there had been no atonement, there would be no remission of sins; no return to the presence of God; no

salvation of any sort, kind, or nature; no eternal life; no exaltation; no continuation of the family unit in eternity. . . .

“All things center in, revolve around, are anchored to, and are built upon the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ” (“The Three Pillars of Eternity” [Brigham Young University devotional, Feb. 17, 1981], 2, 3; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu)).

## LESSON 3

# The Role of the Learner

### Introduction

This lesson should help students understand and fulfill their role in learning the gospel. To understand their role, students must also understand the roles of the

Holy Ghost and the teacher. You may need to review the principles taught in this lesson regularly to remind students of their responsibility in gospel learning.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### The roles of the Holy Ghost, the teacher, and the learner

Divide students into groups of three or four, and invite them to discuss the following (you may want to write these items on the board): their *name*, their *favorite team sport*, and their *favorite position in that sport*, if they have one (other activities such as band, choir, or drama could be substituted here).

After students have discussed their answers, invite one student to draw on the board a diagram of the playing field or court of his or her favorite team sport or activity and put an X where each player would be positioned. Ask the student to describe the objective of the sport and how a team succeeds. Then ask the student the following questions:

- What do you think is the most important position on the team? What position is least important?
- What would happen if you removed a position from your team and then tried to compete?
- What would happen if the player in that position was there, but he (or she) either did not understand his role or expected others to fulfill his role?

Point out how important it is for each player to understand and fulfill his or her role in order for the team to be successful in achieving its objective. Explain that being in a seminary class is similar to being on a team.

- What do you think the purpose of a seminary class is?

After students respond, ask a student to read the following statement aloud while the class listens for the purpose of seminary. (Consider providing copies of the statement as a handout and displaying this statement in your classroom for at least the first few weeks of seminary.)

The purpose of seminary is “to help youth and young adults understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven” (“The Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion,” *Gospel Teaching and Learning* [2012], x).

- What part of the objective of seminary do you most want to achieve in your life?
- As a member of our seminary class, what do you think your role is in accomplishing this purpose?

After students respond, explain that accomplishing the objective of seminary requires the efforts of three different individuals. Each has a position or unique role to fill in the process. Write the following headings on the board: *Holy Ghost, Teacher, Learner*.

- Which position or role do you think is the most important? Which do you think is the least important?
- What would happen if we removed one of these roles from our seminary class?
- What would happen if one of these individuals did not understand their role or expected others to fulfill their role?

Point out that no matter how effective the Holy Ghost or the teacher might be, the purpose of seminary will not be accomplished unless each student fulfills his or her role. Explain that in order for students to understand their role, they also need to understand the roles of the Holy Ghost and the teacher.

## The role of the Holy Ghost

Ask students to ponder what they think the Holy Ghost's role is in the seminary classroom.

- Why is the Holy Ghost essential to our seminary experience?

Invite a student to read 2 Nephi 33:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Holy Ghost does for the student when the truth is taught by His power.

- According to this verse, what does the Holy Ghost do for students? (Under "Holy Ghost" on the board write the following doctrine: **The Holy Ghost carries the truth to our hearts.**)
- What do you think will happen if we do not invite or welcome the Holy Ghost into our classroom?

Invite students to ponder how their behavior and personal worthiness relates to their ability to be taught by the Holy Ghost.

To illustrate the role of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament, explain that a prophet named Elijah was discouraged because of the wickedness of the people. The Lord communicated with him as he stood atop a mountain. Invite a student to read 1 Kings 19:11–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the Lord communicated with Elijah on this occasion. Invite students to report what they find.

- How does knowing that the Lord communicates with us through the Holy Ghost help you as you strive to learn by the power of the Holy Ghost? How does knowing how the Holy Ghost speaks help you?

If possible, provide the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as a handout. Invite a student to read it aloud.

"Please know that your Father in Heaven loves you and so does His Only Begotten Son. When They speak to you—and They will—it will not be in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but it will be with a voice still and small, a voice tender and kind" ("The Tongue of Angels," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 18).

Invite students to share their thoughts and feelings about the ability of the Holy Ghost to carry gospel truth to our hearts.

## The role of the teacher

Point to "Teacher" on the board and ask the following question:

- If the role of the Holy Ghost is to carry the truth to learners' hearts, what do you think the teacher's role is in seminary?

Invite two students to read aloud Doctrine and Covenants 42:12–14 and Doctrine and Covenants 50:13–14. Ask the class to listen for what a gospel teacher's role is.

- How would you summarize what these passages teach about the teacher's role? (Students may give a variety of answers, such as the following doctrine: **The Lord commands teachers to teach the gospel by the Spirit.** Write this doctrine under "Teacher" on the board.)

Explain that after the Lord spoke from Mount Sinai to the ancient Israelites, He gave some specific instructions to those who would teach His word. Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 6:4–7 aloud. Ask students to look for what the Lord commanded the Israelites.

- What did the Lord expect of those who taught their children God's word?
- How does verse 7 affect your understanding of the role of your gospel teacher?

## The role of the learner

Point to "Learner" on the board, and ask students what they think their role is in accomplishing the purpose of seminary.

After they respond, invite two students to come to the front of the class. Hand one student a weight (like a dumbbell), and ask him or her to begin lifting it in repetition. While the student does this, ask if there is any way to transfer the strength that this student is building in his or her muscles to the second student.

- How might this example relate to gaining gospel knowledge and testimony? (If students want to grow spiritually stronger, they must put forth effort.)

Provide the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on a handout. Invite students to read the statement silently and look for what it teaches about the student's role.



"A learner exercising agency by acting in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost and invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. . . .

". . . A student must exercise faith and act in order to obtain the knowledge for himself or herself" ("Seek Learning by Faith," *Ensign*, Sept. 2007, 64).

- What does this statement teach about your role in obtaining spiritual knowledge? (Students' answers may vary, but they might include a principle similar to the following: **Obtaining spiritual knowledge requires effort on our part.** Write this principle under "Student" on the board.)
- What are some spiritual, mental, or physical efforts we can make to obtain spiritual knowledge? (You may want to write students' responses under the principle you just wrote on the board.)

(*Note:* Consider inviting students to read Doctrine and Covenants 88:122 and discuss the importance of order and respect in the class.)

On the board, draw a line connecting "Holy Ghost" and "Student," and ask:

- What do you think the relationship is between students fulfilling their role in the learning process and the Holy Ghost being able to fulfill His role? (Students may use different words, but their responses might reflect something similar to this principle: **When we make an effort to fulfill our role as learners, we open our hearts to the Holy Ghost's teaching power.**)

To help students understand how the roles of the Holy Ghost, teacher, and student work together, invite them to turn to 2 Kings 5.

Explain that Naaman was a captain in the Syrian army who suffered from a disease called leprosy. A Jewish maid in his house suggested that the Israelite prophet Elisha in Samaria could heal him.

Invite two students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 5:9–15. Ask the class to follow along and look for the effect of Naaman's actions. After the students have read, ask the following questions to help the class recognize the roles of the student, the Holy Ghost, and the teacher.

- What effects did Naaman's actions have?
- Who filled the role of a teacher in this account?
- How do you think the Holy Ghost might have played a role in Naaman's experience?

Invite students to share how they have invited the Spirit and acted on what they have learned in seminary or in other gospel settings and the results of such efforts.

Give students time to ponder one or two things they want to do to fulfill their role in seminary this year. Invite them to set a goal to act on these desires. You might suggest that they write this goal in their scripture study journals or on a piece of paper. If students need help coming up with goals, consider showing the following ideas from chapter 1 of *Gospel Teaching and Learning*:

- Develop a habit of daily scripture study.
- Discover and express doctrines and principles that are relevant to their personal lives.
- Ask questions and seek answers that help them better understand the gospel and how it applies to their lives.
- Share insights, experiences, and feelings.
- Explain gospel doctrines and principles to others and testify of their truthfulness.
- Develop scripture study skills, such as marking, cross-referencing, and using the scripture study aids.

## LESSON 4

# Studying the Scriptures

### Introduction

This lesson can help students learn how to better understand the scriptures, identify the gospel truths they contain, and apply those truths in their lives. As students discover and act on the eternal truths found

in the scriptures, the gospel can sink deep into their hearts. Consider ways to review the material in this lesson throughout the year.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### The importance of studying the scriptures

Invite students to list some of the benefits of good friends. Write their responses on the board. Display a set of scriptures, and ask if any of the benefits written on the board can also apply to the scriptures.

If possible, provide as a handout the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and invite a student to read it aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for some of the benefits of having the scriptures as friends:



"[The scriptures] can become stalwart friends that are not limited by geography or calendar. They are always available when needed. . . . Learning, pondering, searching, and memorizing scriptures is like filling a filing cabinet with friends, values, and truths that can be called upon anytime, anywhere in the world. . . .

". . . [Memorizing a scripture] is like discovering a new individual who can help in time of need, give inspiration and comfort, and be a source of motivation for needed change" ("The Power of Scripture," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 6).

- According to Elder Scott, how can the scriptures become like a good friend to you?

You may want to invite a few students to share experiences they have had when the scriptures have helped them in the ways Elder Scott described.

To help students better understand how scriptures can help them, write the phrase "*If we study the scriptures . . .*" along with the following scripture references on the board: *Deuteronomy 17:19; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:105; 2 Nephi 32:3; Jacob 2:8; Alma 31:5*. Assign students a passage to read, and instruct them to complete the phrase on the board with what they find in their assigned passage. You may want to do one with the class as an example.

After sufficient time, invite students to write their completed phrases on the board. Students may use different words, but their answers should reflect the following principles:

**If we study the scriptures . . . :**

- . . . they will help us learn to fear (respect) God and keep His commandments.**
- . . . they will tell us what to do to be prosperous and successful.**
- . . . they will light our path.**
- . . . they will tell us all things that we should do.**
- . . . they will heal our wounded souls.**
- . . . they will lead us to do that which is just (righteous).**

Invite students to ponder which of these blessings they have experienced through studying the scriptures. As time allows, invite a few to share their experiences or their feelings on the blessings of studying the scriptures.

To help students understand the importance of daily scripture study, show them a toothbrush and tube of toothpaste. Announce that in an effort to use your time more

**Read the text for the course**

Students and teachers should read and study the entire book of scripture that corresponds with each course of study. Elder David A. Bednar said:

“Reading a book of scripture from beginning to end . . . [introduces] us to important stories, gospel doctrines, and timeless principles. This approach also enables us to learn about major characters in the scriptures and the sequence, timing, and context of events and teachings” (“A Reservoir of Living Water” [Church Educational System fireside, Feb. 4, 2007], 2; si.lds.org).

efficiently, you are thinking about changing how and when you brush your teeth. Instead of brushing for a couple of minutes every day, you’ve decided to brush for 15 minutes once a week. You will also use seven times the usual amount of toothpaste so that your teeth will be thoroughly clean. Ask students what they think of your new plan.

- Why would this new plan not be a wise way to care for your teeth?
- How can this example relate to our study of the scriptures?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Howard W. Hunter:

“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” (“Reading the Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 64).

Invite students to share what they have done to develop a habit of studying the scriptures daily. Invite students to set a goal to study their scriptures daily.

**How to study the scriptures**

Ask students to imagine that as they are exploring an area outdoors, something shiny catches their eye. They look more closely and discover that it is a large diamond.

- How would you feel? Why?

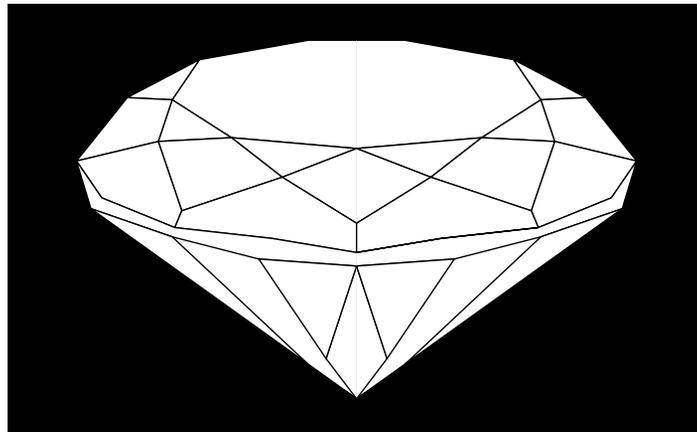
Explain that Elder Richard G. Scott taught that there are “diamonds of truth that . . . must be carefully mined from the pages of the Old Testament” (“Four Fundamentals for Those Who Teach and Inspire Youth” [Church Educational System symposium address, Aug. 14, 1987], 1; si.lds.org). We refer to some of these diamonds as *doctrines* and *principles*. Write these words on the board, and ask if students can define them.

Correct or add to students’ answers by explaining that doctrines are fundamental, unchanging truths of the gospel and that principles can guide us in making decisions.

Explain that the following skills can help students identify, understand, and apply the doctrines and principles found in the scriptures.

**Understanding the context and content of the scriptures**

Show a picture of a diamond on a dark background, or draw a simple illustration on the board.



- Jewelers often display diamonds on dark backgrounds. Why do you think they do this? (A dark background helps the diamond stand out.)
- Explain that an important part of identifying the doctrines and principles contained in the scriptures is to first *understand the context and content of the scriptures*. (Write this phrase on the board.) This includes understanding the historical and literary background, story line, people, events, and sermons in the scriptural text. The context and content of the scriptures provide the background that helps doctrines and principles stand out more clearly.
- What has helped you understand the context or content of a scripture passage?

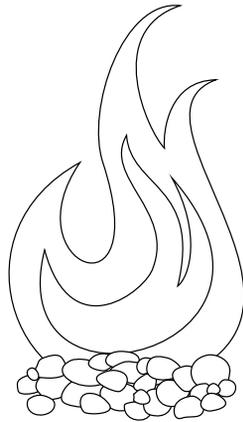
The following teaching ideas can help students learn and practice tools to help them understand context and content.

**Use scripture study aids:** Invite students to identify some of the scripture study aids in the LDS edition of the standard works. These include footnotes, chapter headings, topical indexes, the Bible Dictionary, the Guide to the Scriptures, and maps.

Point out that a particularly helpful aid in studying the Bible is the Joseph Smith Translation. Joseph Smith made inspired revisions to the Bible that restore lost content and clarify certain passages. Many of these changes can be found in the footnotes or the appendix of the LDS edition of the Bible. If students have the LDS edition of the Bible, you could invite them to read Exodus 4:21 and use the footnotes to identify the correction that Joseph Smith made.

- How does this correction affect our understanding of what is happening in this verse?

**Symbolism:** Draw a simple picture of a fire with hot coals on the board.



- What could fire possibly symbolize in scripture?

After students respond, explain that the prophet Isaiah had a vision of God in the temple. Invite a student to read Isaiah 6:5–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Isaiah.

- What could the live coal possibly symbolize?

To help students discover what the live coal symbolizes, help them locate the footnote to verse 6.

Explain that the scriptures are full of symbols that can teach us important gospel truths. Words such as *like* or *as* can help identify symbols. The footnotes, Bible Dictionary, Topical Guide, and Guide to the Scriptures can also help with the interpretation of symbols.

**Word definitions:** Invite a student to read Jeremiah 9:15 aloud while students follow along and look for words they don't understand. Write the words *wormwood* and *gall* on the board, and ask if anyone knows what these words mean.

- What can you do when you read a word you don't understand in the scriptures?

Explain that dictionaries, footnotes, and scripture study aids can often help students understand difficult words and phrases. Invite students to look in the Bible Dictionary for the definitions of the words on the board.

### Identifying and understanding doctrines and principles

Explain that as we study the context and content of the scriptures, we should search for doctrines and principles. Point out that some principles in the scriptures are clearly stated in the text and are easily identified by words and phrases such as "thus we see," "therefore," "wherefore," and "behold." Explain that other principles may be contained in the story line, events, parables, or people's lives.

Explain that asking the following questions as they read can help students identify principles:

- What is the moral or point of this story?
- What can I learn from these passages?
- What gospel truths are taught in this passage?



To help students practice identifying doctrines and principles, show the picture David Slays Goliath (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 19; see also LDS.org), and invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:32–37 aloud while the class follows along.

- What gospel lesson do you learn from this passage? (As students respond, write their answers on the board. They may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **If I exercise faith in the Lord, He will help me overcome life’s challenges.**)

### Applying gospel doctrines and principles to our lives

Explain that as we identify doctrines and principles in the scriptures, we can ponder how they relate to our personal experiences. When we do this, we invite the Spirit into our hearts. When the Spirit testifies of doctrines and principles, we can have a greater desire to act on and apply them in our lives. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“As you receive counsel and instruction, extract principles that will be eternally important in your lives and then make them part of your lives” (“How to Solve Problems,” *New Era*, July 2013, 48).

- When have you identified a doctrine or principle from the scriptures and then made it a part of your life?

After students respond, invite them to identify a doctrine or principle from the scriptures during their personal scripture study and to come to the next seminary class ready to explain the doctrine or principle and how they found it.

## Supplemental Teaching Idea

### Scripture study skills and methods

In addition to the three scripture study skills and methods that were given in lesson 4, the following can be helpful in understanding the context and content of the scriptures, identifying doctrines and principles, and applying doctrines and principles:

**Name substitution:** To help you apply doctrines and principles from the scriptures in your life, substitute your name for a name in the scriptures. Try using this scripture study skill with Moses 1:6.

**Cause and effect:** To help you identify gospel principles in the scriptures, look for “if–then” and “because–therefore” relationships. Try using this skill with Leviticus 26:3–6.

**Scripture lists:** The scriptures often contain lists of things such as instructions or warnings. When you find lists, consider numbering each element. Try this skill with Proverbs 6:16–19.

**Contrasts:** The scriptures often show contrasts in ideas, events, and people. These contrasts can emphasize gospel principles. Look for contrasts in single verses, in chapters, and across chapters and books. Try using this skill with the chapter headings of Genesis 38 and 39.

**Visualization:** Look for descriptive details that can help you create a mental picture as you read. Imagine being present at events described in the scriptures. Try this skill with Daniel 2:31–35.

**Pondering:** Pondering includes thinking, meditating, asking questions, and evaluating what you know and what you have learned. Pondering often helps us understand what we need to do to apply principles.

**Setting:** Determining who is speaking in a scripture passage, whom he or she is speaking to, what he or she is speaking about, and when and where the event is occurring can increase your understanding of the scripture context. Try using this skill with 2 Samuel 12:1–7.

**Cross-references:** Often, one scripture passage can explain or clarify a phrase or concept found in a different passage. Link scripture passages to each other using the scripture footnotes, index, or the Topical Guide or Guide to the Scriptures to help unlock the meaning of a scripture passage. Practice this skill by reading Isaiah 7:14 and then following footnote *b* to Matthew 1:23. Also look at verse 22. How does Matthew 1:22–23 add to your understanding of Isaiah 7:14?

## LESSON 5

# The Bible

### Introduction

This lesson will provide students with background information about how the Bible came to be, help them understand the overall organization of the Bible, and

give them an opportunity to learn the names of the books in the Old Testament.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### The contents of the Bible

Write the word *Miracles* on the board. Invite students to name as many miracles that have occurred in the history of the world as they can think of. Ask a student to act as a scribe and list them on the board.

After several miracles are listed, invite students to hold up their Bibles. Ask students if they would consider the Bible a miracle.

- Why might you consider the Bible a miracle?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for how the Bible is a miracle.



“My brothers and sisters, the Holy Bible is a miracle! It is a miracle that the Bible’s 4,000 years of sacred and secular history were recorded and preserved by the prophets, apostles, and inspired churchmen. . . .

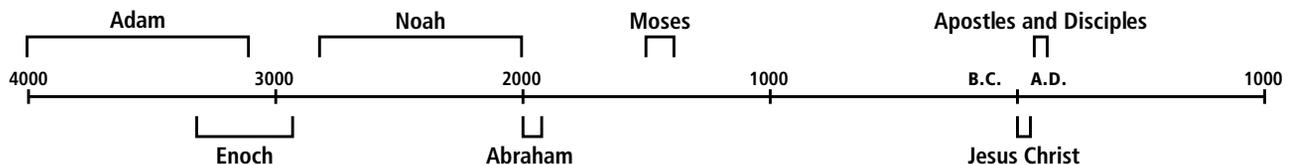
“It is not by chance or coincidence that we have the Bible today” (“The Miracle of the Holy Bible,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 80).

- According to Elder Ballard, how is the Bible a miracle? (Its writings have been preserved for thousands of years.)

Invite students to turn to the “Bible” entry in the Bible Dictionary. Invite a student to read aloud the first two paragraphs. Ask the class to follow along and identify what the word *Bible* means and who wrote the Bible. Ask students to report what they find.

Ask students if they know who wrote the first book in the Bible. After they respond, invite them to turn to Genesis 1 and look in the title to see who wrote the book of Genesis. (You may want to explain that in addition to writing Genesis, Moses wrote Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price also contains Moses’s writings.)

Copy the following timeline on the board (the dates listed are approximate). You could also refer students to the timeline on the Old Testament scripture mastery bookmark.



Explain that Moses wrote about the Creation, the Fall of Adam, and the lives of earlier prophets, but most of Moses’s writings contain information and revelations from his own lifetime.

Invite a student to read Moses 1:40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for one way that Moses learned about events that occurred many years before Moses’s time, such as the Creation and the Fall. Ask students to report what they find.

- According to what you read in Moses and in the Bible Dictionary, how did Moses and other writers of the Bible know what to write? (The Lord revealed it to them.)

To help students recognize that **the Bible contains the word of God**, display the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard and ask a student to read it aloud. (This statement is found in “The Miracle of the Holy Bible,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 80.) You may want to suggest that students write it in their scriptures.

*We love the Bible and other scriptures. . . . [We believe] in the Bible as the revealed word of God” (Elder M. Russell Ballard).*

Explain that the Bible is composed of two main parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The word *testament* means “covenant.” In addition to historical information, the Old Testament contains God’s covenant with His children as they looked forward to the coming of Jesus Christ. The New Testament contains a record of Jesus Christ’s ministry and Atonement and again records God’s covenant with His people. Between A.D. 300 and 400, Christian leaders chose a number of books that had been written during Old Testament and New Testament times and combined them to form the Bible that we know today.

**The structure of the Old Testament**

*Note:* Before class, create “scrolls” that correspond to each book in the Old Testament by loosely rolling up pieces of paper and taping them closed. On the outside of each scroll, write the name of a book of the Old Testament.



To help students understand how the Old Testament is organized, distribute the paper scrolls you prepared before class among the students. Explain that the scrolls represent the books of the Old Testament. The books of the Old Testament were originally written on material such as leather or papyrus. These were eventually transcribed and preserved as scrolls, which were written mostly in Hebrew (see Bible Dictionary, “Bible”).

- If you were in charge of compiling all of these scrolls into one book, how would you organize them?

Explain that over the years several efforts were made to collect and organize the authentic inspired words of the prophets. One important effort happened during the third to second century B.C. The original language of most of the Old Testament was Hebrew, but at this time Jewish scholars translated the Old Testament writings into Greek and decided to organize them categorically. This Greek version of the Old Testament, referred to as the Septuagint, was the version commonly used by the Jews in the Savior’s day. The order of the books in the King James Version of the Old Testament today follows this same organization. Write the following on the board:

The Law (Genesis–Deuteronomy)	The History (Joshua–Esther)	The Poetry (Job–Song of Solomon)	The Prophets (Isaiah–Malachi)
----------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------------	----------------------------------

Invite students to open to the table of contents page of their Bibles, which is titled “The Names and Order of All the Books in the Old and New Testaments.” You may want to suggest that they mark and label this page with the four categories written on the board.

Explain to students that there were some books and writings that for various reasons were not included in the Hebrew Bible. This collection of books is called the Apocrypha. Some Christian churches favor versions of the Bible that include the Apocrypha. When Joseph Smith was engaged in his inspired translation of the Bible, he inquired of the Lord concerning the Apocrypha. He was instructed that while there were many good things contained in the Apocrypha, it was not needful that it should be translated by the Prophet (see D&C 91; see also Bible Dictionary, “Apocrypha”).

Invite students to use the table of contents page of their Bibles to locate the book written on their scrolls. Then ask them to come forward and deposit their scrolls on the ground or in a container beneath the appropriate heading on the board.

Hold up one of the scrolls and explain that we do not have any of the original documents on which the books of the Bible were recorded. The oldest known sources of Bible text are copies of copies. Explain that as copies of the Bible texts were made, translated, and transmitted, scribal errors—both unintentional and intentional—were perpetuated with each succeeding copy (see 1 Nephi 13:24–28). Invite a student to read the following statement aloud:



“Joseph Smith taught that ‘many important points touching the salvation of men, had been taken from the Bible, or lost before it was compiled.’ He also said that the Bible was correct as ‘it came from the pen of the original writers,’ but that ‘ignorant translators, careless transcribers, or designing and corrupt priests have committed many errors.’ (*History of the Church*, 1:245; 6:57.)” (Bible Dictionary, “Bible”).

Explain that in order to restore lost truths and clarify certain passages, the Lord commanded the Prophet Joseph Smith to go through the text of the Bible and translate, restore, and revise it under inspiration. This collection of revisions is called the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (see Bible Dictionary, “Joseph Smith Translation”). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “the Bible [is] the word of God as far as it is translated correctly” (Articles of Faith 1:8). However, we should not think that the Bible is less important just because there may be flaws in the text. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Ballard:



“Without the Bible, we would not know of His Church then, nor would we have the fulness of His gospel now. . . .  
 “. . . Do not discount or devalue the Holy Bible. It is the sacred, holy record of the Lord’s life . . . [and] the bedrock of all Christianity” (“The Miracle of the Holy Bible,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 81, 82).

To help students further understand the importance of the Bible, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Ballard. Ask the class to listen for reasons the Bible is of great worth to us.

“It is a miracle that the Bible literally contains within its pages the converting, healing Spirit of Christ, which has turned men’s hearts for centuries, leading them to pray, to choose right paths, and to search to find their Savior” (“The Miracle of the Holy Bible,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 80).

 Instead of inviting a student to read this statement, you could show the video “The Miracle of the Bible” (1:25), in which Elder Ballard shares his testimony of the Holy Bible.

- Why is the Bible of such great worth?

Share a favorite scripture or brief passage from the Bible that has been meaningful to you. Also consider inviting students to share their feelings about how the Bible has helped them in their search to grow closer to the Savior. Explain that just as with any scripture, the greatest evidence of the truthfulness of the Bible comes through the witness of the Holy Ghost.

Encourage students to continue their study of God’s word as found in the Bible.

## Memorizing the books of the Old Testament

Consider taking a few minutes to help students memorize the order of the books in the Old Testament. Music can be effective in helping students memorize. The *Children’s Songbook* includes a song that can help students memorize the order of the books in the Old Testament (see “The Books in the Old Testament,” *Children’s Songbook*, 114–15).

Another option for helping students memorize the names and order of the books of the Old Testament is to write the first letter of each book in order under its respective category on the board. Invite students to use the table of contents in their scriptures to recite the books in order for each category. Repeat this activity until they can recite the books using only the first letters on the board, without looking at the table of contents. Consider reviewing the books of the Old Testament at the beginning of class for the next few lessons.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Introduction to the Old Testament—Studying the Scriptures (Unit 1)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following is a summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they completed the four home-study student lessons for unit 1. Knowing what students have been studying will help you prepare for class. The summary is not part of the lesson and is not meant to be shared with students. Because the lesson you will teach for unit 1 concentrates on only a few of the doctrines and principles listed in the summary, you may at times feel impressed to review or discuss others according to the promptings of the Spirit and the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Introduction to the Old Testament)**

In addition to learning how the Bible came to be and that it contains the word of God, students were introduced to the Old Testament and some of its predominant themes: Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament, prophets are called of God to preach the gospel and administer His covenants and ordinances, and the scattering and gathering of Israel.

#### **Day 2 (The Plan of Salvation)**

By studying Heavenly Father's plan for our salvation, students learned that Heavenly Father's purpose is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of His children. Students discovered that the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ are the three essential elements in God's plan for us to become like Him and that we must obey Heavenly Father's commandments to receive eternal life.

#### **Day 3 (The Role of the Learner)**

Students learned that the Holy Ghost, the teacher, and the learner each have an important role in gospel learning. Students discovered that obtaining spiritual knowledge requires effort on our part.

#### **Day 4 (Studying the Scriptures)**

Students identified multiple blessings they can receive if they study the scriptures. Students also learned how to increase their understanding of the context and content of the scriptures, identify and understand gospel truths, and apply these truths in their lives.

### Introduction

This lesson can help students better understand the structure of the Old Testament. In addition, it can help them understand that the Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ. This witness can be seen in prophecies, events, and symbols contained in its pages.

### Suggestions for Teaching

Before class, create a "scroll" for each book in the Old Testament by loosely rolling up pieces of paper and taping them closed. Write the name of each book on the outside of the scroll.

#### The structure of the Old Testament

To help students understand how the Old Testament is organized, divide the paper scrolls among the students. Explain that the scrolls represent the books of the Old Testament.

Explain that the books of the Old Testament were originally written on material such as leather or papyrus. These were eventually transcribed and preserved as scrolls, which were written mostly in Hebrew (see Bible Dictionary, "Bible").

- If you were in charge of compiling all of these scrolls into one book, how would you organize them?

Explain that over the years several efforts were made to collect and organize the authentic inspired words of the prophets. One important effort happened during the third to second century B.C. Jewish scholars translated the Old Testament writings from Hebrew into Greek and decided to organize them by categories. This Greek version of the Old Testament, referred to as the Septuagint, was the version commonly used by the Jews in the Savior's day. The order of the books in the King James Version of the Old Testament today follows this same organization. Write the following across the board:

The Law (Genesis– Deuteronomy)	The History (Joshua– Esther)	The Poetry (Job–Song of Solomon)	The Prophets (Isaiah– Malachi)
--------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------

Invite students to open to the table of contents of their Bibles (the page titled "The Names and Order of All the Books in the Old and New Testaments"). Consider inviting them to mark and label their table of contents with the four categories written on the board.

Invite students to use the table of contents to locate the book written on their scrolls and then come forward and deposit their scrolls on the ground or in a container beneath the appropriate heading on the board.

Hold up one of the scrolls and explain that we do not have any of the original documents of the books of the Bible. The oldest known sources are basically copies of copies. Explain that just as with any scripture, the greatest evidence of the truthfulness of the Bible comes through the witness of the Holy Ghost.

## The Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ

Before class, place several Old Testament pictures in a circular pattern on the board (see *Gospel Art Book* [2009], nos. 4–27; see also LDS.org). In the center of the picture display, place a picture of the Savior. Beneath that picture write the following statement by President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency (“The Message of the Old Testament” [Church Educational System symposium address, Aug. 17, 1979], 4; si.lds.org):

*“The message of the Old Testament is the message of Christ and his coming and his atonement.”*

Begin by asking students if they recognize any of the stories represented in the pictures on the board. Invite them to explain what they know about the stories they recognize. After a few students have commented, draw an arrow pointing from each picture toward the statement in the middle. Invite a student to read the statement aloud.

- How can the events depicted in these pictures teach of Jesus Christ, His coming, and His Atonement?

Point out that although the Old Testament may seem to focus on topics such as covenants, prophets, repentance, the law of Moses, and commandments, there is one theme that weaves through them all: Jesus Christ. Write the following truth on the board: The Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ.

- As you begin your study of the Old Testament, why do you think it might be helpful to know that this book of scripture testifies of and foretells the life, ministry, and atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

Explain to the class that as they study the Old Testament this year, they will learn to see Jesus Christ in the prophecies, events, and symbols of the Old Testament. As they study the Old Testament with the understanding that it testifies of Jesus Christ, then it becomes easier to see Him and their testimonies of Him will increase.

- How can you be blessed as you learn to see Jesus Christ in the prophecies, events, and symbols of the Old Testament? (Help students identify and understand the following truth: As we learn to see how the Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ, then our faith in Him will increase.)

To help students understand how the Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ through symbols, show the class a picture of a lamb. Explain that one of the early commandments given to

Adam and Eve was to sacrifice “the firstlings of their flocks” (Moses 5:5), or firstborn male lambs, as an offering unto the Lord.

Explain that in the book of Leviticus we learn additional details about animal sacrifices and other offerings. These details were meant to teach of Jesus Christ and His Atonement. Invite a student to read Leviticus 1:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases about the animal to be sacrificed that also describe the Savior and His Atonement. Ask students to report what they find. Ask questions such as the following to help students deepen their understanding of these verses:

- What does “without blemish” mean? (Free of flaws or imperfections.) How does this symbolize Jesus Christ?

You may want to share your testimony that the Old Testament testifies of Jesus Christ and His mission.

## The Bible helps us come unto Christ

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for reasons why the Bible is of great worth to us.

“It is a miracle that the Bible literally contains within its pages the converting, healing Spirit of Christ, which has turned men’s hearts for centuries, leading them to pray, to choose right paths, and to search to find their Savior” (“The Miracle of the Holy Bible,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2007, 80).

 Instead of inviting a student to read this statement, you could show the video “The Miracle of the Bible” (1:25), in which Elder Ballard shares his testimony of the Holy Bible.

- According to Elder Ballard, why is the Bible of such great worth?

Share a favorite scripture or brief passage from the Old Testament that has been particularly meaningful to you. Also consider inviting students to share their feelings about how the Bible has helped them in their search to grow closer to the Savior.

Encourage students to continue their study of God’s word as found in the Bible.

## Next Unit (Moses 1–4; Genesis 1–3; Abraham 4–5)

Explain to students that in the coming week they will learn about a confrontation between Moses and Satan. Invite them to consider what they think God’s ultimate purpose for His children is. What might it be like if God showed us all the worlds He created? How would Adam and Eve keep the first commandment—to multiply and replenish the earth—unless they used their agency to partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

# The Book of Moses

### Why study this book?

The book of Moses is the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis 1:1 through Genesis 6:13. As students study this book, they will gain a greater understanding of their identity and purpose as children of God. They will also learn the crucial doctrines of the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ. In addition, they will learn about important events and principles from the ministries of ancient prophets, such as Adam, Enoch, Noah, and Moses.

### Who wrote this book?

The book of Moses is the Prophet Joseph Smith's inspired translation of selections from the writings of Moses. It contains "the words of God, which he spake unto Moses" (Moses 1:1) and commanded Moses to record (see Moses 1:40; 2:1). However, "because of wickedness" (Moses 1:23), many of the words and plain and precious truths he recorded were obscured or lost and are thus not preserved in the book of Genesis as it has come to us (see Moses 1:41; 1 Nephi 13:26–28). Consequently, the Lord promised to raise up another prophet in the latter days to restore Moses's words so they would be "had again among the children of men" (Moses 1:41; see also 2 Nephi 3:5–11; Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:26–33 [in the Bible appendix]). In fulfillment of that promise, the Lord revealed the writings of Moses to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when Moses received the revelations recorded in the book of Moses or where he was when he recorded them. However, we know that the experiences recorded in Moses 1 occurred after Moses encountered the burning bush (see Moses 1:17; see also Exodus 3:1–4:17) but before he returned to Egypt to deliver the children of Israel from bondage (see Moses 1:25–26). It has been suggested that Moses recorded the

material in Moses 2–8, which corresponds to his writings in Genesis 1:1–6:13, sometime in the 15th century B.C. Because all of the events in Moses 2–8 occurred before Moses's lifetime, he relied on revelation (see Moses 2:1) and perhaps other records (see Abraham 1:31) to write this material.

The writings contained in the book of Moses were revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith as he was working on his inspired translation, or revision, of the King James Version of the Bible between June 1830 and February 1831 (see the chapter summaries for Moses 1–8).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Moses 1 is particularly distinctive because it has no counterpart in the Bible and because it serves as a preface to the Creation and all of Moses's writings (the Pentateuch, or first five books of the Old Testament). In addition, Moses 2–8 presents information that is not found in the corresponding material in the Bible (Genesis 1:1–6:13). These valuable contributions include:

- The spiritual creation of all things (see Moses 2).
- The significance of the Fall of Adam and Eve and clear explanations of its effects on mankind (see Moses 3–6).
- The actions of Lucifer before he was cast out of heaven (see Moses 4:1–4).
- The importance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Moses 5–7).
- Evidence that Adam and Eve and their descendants enjoyed the blessings of the gospel of Jesus Christ (see Moses 5–8).
- The establishment of Zion in Enoch's day and his visions of the Lord (see Moses 7).
- Details concerning the conditions on the earth before the Flood, as well as Noah's efforts to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ and warn the people to repent (see Moses 8).

### Outline

**Moses 1** Moses sees the Lord and learns he is a son of God. The Lord shows Moses a vision of the earth and its inhabitants. After this vision Satan appears to Moses, but Moses commands him to depart in the name of the Only Begotten. The Lord again appears to Moses and reveals the purpose of His creations.

**Moses 2–3** Through revelation Moses learns about the Creation of the earth and all life upon it. The Lord explains that He created all things spiritually before they were created naturally. He also provides further details concerning the creation of Adam and Eve and the first commandments given to them.

**Moses 4–5** The Lord informs Moses of how Lucifer became Satan. The Lord also relates the account of the Fall of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from Eden. Adam and Eve learn about redemption from the Fall that comes through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and they teach it to their children. Cain slays Abel and is punished by the Lord. Wickedness and secret combinations abound.

**Moses 6–7** Righteousness and wickedness spread among Adam and Eve's descendants. Enoch is called to preach the gospel and establishes a people called Zion, who are translated, or taken to heaven without dying. Enoch sees Satan laughing and the Lord weeping because of the wickedness of mankind. He also sees Noah, the Flood, the coming of Jesus Christ, the Restoration of the gospel in the latter days, and the Second Coming of the Savior.

**Moses 8** Noah preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ. After the people reject Noah's message, the Lord decrees that He will destroy all flesh by the Flood.

## LESSON 6

# Moses 1:1–23

### Introduction

The Lord spoke with Moses face to face and showed him a vision of the earth and its inhabitants. Moses then had an

encounter with Satan. This lesson discusses Moses 1:1–23. The rest of Moses 1 will be discussed in the next lesson.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 1:1–11

#### *God speaks to Moses face to face, and Moses sees the glory of God*

Before class, write the following on the board: *I am . . .*

Ask students to write a sentence or two in their class notebooks or scripture study journals describing who they are. Then invite them to turn to a classmate and share what they wrote. Ask a few students to share with the class what they wrote.

- How might our thoughts about ourselves influence our behavior?

Hold up a picture of Moses (see *The Ten Commandments, Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 14; see also [LDS.org](http://LDS.org)), and ask students what they know about Moses and his life. You may need to explain that Moses was an Israelite (a member of God's covenant people) by birth but that he was adopted by a royal Egyptian family. Eventually he had to flee from Egypt and leave those who raised him.

- Considering this background, how might Moses have described himself up to this point in his life?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 1:1–6. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Moses learned about God and about himself. Before students begin reading, you may want to remind them that the book of Moses was received as part of the Joseph Smith Translation of the Old Testament. The Joseph Smith Translation includes inspired revisions and restored truths. For example, in Moses 1 the Lord revealed experiences from Moses's life that are not found in the book of Exodus because of the wickedness of the world (see Moses 1:23). You may also want to explain that in Moses 1, Jesus Christ speaks on behalf of Heavenly Father. The authority to speak on behalf of Heavenly Father is referred to as divine investiture of authority.

- What did Moses learn about God?
- What did Moses learn about himself that can help us understand who we are? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following doctrine: **We are children of Heavenly Father.** You may want to write this doctrine on the board.)
- How do you think knowing that he was a son of God might have affected Moses?

To help students understand and feel the importance of the doctrine that they are Heavenly Father's children, ask the following questions:

- What does it mean to you to know that you are a child of Heavenly Father?
- What experiences have helped you to know that you are a child of Heavenly Father?
- How can this knowledge affect the way you view yourself? How can it affect the way you view others?
- How might remembering that we are Heavenly Father's children help us to make better choices each day?

### Using the curriculum

When preparing a lesson, prayerfully review the curriculum along with your study of the scripture block. As you do so, the Holy Ghost can help you personalize the lesson for your students. You may choose to use all or part of the teaching suggestions for a scripture block, or you might adapt the suggested ideas according to the needs and circumstances of your class.



Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“You are something divine—more beautiful and glorious than you can possibly imagine. This knowledge changes everything. It changes your present. It can change your future. And it can change the world. . . .

“Because of the revealed word of a merciful God, . . . you have felt the eternal glory of that divine spirit within you. You are no ordinary beings, my beloved young friends all around the world. You are glorious and eternal. . . .

“It is my prayer and blessing that when you look at your reflection, you will be able to see beyond imperfections and self-doubts and recognize who you truly are: glorious sons and daughters of the Almighty God” (“The Reflection in the Water” [Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Nov. 1, 2009]; LDS.org).

Ask students to look at the descriptions of themselves that they wrote at the beginning of class. Invite them to write one or two more sentences explaining what it means to them to know that they are children of God and how remembering this truth can help them.

Ask a student to read Moses 1:7–8 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord showed to Moses. Ask students to report what they find.

Then ask a student to read Moses 1:9–11 aloud while the class follows along and looks for what Moses noticed after the presence of God left him.

To help students understand verse 11, you may need to explain that Moses needed to be transfigured in order to stand as a mortal in the presence of God. Transfiguration is a temporary change in appearance and nature that must take place so a mortal can endure the physical presence and glory of heavenly beings (see Guide to the Scriptures, “Transfiguration”; scriptures.lds.org).

- What did Moses learn about himself after the presence of God had withdrawn from him?
- Although Moses learned that in comparison to God, man is nothing, what evidence do we have that we are of great importance to our Father in Heaven?

### Moses 1:12–23

#### *Satan tempts Moses to worship him*

You may want to write the following question on the board and invite students to write responses as you discuss Moses 1:12–23:

- How did Moses resist Satan?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened after Moses’s spiritual experience.

- What did Satan call Moses?
- Why do you think Satan wanted Moses to think about his earthly parentage rather than his heavenly parentage? (Satan did not want Moses to think of himself as a son of God and does not want us to believe that we are children of God.)
- In what ways do Satan and others try to tempt us to think of ourselves as something other than sons or daughters of God?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 1:13–15, and ask the class to look for Moses’s response to Satan’s attempt to deceive him. Ask students to report what they find.

- How did Moses use his previous spiritual experience with God to detect Satan’s deception?
- What does Moses’s response teach us about what we can do when Satan tries to deceive us? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **We can resist Satan’s deceptions as we remember our previous spiritual experiences and have faith in them.**)

To help students understand how our previous spiritual experiences can strengthen us, invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“In moments of fear or doubt or troubling times, hold the ground you have already won, even if that ground is limited. . . . When those moments come and issues surface, the resolution of which is not immediately forthcoming, *hold fast to what you already know and stand strong until additional knowledge comes*. . . . The size of your faith or the degree of your knowledge is not the issue—it is the integrity you demonstrate toward the faith you do have and the truth you already know” (“Lord, I Believe,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 93–94).

- What do you think it means to demonstrate integrity toward the truth you already know?

To help students identify another principle in this account, ask them to review verse 15 and find how Moses was able to discern between God and Satan.

- What does Moses’s experience teach us about discerning between good and evil? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we have the Spirit with us, we are better able to discern between good and evil.**)
- When has the Spirit of the Lord helped you discern between good and evil?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:16–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify the commandments the Lord gave Moses. Ask students to report what they find. You may need to explain that to call upon God means to pray to Him.

Ask students to read Moses 1:19–22 silently to see how Moses was blessed as he obeyed the commandment to call upon God in the name of the Son. (You may want to suggest that students mark in their scriptures each time Moses calls upon God.)

- According to verse 20, what did Moses receive when he called upon God? What did this strength from God allow Moses to do?

Ask students what principles we can learn from these verses. You could have students write the principles on the board. Ask a few students to share the principles they identified with the class. Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we are faithful and call upon God, we will receive strength to overcome Satan’s influence.**

- How can calling upon God in the name of the Son help you to recognize and resist Satan’s temptations? (See Alma 37:33.)

Ask students to review the doctrines and principles they identified in Moses 1. Then ask them to think about the events, activities, and discussions they will be involved in and the choices they will make during the remainder of the day. Display the following questions on the board, and ask students to write their answers in their class notebooks or on a piece of paper that they can carry with them to remind them of their choice to improve:

*When today might you need to remember and act on one of the principles or doctrines you learned in Moses 1?*

*How can remembering and acting on this principle or doctrine benefit you?*

Consider concluding the lesson by sharing your testimony about the principles you have discussed today.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Moses 1:6. “Mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior”

One of Jesus Christ’s titles is the Only Begotten Son of God. God is the Father of the spirits of all mankind, but Jesus Christ is the only person who was born into the world as the literal Son of God in the flesh. Because

Jesus Christ was born of a mortal mother, He was able to experience mortality, including death. Because He was born of an immortal Father, He had power over death (see John 10:17–18). This power allowed Jesus Christ to accomplish His divine mission for all mankind.

## LESSON 7

# Moses 1:24–42

### Introduction

After his confrontation with Satan, Moses was filled with the Holy Ghost and heard the voice of the Lord. He learned that he was chosen to deliver Israel from bondage. He also beheld the earth and its inhabitants

and learned the purpose of God's many creations. Moses was then instructed to write God's words concerning the Creation of the earth.

### Determine pacing

Avoid taking so much time on the first part of the lesson that you have to rush through the last part. As you prepare, estimate the time it will take to cover each section of the lesson using the teaching methods you have chosen. Because you will almost always have more to teach than there is time for, you will need to determine which portions of the scripture block to emphasize and which to summarize.



## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 1:24–26

#### *Moses is filled with the Holy Ghost and converses with the Lord*

To provide context for Moses 1:24–42, invite students to think about the previous lesson and discuss the following two questions in pairs. You may want to write the questions on the board.

1. How was Moses able to resist Satan's temptations? (See Moses 1:12–21 if needed.)
2. What blessings do you feel you have received when you have chosen to resist Satan's temptations?

After sufficient time, ask a few students to share what they discussed in their partnerships.

Invite a student to read Moses 1:24–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Moses was blessed for resisting Satan's temptations.

- What did the Lord say He had chosen Moses to do? (You may need to explain that at this time the Lord's people, the children of Israel, were in bondage to the Egyptians.)
- What phrases in verses 25–26 would help you have confidence if you were in Moses's position? Why?

You may want to show a picture of Moses parting the Red Sea, if one is available. Explain to students that when they study the book of Exodus they will learn more about how the Lord fulfilled His promise that Moses would "be made stronger than many waters" (Moses 1:25) and that he would deliver Israel from bondage.

### Moses 1:27–39

#### *Moses learns the purpose for the Creation of the earth and its inhabitants*

Show students a small container of sand and a small container of water. Ask a student to come to the front of the class and put his or her finger into the container of water and then dip the moistened finger into the container of sand. (If time permits, you could have all of the students dip their moistened fingers into the sand.) Then ask the student to begin counting the grains of sand on his or her finger. (It should be difficult for the student to count them all.) After the student has counted for a while, point to the container of sand and ask:

- How many grains of sand do you think are in this container?
- How many grains of sand do you think are on a seashore?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:27–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord showed Moses that relates to sand.

- How many of Heavenly Father's children did Moses behold?
- What questions might you ask if you had seen this vision?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two questions Moses asked the Lord.

- What were the two questions Moses asked the Lord? (Write them on the board: *Why were the earth and its inhabitants created? By what power were they created?*)

Explain that Moses's question about the purpose of creation is similar to questions asked by many people today. Invite a student to read the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for why it is important that we discover the answers to these kinds of questions.



“Discovering who we really are is part of this great adventure called *life*. Mankind’s greatest minds have wrestled endlessly with these questions: Where did we come from? Why are we here? What happens after we die? And how does all this fit together—how does it make sense?”

“Once we begin to understand the answers to these questions—not with the mind only, but with the heart and the soul—we will begin to understand who we are, and we will feel like the wanderer who is finally finding home. . . . Everything finally makes sense” (“The Reflection in the Water” [Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Nov. 1, 2009]; LDS.org).

- Why is it important for Heavenly Father’s children to understand the purposes of the earth and our lives here?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:31–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord’s answer to Moses’s second question.

- What doctrine do we learn from verses 32–33 concerning who created the earth and “worlds without number”? (After students respond, you may want to suggest that they write the following doctrine in their scriptures next to verse 33: **Under the direction of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ created worlds without number.** You may want to suggest that students mark footnote *a* for verse 32, in particular the reference to Hebrews 1:2.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 1:34–38. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional details the Lord gave to Moses about the creation of this and other worlds. Ask students to report what they find. To ensure they understand the content of these verses, you may want to ask questions like the following:

- How many worlds did God say had been created “by the Son” (Moses 1:33)? (To help students try to comprehend the meaning of “innumerable” [Moses 1:35], you may want to review the activity with the sand in the container.)
- According to verse 35, which of these worlds did the Lord say He was going to teach Moses more about?

Direct students’ attention to the first question Moses asked the Lord, which you wrote on the board. Explain that an answer to this question can be found in Moses 1:39. Before students read this verse, explain that Moses 1:39 is a scripture mastery passage. Also explain that throughout the year, students will focus on 25 scripture mastery passages. These passages will help them understand and explain basic doctrines of the gospel. (For more information on scripture mastery and the Basic Doctrines, see the appendix in this manual.) The 25 scripture mastery references are listed on the back of the seminary bookmark for the Old Testament. (You may want to invite your students to look at these scripture mastery references on their bookmarks.)

Invite a student to read Moses 1:39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for God’s purpose in creating the worlds and their inhabitants.

- What is Heavenly Father’s purpose in creating the worlds and their inhabitants? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father’s purpose is to bring about the immortality and eternal life of man.**)
- What is immortality? (The condition of living forever in a resurrected state.)
- How has the immortality of all mankind been made possible? (Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ—which includes His Resurrection—every person who is born with a physical body will be resurrected and will live forever.)
- What is eternal life? (Becoming like God and living forever as families in His presence.)
- How can we receive eternal life? (Through His Atonement, Jesus Christ has made it possible for all who are obedient to the laws and ordinances of the gospel to receive eternal life.)

### **Moses 1:39**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix at the end of this manual.

- How can it influence our lives now to know that Heavenly Father’s purpose is to bring to pass our immortality and eternal life?

If hymnbooks are available, invite students to sing the hymn “How Great Thou Art” (*Hymns*, no. 86) together as a class. Invite them to consider, as they sing, how the words of the hymn relate to what they have learned in Moses 1. Following the singing of the hymn, ask students to write a few sentences in their class notebooks or scripture study journals about their feelings for what Heavenly Father has created and done to bring to pass their immortality and eternal life. You may want to invite a few students to share what they wrote.

Explain that one of the blessings we have as members of the Church of Jesus Christ is restored knowledge to help others learn and understand the purposes of God and His plan for them. Ask students how they would use what they learned from Moses 1 today to help the individuals in the following scenarios:

1. In your science class, your teacher explains that human life and the Creation of the earth occurred by chance. After class, a classmate asks you what you believe.
2. A friend is experiencing challenges and wonders if God cares about him or her.

### Moses 1:40–42

#### *Moses is instructed to write the words of God*

Summarize Moses 1:40–42 by explaining that the Lord instructed Moses to write the things that He was going to teach Moses about this earth. He also told Moses that “in a day when the children of men shall esteem my words as naught and take many of them from the book which thou shalt write” (Moses 1:41), He would raise up a man who would restore Moses’s words to those who believed. That man was the Prophet Joseph Smith, and Moses 2–4 contains the words Moses wrote about the earth.

Conclude by expressing your testimony as prompted by the Holy Ghost.

### Scripture Mastery—Moses 1:39

Because Moses 1:39 is the first scripture mastery passage in this course, you may want to explain that “mastering” scripture passages includes being able to locate, understand, apply, and memorize them.

To help students memorize this passage, invite them to recite it to themselves several times in their minds and then out loud to a classmate once or twice. You may want to have the class recite this passage aloud at the beginning or end of each class during the next week.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Moses 1:31. “For mine own purpose have I made these things”

In Moses 1:31, 33, the Lord indicated that He created all things “for mine own purpose.” He then revealed that purpose in Moses 1:39—“to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that “as the plan of salvation is executed and re-executed, again and again, in realms beyond our purview, His love is constant and personal” (“Wisdom and Order,” *Ensign*, June 1994, 43). Because

God’s “great and eternal plan” (2 Nephi 11:5) does not vary, the same plan that will exalt the inhabitants of this earth is implemented for the same purpose in all the worlds God has created. We learn from Doctrine and Covenants 76:23–24 that the inhabitants of numerous worlds “are begotten sons and daughters unto God” through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. This truth underscores the central role of Jesus Christ’s infinite Atonement in God’s plan for the salvation of our world as well as the many others created by His Only Begotten Son.

# The Book of Genesis

## Why study this book?

The word *genesis* means origin or beginning, and the book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. This book sets forth the Creation of the earth and all life thereon, the Fall of Adam and Eve and the introduction of sin into this world, the origin of the house of Israel, and the establishment of covenants by a merciful Father in Heaven for the salvation of His children. As students study the book of Genesis, they will better understand who they are and what the Lord expects of individuals who have made covenants with Him.

## Who wrote this book?

Moses is the author of Genesis. Moses was a prophet who was called by God to lead the children of Israel out of bondage from Egypt, through the wilderness, to the promised land of Canaan. Because the events in Genesis occurred before Moses's time, he did not learn about them firsthand. They were made known to him through revelation (see Moses 1:40; 2:1), and he may also have relied on historical sources available to him (see Abraham 1:31).

## When and where was it written?

There are varying opinions on when Genesis and the other books of Moses were written, but some scholars date the writing to sometime between the 15th and 13th centuries B.C. We do not know exactly where Moses was when he wrote this book. This record would have given encouragement and perspective to the Israelites, who needed to develop faith in the Lord and understand the covenants He had made with their forefathers so they could fulfill their role as the Lord's chosen people.

## What are some distinctive features of this book?

Genesis is an introduction to the other books of Moses (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), as well as to the entire Old Testament. Genesis recounts events that occurred during the dispensations of Adam, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham. Thus, Genesis provides the Old Testament's only record of many important events, including the Creation, the Fall of Adam and Eve, the Flood, and the establishment of the Abrahamic covenant. However, Genesis does not focus on these periods equally: only 11 chapters of Genesis are dedicated to the time from the

Creation of the earth to Abraham, while 39 chapters are dedicated to the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's 12 sons. This emphasis suggests that Moses desired to teach the children of Israel about the covenants the Lord made with their forefathers, through which Israel would join Him in the work of blessing all the nations and families of the earth (see Genesis 12:2–3). The accounts of the lives of these patriarchs and their wives also illustrate that although the Lord's covenant people will be tested, the Lord will be with them as they remain faithful to Him.

## Old Testament Times at a Glance Poster (00897)

This foldout poster, originally prepared for issues of the *Ensign* and *Liahona* published in 2002, contains a chronological chart of major prophets and events in the Old Testament. Order at [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org).

## Old Testament Times at a Glance Booklet (09233)

This booklet, originally prepared for issues of the *Ensign* and *Liahona* published in 2002, contains a chronological chart of major prophets and events in the Old Testament. Order at [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org).

## Outline

**Genesis 1–4** Moses sets forth the Creation of the earth and all living things upon it. Adam and Eve partake of the forbidden fruit and are cast out of the Garden of Eden. They have children. Cain slays Abel.

**Genesis 5–11** Because of the wickedness of mankind, God promises to flood the earth. Noah obeys the commandment of God to build an ark, and his family is saved from the Flood. Noah and his family multiply and replenish the earth. The Lord confounds the languages of the people and scatters them throughout the earth after they build the Tower of Babel.

**Genesis 12–23** The Lord promises that Abram will become a great nation and that his seed will bless the earth. Abram travels with his wife, Sarai, to Hebron and then to Egypt.

The Lord covenants with Abram. He changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah and promises them a child. Abraham's nephew Lot is spared from the destruction of Sodom. Sarah bears Isaac in her old age. Abraham proves his faithfulness to the Lord by showing his willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac.

**Genesis 24–26** The Lord guides Abraham's servant in choosing Rebekah as a wife for Isaac. Esau and Jacob are born. Esau sells his birthright to Jacob. The Lord renews the Abrahamic covenant with Isaac.

**Genesis 27–36** Jacob receives the birthright blessing from his father. Esau hates Jacob and plans to slay him. The Lord promises Jacob the same blessings given to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob serves Laban and marries his daughters Leah and Rachel. The Lord appears to Jacob and

changes his name to Israel. Jacob returns to Canaan and makes peace with Esau. He then travels to Beth-el, where the Lord appears to him and renews His covenant. Jacob has 12 sons and a daughter.

**Genesis 37–50** Joseph is favored by Jacob. Joseph dreams that his parents and brothers will honor and submit to him. Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery, and he is taken to Egypt. Potiphar's wife tempts Joseph and falsely accuses him. Joseph is cast into prison. He interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker and then of Pharaoh. Pharaoh makes Joseph a ruler in Egypt, and Joseph prepares Egypt for a famine. When Joseph's brothers come to Egypt, he tests and forgives them. All of Jacob's family come to Egypt, and Jacob blesses his sons. Joseph prophesies and dies in Egypt.

## LESSON 8

# Moses 2 (Genesis 1; Abraham 4)

### Introduction

In Moses 2 we learn that Jesus Christ, under the direction of the Father, created the earth and all living things upon it. We also learn that God created Adam and Eve

in His image, united them in marriage, and commanded them to multiply and replenish the earth.

### The purpose of seminary

The purpose of seminary is to help youth understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ; qualify for the blessings of the temple; and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven. As you prepare your lessons, prayerfully determine how you can help achieve this objective each day.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 2:1–25

*Under the direction of the Father, Jesus Christ creates the earth and all living things upon it except mankind*

Display an object that someone made for you (perhaps as a gift). Share with the class your feelings about the object and the person who made it. Then ask:

- When has someone made something for you? What feelings do you have for the person who made it?

Ask a student to read Moses 2:1 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and identify who created the earth. (You may want to remind students that Moses 2 is Joseph Smith's translation of Genesis 1.)

- What doctrine do we learn from verse 1 concerning who created the earth? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ created the earth under the direction of Heavenly Father.**)
- Some people suggest that the Creation of the earth and all life upon it occurred by chance. Why do you think it is important for us to know that Jesus Christ created the earth?

Invite a student to read Moses 2:2–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jesus Christ did at the beginning of the Creation. Ask students to report what they find.

- In verse 5, how does the Lord refer to this period of creation? (The first day.)

To help students understand the meaning of the term *day* as used in this chapter, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The physical Creation itself was staged through ordered periods of time. In Genesis and Moses, those periods are called *days*. But in the book of Abraham, each period is referred to as a *time*. Whether termed a *day*, a *time*, or an *age*, each phase was a period between two identifiable events—a division of eternity” (“The Creation,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 85).

Copy the following chart on the board. Divide the class into five groups, and assign each group to study one of the creative periods from day 2 through day 6. Ask them to identify what the Lord accomplished during that period.

Day 1	Moses 2:2–5	Divided the light from the darkness
Day 2	Moses 2:6–8	
Day 3	Moses 2:9–13	
Day 4	Moses 2:14–19	
Day 5	Moses 2:20–23	
Day 6	Moses 2:24–31	

After students have had time to study their assigned verses, ask one person from each group to explain to the class the verses they studied and write what they discovered on the chart. (You may need to help students understand that the word *firmament* refers to the atmosphere around the earth.)

After the chart is complete, point out that the scriptures do not contain all the details of the process of the Creation; rather, they testify that the Lord purposefully carried out the Creation of the earth and all life upon it. You may want to invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson:

“The entire Creation was planned by God. . . .

“I testify that the earth and all life upon it are of divine origin. The Creation did not happen by chance. . . . The Creation itself testifies of a Creator” (“The Creation,” 84–85).

- What are some examples that show how the Creation testifies of the Creator?
- What feelings do you have for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as you consider Their creations?

## Moses 2:26–31

### *God creates both man and woman in His own image*

Invite three students to each read one of the following scenarios aloud. (Consider copying the scenarios on separate pieces of paper and having the students draw them randomly from a container.)

1. A missionary is teaching a person who wants to know what God looks like.
2. A young woman has been told that gender is a matter of chance. She has begun to question if gender matters and whether it should influence any of her choices in life.
3. A young man does not like his body. He struggles with feelings of low self-worth because of his physical appearance.

Invite students to turn to Genesis 1:26–27. Explain that these verses, which teach what the Lord did on the sixth day after creating all forms of animal life, correspond to Moses 2:26–27. (Genesis 1:26–27, rather than Moses 2:26–27, is designated as a scripture mastery passage so students will be prepared as missionaries to help others locate this passage in their Bibles.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 1:26–27 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and consider how these verses relate to the scenarios.

- What doctrine concerning our creation is taught in Genesis 1:26–27? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **We have been created in the image of God.** Consider writing this doctrine on the board.)

Invite a student to read the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“God our Father has ears with which to hear our prayers. He has eyes with which to see our actions. He has a mouth with which to speak to us. He has a heart with which to feel compassion and love. He is real. He is living. We are his children, made in his image. We look like him, and he looks like us” (“I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1990, 6).

Ask a student to read scenario 1 again for the class.

- If you were the missionary in scenario 1, how might you use Genesis 1:26–27 and the statement from President Monson to teach someone about God?

Ask a student to read scenario 2 again for the class. Then invite a student to read aloud the following statement from “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”:

“All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose” (*Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129).

- How would you use Genesis 1:26–27 and the statement from the family proclamation to help the young woman in scenario 2?
- Why is it important to know that your gender is not a matter of chance or a temporary condition but is part of your eternal identity and purpose?

Ask a student to read scenario 3 again for the class. Then invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson:

“Think of [God’s] gift to you of your own physical body. The many amazing attributes of your body attest to your own ‘divine nature’ [2 Peter 1:4]” (“Thanks Be to God,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 78).

 **Genesis 1:26–27** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix at the end of this manual.

- How would you use Genesis 1:26–27 and the statement from Elder Nelson to help the young man in scenario 3?
- Why do you think it is important to remember that your physical body is a gift from God?

Invite one or two students to share why knowing that they are created in the image of God is important to them.

Invite a student to read Moses 2:28 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Heavenly Father did after He created the physical bodies of Adam and Eve. Ask them to report what they find. (He blessed them and gave them a commandment.) You may want to explain that the Lord performed the marriage ceremony for Adam and Eve, and they entered into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:



“The Lord [brought] together Adam and Eve, his first male and first female on this earth, and perform[ed] a holy marriage ceremony to make them husband and wife. They were quite different in their makeup, with different roles to play. Hardly had he performed the ceremony than he said to them: ‘Multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion’ (Gen. 1:28)” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 192).

- According to verse 28, what was the first commandment God gave to Adam and Eve as husband and wife? (You may need to explain that to multiply and replenish the earth means to have children. Students should identify the following truth: **God has commanded those who are married as husband and wife to have children.** You may want to suggest that students write this truth in their scriptures near verse 28.)

Invite students to scan Moses 2:10, 12, 18, 21, 25 to see what God said after each of the first five periods of the Creation was complete. Then ask a student to read Moses 2:31 aloud, and invite the class to look for what God said after He completed the Creation.

- Why do you think the phrase “very good” was given at this point in the Creation? (God had now finished the Creation, including the physical creation of Adam and Eve.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson (you may want to provide copies of this statement to the students):

“Grand as it is, planet Earth is part of something even grander—that great plan of God. Simply summarized, the earth was created that families might be” (“The Creation,” 85).

Conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed today.

### Scripture Mastery—Genesis 1:26–27

Invite students to write a brief talk based on Genesis 1:26–27. To help them prepare, you may want to suggest that they answer the following questions in their talks: What does it mean that I am created in the image of God? How can this truth affect my feelings about myself and others? How can it influence my daily actions?

Consider inviting some students to share their talks as part of future class devotionals.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Moses 2:28. “Multiply, and replenish the earth”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that the commandment to have children is vital to God’s plan of happiness:

“Maleness and femaleness, marriage, and the bearing and nurturing of children are all essential to the great plan of happiness. . . .

“To the first man and woman on earth, the Lord said, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply’ (Moses 2:28; see also Gen. 1:28; Abr. 4:28). This commandment was first in sequence and first in importance. It was essential that God’s spirit children have mortal birth and an opportunity to progress toward eternal life” (“The Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 72).

## LESSON 9

# Moses 3 (Genesis 2; Abraham 5)

### Introduction

In Moses 3, the Lord revealed that after the six periods of creation were complete, He rested from His labors. He also revealed that He created all things spiritually

before they were created physically upon the earth. Finally, the Lord taught about the relationship of Adam and Eve as husband and wife.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 3:1–3

#### *The Lord rests on the seventh day*

To prepare students to study Moses 3:1–3, ask the following questions:

- Which day of the week do you enjoy more than any other?
- What makes that day different from the others?

Explain that Moses 3 is a continuation of the account of the Creation. Invite a student to read Moses 3:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord did differently on the seventh day.

- What did the Lord do on the seventh day that was different from what He did on the other six? (He rested from His labors and blessed and sanctified the seventh day.)
- What does the word *sanctify* mean? (To make something sacred or holy.)

Explain that by resting from His labors and sanctifying the Sabbath day, the Lord established the pattern of Sabbath day observance.

- What principle can we learn from these verses about Sabbath day observance? (Students may identify a principle such as the following: **We can keep the Sabbath day holy as we rest from our labors and focus on sacred things.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle and feel its truth and importance, consider asking questions such as the following:

- What are some ways we can focus on sacred things on the Sabbath? (Students might mention activities such as attending Church meetings, partaking of the sacrament, spending quiet time with family, studying the gospel, serving others, writing in their journals, or doing family history work.)
- How do you feel you have been blessed by resting from your labors on the Sabbath day and focusing on sacred things?

You might invite students to ponder ways they can more fully sanctify the Sabbath day and then encourage them to act on at least one of the ways they have thought of.

### Moses 3:4–17

#### *The Lord reveals that He created all things spiritually before creating them physically upon the earth*

Read or display the following statements. Ask students to think about whether each statement is true or false.

1. We lived in heaven as spirit children of God before we were born on earth.
2. Plants and animals were created spiritually in heaven before they were created physically on the earth.
3. Some forms of life on the earth are not creations of God.

### *Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning*

Each scripture-based lesson in seminary focuses on a scripture block rather than on a particular concept, theme, doctrine, or principle. As teachers and students study the scriptures sequentially, they incorporate the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning. These fundamentals include understanding the context and content of the scriptures; identifying, understanding, and feeling the truth and importance of gospel doctrines and principles; and applying doctrines and principles.

Invite a few students to read from Moses 3:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to look for words or phrases that indicate whether the statements above are true or false, and then invite them to report what they find.

To help students understand the statement in verse 5 that the Lord created all things spiritually before they were naturally on the earth, ask a student to read the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“This earth, all men [and women], animals, fish, fowls, plants, all things—all lived first as spirit entities. Their home was heaven, and the earth was created to be the place where they could take upon themselves mortality” (“Christ and the Creation,” *Ensign*, June 1982, 86).

- How would you summarize what you have learned from Moses 3:4–7 as a statement of doctrine? (Although students may use different words, they should identify a doctrine similar to the following: **God created the spirits of all living things before they were created physically on the earth.** You may want to suggest that students write this doctrine in their scriptures or in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.)

To help students understand this doctrine, review the three statements at the beginning of this teaching idea. Ask students whether each statement is true or false. (Statement 1 is true, statement 2 is true, and statement 3 is false.)

Summarize Moses 3:8–17 by explaining that after the Lord created Adam physically, He placed him in the Garden of Eden. He also planted two trees in Eden that were significant—the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. *Note:* In the next lesson, students will study Moses 3:16–17 and learn more about these two trees.

### Moses 3:18–25

#### *The Lord teaches that Adam and Eve were husband and wife*

Ask students if they have ever had the opportunity to explain their beliefs on marriage and family to someone who is not a member of the Church. You may want to invite a few students to share their experiences.

Point out that Moses 3 contains additional information about the creation of Adam and Eve that can help students understand and explain the Lord’s teachings on marriage and family.

Invite a student to read Moses 3:18 aloud. Before the student begins reading, explain that in Moses 3:18–21, the Lord discusses the time between the physical creation of Adam and the physical creation of Eve. Ask the class to look for what the Lord said about Adam during this time.

- What did the Lord say about Adam before Eve had been placed on the earth?
- Why do you think it was “not good that the man should be alone”? What would have happened to Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness if Adam had remained alone?

Ask a student to read Moses 3:20–23 aloud, and invite the class to look for what Heavenly Father did so that His plan of happiness could move forward. Ask students to report what they find.

You may want to explain that President Spencer W. Kimball taught that “the story of the rib, of course, is figurative” (“The Blessings and Responsibilities of Womanhood,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1976, 71). The rib symbolizes the side-by-side partnership of equality of Adam and Eve and all married couples.

- What can we learn from the way the Lord described the physical creation of Eve?

After students respond to the question above, you may want to read the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The rib, coming as it does from the side, seems to denote partnership. The rib signifies . . . a lateral relationship as partners, to work and to live, side by side” (“Lessons from Eve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 87).

Invite students to turn to Genesis 2:24–25. Explain that these verses correspond to Moses 3:24–25. (Genesis 2:24, rather than Moses 3:24, is designated as a scripture mastery passage so students will be prepared as missionaries to help others find this passage in their Bibles.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 2:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a doctrine we can learn from this account of Adam and Eve.

#### Genesis 2:24

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix at the end of this manual.

- What doctrine can we learn from Genesis 2:24? (You may want to suggest that students write the following doctrine in their scriptures near verse 24: **Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God.**)
- Based on your understanding of Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness, why do you think God has ordained that marriage be between a man and a woman?

You may want to ask a student to read the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for insights that help them understand why God has ordained that marriage be between a man and a woman.



“Two compelling doctrinal reasons help us to understand why eternal marriage is essential to the Father’s plan.

*“Reason 1: The natures of male and female spirits complete and perfect each other, and therefore men and women are intended to progress together toward exaltation.*

*“ . . . For divine purposes, male and female spirits are different, distinctive, and complementary.*

*“ . . . The unique combination of spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional capacities of both males and females were needed to implement the plan of happiness. Alone, neither the man nor the woman could fulfill the purposes of his or her creation.*

*“ . . . Because of their distinctive temperaments and capacities, males and females each bring to a marriage relationship unique perspectives and experiences. The man and the woman contribute differently but equally to a oneness and a unity that can be achieved in no other way. The man completes and perfects the woman and the woman completes and perfects the man as they learn from and mutually strengthen and bless each other. ‘Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, *in the Lord*’ (1 Corinthians 11:11; italics added).*

*“Reason 2: By divine design, both a man and a woman are needed to bring children into mortality and to provide the best setting for the rearing and nurturing of children. . . .*

*“A home with a loving and loyal husband and wife is the supreme setting in which children can be reared in love and righteousness and in which the spiritual and physical needs of children can be met. Just as the unique characteristics of both males and females contribute to the completeness of a marriage relationship, so those same characteristics are vital to the rearing, nurturing, and teaching of children” (“Marriage Is Essential to His Eternal Plan,” *Ensign*, June 2006, 82–84; see also “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129).*

What insights from Elder Bednar’s statement help you understand why God has ordained that marriage be between a man and a woman?

Ask students to scan Moses 3:18, 20 and identify a phrase the Lord used to refer to Eve. Ask students to report what they find.

You may want to explain that the term *help meet* refers to a companion in equal and full partnership.

- Based on verses 18 and 20, what kind of relationship are husband and wife to have with each other? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a doctrine similar to the following: **Husband and wife are to be equal partners.** Write this doctrine on the board.)
- In what ways can husbands and wives be equal partners?

You may want to invite students to share examples of married couples they know who demonstrate equal partnership in their marriages.

Ask students to consider opportunities they might have to explain their beliefs about marriage and family to others. Invite one or two students to share with the class what they would say. Conclude by adding your testimony of the truths that you have discussed today.

### Scripture Mastery—Genesis 2:24

To help students memorize Genesis 2:24, ask them to write this verse on a piece of paper. Invite them to carry it with them throughout the day and practice reciting it. Encourage them to recite this verse from memory to a family member or a friend and explain why it is important.

## LESSON 10

# Moses 4 (Genesis 3)

### Introduction

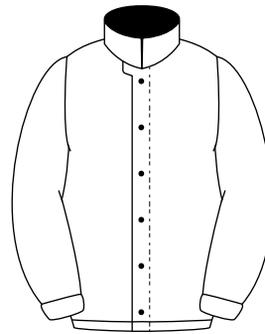
Moses 4 helps explain how Lucifer became Satan. It also contains the Lord's description of the Fall of Adam and

Eve and its consequences. Moses 4 is the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis 3.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Moses 4:1–4

*The Lord reveals how Lucifer became Satan*



Display a coat or draw one on the board.

- Why might a person carry a coat even though the weather is not cold or wet?

Point out that carrying a coat is a solution to the *potential* condition of cold or wet weather. (You could adapt this activity by displaying various objects that provide solutions to potential problems.) Write the following headings on the board:

*Conditions we experience    Solution prepared in advance*

- What are some other examples of solutions that can be prepared before a particular condition occurs?

Explain that as students study Moses 4, they will learn about some of the challenging conditions they will experience in life. They will also learn about the solution Heavenly Father prepared in advance to help them overcome these challenges.

Remind students that in our premortal life, before we were born on earth, we learned about Heavenly Father's plan of happiness and that a savior would be required to carry out this plan. Lucifer, one of Heavenly Father's spirit children, rebelled against Heavenly Father's plan. He is commonly known as Satan.

Invite a student to read Moses 4:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Satan demanded of Heavenly Father.

- What did Satan demand of Heavenly Father?

Point out Satan's repetitive use of the words *I* and *me* in verse 1. You may want to invite students to mark these words.

- What can we learn about Satan from his use of the words *I* and *me* in verse 1?

Ask a student to read Moses 4:2 aloud, and invite the class to look for what Jesus Christ said to Heavenly Father.

- What are some differences between Jesus Christ's statement in verse 2 and Satan's statement in verse 1?
- According to verse 2, what did Heavenly Father say about Jesus Christ? (He was chosen from the beginning.)

#### Understand context and content

One of the fundamentals of gospel teaching and learning is to understand the context and content of the scriptures. Context includes the circumstances or background of a particular passage, event, or story. The content includes the story line, people, events, sermons, or inspired explanations that make up the scripture text. As you help your students understand the context and content of the scriptures, they will be prepared to recognize the underlying messages of the inspired authors.

- What was Jesus Christ chosen to do? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board under the heading “Solution prepared in advance”: **Jesus Christ was chosen in the premortal existence to be the Redeemer of mankind.**)

Ask a student to read Moses 4:3–4 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what these verses teach us about Satan.

- According to verse 3, what are two things Satan did that caused him to be cast down from heaven?
- According to verse 4, how does Satan seek to gain control over us? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **Satan seeks to deceive and blind us so he can lead us captive at his will.** Write this truth on the board under “Conditions we experience.”)

### Moses 4:5–12

#### *Eve and Adam eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil*

Summarize Moses 4:5–11 by explaining that the Lord referred to Satan symbolically as a serpent and taught that Satan “sought to destroy the world” by tempting Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (verse 6).

Ask a student to read Moses 3:16–17 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for the choice given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

- According to Moses 3:17, what would happen if Adam and Eve chose to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil?
- What would happen if Adam and Eve chose not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? (They would remain in the Garden of Eden forever. See 2 Nephi 2:22.)

Remind students that before the Lord explained Adam and Eve’s choices that we read about in Moses 3:16–17, He gave them a commandment of great importance.

- What was the first commandment the Lord gave to Adam and Eve? (To have children [see Moses 2:28].)

To help students understand the significance of this commandment, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“To the first man and woman on earth, the Lord said, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply’ (Moses 2:28; see also Gen. 1:28; Abr. 4:28). This commandment was first in sequence and first in importance. It was essential that God’s spirit children have mortal birth and an opportunity to progress toward eternal life” (“The Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 72).

- Why was the commandment to have children so important?
- What choice did Adam and Eve need to make in order to obey the Lord’s commandment to have children? (Adam and Eve needed to choose to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. See 2 Nephi 2:22–23.)

Invite a student to read Moses 4:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Eve and Adam chose to do.

Explain that we call the consequence of Adam and Eve’s choice to partake of the forbidden fruit “the Fall.”

### Moses 4:13–32

#### *Adam and Eve learn of the consequences of the Fall*

Assign students to work in pairs. Invite them to read Moses 4:13–14, 22–25 together, looking for consequences of the Fall of Adam and Eve. You may want to suggest that students mark in their scriptures the consequences they identify.

- What were some of the consequences of the Fall?
- What doctrine do we learn from the phrase “thou shalt surely die” in verse 25? (Students may use different words, but they should identify something like the following doctrine: **Because of the Fall, all mankind will experience physical death.** Write this doctrine on the board under “Conditions we experience.”)

Point out that because our bodies are mortal—or subject to physical death—we experience additional consequences of the Fall before we die, such as physical imperfections and pain. Add *physical imperfections* and *pain* to the board under “Conditions we experience.”

- What are some other consequences of the Fall that we experience because our bodies are mortal? (Add students’ responses to the board under “Conditions we experience.” These may include *injuries, illness, and disease*.)

You may want to point out some additional consequences of the Fall. If Adam and Eve had not partaken of the fruit, they would not have had the opportunity to have children in mortality. Therefore, we would not have been able to come to earth to receive physical bodies, be tested, and prepare for eternal life—frustrating the plan of salvation.

Explain that in the Garden of Eden there was another important tree called the tree of life. Invite a student to read Moses 4:28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said would happen if Adam and Eve were to eat the fruit of the tree of life after having eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

- What would have happened if Adam and Eve had eaten of the fruit of the tree of life after partaking of the forbidden fruit? (They would have lived forever in their transgressions, without an opportunity to repent and progress.)

You may want to clarify that if “[Adam and Eve] would have lived forever, . . . having no space for repentance; . . . the great plan of salvation would have been frustrated” (Alma 42:5).

Invite a student to read Moses 4:29–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord did to prevent Adam and Eve from partaking of the fruit of the tree of life. Ask them to report what they find. You may need to explain that the word *cherubim* refers to “figures representing heavenly creatures, the exact form being unknown” (Bible Dictionary, “Cherubim”).

Point out that when Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden, they were no longer in God’s presence (see Moses 5:4).

- What do we call the condition of being separated from God’s presence? (Spiritual death.)
- What doctrine about the Fall do we learn from verses 29 and 31? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board under “Conditions we experience”: **Because of the Fall, all mankind will experience spiritual death.**)

To help students understand this doctrine about spiritual death, invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Earl C. Tingey of the Seventy:

“Currently, we are all in the state of spiritual death. We are separated from God. He dwells in heaven; we live on earth. We would like to return to Him” (“The Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2006, 73).

You may want to invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals one or two ways they have personally experienced the consequences of the Fall. To help them begin, you might suggest they describe the death of a loved one, dealing with sickness, or how it feels to be separated from their Father in Heaven.

You may want to invite one or two students to share with the class what they have written. You may need to explain to students that they should not share experiences that are too personal or private.

- What was the solution Heavenly Father prepared in advance to help us overcome physical and spiritual death?

Point to the doctrine you wrote on the board at the beginning of class: **Jesus Christ was chosen in the premortal existence to be the Redeemer of mankind.** Ask if any students would like to testify of this doctrine and why it is important to them. You may also want to share your feelings about this doctrine.

Explain that in the next lesson students will learn more about Heavenly Father’s plan of redemption prepared through His Son, Jesus Christ.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Moses 1–4 (Unit 2)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Moses 1–4 (unit 2), along with Genesis 1–3 and Abraham 4–5, is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Moses 1)

As students read about Moses's spiritual experiences, they learned that we are all children of Heavenly Father. They also learned that after we have spiritual experiences, Satan may seek to tempt or deceive us. Students discovered that by having faith in our previous spiritual experiences and praying for guidance and help, we can resist these deceptions.

#### Day 2 (Moses 2)

In this lesson, students learned that Jesus Christ created the earth under the direction of Heavenly Father and that we were created in the image of God. They also discovered that God has commanded that husbands and wives have children.

#### Day 3 (Moses 3)

As students continued their study of the Creation, they learned that we can sanctify the Sabbath day as we rest from our labors and focus on sacred things. In addition they discovered that God created the spirits of all living things before they were created physically on the earth. Students learned that Adam and Eve were married for eternity by Heavenly Father and that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God. They also learned that husband and wife are to be equal partners in marriage.

#### Day 4 (Moses 4)

In their study of the events that led to the Fall of Adam, students learned that Jesus Christ was chosen from the beginning (in the premortal existence) to be the Redeemer of mankind and that Satan seeks to deceive and blind us so that he can lead us captive at his will. Students also learned that as consequences of the Fall, all mankind will experience physical death and spiritual death.

### Introduction

After Moses beheld the earth and its inhabitants in vision, he asked God about the purpose of His creations. As students study the Lord's answers to this question, they can learn about the purpose of life and their understanding and feelings of God's love for them can increase.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Moses 1:24–39

*Moses converses with the Lord and learns the purpose behind God's creations*

Show students a small container of sand and a small container of water. Ask a student to come to the front of the class and put his or her finger into the container of water and then dip the moistened finger into the container of sand. (If possible, you could have all of the students dip a moistened finger into the container of sand.) Then ask the student to begin counting the grains of sand on his or her finger. (It should be difficult for the student to count them all). After the student has counted for a while, point to the container of sand and ask:

- How many grains of sand do you think are in this container?
- How many grains of sand do you think are on a seashore?

Ask a student to read Moses 1:27–29 aloud, and invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord showed Moses that relates to the sand.

- How many of Heavenly Father's children did Moses behold?
- What questions might you ask if you had seen this vision?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two questions Moses asked the Lord.

- What were the two questions Moses asked the Lord? (Write them on the board: *Why were the earth and its inhabitants created? By what power were they created?*)

Explain that Moses's question about the purpose of creation is similar to those asked by many people today. Invite a student to read the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for why it is important that we discover the answers to these kinds of questions.

"Discovering who we really are is part of this great adventure called *life*. Mankind's greatest minds have wrestled endlessly with these questions: Where did we come from? Why are we here? What happens after we die? And how does all this fit together—how does it make sense?

"Once we begin to understand the answers to these questions—not with the mind only, but with the heart and the soul—we will begin to understand who we are, and we will feel like the wanderer who is finally finding home. . . . Everything finally makes sense" ("The Reflection in the Water" [Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Nov. 1, 2009]; LDS.org).

- Why would it be important for Heavenly Father's children to understand the purposes of the earth and our lives here?

Invite a student to read Moses 1:31–33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's answer to Moses's second question.

- What doctrine do we learn from verses 32–33 concerning who created the earth and “worlds without number”? (After students respond, invite them to write the following doctrine in their scriptures next to verse 33: **Under the direction of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ created worlds without number.**)

Ask several students to take turns reading verses from Moses 1:34–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional details the Lord gave to Moses about the creation of this and other worlds. Ask students to report what they find. To ensure they understand the content of these verses, you may want to ask questions like the following:

- How many worlds did the Lord say had been created “by the Son” (Moses 1:33)? (To help students try to comprehend the meaning of “innumerable” [Moses 1:35], you may want to review the activity with the sand in the container.)
- According to verse 35, which of these worlds did the Lord say He was going to teach Moses more about?

Direct students' attention to the first question Moses asked the Lord, which you wrote on the board. Explain that an answer to this question can be found in Moses 1:39. Before students read this verse, explain that Moses 1:39 is a scripture mastery passage. Also explain that throughout the year, students will focus on 25 scripture mastery passages. These passages will help them understand and explain basic doctrines of the gospel. (For more information on scripture mastery and the Basic Doctrines, see the appendix in this manual). The 25 scripture mastery references are listed on the back of the seminary bookmark for the Old Testament. (You may want to invite your students to look at these scripture mastery references on their bookmarks.)

Invite a student to read Moses 1:39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for God's purpose in creating the worlds and their inhabitants.

- What is Heavenly Father's purpose in creating the worlds and their inhabitants? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father's purpose is to bring about the immortality and eternal life of man.**)

To help students understand this doctrine, ask the following questions:

- What is immortality? (The condition of living forever in a resurrected state.)
- What is eternal life? (Becoming like God and living forever as families in His presence.)
- How can it influence our lives now to know that Heavenly Father's purpose is to bring to pass our immortality and eternal life?

If hymnbooks are available, invite students to sing the hymn “How Great Thou Art” (*Hymns*, no. 86) together as a class. Invite them to consider, as they sing, how the words of the hymn relate to what they have learned in Moses 1. Following the singing of the hymn, ask students to write a few sentences in their notebooks or on a piece of paper about their feelings of gratitude for what Heavenly Father has created and done to bring to pass their immortality and eternal life. You may want to invite a few students to share what they wrote.

### Next Unit (Moses 5–7; Genesis 4–5)

Ask students if they have ever wondered what happened after Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden. How was Satan able to influence Adam and Eve's children to be carnal, sensual, and devilish? How did Enoch respond to his calling to be a prophet? What happened to the people of Enoch, and where are they today? Tell students that in the next lesson they will learn about our first parents and what occurred during generations that followed their leaving the Garden of Eden.

## LESSON 11

# Moses 5:1–11

### Introduction

This is the first of two lessons on Moses 5. Moses 5:1–11 teaches about Adam and Eve’s experiences after the Fall. After offering sacrifice in obedience to God’s

commandments, Adam and Eve learned that they could be redeemed and obtain the blessings of eternal life.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 5:1–4

#### *Adam and Eve experience the consequences of the Fall*

Invite students to think of a time when they experienced a significant change in their lives, such as moving to a new home or changing schools. Ask one or two students to briefly share the experience they thought of.

Explain that Adam and Eve experienced significant changes after they were cast out of the Garden of Eden. To help students learn about these changes, copy the following chart on the board or prepare it as a handout. Invite students to complete the “After the Fall” sections of the chart by searching for information in Moses 5:1–4. Depending on the needs of your students, you could ask them to do this activity individually or in pairs, or you could complete the activity as a class.

Before the Fall:	Adam and Eve did not need to labor for their food.	Adam and Eve could not have children.	Adam and Eve lived in God’s presence and spoke with Him face to face.
After the Fall: (Moses 5:1–4)			

After students have completed the chart, ask them to report what they found. You may want to suggest that students mark the following phrase in verse 4: “they were shut out from his presence.”

- What feelings do you think Adam and Eve may have experienced after they were shut out from God’s presence? Why?
- What term do we use to describe the condition of being separated from the presence of God? (Spiritual death.)

Invite a student to read the following statement aloud. Ask the class to listen for two sources of spiritual death that we each experience.

“The scriptures teach of two sources of spiritual death. The first source is the Fall, and the second is our own disobedience” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 48).

- How does the Fall of Adam and Eve cause us to experience spiritual death? (We are born into a fallen world in which we are separated from our Heavenly Father.)
- How does our own disobedience cause us to experience spiritual death? (When we sin we become spiritually unclean and unworthy to be in our Heavenly Father’s presence.)

To help students understand how spiritual death relates to their personal choices, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *After I sin, I feel . . .* Then invite students to ponder feelings they have had after they knowingly disobeyed a commandment and sinned. Do not ask them to share their feelings with the class.

After students have had sufficient time to ponder, point out that feelings such as guilt, shame, sorrow, regret, emptiness, and a lack of feeling the Spirit of the Lord can indicate that we have distanced ourselves from Heavenly Father because of our disobedience.

### *Consider the needs of your students as you teach*

To help students successfully fulfill their role as learners, you may need to adjust your teaching methods. For example, if students seem tired, consider having them work with partners to help keep them engaged in learning. If students are overly energetic, you might ask them to study individually to help them stay on task.

Through these feelings we can come to understand in a small degree what it means to be shut out from Heavenly Father’s presence (see D&C 19:20).

### Moses 5:5–8

#### *Adam and Eve offer sacrifices in obedience to God’s commandments*

Explain that Heavenly Father helped Adam and Eve understand how they could overcome the effects of spiritual death and again enjoy His presence.

Invite a student to read Moses 5:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Heavenly Father commanded Adam and Eve to do after the Fall. Ask students to report what they find.

- What does it mean to “offer the firstlings of their flocks”? (To sacrifice the firstborn male lambs upon an altar.)
- How did Adam respond to this commandment?



Display a picture of a lamb, or draw one on the board. Ask students to consider how sacrificing the firstborn male lambs could help Adam and Eve understand Heavenly Father’s plan of redemption and what would be required for them to be able to return to God’s presence.

Invite a student to read Moses 5:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after Adam and Eve had been obedient to the Lord’s commandment for “many days.”

- What question did the angel ask Adam?
- What did Adam say to the angel?
- What principle can we learn from Adam’s response? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **We can choose to obey the Lord’s commandments even if we do not understand the reason for those commandments.**)
- How can our lives be blessed when we obey the Lord’s commandments even if we do not fully understand the reasons for the commandments?

Invite a student to read Moses 5:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angel taught Adam about the sacrifices he offered.

- What do you think the word *similitude* means? (A similarity, comparison, or symbol.)
- According to verse 7, what did the Lord want Adam and Eve to understand through the sacrifice of the firstlings of their flocks?

Refer to the picture of the lamb, and ask:

- In what ways were the sacrifices offered by Adam and Eve similar to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? (Like Jesus Christ, the lambs were firstborn males and were without blemish.)

To help students further understand why the Lord commanded Adam and Eve to offer animal sacrifices, ask a student to read the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask the class to listen for what he said was the purpose of animal sacrifice.



“Certainly, the shedding of the blood of a beast could be beneficial to no man, except it was done in imitation, or as a type, or explanation of what was to be offered through the gift of God Himself—and this performance done with an eye looking forward in faith on the power of that great Sacrifice for the remission of sins. . . .

“ . . . We conclude that whenever the Lord revealed Himself to men in ancient days, and commanded them to offer sacrifice to Him, that it was done that they might look forward in faith to the time of His coming, and rely upon the power of that atonement for a remission of their sins” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 48–49).

- According to this statement, what was the purpose of animal sacrifice?

Explain that after the angel taught Adam and Eve about the Atonement of Jesus Christ, he gave them additional commandments from the Lord that would help them receive the blessings of the Atonement.

#### **Identify doctrines and principles**

A central purpose of the scriptures is to teach doctrines and principles of the gospel. Learning to identify doctrines and principles as they are found in the scriptures is one of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning. Learning how to identify them takes thoughtful effort and practice. As doctrines and principles are identified, they should be clearly and simply stated to ensure they are clear in the minds of the students.

Invite a student to read Moses 5:8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional commandments given to Adam and Eve.

- According to verse 8, what were Adam and Eve commanded to do “forevermore”?

To help students understand the commandment to “call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore,” ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Why are they to call upon God? Is this a social visit? Is it a friendly neighborhood chat? No, this is a call for help from the lone and dreary world. This is a call from the brink of despair. . . . This is a call from the personal prison of a sinful heart. It is a call for the forgiveness of sins” (“I Stand All Amazed,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1986, 69).

### Moses 5:9–11

#### *Adam and Eve learn that they can be redeemed and obtain the blessings of eternal life*

Write the following unfinished principle on the board: *If we repent and call upon God for forgiveness, then . . .*

Invite a student to read Moses 5:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord taught Adam and Eve through the Holy Ghost.

- From what you learn in verse 9, how would you complete the principle on the board? (After students respond, complete the principle on the board so it conveys the following truth: **If we repent and call upon God for forgiveness, then we can be redeemed from our sins.**)
- What does it mean to be redeemed from our sins? (To be delivered or freed from the spiritual consequences and penalties of our sins and to be restored to a state of innocence before God.)

If possible, invite a male student to read Moses 5:10 aloud and invite a female student to read Moses 5:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Adam and Eve reacted to the news that they could be redeemed. You may want to point out that the word *transgression* in these verses refers to the partaking of the fruit that resulted in the Fall of Adam and Eve.

- What did Adam and Eve teach about the Fall and the Atonement in these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following doctrine: **Without the Fall and the Atonement, we could not obtain the blessings of eternal life.** Write this doctrine on the board.)
- What emotion did Adam and Eve express as they learned about the Atonement of Jesus Christ?
- Why do you think they would express joy as they learned about the Atonement?

Remind students of when they previously pondered the feelings they have had after they knowingly disobeyed a commandment and sinned. In contrast to these feelings, invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their feelings about the Atonement of Jesus Christ and why it is important to them. For example, students could complete the following statement: *Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I can . . .*

You may want to invite students who feel comfortable doing so to share with the class what they wrote about the Atonement of Jesus Christ and why it is important to them.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and your feelings for the Savior.

## LESSON 12

# Moses 5:12–59 (Genesis 4)

### Introduction

This is the second of two lessons on Moses 5. In Moses 5:12–59 we learn that Adam and Eve taught their children Heavenly Father’s plan. One of their sons, Cain, chose to hearken unto Satan and murdered his brother

Abel. Wickedness spread among the descendants of Adam and Eve. (Biblical text that corresponds to some of the information in this scripture block is found in Genesis 4.)

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 5:12–15

#### *Adam and Eve teach their children Heavenly Father’s plan*

Invite a student to come to the front of the class. Blindfold the student, and invite four other students to each go to a different corner of the room. Ask the students in the corners to try at the same time to get the blindfolded student to come to them by using only their voices. After the blindfolded student has reached one of the four students, ask the blindfolded student why he or she chose to follow that person’s voice. Then ask the class the following question:

- How is this activity similar to what we experience each day?

Point out that some voices or influences we encounter prompt us to do good while others entice us toward temptation and sin. Invite students to think about the various voices that seek to influence them each day as they continue their study of Moses 5.

Ask a student to briefly summarize what Adam and Eve learned in Moses 5:5–11.

Invite a student to read Moses 5:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Adam and Eve did after learning more about Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation and the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Moses 5:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who, in addition to Adam and Eve, sought to influence the children of Adam and Eve.

- According to verse 13, who sought to influence the children of Adam and Eve?
- What did Satan tell them to do?
- What happened when the children of Adam and Eve chose to listen to Satan rather than believe in the words of their parents?

Explain that *carnal* and *sensual* refer to being preoccupied with worldliness and with gratifying physical desires, lusts, and pleasures. *Devilish* means to be influenced by the devil.

- According to verse 14, what did the Lord invite all of Adam and Eve’s children to do?
- What principle can we learn from this verse concerning how the Lord calls on us to repent? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **The Lord calls on us to repent through the promptings of the Holy Ghost.** Write this principle on the board.)
- How do you know if the Holy Ghost is prompting you to repent?

Invite students to silently ponder whether they have had thoughts or feelings concerning changes the Lord would like them to make in their lives.

Ask a student to read Moses 5:15 aloud. Invite the class to look for what will happen to those who choose to believe in the Lord and repent of their sins and what will happen to those who choose not to believe and repent.

- What principle can we learn from verse 15 concerning what will happen if we choose to believe in Jesus Christ and repent of our sins? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we believe in Jesus Christ and repent of our sins, we will be saved.**)

### **Understand the meaning of doctrines and principles**

As students identify doctrines and principles in the scriptures, you can guide them through discussions that will help them analyze and better understand the meaning of these truths. When students understand a gospel doctrine or principle, it means they comprehend the identified truth, its relationship with other doctrines and principles in the Lord’s plan, and the circumstances in which it might be applied in their lives.

- What will happen if we choose not to believe in Jesus Christ and do not repent of our sins? (Our spiritual progress will be halted.)

You may want to suggest that students mark the words in their scriptures that teach the truths identified in Moses 5:15. Share your testimony of repentance being a great blessing that allows us to feel the Lord's forgiveness and love and that helps us prepare to return to our Father in Heaven.

## Moses 5:16–41

### *Cain conspires with Satan and murders Abel*

Explain that the remainder of Moses 5 provides examples of individuals who listened to the Lord and others who did not listen and refused to repent of their sins.

Invite a student to read Moses 5:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the names of two of Adam and Eve's sons and how these sons were different from one another. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that the word *hearken* means to listen attentively. When we truly hearken to the Lord, we will listen to and obey His commandments. Invite a student to read Moses 5:18–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who Cain hearkened to instead of God.

You may want to explain that in verse 21 the phrase "had not respect" means that the Lord did not accept Cain's offering. God had commanded Adam and Eve and their children to offer animal sacrifices to prepare them to understand the sacrifice and Atonement of Jesus Christ. Cain rebelled against the command of God (see Moses 5:5) and chose to offer his own type of sacrifice.

Ask a student to read aloud the following explanations by the Prophet Joseph Smith:



"Salvation could not come to the world without the mediation of Jesus Christ."

"By faith in this atonement or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was accepted, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground, and was not accepted, because he could not do it in faith; he . . . could not exercise faith contrary to the plan of heaven. . . . As the sacrifice was instituted for a type by which man was to discern the great

Sacrifice which God had prepared, to offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 48).

- Why didn't the Lord accept Cain's sacrifice? (Answers might include the following: (1) Cain was following Satan's counsel, not God's; (2) Cain loved Satan more than God; (3) Cain had rebelled by making an offering that did not symbolize the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ [he did not use a firstborn, unblemished male lamb].)

Point out in Moses 5:21 that Satan was pleased when Cain's offering was rejected and Cain became wroth (or angry).

- Why do you think Satan was pleased?
- What does this teach us about Satan?

To help students gain experience in seeking to understand the content of the scriptures and identifying gospel principles, divide the class into small groups of two to four students. Give each group a copy of the following handout. Ask the students to work together in their groups to study the scriptures and discuss the questions on the handout.

### Handout—Moses 5:22–39

Moses 5:22–25 contains the Lord's warning to Cain concerning the consequences of his choices. Read the Lord's warning in verse 23. You may want to mark the word *if* wherever it appears in this verse.

Based on what you have learned from verse 23, discuss how you might complete the following principle, and write your answer in the space provided:

**If we hearken to the Lord's warnings, then \_\_\_\_\_.**

Discuss the following question:

- How do the Lord's warnings demonstrate His love for us?

Read Moses 5:26, looking for how Cain responded to the Lord's warning. Then discuss the following question:

- Why do you think it was a mistake for Cain to respond to the Lord's warning in this way?

After rejecting the Lord's warning, Cain continued to listen to Satan. Read Moses 5:29–31, looking for what Satan offered Cain and how Cain responded to this offer.

You may want to mark the following phrases in your scriptures: "that thy father may not know it" (Moses 5:29) and "all these things were done in secret" (Moses 5:30).

Discuss the following questions:

- What did Satan offer Cain?
- How did Cain respond to Satan's offer?
- Why do you think Satan's promise to keep Cain's sins secret appealed to Cain?
- How does the Lord's way of dealing with sin in Doctrine and Covenants 58:43 differ from Satan's way in Moses 5:30?

Moses 5:32–37 explains that Cain murdered his brother Abel and that the Lord held Cain accountable for his actions. Read Moses 5:38–39, looking for Cain's response to the Lord.

In your scriptures, you may want to mark the following phrase in Cain's response in verse 39: "these things are not hid from the Lord."

In the following space, write a principle we can learn from Moses 5:39 about the consequences of hearkening to Satan's temptations: \_\_\_\_\_.

After students have had sufficient time to complete the instructions on the handout, invite them to tell the class how they completed the principle learned from Moses 5:23. Write their responses on the board. As students report the principles they identified, emphasize the following: **If we hearken to the Lord's warnings, then we will be accepted by Him. If we hearken to the Lord's warnings, then we can avoid sin and the consequences of sin.**

Invite students to state a principle they identified from Moses 5:39, and write their responses on the board. As students report the principles they identified, emphasize the following: **If we hearken to Satan's temptations, our sins will be known by the Lord. If we hearken to Satan's temptations, we will eventually receive the consequences of our sins.**

To help students better understand these principles and feel their truth and importance, ask questions such as the following:

- Why are these principles important for us today?
- When have you witnessed the truthfulness of one of these principles? (Caution students not to share anything that may be too personal or inappropriate.)
- How can believing these principles influence our actions?

### **Moses 5:42–59**

#### *Wickedness spreads among the descendants of Adam and Eve*

Summarize Moses 5:42–54 by explaining that some of Cain's descendants also chose wickedness and would not hearken to the Lord. They likewise suffered the consequences of their sins. (Do not speculate about the mark or curse placed upon Cain or upon some of his descendants.)

Invite a student to read Moses 5:55–59 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Heavenly Father has done, and continues to do, to invite His children to repent and prepare to return to Him.

Remind students that every day we encounter voices or influences that prompt us to do good and others that entice us toward temptation and sin. Share your testimony that the principles students identified during this lesson can help them choose to hearken to righteous voices and influences that will bless them. Invite students to apply what they have learned and to act on any promptings of the Holy Ghost they may have received during the lesson.

## LESSON 13

# Moses 6:1–47 (Genesis 5)

### Introduction

Adam's righteous posterity kept a book of remembrance, taught the gospel to their families, and invited all men to

repent. Enoch, one of Adam's descendants, was called to preach repentance to the people and was called a seer.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Moses 6:1–25

*Adam's posterity keep a book of remembrance and teach their children the gospel*



Show students a chain (or draw one on the board). Invite them to imagine that the chain represents their ancestors (including their parents), themselves, and their descendants (including their future children). Explain that because we are linked with our ancestors and descendants, certain traits, traditions, and teachings are often passed on from generation to generation.

- What have your parents (or ancestors) passed on to you?
- What do you think are the most useful things you could pass on to your future children?

Invite a student to read aloud the chapter summary for Genesis 5. Ask the class to notice the names that are part of Adam's "chain" of descendants.

Explain that Genesis 5 does not provide many details about Adam and his posterity. Remind students that as the Prophet Joseph Smith made inspired changes to the Bible, the Lord revealed to him many plain and precious truths that had been lost before the Bible was compiled. Moses 6–7 contains significant details not contained in Genesis 5 about one of Adam's descendants: the prophet Enoch.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 6:1, 13, 21, 23. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Adam and his righteous descendants passed on to their children.

- What did Adam and his righteous descendants teach their children?
- From the example of Adam and his posterity, what can we learn about the responsibility parents have to their children? (Students may use different words, but they should identify something similar to the following doctrine: **Parents are responsible to teach their children the ways of God.**)

Invite students to consider how their parents or other parents they know have carried out the responsibility to teach their children the ways of God. Ask a few students to share their observations.

Summarize Moses 6:2–3 by explaining that Adam and Eve had a son named Seth. After Abel's death, Seth was chosen to hold the keys of the priesthood and thus carry the responsibilities of the priesthood to succeeding generations (see D&C 107:40–42).

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 6:4–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Adam and his descendants did that would help them teach their children.

**Help students feel the truth and importance of doctrines and principles**

Students are more likely to apply doctrines and principles they have found in the scriptures when they feel their truth and importance through the Spirit and sense some urgency to incorporate them in their lives. One effective way to help students feel the truth and importance of doctrines and principles is to encourage them to reflect on and share personal experiences related to these truths.

- What kind of record did Adam and his posterity keep? What do you think they wanted their children to remember?

Explain that in our day a book of remembrance can take many forms. It can be a journal, a diary, or anything we use to record inspiring thoughts and events about our lives and the lives of those we know.

- How might keeping a book of remembrance help you teach your children the ways of God?

Ask students if one of their family members has kept a “book of remembrance” that has encouraged them to follow the ways of God. Invite one or two students to share their experiences.

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a goal about what they will do to prepare to teach their children the ways of God.

Summarize Moses 6:9–25 by explaining that Adam and his righteous posterity continued to teach the gospel to their families even when those around them became wicked.

### **Moses 6:26–47**

#### ***Enoch is called to preach and begins his ministry***

Write the following questions on the board, and invite students to ponder them:

*When have you felt like you were not good enough?*

*When have you felt like you had a weakness that kept you from doing something the Lord had asked you to do?*

Inform students that Enoch had such feelings when the Lord called him to cry repentance to his people. Invite students to look for principles that can address these feelings as they study Enoch’s experience in Moses 6.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 6:26–28. Ask the class to follow along and look for phrases that describe Enoch’s people.

- How did the Lord describe the people Enoch was called to teach?
- What could it mean that the people’s hearts were hard and their ears were dull of hearing? (They resisted the promptings of the Spirit and did not hearken to the Lord’s counsel.)
- What do you think it means that “their eyes cannot see afar off” (verse 27)? (One possible answer might be that they do not look beyond the present. You may want to suggest that students mark this phrase.)

Invite a student to read Moses 6:31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Enoch’s response to the Lord’s call.

- What concerns did Enoch express about his ability to fulfill the Lord’s call?
- How does Enoch’s concern about his weaknesses show that he also could not “see afar off” at this time?

Invite a student to read Moses 6:32–34 aloud, and ask the class to look for promises that the Lord made to Enoch. Invite students to identify phrases that stand out to them and explain why they stand out.

- According to verse 32, what did the Lord tell Enoch he needed to do in order to receive these promises?
- What can we learn from these verses about what the Lord will do if we do what He asks despite our weaknesses? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **If we go and do what the Lord commands, He will be with us and help us.**)
- How might this principle help those who feel inadequate or incapable of doing what the Lord has asked of them?

Invite students to think of a time when they have seen (or read about) someone who did what the Lord asked in spite of their weaknesses and received the Lord’s help. Ask a few students to share their thoughts with the class. You may also want to share about a time when you did something the Lord asked and were blessed with His help to accomplish it.

Display a container of clay or thick mud and a container of water. Invite a student to read Moses 6:35–36 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord instructed Enoch to do with these items.

- What did the Lord instruct Enoch to do?

To help students better understand the context and content of these verses, ask them to describe where clay comes from. If they do not know, explain that clay is a type of soil from the earth.

- What was the result of Enoch anointing his eyes with clay and then washing the clay from them? (He was able to see with spiritual eyes rather than just his natural eyes.)
- What do you think the act of Enoch anointing his eyes with clay and then washing them might symbolize?

After students respond, explain that the Lord had Enoch anoint his eyes with clay and then wash them to teach him about his sacred role as a seer. Even though we are not called to be seers as Enoch was, we can still benefit from learning to see things with spiritual eyes.

Invite students to identify a principle we can learn from the Lord's instructions to Enoch and the blessing that resulted. Students might express a principle similar to the following:

**By strict obedience and with the Lord's help, we can see with spiritual eyes.**

- What do you think it means to see with spiritual eyes?

Ask students to think about why they would want to be able to see life from a spiritual perspective. Invite a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Ask students to ponder what they could do to be more obedient so they can better see life from a spiritual perspective. Invite them to set a goal to be more obedient so they can see with spiritual eyes.

Point out the word *seer* in verse 36, and explain that because God gave Enoch power to see things not visible to the natural eye, he was called a seer. You may want to explain that the Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been called of God to be prophets, seers, and revelators in our day.

- What is a seer?

To help students understand the meaning of Enoch's call as a prophet, seer, and revelator, invite a student to read aloud the following statements by Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"A seer is one who sees with spiritual eyes. He perceives the meaning of that which seems obscure to others; therefore he is an interpreter and clarifier of eternal truth. He foresees the future from the past and the present. . . . In short, he is one who sees, who walks in the Lord's light with open eyes. . . .

". . . A prophet is a teacher of known truth; a seer is a perceiver of hidden truth; a revelator is a bearer of new truth" (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, arr.

G. Homer Durham, 3 vols. in 1 [1960], 258).

Invite a student to read Moses 6:37–39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people responded to Enoch's preaching.

- What phrases describe how the people responded to Enoch?
- Why do you think some people might be offended by the prophets, seers, and revelators in our day?

Invite a student to read Moses 6:40 aloud, and ask the class to find what Mahijah asked Enoch.

Ask students to imagine that one of their friends or family members asked them similar questions about the prophet today. To help them think about how they might respond, invite a student to read Moses 6:41–43 aloud. Ask the class to look for how Enoch responded. Invite a few students to explain how they would respond to their friends.

Invite a student to read Moses 6:47 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and notice the people's reaction to Enoch's words.

- How does the people's reaction recorded in verse 47 relate to the Lord's promises to Enoch described in verses 32–34?
- What are some teachings and insights from the prophets and apostles of our day that demonstrate that they are true seers?

Conclude by inviting one or two students to share their testimonies of the Lord's prophets, seers, and revelators. You might consider sharing your testimony as well.

## LESSON 14

# Moses 6:48–68

### Introduction

In obedience to the Lord's command, Enoch preached the gospel to his people. He taught about the consequences of the Fall of Adam and Eve and how we can overcome

those consequences. He also explained why we must repent and be baptized.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 6:48–52

#### *Enoch teaches about the consequences of the Fall and how to overcome them*

Ask students to think of a time when they or someone they know needed to be rescued. If students cannot think of an example, be prepared to describe a time when you or someone you know needed to be rescued. Then ask the following questions (you may want to write the questions on the board before class begins):

- What caused the need for you to be rescued?
- What did you have to do in order to be rescued? Who rescued you?

After students respond, explain that Enoch taught his people how we can be rescued, or saved, from the consequences of the Fall of Adam.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Because of the Fall we . . .*

Invite a student to read Moses 6:48 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the consequences that came because of the Fall of Adam and Eve. Ask a student to write the consequences on the board as students report what they find.

You might need to explain that the phrase “we are” means that the Fall opened the way for us to be born on the earth (see 2 Nephi 2:25). The term *death* in this verse can refer to both spiritual and physical death.

- What do you think the phrase “partakers of misery and woe” means? (Students might express that we are subject to the pains, sicknesses, sorrows, and difficulties of mortal life.)

Invite students to summarize the doctrine we can learn from Moses 6:48. They might respond with something similar to the following: **Because of the Fall we leave God's presence, come to the earth, receive physical bodies, experience sorrow, and suffer both physical and spiritual death.** You may want to write this doctrine on the board. Remind students that the Fall was an essential part of Heavenly Father's great plan of happiness and was necessary for our eternal progression.

Invite a student to read Moses 6:49 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened after the Fall of Adam and Eve.

- According to Enoch, what did mankind become?

Explain that the words *carnal* and *sensual* refer to being preoccupied with worldliness and the gratification of physical desires, lusts, and pleasures. The word *devilish* implies being influenced by the devil. Explain that these words do not mean that our bodies are evil. Rather, they describe an aspect of our fallen condition and the consequences of yielding to the enticements of Satan (see Moses 5:13; D&C 20:20).

- What does our fallen condition do to our relationship with God?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 6:50–52. Ask the class to follow along and look for what God told Adam we need to do to overcome our carnal and sensual nature (see also Mosiah 3:19). Invite students to report what they find.

You may want to suggest that students mark the word *if* in verse 52 as well as what the Lord admonished Adam (and each of us) to do.

- According to verse 52, what will we receive if we believe, repent, and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we believe, repent, and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, then we will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**)
- How does receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost help us overcome spiritual death (being separated from God’s presence)?
- How can the gift of the Holy Ghost help us as we seek to overcome our unrighteous desires?

### Moses 6:53–68

#### *Adam learned what we must do to overcome the Fall and enter the kingdom of heaven*

Invite a student to read Moses 6:53 aloud.

- What did Adam ask the Lord? (You may want to suggest that students mark the question in verse 53.)

Ask students to discuss with a partner how they would answer the first part of Adam’s question: “Why is it that men must repent?” Invite a few students to explain their answers to the class.

Invite several students to each read aloud a verse from Moses 6:54–57. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord answered Adam’s question about why we need to repent. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find and then report it.

Explain that Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that the phrase “thy children are conceived in sin” in verse 55 means that we are “born into a world of sin,” a world in which evil exists and influences us in our fallen state (see *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 101).

- What do verses 54–55 teach us about accountability for sins?
- What does the phrase “they are agents unto themselves” (verse 56) mean?
- According to verses 56–57, what can we inherit if we use our agency to repent? (Students might use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we use our agency to repent, we can inherit the kingdom of God.**)
- According to verse 57, why will the unrepentant not inherit the kingdom of God?

Point out the phrase “dwell there, or dwell in his presence” in verse 57. Explain that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all of us will be redeemed from the Fall and brought back to the presence of God to be judged. However, only those who have repented of their sins can dwell, or stay, in God’s presence. (See Helaman 14:15–19 and 2 Nephi 2:10.)

Invite students to ponder their need to repent of their sins so they can dwell in God’s presence.

Ask students to discuss with a partner how they would answer the second part of Adam’s question in verse 53: “Why is it that men must . . . be baptized in water?” Invite a few students to explain their answers to the class.

Explain that in order to help his people understand why we must be baptized in water, Enoch quoted God’s words to Adam about this spiritual rebirth. Invite a student to read Moses 6:58–59 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord taught about being born again.

- Why must we be born again? (Students may identify a variety of doctrines and principles, including the following: **We must be born again in order to be sanctified from all sin and to inherit eternal life.**)
- What does it mean to be “born again”? (To be born again is the spiritual process by which we come alive to things of the Spirit and gradually lose our desire to break God’s commandments.)
- How does being baptized by water relate to being born again?

To help students understand how baptism by water relates to being born again, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“We begin the process of being born again through exercising faith in Christ, repenting of our sins, and being baptized by immersion for the remission of sins” (“Ye Must Be Born Again,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 21).

- According to verse 59, what three elements are essential to physical birth and being born again, or spiritual birth?

Write the following words on the board: *water, Spirit, blood*.

Invite a student to read Moses 6:60–61 aloud, and ask the class to look for why these elements are essential to being born again.

- According to verse 60, what role does each of these elements play in the process of being born again?

Explain that to be justified means “to be pardoned from punishment for sin and declared guiltless” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Justification, Justify”; scriptures.lds.org). To be sanctified means to be “free from sin, pure, clean, and holy through the Atonement of Jesus Christ” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Sanctification”; scriptures.lds.org).

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:

“Reception of the Holy Ghost is the cleansing agent as the Atonement purifies you. . . .

“ . . . And when he is your companion, you can have confidence that the Atonement is working in your life” (“Come Unto Christ” [Brigham Young University fireside, Oct. 29, 1989], 4; speeches.byu.edu).

- According to President Eyring, how can we know if we are being purified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ?

Invite students to ponder a time when they felt the influence of the Holy Ghost. Ask them to think about where they were and what they were doing. You may want to challenge them to more frequently put themselves in places and engage in activities that invite the Holy Ghost into their lives so they can be purified and continue in the process of being born again.

Invite a student to read Moses 6:62 aloud, and ask the class to look for who makes it possible for us to be born again so that we can be sanctified from all our sins and inherit eternal life.

Ask a student to read Moses 6:63 aloud. Then ask the class the following questions:

- How does the fact that “all things are created and made to bear record of [the Savior]” (verse 63) help us understand the importance of His role in the plan of salvation?
- What do you feel when you reflect on how the Savior’s sufferings in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross of Calvary opened the way for you to be forgiven and cleansed of your sins?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 6:64–68. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened to Adam after the Lord had spoken with him. You may want to point out that these verses show Adam beginning the process of being born again through faith, repentance, baptism by immersion, and receiving the Holy Ghost. (You may need to explain that the phrase “quickened in the inner man” refers to being enlightened or enlivened by the Holy Ghost.)

- What do you think it means to become “one in [Christ]”? (One explanation might be that we become like Christ in our way of thinking and acting.)

Point out the phrase “and thus may all become my sons” in verse 68. Conclude by testifying that if we follow Adam’s example by believing in Christ and being baptized by water and the Spirit, we too can become covenant sons and daughters of God, born again through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

### Apply doctrines and principles

After students have identified, understood, and felt the truth and importance of a doctrine or principle found in the scriptures, teachers should encourage them to apply that truth in their lives. Application takes place when students think, speak, and live according to the principles they have learned. As students apply the principles of the gospel in their lives, they will receive promised blessings and will gain a deeper understanding and testimony of what they have applied.

## LESSON 15

# Moses 7

### Introduction

The prophet Enoch led the people of God and established the city of Zion upon the principles of righteousness. Enoch was blessed to see a vision of the earth's history, from his own day to the Millennium, and learn

in a very profound way of our Heavenly Father's love for His children. He also foresaw the coming of the Savior, the eventual Restoration of the gospel, the gathering of Israel, and the return of the city of Zion upon the earth.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Moses 7:1–21

##### *Enoch establishes the city of Zion upon principles of righteousness*

To prepare students to study Moses 7, display a bowl of water and explain that it represents the world we live in. Sprinkle ground black pepper all over the water to represent the wicked influences in the world.

Explain that, like us, Enoch lived in a world full of wickedness. Summarize Moses 7:1–12 by explaining that as Enoch preached the gospel, he testified that he had talked to the Lord face to face. The Lord showed Enoch a vision of the groups of people he was called to teach. The Lord commanded Enoch to call these people to repentance and to baptize them, which would allow them to become the people of God.

Direct students' attention back to the bowl of water. Invite them to watch what happens as you add a drop or two of liquid soap to the center of the bowl. (The pepper will disperse to the edges of the bowl.)

Ask a student to read Moses 7:13–17 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for ways in which the faith of Enoch and his people was similar to the soap you added to the water.

- How was the faith of Enoch and his people similar to the soap we added to the water? (Because of Enoch's great faith and the righteousness of the people, they were separated from the wicked in miraculous ways.)
- According to verses 16–17, how were Enoch and his people blessed compared to the world around them? (The Lord came and dwelt with His people, and they lived in peace while wars and bloodshed were all around.)

Invite a student to read Moses 7:18 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord called His people and why He gave them that name. Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think it means that "there was no poor among them"? (The people cared for one another temporally and spiritually.)
- According to verse 18, what do we need to do to be the Lord's people? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **The Lord will call His people Zion when they are of one heart and one mind, live righteously, and care for one another.**)

To help students better understand this principle and relate it to themselves, copy the following questions on the board. Invite students to choose any of the questions and record their answers in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Then ask students to share their answers with the class or with a partner.

*What do you think it means to be "of one heart and one mind"? When have you felt that you were of one heart and one mind with other members of the Church?*

*In your experience, how does living righteously help members of the Church to feel unified?*

*When have you ministered to the needs of another member of the Church? What effect did that have on you?*

*How have members of the Church cared for you? What feelings do you have for them?*



#### *Capture and maintain students' interest*

You can help focus students' minds on the learning experience by beginning each lesson in a way that captures their attention and leads them to search the scriptures with greater purpose. For example, you could display an object or picture that triggers their interest. If a suggested object or picture is not available to you, consider describing it for students or drawing it on the board.

#### **Moses 7:18**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Summarize Moses 7:19–21 by explaining that Enoch built a city called the city of Zion. Enoch saw in a vision that the city would eventually be taken up to heaven because of the righteousness of his people. This means that Enoch and his people were translated—in other words, their bodies were changed so they would be free of physical pain and would not experience death until the time of their resurrection.

### Moses 7:22–40

#### *Enoch sees that Satan laughs and God weeps over the wicked*

Ask students to think of a time in their lives when they felt like they were all alone or that nobody cared about them. Invite them to look for a principle as they continue to study Moses 7 that can help them when they have these feelings.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 7:23–26. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Enoch saw in vision. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did Enoch learn about Satan?
- What do you think the “great chain in his hand” represents?
- Why do you think Satan and his followers laughed and rejoiced?

Invite a student to read Moses 7:27–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to many of the righteous who were on the earth after the city of Zion was translated. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord do when He saw the wickedness of the people who remained on the earth?
- What does this teach us about the Lord’s nature?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Moses 7:29–31. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Enoch responded when he saw the Lord weep.

- What did Enoch ask the Lord?
- In verse 30, point out the phrase “and yet thou art there, and thy bosom is there.” What was Enoch saying about the Lord? (To help students answer this question, you may want to explain that in the scriptures, the word *bosom* is often used to refer to a person’s chest, which covers his heart, where deep emotions are felt. The phrase “and yet thou art there, and thy bosom is there” indicates that although God has created innumerable worlds, He feels deep love and compassion for each one of His children and is close to them.)

To illustrate what Enoch said about the Lord in verse 30, draw multiple dots on the board. Explain that these dots represent a few of the many worlds God has created. Point to one of the dots and explain that it represents the earth and those who live on it.

- What do verses 28–31 teach us about God’s feelings for us as His children? (**God has created worlds without number, yet He is aware of and cares about us.** You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases in verse 30 that teach this truth.)
- When have you had an experience that helped you know that God is aware of and cares for you?

Invite students to study Moses 7:32–40 with a partner, looking for what causes Heavenly Father to feel sorrow.

- What causes Heavenly Father to feel sorrow? (Summarize student responses by writing the following truth on the board: **Heavenly Father feels sorrow when we choose to commit sin.**)
- According to verses 37–38, why does Heavenly Father feel sorrow when we choose to commit sin?
- How can this knowledge influence you to live righteously?

### Moses 7:41–69

#### *The Lord comforts Enoch by teaching him about the plan of salvation*

Ask students if they have ever felt tired of being surrounded by evil influences and temptations.

Invite a student to read Moses 7:41–44 aloud. Ask the class to look for how Enoch felt when he looked upon the wickedness and misery of God’s children.

- How did Enoch feel?
- According to verse 44, what did the Lord tell Enoch?

Invite a student to read Moses 7:45–47 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify what the Lord showed Enoch to comfort him.

- Why do you think seeing a vision of the Savior would cause Enoch’s soul to rejoice?

Summarize Moses 7:48–53 by explaining that Enoch wept again when he heard the earth mourn because of the wickedness of the people. Enoch prayed and asked God if he would have compassion on the earth and bless the children of Noah. The Lord promised Enoch that He would never again flood the earth. The Lord also promised that He would “call upon the children of Noah,” which means that He would invite them to accept the gospel. The Lord also taught Enoch that those who build their lives upon the Savior would never fall. (See also Helaman 5:12.)

Invite a student to read Moses 7:54 aloud, and ask the class to look for the question Enoch asked. Ask students to report what they find. Explain that when Enoch asked the Lord when the earth would “rest,” he was referring to a time when wickedness will be taken from the earth and the righteous will dwell in peace and safety.

Summarize Moses 7:55–59 by explaining that Enoch saw that the Savior would be crucified. He wept and asked again when the earth would rest. After seeing Jesus ascend into heaven he asked whether the Lord would return to the earth.

Invite a student to read Moses 7:60–61 aloud, and ask the class to look for the answer the Lord gave to Enoch. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord say the world would be like when He comes again?
- What did the Lord promise He would do for His people in the last days? (He would preserve them.)

Explain that the word *preserve* refers to the Lord’s ability to save His people both physically and spiritually from the wickedness of the world. Invite a student to read Moses 7:62 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord will do to preserve His people spiritually in the latter days. Ask students to report what they find.

- How is this similar to what the Lord did for His people during Enoch’s day?

Explain that the phrase “righteousness will I send down out of heaven” refers to such things as the appearance of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, the appearance of angels, revelation, and the bestowal of priesthood keys and power. The phrase “truth will I send forth out of the earth” refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon in the latter days as part of the Restoration. This “righteousness” from heaven and “truth” from the earth would bear witness of Christ, His Resurrection, and the Resurrection of all mankind.

- According to Moses 7:62, how will the Book of Mormon be used in the latter days? (To gather out God’s elect throughout the earth.)

Point out that even though the city of Zion will be built in the last days, not everyone will need to be in the city to be preserved. Summarize Moses 7:63–66 by explaining that it describes one of the events associated with Jesus Christ’s Second Coming: Enoch and his city will return to the earth and will meet the city of Zion, or New Jerusalem, which will be built in the last days. These verses also tell us that when the Savior comes again, all wickedness will be removed from the earth and the earth will rest.

Invite a student to read Moses 7:67–69 aloud. Ask the class to look for the effect the Lord’s vision had on Enoch and what happened to the city of Zion. Ask students to report their findings.

Conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed in this lesson.

### Scripture Mastery—Moses 7:18

Consider inviting students to read Moses 7:18 aloud as a class. Based on the teachings in this verse, ask students to suggest what they might do to become more united as a seminary class. Together, set a goal to implement those suggestions. You could then begin the next several lessons by reciting the scripture at the beginning of class and briefly discussing your progress toward the goal.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Moses 5–7 (Unit 3)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Moses 5–7 (unit 3), along with Genesis 4–5, is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Moses 5:1–11)

As students studied about Adam and Eve's obedience to the Lord's commandment to offer sacrifice, they learned that we can choose to obey the Lord's commandments even if we do not fully understand the reasons for the commandments. Students also learned that although mankind has fallen, we can repent and be redeemed from sin because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

#### Day 2 (Moses 5:12–59)

In this lesson students learned that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, all mankind can be redeemed from the Fall and that through the promptings of the Holy Ghost, the Lord calls upon us to repent. They also learned that all who believe in Jesus Christ and repent of their sins will be saved, while those who refuse to believe in Jesus Christ and do not repent of their sins will be cut off from the Father.

#### Day 3 (Moses 6)

As students studied about Adam's righteous posterity, they learned that parents are responsible to teach their children the ways of God. While reading about Enoch they learned the following truths: If we go and do what the Lord commands us, He will be with us and help us; and by strict obedience and with the Lord's help, we can see and discern spiritually far beyond what we can with our "natural eye."

#### Day 4 (Moses 7)

In this lesson students learned that the Lord will call His people Zion when they are united, live righteously, and care for one another. As they studied Enoch's vision, they also learned the following: Even though God has created worlds without number, He weeps for His children and cares about us as individuals; Heavenly Father feels sorrow when we choose to commit sin; and the Lord will preserve His people by sending revelation and sacred texts such as the Book of Mormon.

### Introduction

Enoch taught the people in his day about the consequences of the Fall of Adam and Eve and how we can overcome those consequences. This lesson can help students learn how they can overcome the natural man and receive the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* Students studied a scripture mastery passage, Moses 7:18, this week. You may want to review it before you begin the lesson.

#### Moses 6:48–52

*Enoch teaches about the consequences of the Fall and how to overcome them*

Ask students to think of a time when they or someone they know needed to be rescued. If students cannot think of an example, be prepared to describe a time when you or someone you know needed to be rescued. Then ask the following questions (you may want to write the questions on the board before class begins):

- What caused the need for you to be rescued?
- What did you have to do in order to be rescued? Who rescued you?

After students respond, explain that Enoch taught his people how we can be rescued, or saved, from the consequences of the Fall of Adam.

Invite a student to read Moses 6:48–49 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the consequences that came because of the Fall of Adam and Eve. Ask them to report what they find.

- According to Enoch, what did mankind become?

Explain that the words *caral* and *sensual* refer to being preoccupied with worldliness and the gratification of physical desires, lusts, and pleasures. The word *devilish* implies being influenced by the devil. Explain that these words do not mean that our bodies are evil. Rather, they describe an aspect of our fallen condition and the consequences of yielding to the enticements of Satan (see Moses 5:13; D&C 20:20).

Invite a student to read aloud the following explanation from *True to the Faith*:

"In this fallen condition, we have a conflict within us. We are spirit children of God, with the potential to be 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Peter 1:4). However, 'we are unworthy before [God]; because of the fall our natures have become evil continually' (Ether 3:2). We need to strive continually to overcome unrighteous passions and desires" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 57).

- How would you describe the two forces that are pulling on us? (As students respond, help them understand that the two forces pulling on us are our fallen nature and our divine nature.)

Invite a student to read Moses 6:50–52 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what we need to do to overcome our fallen nature (see also Mosiah 3:19). Invite students to report what they find.

- According to verse 52, what do we receive if we believe, repent, and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we believe, repent, and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, then we will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**)
- How does receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost help us overcome our fallen nature?

## Moses 6:53–68

*Adam learned what we must do to overcome the Fall and enter the kingdom of heaven*

Invite a student to read Moses 6:53 aloud.

- What did Adam ask the Lord?

Ask students to discuss with a partner how they would answer the first part of Adam's question: "Why is it that men must repent?" Invite a few students to explain their answers to the class.

Invite a student to read Moses 6:54–57 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord answered Adam's question about why we need to repent. Invite students to report what they find.

- What do verses 54–55 teach us about accountability for sins? (We will be punished for our own sins, and not for Adam's transgression [see Articles of Faith 1:2]. It may be helpful to explain that Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that the phrase "thy children are conceived in sin" in verse 55 means that we are "born into a world of sin," a world in which evil exists and influences us in our fallen state [see *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (1985), 101].)
- According to Moses 6:57, why can the unrepentant not inherit the kingdom of God?

Ask students to discuss with a partner how they would answer the second part of Adam's question in verse 53: "Why is it that men must . . . be baptized in water?" Invite a few students to explain their answers to the class.

Explain that in order to help his people understand why we must be baptized in water, Enoch quoted God's words to Adam about being born again. Invite a student to read Moses 6:58–61 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord taught about being born again. Ask students to report what they find.

- How does being baptized by water relate to being born again?

To help students understand how baptism by water relates to being born again, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"Two births are essential to salvation. Man cannot be saved without birth into mortality, nor can he return to his heavenly home without a birth into the realm of the Spirit. . . . The elements present in a mortal birth and in a spiritual birth are the same. They are water, blood, and spirit. Thus every mortal birth is a heaven-given reminder to prepare for the second birth. . . .

"In every mortal birth the child is immersed in water in the mother's womb. At the appointed time the spirit enters the body, and blood always flows in the veins of the new person. Otherwise, without each of these, there is no life, no birth, no mortality.

"In every birth into the kingdom of heaven, the newborn babe in Christ is immersed in water, he receives the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and the blood of Christ cleanses him from all sin. Otherwise, without each of these, there is no Spirit-birth, no newness of life, no hope of eternal life" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 288).

Write the following words on the board: *water, Spirit, blood.*

- According to Moses 6:60, what role does each of these elements play in the process of being born again?

Explain that to be justified means to be pardoned from sin. To be sanctified means to be cleansed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. (See Guide to the Scriptures, "Justification, Justify" and "Sanctification"; scriptures.lds.org.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:

"Reception of the Holy Ghost is the cleansing agent as the Atonement purifies you. . . .

". . . And when he is your companion, you can have confidence that the Atonement is working in your life" ("*Come Unto Christ*" [Brigham Young University fireside, Oct. 29, 1989], 4; speeches.byu.edu).

- According to President Eyring, how can we know if we are being purified through the Atonement of Jesus Christ?

Invite students to ponder a time when they felt the influence of the Holy Ghost. Ask them to think about where they were and what they were doing. You may want to encourage students to ask Heavenly Father in prayer for the Holy Ghost to guide them, as they more frequently put themselves in places and engage in activities that invite the Holy Ghost into their lives, so they can be purified and continue in the process of being born again.

Summarize Moses 6:62–68 by explaining that after Adam received this instruction, he was baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. These verses illustrate the process of being born again through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. (You may need to explain that the phrase "quickened in the inner man" refers to being enlightened or enlivened by the Holy Ghost.)

Point out the phrase "and thus may all become my sons" in verse 68. Conclude by testifying that if we follow Adam's example by believing in Christ and being baptized by water and the Spirit, we too can become covenant sons and daughters of Jesus Christ.

## Next Unit (Moses 8; Genesis 6–12; Abraham 1–2)

Ask students if they are familiar with accounts about Noah and Abraham. To help them prepare for their study during the coming week, invite them to keep in mind the following: What happens to the people when they reject Noah's preaching and warning to repent? What promises did Abraham want from the Lord, and what was he willing to do to obtain them? Can a person grow up in an unrighteous environment and still become a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ? Explain that in the next unit, students will learn how Abraham overcame his unrighteous environment and received promises from God.

# Moses 8 (Genesis 6:1–13)

## Introduction

The Lord promised Enoch that Noah would be one of his descendants. The Lord called Noah to preach the gospel and warn the people that if they did not repent,

they would be destroyed by a flood. Because the people were wicked and corrupt and refused to repent, the Lord determined to destroy all flesh from the earth.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Moses 8:1–11

#### *The generations preceding Noah are given*

Invite students to name situations in which a person might be directed to change or correct his or her actions (such as violating a driving law or sports game rule or performing a mathematical equation incorrectly). You may want to list students' responses on the board.

- In these situations, what could happen if a person chose not to change as directed?

Tell students that in today's lesson they will learn about a group of people who were directed to change, and they will find out how those people responded. Encourage students to consider, as they study, how they personally respond to invitations to change.

To help students understand the content of Moses 8:1–11, invite them to scan these verses, looking for names of Enoch's descendants. Ask them to report the names they find.

Explain that to fulfill the covenant the Lord made with Enoch that Noah would be his descendant (see Moses 8:2), Methuselah was not taken with the city of Enoch when it was translated. Methuselah, who lived to be 969 years old, begat Lamech, and Lamech begat Noah.

### Moses 8:12–28

#### *Noah preaches the gospel and calls upon the children of men to repent*

Invite a student to read Moses 8:12–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the two types of sons that are described. Ask students to report what they find (the sons of God and the sons of men).

- What difference do you find in these verses between the sons of God and the sons of men?
- What do you think it means that the sons of God "hearkened unto the Lord, and gave heed" (Moses 8:13)? (They listened attentively to the Lord and obeyed Him.)
- According to verse 15, how did the Lord describe the decision of Noah's granddaughters to marry the sons of men?
- What do you think it means that Noah's granddaughters "sold themselves"? (In choosing to marry wicked men, Noah's granddaughters forfeited the opportunity to receive the full blessings Heavenly Father offers those who marry in His covenant.)

Write the following scripture references on the board, leaving space for responses to be written under them: *Moses 8:16–18, 28; Moses 8:19–22; Moses 8:23–26.*

Tell students that the remainder of Moses 8 contains a description of the actions of rebellious people who lived in Noah's day. Assign each of the references on the board to a group of students. Ask the students to read their assigned verses and identify actions of these rebellious people. After sufficient time, invite a few students to write what they found on the board, under the scripture reference they studied. Then ask the following questions:

- Why do you think someone would want to kill a prophet of God (see Moses 8:18, 26)?
- What similarities do you see between the spiritual conditions in Noah's day and conditions in our day?

### *Help students understand the content of the scriptures*

Ask questions that help students analyze and understand the content of the scriptures. For example, you might ask questions that help them (1) examine one scripture passage in the light of other passages or gospel principles, (2) clarify the meaning of words or phrases, or (3) analyze the details of the story line for greater meaning. As students answer such questions, they will be prepared to identify doctrines and principles.

Ask students to review Moses 8:20, 24 silently, looking for the message the Lord had Noah give to the people.

- What did the Lord direct Noah to call upon these people to do?
- How did the people repeatedly respond to this invitation?

Explain that an invitation to repent is an invitation to change our desires, attitudes, and actions to be aligned with God’s will.

- According to Moses 8:17, how long did the Lord give the people to repent?
- What would be the consequence if they chose not to repent?

Point out that although the consequence of the Flood was specific to the people of Noah’s day, the Lord has always warned that negative consequences will follow sin.

- What principle can we learn from the people’s refusal to hearken to the Lord’s invitations to repent? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we do not hearken to the Lord’s invitations to repent, then we will suffer the consequences of continuing in our sins.** Write this principle on the board.)

Help students understand this principle by asking questions such as the following:

- In what ways does the Lord communicate to us His invitations to repent?
- According to Moses 8:21, how had these people convinced themselves that they did not need to repent? What are some ways people in our day might convince themselves that they do not need to hearken to the Lord’s invitations to repent?
- What are some consequences we might face for choosing not to repent?

Ask students to recall how Noah and his sons responded to the Lord’s instructions (see Moses 8:13). Then invite a student to read Moses 8:27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the results of their hearkening to the Lord. Ask students to report their findings.

Explain that, in this context, the word *just* means “righteous.” Also explain that the phrase “perfect in his generation” does not mean that Noah lived a sinless life. It means he was a man of integrity, who was completely devoted to carrying out the will of the Lord and was purified from all unrighteousness through being true to the covenants of the gospel of Jesus Christ. (You may want to remind students that we become perfect through Jesus Christ [see Moroni 10:32; D&C 76:69].)

Invite students to ponder whether they are currently hearkening to the Lord’s invitations to repent or ignoring those invitations. Encourage them to choose to repent as necessary, and share your testimony that as they do so they can avoid the negative consequences that come from continuing in sin.

## Moses 8:29–30

### *Because of the corruption on earth, the Lord determines to destroy all flesh*

Invite a student to read Moses 8:29–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord resolved to do because of the corruption of the people, the violence that filled the earth, and the people’s refusal to repent. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that some people wonder why a loving God would destroy almost all of the people on earth through the Flood. To help students understand how to respond to this concern, invite a student to read 2 Nephi 26:24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the reason behind everything God does. (You might want to suggest that students write this reference in their scriptures next to Moses 8:30.)

- Why does God do everything He does? (Students should identify the following truth: **All that God does is for the benefit of His children.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)
- In what ways do you think the Flood would be a benefit to God’s children?
- How do you think your ability to fulfill God’s plan for your salvation would be affected if you were born into a world where all parents imagined only evil in their hearts continually (see Moses 8:22; Genesis 6:5)?

Invite a student to read the following statements by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and President John Taylor. Ask the class to listen for additional insights that can help them understand how the Flood was for the benefit of the world.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that God intervened “when corruption had reached an agency-destroying point that spirits could not, in justice, be sent here” (*We Will Prove Them Herewith* [1982], 58).

President John Taylor explained that “by taking away their earthly existence [God] prevented them from entailing their sins upon their posterity and degenerating [or corrupting] them, and also prevented them from committing further acts of wickedness” (“Discourse Delivered by Prest. John Taylor,” *Deseret News*, Jan. 16, 1878, 787).

- According to these statements, how did the Flood benefit God’s children?

Explain that the Flood also benefited those who were wicked because they were brought into the spirit world, where they could eventually repent and be taught the gospel of Jesus Christ (see 1 Peter 3:18–20; Moses 7:39).

- Why do you think it is important to understand that all that God does is for the benefit of His children? How can you benefit from having a testimony of this truth?

Consider sharing a personal experience or testimony regarding how you know that all that God does is for the benefit of His children.

### Scripture Mastery Review

When students can locate scripture mastery passages easily, they will be more confident in their personal study and application of the gospel and in their opportunities to teach from the scriptures. Consider the following declaration by President Howard W. Hunter:

“We would hope none of your students would leave your classroom fearful or embarrassed or ashamed that they cannot find the help they need because they do not know the scriptures well enough to locate the proper passages” (“Eternal Investments” [evening with President Howard W. Hunter, Feb. 10, 1989], 2; si.lds.org).

Scripture mastery reviews are placed throughout this manual to introduce a variety of methods you can use to help students review scripture mastery verses regularly. For other scripture mastery review activities, see the appendix at the end of this manual.

The length of this lesson may allow time for the following scripture mastery review activity. You could conduct the activity at the beginning of class, between sections of the lesson, or at the end of class. Keep the activity brief to allow sufficient time for the lesson.

Quizzes can help students remember what they have learned and measure their learning. Use the four scripture mastery passages students have already been introduced to (you could also include a few new scripture mastery passages), and invite students to read and mark them in their scriptures. When they have done this, give them a verbal quiz on those passages. For each passage, give a key word or read a phrase from the seminary bookmark. Then ask students to find the correct passage in their scriptures. You could time the class to measure how quickly they can all find each passage. Doing this more than once could help them try to improve.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Moses 8:27. “Noah was . . . perfect in his generation”

Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained:

“Scriptures have described Noah, Seth, and Job as *perfect men*. . . .

“This does not mean that these people never made mistakes or never had need of correction. The process

of perfection includes challenges to overcome and steps to repentance that may be very painful. . . .

“Mortal perfection can be achieved as we try to perform every duty, keep every law, and strive to be as perfect in our sphere as our Heavenly Father is in his. If we do the best we can, the Lord will bless us according to our deeds and the desires of our hearts” (“Perfection Pending,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86).

## LESSON 17

# Genesis 6:13–9:29

### Introduction

The Lord commanded Noah to build an ark in which his family and “every living thing of all flesh” (Genesis 6:19) were saved from the Flood. Floodwater destroyed the wicked and all creatures that lived on the land except

those in the ark. When the floodwater receded, Noah and his family exited the ark. The Lord gave them commandments and established with them the covenant He had made with Enoch.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 6:13–7:24

#### *Noah obeys the Lord’s commandment to build an ark*

Display the pictures Building the Ark and Noah and the Ark with Animals (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], nos. 7, 8; see also LDS.org). Ask students to describe differences they notice between the two pictures.

- What types of expressions do you see on the faces of the people that Noah tried to warn?
- What do these pictures suggest about how the people responded to the Lord’s instructions?

Invite students to consider what they can learn from the example of Noah and his family during today’s lesson.

Invite a student to read Genesis 6:13–16 aloud. (You may want to explain that Genesis 6:13 marks the end of the portion of the Joseph Smith Translation that we know as the book of Moses.) Ask the class to follow along, looking for specific instructions the Lord gave Noah to prepare for the coming destruction. Ask students to report what they find. You may need to explain that the phrase “pitch it” means to cover the ark with a tar-like substance to seal it and make it waterproof.

To help students understand the size of the ark, explain that a cubit was a unit of measurement used by the Hebrews in biblical times. The measurement is based on the distance between an adult’s elbow and the tip of the longest finger. You may want to measure this distance on some of your students. Point out that one cubit is generally estimated to be between 18 and 22 inches (45.72–55.88 centimeters). Invite a student to calculate the approximate size of the ark in modern measurements. For example, if using 18 inches as one cubit, the ark was 450 feet long (about 138 meters), 75 feet wide (about 23 meters), and 45 feet high (about 14 meters).

- What challenges might Noah have faced in constructing the ark?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 6:17–22. Ask the class to follow along and look for what else the Lord directed Noah to do.

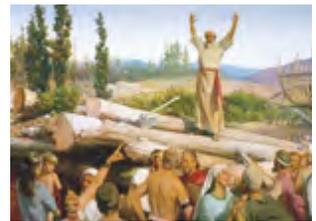
- What additional challenges might Noah have faced as he obeyed these instructions from the Lord?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball.

Invite the class to listen closely and consider ways Noah demonstrated faith in the Lord as he prepared the ark.

“As yet there was no evidence of rain and flood. His people mocked and called him a fool. His preaching fell on deaf ears. His warnings were considered irrational. There was no precedent; never had it been known that a deluge [or flood] could cover the earth. How foolish to build an ark on dry ground with the sun shining and life moving forward as usual!” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 140–41).

- What are some ways Noah demonstrated faith in the Lord? (After students respond, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we act in faith by obeying the Lord’s commands . . .*)



- How would Noah be blessed by acting in faith to build the ark when there appeared to be no danger?
- What are some things the Lord has asked us to do that might appear foolish to others? (List students' responses on the board.)
- Why do we need faith to obey the Lord?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson, who spoke of the faith Noah demonstrated by keeping God's commandment:

"Noah had the unwavering faith to follow God's commandments. May we ever do likewise. May we remember that the wisdom of God oftentimes appears as foolishness to men; but the greatest lesson we can learn in mortality is that when God speaks and we obey, we will always be right" ("Models to Follow," *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 61).

Remind students that the Lord sent Noah to preach repentance to the people, who were wicked. Noah warned them that if they did not repent, they would be destroyed by a flood.

To help students discover what happened to Noah and the people he preached to, invite them to take the following true-or-false quiz. (Before class, prepare a copy of the quiz for each student.) Ask students to first complete the quiz without using their scriptures. Then invite them to read Genesis 7 on their own or with a partner to check their answers. When they have checked their answers, review the answers as a class.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Noah took seven of some animals on the ark.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Noah was 60 years old when the Flood came.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Rain was the only source of water that flooded the earth.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The rain did not cease for forty days.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Eight people were saved on the ark.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ In addition to Noah's family and the animals on the ark, one other family also survived the Flood by staying on the top of a mountain.

*Answers:* 1 is true (see Genesis 7:2–3. You may need to explain that clean and unclean beasts refer to animals considered acceptable or unacceptable to eat and to be sacrificed to God at that time.); 2 is false (see Genesis 7:6, 11); 3 is false (see Genesis 7:11); 4 is true (see Genesis 7:4, 17); 5 is true (see Genesis 7:7, 13; 1 Peter 3:20); 6 is false (see Genesis 7:19–23).

After you review the answers to the quiz as a class, invite students to report what they found interesting in Genesis 7.

- If you had been in the position of one of the people who *were not* in the ark, what might you have thought and felt as the floodwater rose?
- If you had been in the position of one of those who *were* in the ark, what might you have thought and felt as the waters rose?
- Based on what you learned from Genesis 7, how would you complete the statement on the board? (You might invite students to write their answers on the board. Students may identify a variety of principles, but you may want to emphasize the following: **If we act in faith by obeying the Lord's commands, we can receive His blessings and protection.**)

To help students feel the truth and importance of this principle, refer to a few of the things students mentioned that the Lord has asked us to do that might appear foolish to others. For each response, ask:

- When have you been blessed or protected by obeying the Lord in this way?

To help students apply the principle identified above, invite them to answer the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What is one way you will act in faith by obeying the Lord today?

You may want to encourage students to act on what they wrote by testifying of blessings or protection you have received by obeying the Lord's commandments.

**Help students identify doctrines and principles**

As students develop their understanding of the context and content of the scriptures, they are better able to identify the doctrines and principles they contain. Ask students questions that help them draw conclusions and articulate clearly the principles or doctrines found in the text they are studying.

## Genesis 8:1–9:17

### *Noah and his family leave the ark, and the Lord establishes His covenant with Noah*

Draw a rainbow on the board.

- What do you think of when you see a rainbow in the sky?

Explain that after the Flood, a rainbow appeared. This rainbow had special meaning to Noah and his posterity. Invite students to look for why the rainbow was important to Noah as they discuss Genesis 8–9.

Summarize Genesis 8:1–9:7 by explaining that the waters on the earth gradually receded and the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. (Many believe that this site is in present-day Turkey.) Noah sent out birds to determine how far the water level had lowered. When a dove returned with an olive leaf, Noah knew the waters had receded. After Noah and his family had been on the ark for about a year, God directed them to exit the ark. Noah offered animal sacrifices to the Lord, gave thanks, and asked the Lord to “not again curse the ground any more for man’s sake” (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 9:4–6 [in the Bible appendix]). The Lord commanded Noah and his family to multiply and replenish the earth, instructed them on how to treat living things, and commanded them not to shed man’s blood (murder). The Prophet Joseph Smith’s translation clarified these verses, showing that God will hold us accountable for how we treat the life of animals and that God explicitly commanded Noah’s family to preserve the life of other human beings—that “man shall not shed the blood of man” (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 9:10–15 [in the Bible appendix]).

Invite a student to read Genesis 9:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a covenant God made with Noah and his sons. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a few students to take turns reading Genesis 9:12–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what a rainbow has to do with the covenant God made with Noah. (Explain that a token is a sign or symbol.)

- What does a rainbow have to do with the covenant God made with Noah? (The rainbow is a token, or sign, of the everlasting covenant—a reminder of God’s promises, including to never flood the earth again. This token or sign had first been given to Enoch [see Moses 7:50–51], and now the covenant and token were renewed with Noah.)

Write the following truth on the board: **God uses tokens as reminders of covenants.** Explain that the rainbow became a symbol and reminder of God’s mercy to His children on earth.

- What other tokens has God given us that can remind us of our covenants with Him and of His mercy? (Examples include the ordinances of baptism and the sacrament.)



## Genesis 9:18–29

### *Noah curses Canaan, the son of Ham*

Explain that Genesis 9:18–29 contains an account of an incident with Noah and his sons. This account can be difficult to understand. It appears that Ham disrespected something sacred. Even though we know that Ham’s actions were deliberate and the consequences were severe, we likely do not have all of the relevant details of the story. We therefore do not know exactly what happened or the meaning of what transpired.

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to share any additional insights they have learned from the life of Noah. Consider sharing your own insights.

### Commentary and Background Information

#### Genesis 9:18–27. “Cursed be Canaan; a servant . . . shall he be”

Some have incorrectly used Noah’s cursing of Canaan to justify slavery. Any theories suggested in the past that

black skin is a curse or an indication of unworthiness in a premortal life; that mixed-race relationships are a sin; or that people of any race or ethnicity are inferior to anyone else are not true doctrine. Church leaders unequivocally condemn all racism, past and present, in any form.

# Genesis 10–11

## Introduction

After the Flood, the posterity of Noah began to multiply and establish cities and kingdoms upon the earth. Many of the people turned from the Lord and became wicked, and they began to build a great tower in Babel. Because

of the wickedness of the people, the Lord confounded their language and scattered them to different places upon the earth.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 10

#### *Descendants of Noah are listed*

Have students imagine that after they are married they have a newborn son. Invite them to briefly scan the list of Noah’s descendants in Genesis 10:1–29 to find a name they would be willing to name their son. Ask a few students to tell the class what name they chose. (You might consider looking up the meaning of some of the names to share with the students. For example: *Phut* [verse 6] means “a bow.” *Seba* [or *Sheba*; verse 7] means “seven” or “an oath.” Today, *Nimrod* may be used as a derogatory name, but the ancient meaning was “rebellion.”)

Point out the name *Nimrod* in Genesis 10:8. Ask the students to read Genesis 10:8–10 silently, looking for the description of Nimrod, who was a great-grandson of Noah through Ham. Ask them to report what they learned.

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase “He was a mighty hunter before the Lord” in verse 9 to “He was a mighty hunter in the land” (Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 10:5). Write this change on the board.

- What is the difference between being mighty before the Lord and being mighty in the land?
- How is this change significant?

Explain that the reference to Nimrod being a “mighty hunter” refers not only to his ability in killing animals but also to his use of violence to gain power over and influence other people. “Though the words are not definite, it is very likely he was a very *bad man*. His name Nimrod comes from . . . *marad, he rebelled*; and the Targum [ancient Jewish translations or paraphrases of the scriptures], on [1 Chronicles 1:10], says: *Nimrod began to be a mighty man in sin, a murderer of innocent men, and a rebel before the Lord*” (Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible . . . with a Commentary and Critical Notes*, 6 vols., 1:86; see also *Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 57–58).

- According to Genesis 10:10, what cities were included in Nimrod’s kingdom? (You may want to suggest that students mark “Babel” and “in the land of Shinar” in their scriptures.)

### Genesis 11:1–9

#### *The Lord confounds the language of the people and scatters them throughout the earth*

Invite students to imagine they have a friend who appears to be happy and successful even though he is involved in serious sin. Because he appears to be happy and successful, some of their other friends are also considering committing serious sins. Invite students to think about what they could say to their friends to help them avoid making that mistake.

Explain to students that as they study Genesis 11, they will learn a principle that will help them know how to respond to those who believe that they can avoid the consequences of sinful behavior.

Ask a student to read Genesis 11:1–4 aloud. Invite students to follow along, looking for what the people in Nimrod’s kingdom—the land of Shinar—began to do.

- What did the people begin to do? (You may want to point out that this tower is often referred to as the Tower of Babel.)
- According to verse 4, why did they build the tower?

Explain that the phrase “reach unto heaven” in verse 4 taken literally could mean the people were making a tower that would physically reach heaven so they could avoid the consequences of sin. It may also be more symbolic and mean that the people were attempting to set aside true temple worship and build a counterfeit temple in order to reach unto heaven.

Point out the phrase “make us a name” in verse 4, and explain that the biblical meaning of making a name is to build a reputation, fame, or a monument. By building the tower, the people may have been trying to obtain the glory of the world by creating something that would perpetuate their fame or wickedness.

- According to verse 3, what materials did they use to build the tower?

Explain that slime, or bitumen (see verse 3, footnote *a*), was a substance like asphalt or tar that was used not only as an adhesive for the bricks but also to seal objects against water or moisture.

- Why might the people have wanted to use a substance for mortar that would resist water?

Some people think that the people used slime as mortar to make the tower waterproof so it would keep them safe in their sins if God decided to flood the earth again (see Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 1, chapter 4, paragraphs 2–3).

Invite a student to read Genesis 11:5–6 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord said about the people who were building the tower.

- What do you think the phrase “nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do” means? (It may mean that the people believed that once the tower was built, they could commit any sin without having to worry about God’s punishments.)
- How might people try to avoid the consequences of their sins in our day?

Invite a student to read Genesis 11:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God did because of the wickedness of the people.

- What did the Lord do to the inhabitants of earth? (Tell students that the word *confound* in these verses means “to confuse.”)
- Since the people were “scattered . . . upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis 11:8), what happened to the construction of the tower? (It may be helpful to explain that the phrase “they left off to build the city” in verse 8 means that they stopped building.)
- What does this scripture account teach us will happen if we choose to turn away from God? (One principle students may identify is that **if we choose to turn away from God, we bring undesirable consequences upon ourselves and others.**)

You may want to point out that this account is an example of what happens when people break the laws of God—they are scattered and they become separated from the gospel covenant and God’s covenant people. The Book of Mormon teaches that the children of Israel were scattered when they rejected the true Messiah and His gospel (see 2 Nephi 6:8–11; 10:5–6; Helaman 7:19).

Invite students to reflect on experiences they have had when they have seen this principle in their lives or the life of someone they know.

Remind students of the example of the friend involved in serious sin, mentioned at the beginning of class.

- What are some possible undesirable consequences this person might experience because of his involvement in serious sin?
- What are some possible consequences those around him might experience?

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle identified above, ask them to think of a time when they have seen a person or group of people experience undesirable consequences that came as a result of someone turning away from the Lord.

Ask students to think about the choices they are currently making and to consider what consequences might come to them and those around them because of those choices. Encourage them to seek Heavenly Father’s help to repent of anything that would bring undesirable consequences to them and to those around them.

**Help students understand doctrines and principles**

Students need to understand doctrines and principles before they can meaningfully apply them. Ask students questions that will lead them to a clearer understanding of the meaning of a particular principle or doctrine, that encourage them to think about a principle in a modern context, or that invite them to explain their understanding of a principle.

Point out that in the 2013 edition of the scriptures, an important phrase from the Joseph Smith Translation was added in a footnote to the end of Genesis 11:8: “and they hearkened not unto the Lord” (Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 11:6 [in Genesis 11:8, footnote *a*]). Explain that while there were many people who hearkened not unto the Lord, there were other people who were righteous and did not have their language confounded. The Lord blessed those who were righteous. The brother of Jared called upon God and was promised that his language and the language of his brother and certain family members and friends would not be confounded. The Lord led them to a choice land where they were able to worship Him and raise their families in righteousness (see Ether 1:33–43).

### Genesis 11:10–32

#### *Descendants of Shem are listed*

Write the following names on the board: *Japheth*, *Ham*, and *Shem*. Explain that Genesis 10 lists the descendants of these three sons of Noah: Japheth (see verses 2–5), Ham (see verses 6–20), and Shem (see verses 21–31).

Ask students to read Genesis 11:10 silently and identify whom the people listed in the remainder of Genesis 11 descend from. Ask students to report what they learn.

Explain that beginning with Genesis 11, the Bible is mainly the story of some of Shem’s descendants. The term “Semite”—usually referring to the Jews—means “a descendant of Shem.”

Ask students to scan Genesis 11:26–29 to find the names Abram and Sarai. Ask students if they are familiar with these two names. Help them understand that Abram was a prophet whose name was later changed to Abraham. The Lord also changed the name of his wife Sarai to Sarah (see Genesis 17:5, 15).

Tell students that as they continue to study the Old Testament, they will learn about a covenant God made with Abraham and Sarah to bless all the people of the earth.

Conclude today’s lesson by inviting students to share insights or testimonies of truths they learned in the lesson or spiritual impressions they felt.

#### Scripture Mastery Review

To help students understand the context for the scripture mastery references that have been introduced so far this year, write the following four headings across the top of the board: *Speaker*, *Audience*, *Purpose*, and *Other Helpful Insights*. Divide students into groups, and assign each group one of the following scripture mastery passages: Moses 1:39; Moses 7:18; Genesis 1:26–27; Genesis 2:24.

Invite students to discover the context of their assigned passages as they identify information that corresponds to each of the headings on the board. Explain that they can do this by reading the scripture chapter summary and some of the verses before and after their scripture mastery passage. Have them write their findings on the board. Then ask each group to explain the context of their assigned passage and how this information affects their understanding of the truths taught in that passage.

To add another element to this activity, you could ask the class to guess the scripture mastery references based on the descriptions on the board before each group gives its explanation.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Genesis 11:31. How does the book of Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price help us understand this verse?

From Genesis 11:31 it seems that it was Terah who directed his family to leave Ur and go to Canaan by way

of Haran. Abraham 2:3–5, however, makes it clear that Abraham, under the Lord’s direction, was the leader of the group.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Abraham

### Why study this book?

The book of Abraham is an inspired translation of the writings of Abraham and is scripture. By studying this book, students can draw strength from Abraham's example of living righteously while surrounded by wickedness. They will also learn about the blessings and responsibilities they can inherit as the posterity, or seed, of Abraham. In addition, studying this book will provide students with a greater understanding of their premortal existence as spirit sons and daughters of God.

### Who wrote this book?

The introduction to the book of Abraham states that it is "a Translation of some ancient Records that have fallen into our hands from the catacombs of Egypt. The writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Abraham, written by his own hand, upon papyrus." Abraham was born in Ur of the Chaldees in approximately 2000 B.C. In obedience to the Lord's commands, he traveled from Ur to Haran, and then to Canaan, to Egypt, and back to Canaan—the land the Lord promised to give to Abraham's seed.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know when Abraham recorded the writings in the book of Abraham. However, it appears they were originally written while he was in Egypt, though the papyri may be the transcription of a much later date. The Prophet Joseph Smith became aware of these writings in 1835, when a man named Michael Chandler brought four Egyptian mummies and several papyrus scrolls of ancient Egyptian writings to Kirtland, Ohio. Members of the Church purchased the mummies and rolls of papyrus. The Prophet translated some of the writings and began publishing excerpts of the book of Abraham in a Church publication called *Times and Seasons* beginning in March 1842 at Nauvoo, Illinois.

Several fragments of papyri once possessed by the Prophet Joseph Smith were discovered in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The exact dates of the discovery are unclear; however, it appears the First Presidency learned about them as early as 1965. The museum

transferred the fragments to the Church in 1967, and those fragments have been analyzed by scholars, who date them between about 300 B.C. and A.D. 100. A common objection to the authenticity of the book of Abraham is that the manuscripts (papyri) are not old enough to have been written by Abraham, who lived almost 2,000 years before Jesus Christ. Joseph Smith never claimed that the papyri were written by Abraham himself, nor that they originated from the time of Abraham. It is common to refer to an author's works as 'his' writings, whether he penned them himself, dictated them to others, or others copied his writings later.

While translating, the Prophet Joseph Smith may have been working with sections of papyri that were later destroyed; thus, it is likely not possible to assess the Prophet's ability to translate papyri when we now have only a fraction of the papyri he had in his possession. Neither the Lord nor Joseph Smith ever explained his precise method of translating the book of Abraham. We do know that the translation was done by the Prophet Joseph Smith through the gift and power of God. For more information about the coming forth of the book of Abraham, go to Gospel Topics on LDS.org and search for "book of Abraham."

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

In this book, unlike the account of Abraham given in Genesis 12–25, Abraham presented his experiences in his own words. The book of Abraham also gives us more information about Abraham's early life in the land of the Chaldeans. For example, we learn that Abraham was nearly sacrificed to false gods before being saved by Jehovah (see Abraham 1:5–20). This book also provides distinctive insights concerning the Abrahamic covenant (see Abraham 2:6–11), Abraham's use of a Urim and Thummim (see Abraham 3:1), and Abraham's vision of the sun, moon, and stars (see Abraham 3:2–18). In addition, this book contributes significant doctrinal information about subjects pertaining to the premortal life, including the eternal nature of spirits (see Abraham 3:18–21), foreordination (see Abraham 3:22–23), the

Council in Heaven (see Abraham 3:24–28), and the planning and the Creation of the earth (see Abraham 4–5).

The book of Abraham is the only book in the standard works that is accompanied by images. The manuscripts Joseph Smith translated to produce the book of Abraham contained Egyptian drawings in addition to hieroglyphic writings. "On 23 February 1842, the Prophet Joseph Smith asked Reuben Hedlock, a professional wood engraver and member of the Church, to prepare woodcuts of three of those drawings so they could be printed. Hedlock finished the engravings in one week, and Joseph Smith published the copies (facsimiles) along with the book of Abraham. Joseph Smith's explanations of the drawings accompany the facsimiles" (*The Pearl of Great Price Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2000], 29).

### Outline

**Abraham 1–2** Abraham seeks the blessings of the priesthood. Idolatrous priests attempt to sacrifice Abraham, and he is saved by Jehovah. He leaves the land of the Chaldeans and travels to Haran. The Lord again appears to Abraham, commands him to go to the land of Canaan, and sets forth the blessings and responsibilities of the Abrahamic covenant. Abraham travels to Canaan and continues on to Egypt.

**Abraham 3** Abraham is given information about the sun, moon, and stars that can be related to the greatness of Jesus Christ. He also learns about the eternal nature of spirits, foreordination, and the premortal Council in Heaven.

**Abraham 4–5** Abraham records the planning of the Creation of the earth and the accomplishment of those plans.

# Abraham 1

## Introduction

While living in Ur, Abraham sought the blessings of the priesthood and desired to be a greater follower of righteousness. However, his fathers had turned from righteousness to the worship of false gods. Wicked priests attempted to sacrifice Abraham to their false gods, but Jehovah (Jesus Christ) miraculously delivered him. After recounting the story of his deliverance, Abraham explained the origins of the ancient government of Egypt. He also explained that he had been entrusted by the Lord to preserve the sacred records of the righteous.

*Note:* On July 5, 1835, Joseph Smith wrote of the coming forth of the book of Abraham and the importance of these ancient Egyptian writings: "I commenced the translation of some of the characters or hieroglyphics, and much to our joy found that one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham. . . . Truly we can say, the

Lord is beginning to reveal the abundance of peace and truth' (*History of the Church*, 2:236)" (*The Pearl of Great Price Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2000], 28). Some have wondered how the Prophet translated the ancient writings. "The Prophet Joseph Smith never communicated his method of translating these records. As with all other scriptures, a testimony of the truthfulness of these writings is primarily a matter of faith. The greatest evidence of the truthfulness of the book of Abraham is not found in an analysis of physical evidence nor historical background, but in prayerful consideration of its content and power" (*The Pearl of Great Price Student Manual*, 28). Although we do not know the exact method Joseph Smith used to translate the writings of Abraham, we do know that he translated them by the gift and power of God.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Abraham 1:1–20

#### *Abraham seeks righteousness and is persecuted by false priests*

Invite students to imagine that they have a friend who is a member of the Church who has a difficult home life where the Lord's commandments are taken lightly and there is no support to keep them. She wants to receive all the blessings that come from living the gospel, but some of her family members make it difficult for her. In fact, they often ridicule her and discourage her from living her beliefs.

- What would you tell your friend that could help her remain faithful? Can she hope to obtain her desires despite her circumstances? Why?

The situation of this young woman could be likened to that of a man named Abraham, who was born about 300 years after the Flood. Invite students to read Abraham 1:1–2 silently, looking for the spiritual blessings Abraham desired and sought to obtain. (As students read, write the phrase *Desire and Seek* on the board.) After sufficient time, point out the phrase "having been myself a follower of righteousness" in verse 2, and ask the following questions:

- Even though Abraham was already a follower of righteousness, what spiritual blessings did he desire and seek to obtain? (Write students' responses on the board under "Desire and Seek.")
- According to verse 2, why did Abraham desire these things and seek to obtain them?
- What are some synonyms for the word *desire*?

To help students understand what it means to desire something, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"*Desire* denotes a real longing or craving. . . .

". . . What we insistently desire, over time, is what we will eventually become and what we will receive in eternity" ("According to the Desire of [Our] Hearts," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 21).

- What do you think it means to desire "to be a greater follower of righteousness"?

Point to the word "Seek" on the board.

- What are some synonyms for the word *seek*?

To help students understand what it means to seek, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The word *seek* means to go in search of, try to discover, try to acquire. It requires an active, assertive approach to life. . . . It is the opposite of passively waiting for something good to come to us, with no effort on our part” (“Seeking the Good,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 86).

Invite a student to read Abraham 1:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened to Abraham because he desired and sought for the blessings of the gospel. Ask students to report what they find.

Make sure students understand that Abraham received what he sought and that the blessings of the priesthood were conferred upon him.

- Based on what God did for Abraham, what do you think God will do for us if we seek for righteousness? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we seek for righteousness, God will bless us according to our desires.**)

Remind students of the scenario you presented at the beginning of class, and ask the following question:

- How might the principle on the board help your friend remain faithful even though her family members make it difficult for her to live the gospel?

Explain that even though Abraham sought after righteousness in his life, he lived in circumstances that made it difficult to obtain his righteous desires. Ask a student to read Abraham 1:5–7 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and identify the difficult circumstances Abraham faced.

- What difficult circumstances did Abraham face?
- According to verses 5 and 7, what did Abraham do even though he lived in difficult circumstances? (He tried to teach his family the gospel.)

Invite a student to read Abraham 1:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify other difficult circumstances that existed for Abraham and other righteous people in Chaldea.

- What difficult circumstances existed in the land of Chaldea?
- According to verse 11, why were the three daughters of Onitah sacrificed?
- Based on the examples of Abraham and the three daughters of Onitah, what can we choose to do regardless of the circumstances in which we live? (Students may give a variety of answers. As they respond, help them identify the following principle: **We can choose righteousness regardless of the circumstances in which we live.**)
- How might believing this principle help your friend continue to live the gospel even though it is difficult for her to do so?

Invite students to think of a time when they or someone they know made righteous choices while they were in difficult circumstances. Ask a few students to share their experiences.

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith:



“We all know something of the courage it takes for one to stand in opposition to united custom, and general belief. None of us likes to be ridiculed. Few are able to withstand popular opinion even when they know it is wrong, and it is difficult to comprehend the magnificent courage displayed by Abraham in his profound obedience to Jehovah, in the midst of his surroundings. His moral courage, his implicit faith in God, his boldness in raising his voice in opposition to the prevailing wickedness, is almost beyond comparison (*The Way to Perfection* [1953], 86)” (*Pearl of Great Price Student Manual*, 30).

Invite students to set a goal to make righteous choices regardless of the circumstances they may be in. Testify that God will bless them as they make those righteous choices.

Invite students to look at “A Facsimile from the Book of Abraham, No. 1,” which is located at the beginning of the book of Abraham. Summarize Abraham 1:12–14 by explaining that this depiction represents Abraham on the altar and the false priest preparing to sacrifice him. The depiction also contains images of the many false gods the people worshipped at that time.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Abraham 1:15–17. Ask the class to look for what happened to Abraham after he was placed on the altar.

#### Invite students to share

Sharing insights and relevant experiences can help clarify a student’s understanding of gospel doctrines and principles. As students share insights and experiences, they are often led by the Holy Ghost to a deeper testimony of the very things they are expressing. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, their words and experiences can also have significant impact on the hearts and minds of their peers.

 To illustrate the events in Abraham 1:15–17, you may want to show the video “Deliverance of Abraham” (1:31). This video can be found on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* or on LDS.org.

- What happened to Abraham?
- What did Jehovah say to Abraham?

You may want to point out that the three daughters of Onitah set a courageous example for Abraham to follow when they refused to bow down to false gods. These virtuous young women were willing to die rather than deny what they believed or yield to bowing down before idols. Abraham followed their example of virtue and bravery, and he was willing to accept the same fate.

Ask students to read Abraham 1:18–19 silently, looking for the promises Jehovah gave to Abraham. You may want to suggest that they mark what they find.

Invite a student to read Abraham 1:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord did after He delivered Abraham from the wicked priests. Ask students to report what they find. You may want to point out that the Lord also sent a famine into the land (see Abraham 1:29–30).

### Abraham 1:21–27

#### *The origins of the government of Egypt are explained*

Summarize Abraham 1:21–24 by explaining that after the Flood, a woman named Egyptus, who was Noah’s granddaughter through Ham, settled in a land with her sons. The land became known as the land of Egypt, and Egyptus’s oldest son, Pharaoh, established the first government (subsequent leaders of Egypt were also called Pharaoh). Ask a student to read Abraham 1:25–27 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for how Pharaoh tried to set up his kingdom.

- What did Pharaoh try to imitate? (Even though Pharaoh did not have “the right of priesthood,” he tried to imitate the same “[priesthood] order established by the fathers.”)
- According to verse 27, what did trying to imitate the priesthood eventually lead to?

You may want to explain that *idolatry* refers to worshipping idols, false gods, and images of any kind.

### Abraham 1:28–31

#### *Abraham is entrusted as a record keeper*

- What does it mean to preserve something? (To keep something in good condition or ensure its continued existence; to protect something from harm or loss.)

Ask students how someone might preserve a letter or a photograph. You may wish to show students a letter or photograph you have preserved.

Invite a student to read Abraham 1:28 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord charged Abraham to preserve. (You may need to explain that the word *delineate* means to describe in detail.) Ask them to report what they find.

Invite another student to read Abraham 1:31 aloud. Ask students to identify what these preserved records contained.

- What was preserved in the records Abraham kept? (Information about the right of the priesthood and knowledge of the beginning of creation, the planets, and the stars.)
- How might Abraham’s posterity benefit from knowing about these truths?

Invite students to share something they learned from today’s lesson. You might also invite them to testify of the principles you discussed as you studied Abraham 1.

## LESSON 20

# Abraham 2; Genesis 12

### Introduction

Abraham and his family experienced a famine in Ur. The Lord led him, his wife Sarai, and others toward the land of Canaan. They stopped for a time in Haran, where the Lord appeared to Abraham and explained the covenant

He would make with Abraham (later known as the Abrahamic covenant). Abraham then traveled through Canaan to Egypt.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Abraham 2:1–11

#### *The Lord begins to explain the covenant He will make with Abraham*

Write the following question on the board: *Who are you?*

Invite students to explain different ways they could answer this question. Then, if possible, provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask a student to read the statement aloud while the class follows along, pondering how they would fill in the blanks.

“You may enjoy music, athletics, or be mechanically inclined, and someday you may work in a trade or a profession or in the arts. As important as such activities and occupations can be, they do not define who we are. First and foremost, we are spiritual beings. We are sons [and daughters] of \_\_\_\_\_ and the seed of \_\_\_\_\_” (“Becoming a Missionary,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 47).

After students have explained how they would fill in the blanks, invite them to write *God* in the first blank and *Abraham* in the second. Explain that the “seed” of Abraham refers to his posterity or descendants.

- Of all of the ways Elder Bednar could have described you, why do you think he identified you as the “seed of Abraham”?

Invite students to consider as they study Abraham 2 why it is important to know that they are the seed of Abraham.

Summarize Abraham 2:1–5 by explaining that Abraham married Sarai and then the Lord led them and members of Abraham’s extended family, including his nephew Lot, out of Ur and toward the land of Canaan. The travelers stopped for a time in a land they named Haran. (You might invite students to locate Ur, Haran, and the land of Canaan on map 9 of the Bible Maps [“The World of the Old Testament”].)

Invite a student to read Abraham 2:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along in their scriptures and look for what happened to Abraham in Haran. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord want Abraham to be?
- What did the Lord promise to give Abraham and his seed? (A certain land as an “everlasting possession.” You may want to explain that He was referring to the land of Canaan.)
- What did Abraham’s posterity need to do in order to receive the land?

Explain that the Lord’s promise recorded in verse 6 is part of what is known as the Abrahamic covenant. The Abrahamic covenant refers to all of the covenants and promises God offered to Abraham and his seed.

Draw the following chart on the board:

The Abrahamic Covenant	
Responsibilities	Blessings

Invite students to copy this chart in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Explain that in this and future lessons they will be adding information to this chart that will help them understand the Abrahamic covenant.

Ask students to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals the responsibilities and blessings they found in verse 6. (Responsibilities they identify might include: *Be a minister of Jesus Christ; hearken to the Lord's voice*. One blessing they might identify is: *Receive land for an everlasting possession*. Add these to the board.) Explain that the phrase “everlasting possession” means that the promise of land extends to eternity. The lands of the earth will eventually become part of the celestial kingdom, which the obedient will inherit (see D&C 88:17–20). Invite students to write *celestial kingdom* on their lists in parentheses next to “everlasting possession.”

Ask students to read Abraham 2:7–8 with a partner, searching for indications that the Lord can and will keep His promises to Abraham and Abraham’s seed. Invite students to report what they discover.

Invite a student to read Abraham 2:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord says He will make of Abraham.

- What did the Lord promise would come from Abraham? (From Abraham would come “a great nation.” Add this blessing to the board, and invite students to add it to their lists.)

Explain that the promise of children was one Abraham and Sarai greatly desired. Shortly after He gave this promise, the Lord described how numerous Abraham’s posterity would be. You may want to suggest that students write *Abraham 3:14* in their scriptures next to Abraham 2:9. Invite a student to read Abraham 3:14 aloud, and ask the class to look for how numerous Abraham’s posterity would be. Invite students to report what they find. Write *innumerable posterity* on the board, and invite students to add it to their lists. Explain that the promise of innumerable posterity is also a promise of godhood, which includes receiving eternal posterity (see D&C 132:19).

Ask a student to read Abraham 2:10 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and identify who will be “accounted” as Abraham’s seed.

- According to verse 10, who will be called after the name of Abraham? (Those who receive the gospel of Jesus Christ.)

Ask a student to read Abraham 2:9, 11 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for responsibilities or blessings promised to Abraham and his seed.

- How would you summarize what we are to do for others as the seed of Abraham? (We are to minister to all the families of the earth with the blessings of the gospel. Ask students if they think this is a blessing or a responsibility. Invite them to explain their answers.)

After students respond, write the following principle in the chart on the board under both headings: **As the seed of Abraham, we have a responsibility to minister to and bless all the families of the earth with the blessings of the gospel.**

To help students understand their responsibilities as the seed of Abraham, invite them to imagine that their country has been exposed to a fatal disease and everyone would soon die without a particular medicine. Their family alone not only has the needed medicine, but they have enough to cure everyone who is sick.

- What would you want your family to do with the medicine?
- What might you say to a family member who felt too busy or nervous to help distribute the medicine?
- How might our need to assist others in this situation be like our responsibility as the seed of Abraham?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bednar:

“Truly, great responsibility rests upon the seed of Abraham in these latter days. . . .

“ . . . We are here upon the earth at this time to magnify the priesthood and to preach the gospel. That is who we are, and that is why we are here” (“Becoming a Missionary,” 47).

- In addition to serving as full-time missionaries, how else can we bless the families of the earth? What can we do to bless our own families and the families of our friends and neighbors?

Point out that the crowning blessings of salvation and eternal life identified in Abraham 2:11 are to be had only through receiving and keeping the ordinances and covenants of the temple. Invite students to ponder and then record in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their answer to the following question. You may want to write the question on the board.

- How do you feel about being numbered among the seed of Abraham?

## Abraham 2:12–21

### *Abraham journeys through the promised land of Canaan*

Write the word *Earnestly* on the board. Ask students to explain what they think it means to do something earnestly. If needed, explain that the word *earnest* means sincere, serious, or intense. To illustrate the difference between doing something earnestly and doing it casually, you might invite two students to perform a task in front of the class. Instruct one of them to do the task earnestly and the other to do the task casually or halfheartedly. Ask the class to explain what the students did that showed earnestness or halfheartedness.

Invite a student to read Abraham 2:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the conclusions Abraham drew from his experience with the Lord.

- What conclusions did Abraham draw from his experience with the Lord? (Because Abraham had sought the Lord earnestly, he had found Him. Abraham also decided that he would do well to hearken to the Lord's voice.)
- According to Abraham 1–2, how did Abraham seek the Lord earnestly?
- What can we learn from Abraham's earnest seeking of the Lord (see Abraham 2:12)? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we seek the Lord earnestly, we will find Him.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)
- What are some examples of how we can earnestly seek the Lord?
- What do you think it means that we will find Him?

Invite students who feel comfortable doing so to share an experience of when they have earnestly sought the Lord and how they found Him.

Invite students to set a goal to more earnestly seek the Lord in their daily lives. You may want to testify that as they do so, they will find Him.

Summarize Abraham 2:14–21 by explaining that Abraham and his family traveled south from Haran to the land of Canaan. There Abraham offered sacrifice, and the Lord declared that this land of Canaan was to be the land promised in the Abrahamic covenant. Then, because of a famine in the land, Abraham decided to travel to Egypt.

## Abraham 2:22–25; Genesis 12:14–20

### *The Lord warns Abraham about the Egyptians*

Summarize Abraham 2:22–25 and Genesis 12:14–20 by explaining that before Abraham entered Egypt, the Lord warned him that the Egyptians would see how beautiful Sarai was and would kill Abraham so they could take her. Therefore, the Lord instructed Sarai to say that she was Abraham's sister to save Abraham's life and to protect herself. Both Sarai and Abraham acted in faith, believing that God would deliver them. Sarai was taken into Pharaoh's house, and Abraham was given riches. The Lord sent a plague to Pharaoh and his house, and Pharaoh realized that Sarai was being protected by God and that she was married to Abraham. Pharaoh then sent Abraham and Sarai away.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the doctrines and principles discussed today.

#### *Ask questions that invite feelings and testimony*

Once students understand a doctrine or principle they have learned, ask questions that cause them to reflect on past spiritual experiences related to that doctrine or principle. These questions can lead students to feel more deeply the truthfulness and significance of that gospel truth in their lives. Many times, those feelings will engender in their hearts a stronger desire to live the doctrine or principle more faithfully.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Moses 8; Genesis 6–12; Abraham 1–2 (Unit 4)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Moses 8, Genesis 6–12, and Abraham 1–2 (unit 4) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Moses 8)

As students studied about Noah and his day, they learned that if we do not hearken to the Lord's invitations to repent, we will suffer the consequences of continuing in our sins. Students also discovered that if we act in faith by obeying the Lord's commands, we can receive His blessings and protection.

#### Day 2 (Genesis 6–9)

As students studied the effects of the Flood on the earth, they learned the importance of following the Lord's commands so that we can receive His protection and blessings. Learning about the rainbow that appeared after this significant event helped students understand that God uses tokens as reminders of covenants.

#### Day 3 (Genesis 10–11; Abraham 1:1–4)

In studying about the Tower of Babel, students learned that if we choose to turn away from God, we bring consequences upon ourselves and others. Students were also introduced to the prophet Abraham and learned that if we seek for righteousness, God will bless us according to our desires.

#### Day 4 (Abraham 2; Genesis 12)

While studying Abraham's experiences, students learned that as the seed of Abraham, we have a responsibility to minister to and bless all the families of the earth with the blessings of the gospel. Students also discovered that if we seek the Lord earnestly, we will find Him.

### Introduction

Abraham and three virtuous young women refused to worship false gods and chose to honor God in all circumstances.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Abraham 1:5–20

##### *False priests attempt to take Abraham's life*

Invite students to imagine that they have a friend who is a member of the Church who has a difficult home life where the Lord's commandments are taken lightly and there is no support to keep them. She wants to receive all the blessings that come from living the gospel, but some of her family members make it difficult for her to live the gospel. In fact, they often ridicule her and discourage her from living her beliefs.

- What would you tell your friend that could help her remain faithful?

Explain that Abraham was in a situation similar to that of the young woman in the scenario you just described. Even though he sought after righteousness in his life, he lived in circumstances that made it difficult to obtain his righteous desires. Ask a student to read Abraham 1:5–7 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and identify the difficult circumstances Abraham faced.

- What difficult circumstances did Abraham face?
- According to verses 5 and 7, what did Abraham do even though he lived in difficult circumstances? (He tried to teach his family the gospel.)

Invite a student to read Abraham 1:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify other difficult circumstances that existed for Abraham and other righteous people in Chaldea.

- What difficult circumstances existed in the land of Chaldea?
- According to verse 11, why were the three daughters of Onitah sacrificed?

Explain that the examples of Abraham and the three daughters of Onitah show us that **we can choose righteousness regardless of the circumstances in which we live**. Write this principle on the board.

- What are some circumstances in which a young man or young woman may benefit from remembering this principle?
- How might believing this principle help your friend continue to live the gospel even though it is difficult for her to do so?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith:

“We all know something of the courage it takes for one to stand in opposition to united custom, and general belief. None of us likes to be ridiculed. Few are able to withstand popular opinion even when they know it is wrong, and it is difficult to comprehend the magnificent courage displayed by Abraham in his profound obedience to Jehovah, in the midst of his surroundings. His moral courage, his implicit faith in God, his boldness in raising his voice in opposition to the prevailing wickedness, is almost beyond comparison (*The Way to Perfection* [1953], 86)” (in *The Pearl of Great Price Student Manual* [Church Educational System manual, 2000], 30).

- When have you or someone you know made righteous choices while in difficult circumstances?

Invite students to set a goal to make righteous choices regardless of the circumstances they may be in. Testify that God will bless them as they make those righteous choices.

Invite students to look at “A Facsimile from the Book of Abraham, No. 1,” which is located at the beginning of the book of Abraham. Summarize Abraham 1:12–14 by explaining that this depiction represents Abraham on the altar and the false priest preparing to sacrifice him. The depiction also contains images of the many false gods the people worshipped at that time.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Abraham 1:15–17. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Abraham after he was placed on the altar.

 To illustrate the events in Abraham 1:15–17, you may want to show the video “Deliverance of Abraham” (1:31). This video can be found on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* or on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org).

- What happened to Abraham?
- What did Jehovah say to Abraham?

You may want to point out that the three daughters of Onitah set a courageous example for Abraham when they refused to bow down to false gods. These virtuous young women were willing to die rather than deny what they believed or yield to bowing down before idols. Abraham followed their example of virtue and bravery and was willing to accept the same fate.

Ask students to read Abraham 1:18–19 silently, looking for the promises Jehovah (Jesus Christ) gave to Abraham. You may want to suggest that they mark what they find.

- How do these promises apply to you?

Invite a student to read Abraham 1:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord did after He delivered Abraham from the wicked priests. Ask students to report what they find. You may want to point out that the Lord also sent a famine into the land (see Abraham 1:29–30).

## Abraham 1:21–31

*Abraham explains the origins of the government of Egypt and his role as record keeper*

Summarize Abraham 1:21–27 by explaining that after the Flood a woman named Egyptus, who was Noah’s granddaughter through Ham, settled in a land with her sons. They named the land Egypt, and Egyptus’s oldest son, Pharaoh, was appointed the first king of Egypt (subsequent leaders of Egypt were also called Pharaoh). The first Pharaoh, and subsequent Pharaohs, did not have the right of priesthood. The Egyptian leaders tried to imitate the priesthood, which eventually led to idolatry. Explain that *idolatry* means worshipping idols, false gods, and images of any kind. In short, idolatry is to love a man-made creation of any kind more than loving God.

Show students something that you have tried to preserve or keep safe. You could display a letter or a photograph as an example.

- What does it mean to preserve something? (To keep something in good condition or ensure its continued existence; to protect something from harm or loss.)

Invite a student to read Abraham 1:28 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord charged Abraham to preserve. Ask them to report what they find.

Invite another student to read Abraham 1:31 aloud. Ask students to follow along and identify what these preserved records contained.

- What was preserved in the records Abraham kept? (Information about the right of the priesthood and knowledge of the beginning of creation, the planets, and the stars.)
- Why did Abraham choose to write some of these things in his record?
- What contents of Abraham’s record that you studied this week were of benefit to you?

Encourage students to continue to diligently study the words recorded by Abraham so they can continue to benefit from them.

## Next Unit (Abraham 3; Genesis 13–18)

As students prepare to study Abraham 3 and Genesis 13–18, encourage them to consider the following: Why did Abraham marry Hagar as a plural wife? How did this action show Sarah’s faith? When the men of Sodom sought to commit immoral acts upon Lot’s visitors and daughters, what did the holy men do to the wicked Sodomites? Sodom was known for the sin of homosexual behavior. What happened to Sodom because they would not repent?

# Abraham 3

## Introduction

Before Abraham went to Egypt, the Lord spoke with him face to face and instructed him about the nature and order of the cosmos and the centrality of Jesus Christ in the plan of salvation. The Lord told Abraham to declare to the people in Egypt what he had learned.

The Lord also showed Abraham the Council in Heaven, which occurred before the world was created, including Heavenly Father's selection of Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the world.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Abraham 3:1–21

#### *The Lord teaches Abraham about the order of the stars*

Write the following incomplete statements on the board. Invite students to complete the first statement in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

*The world tells me I am great if . . .*

*Real qualities of greatness include . . .*

Invite a few students to tell the class how they completed the first statement.

Explain that Abraham 3 contains the account of the Lord teaching Abraham about the stars, which helped Abraham understand the greatness of Jesus Christ and the importance of each of God's children. Abraham received this revelation through the Urim and Thummim, an instrument given to seers to assist them in receiving revelation and translating languages. Invite students to look for what the Lord taught Abraham about true greatness as they study this revelation.

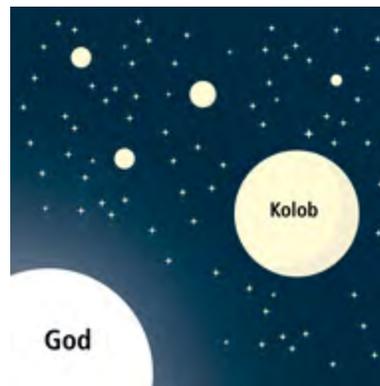
Invite a student to read Abraham 3:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abraham learned about the stars and planets. Invite students to report what they find. To help students visualize what Abraham saw, consider drawing or inviting a student to draw on the board a simple illustration of what students describe.

- Which star is nearest to the throne of God?
- According to verse 3, what phrase did the Lord use to describe Kolob? ("The great one.")

Summarize Abraham 3:4–17 by explaining that Abraham learned details about the planets and stars. For example, one day for Kolob is equivalent to 1,000 years on Earth (see verse 4). The Lord also showed Abraham His creations and promised Abraham that his posterity would be as numerous as the stars and sands. The Lord commanded Abraham to declare these truths in Egypt.

You may want to briefly explain that "A Facsimile from the Book of Abraham, No. 2" was part of a collection of Egyptian papyri purchased from an antiquities dealer by some of the Saints in Kirtland, Ohio. The facsimile contains symbolic figures relating to the planets and stars and the Lord's plan of salvation. Other than the explanations provided by the Prophet Joseph Smith, we have no additional revelation about the facsimile from modern prophets.

You may want to point out that God's instruction about the comparative differences in stars was also meant to teach Abraham about the greatness of Jesus Christ and the differences between Him and God's other spirit children. Invite a student to read Abraham 3:18–19, 21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abraham learned about the Lord Jesus Christ.



- How would you summarize what Abraham learned about Jesus Christ? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board: **Jesus Christ is the greatest and most intelligent of all Heavenly Father’s children.**)

Point out the word *intelligent* in verse 19. Explain that in the scriptures, the word *intelligent* often refers to the degree of light and truth an individual has received. We gain intelligence by obeying God’s commandments; thus, the more obedient we are, the greater our intelligence can be. (See D&C 93:28, 36.) Jesus Christ is nearest to and most like Heavenly Father because of the light and truth He has received through His perfect obedience.

- How can knowing that Jesus Christ is the most intelligent of all our Heavenly Father’s children help you exercise faith in Him?

## Abraham 3:22–28

### *The Lord shows Abraham the Council in Heaven*

Invite students to think about a time they learned or discovered something new about themselves. (For example, they may have discovered a new talent or an interest in a particular hobby.) Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Explain that Abraham 3:22–23 shows us that the Lord taught Abraham more about himself while showing him a vision of the Council in Heaven, which occurred before the earth was created. Invite a student to read these verses aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abraham learned about himself.

- Who did Abraham see gathered together in heaven?

Explain that in verse 22, the word *intelligences* refers to spirit children of God.

- What did Abraham learn about himself from this vision?
- What did Heavenly Father choose Abraham and other noble and great spirits to do on the earth? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father chose His noble and great children before they were born to become leaders in His kingdom on the earth.**)

To help students understand that they too were chosen or foreordained in the premortal life to fulfill certain responsibilities on the earth, invite a student to read the following statement from *True to the Faith*:

“In the premortal spirit world, God appointed certain spirits to fulfill specific missions during their mortal lives. This is called foreordination. . . .

“The doctrine of foreordination applies to all members of the Church, not just to the Savior and His prophets. Before the creation of the earth, faithful women were given certain responsibilities and faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood duties. Although you do not remember that time, you surely agreed to fulfill significant tasks in the service of your Father” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 69, 70).

- How can knowing you were chosen in the premortal life to “fulfill significant tasks in the service of your [Heavenly] Father” influence your choices and actions in mortality?
- What might prevent someone in mortality from fulfilling the tasks God foreordained or chose him or her to do?

Read the following incomplete statement aloud, and ask students how they would complete it: “The test of life is . . .”

Invite a student to read Abraham 3:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the test of life is. Before the student reads, you may want to explain that the word *prove* in this passage means to test.

- After reading Abraham 3:24–25, what would you say the test of life is? (After students respond, you may want to write the following truth on the board: **The test of life is to determine if we will do whatever God commands us.**)

Explain that this test began in our premortal life, or our “first estate.” The scriptures refer to our premortal choice to follow Heavenly Father’s plan as *keeping* our first estate. Invite a student to read Abraham 3:26 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for the blessing Heavenly Father planned to give to His spirit children who kept their first estate.



### Abraham

**3:22–23** is a scripture mastery passage.

Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- What blessing did Heavenly Father plan to give to those who kept their first estate? (They would be “added upon.”)
- What do you think it means to be “added upon”? (Students might mention that if we chose to follow Heavenly Father’s plan in the premortal life, then we were given the opportunity to progress to mortality and receive a physical body.)
- What were the consequences for spirits who chose not to keep their first estate? (They would neither receive a physical body nor have the opportunity to attain eternal glory.)
- What do you think it means to keep our second estate? (The second estate refers to the time between our mortal birth and the Final Judgment. To keep our second estate, we must accept and live the gospel of Jesus Christ, including obeying all that Heavenly Father commands us to do.)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we do all that Heavenly Father commands us to do, then . . .*

Refer students to verse 26, and ask them how they would complete the statement on the board based on this verse. Invite a student to write the rest of the principle on the board. They may use different words, but students should identify something similar to the following principle: **If we do all that Heavenly Father commands us to do, then we will have glory added upon us forever.**

- What do you think it means to have glory added upon us forever?

Read Abraham 3:27–28 aloud, and invite students to consider who the two spirits were who responded to Heavenly Father’s question concerning whom he should send.

- Who were the two spirits who responded to Heavenly Father’s question? (Jesus Christ was the first, and Lucifer [or Satan] was the second.)
- How did Lucifer react when Jesus Christ was chosen? (Lucifer was angry and rebelled against Heavenly Father’s plan. He also persuaded many of Heavenly Father’s children not to follow the Father’s plan.)

Because Satan and his followers did not keep their first estate, they lost the opportunity to receive physical bodies, experience mortal life, and progress toward eternal glory.

To conclude, invite students to complete the second sentence on the board from the beginning of class in their class notebooks or scripture study journals (“Real qualities of greatness include . . .”).

Invite a few students to explain to the class what they wrote. Testify that we can achieve real greatness as we draw closer to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ through obedience to Their commandments.

### Scripture Mastery—Abraham 3:22–23

To help students memorize Abraham 3:22–23, use this “one-word race” activity. Challenge the class to say one or both verses of Abraham 3:22–23, one word per student at a time. For example, if starting with verse 22, the first student would say the word *now*, the second student would say *the*, the third student would say *Lord*, and so forth until the class has completed the entire verse. Time the class, and give them multiple chances to achieve a target time or set a class record. As you repeat this activity, consider shifting the order of students so they have to say different words. After students have become familiar with the verses, invite the class to recite the passage aloud all together.

Remember that one key to memorization and scripture mastery is repetition. Consider ways to review this passage at the beginning or end of lessons over the next week or two.

## LESSON 22

# Genesis 13–14

### Introduction

Abram and his nephew Lot returned with their families from Egypt to the land of Canaan. When strife developed between Abram's and Lot's herdmen, Abram acted as a peacemaker between them. Abram and Lot parted ways, and Lot's family was captured by an invading army while living in Sodom. Abram rescued Lot and his family

from captivity and, upon returning home, received a blessing from the great high priest Melchizedek.

*Note:* Before class, place a small, inconspicuous length of thread on your clothing. You will refer to this thread later in the lesson.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 13:1–18

#### *Abram offers a peaceful solution to the strife between his herdmen and Lot's herdmen*

Display a delicious treat, and ask who wants it. Invite two students who express interest in the treat to come to the front of the class. Divide the treat into unequal portions, and allow them to decide who gets which piece.

- How could a situation like this cause conflict in a family?

Explain that in today's lesson, we will see how Abram responded when conflict and disagreement arose in his family. Invite students to look for principles from Abram's example that can help them avoid or resolve conflict in their relationships with their families and others. You may want to remind students that Abram is the prophet whose name was later changed to Abraham (see Genesis 17:5, 15).

Summarize Genesis 13:1–4 by explaining that Abram and Lot left Egypt with all their flocks and possessions and journeyed back to the land of Canaan, where they settled together.

Invite a student to read Genesis 13:5–7 aloud, and ask the class to look for a disagreement that arose when Abram and Lot arrived in Canaan.

- What was the disagreement? (The servants of Lot quarreled with the servants of Abram over land and water for their flocks and herds.)
- What do you think would be a good solution to this situation?

Invite a student to read Genesis 13:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abram suggested they do to resolve the problem.

- What did Abram suggest?
- What do Abram's actions teach us about being a peacemaker? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but you may want to emphasize the following: **Being a peacemaker may require us to place others' interests above our own.**)
- Who do you know that, like Abram, is good at putting others' interests above his or her own?

Invite a student to read Genesis 13:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to identify where Lot chose to dwell. Ask them to report what they find.

Point out that Lot chose to dwell in the more fertile, well-watered area known as the plain of Jordan.

Explain that after Lot chose where he would dwell, he and Abram took their families and parted ways. Invite a student to read Genesis 13:12–13, and ask students to look for what Lot did when he got to his new place of dwelling.

- What did Lot do when he arrived at his new dwelling place? (He "pitched his tent toward Sodom." You may want to explain that one meaning of the word *toward* is "by" or "near.")

Write the names *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* on the board, and ask the students what they know about these places. Explain that these two cities were located in the plain of Jordan and have become synonymous with evil and immorality because of the wickedness of their people.

Summarize Genesis 13:14–17 by explaining that after Lot departed with his family, the Lord promised Abram all the land that he could see as an inheritance for his posterity. Abram then traveled with his family to the land of Canaan. Invite students to read Genesis 13:18 silently, looking for what Abram did when he arrived at his new dwelling place.

- What did Abram do when he arrived in Hebron (in the land of Canaan)? (He built an altar to worship God.)
- What can we learn from Abram’s decision to build an altar when he arrived in Hebron?

### Genesis 14:1–12

#### *Lot is captured while living in Sodom*

Ask students to think about all the decisions they have had to make so far this week. Invite several students to name some of these decisions. Write their responses on the board.

- Which of these decisions would you say are important? Which would you categorize as small or insignificant?

After students respond, remind them of the choice that Lot made in Genesis 13:12. (He pitched his tent toward Sodom.)

- What do you think might have been some of the potential consequences of Lot’s decision to live near Sodom?

Summarize Genesis 14:1–10 by explaining that four local kings united their forces, attacked several cities (including Sodom and Gomorrah), and took their inhabitants captive.

Invite a student to read Genesis 14:11–12 aloud, and ask students to look for who was captured when Sodom was attacked and conquered.

- According to Genesis 14:12, where were Lot and his family living? (Point out that Lot and his family had gone from merely pitching his tent toward Sodom, as recorded in Genesis 13:12, to actually living in Sodom.)
- What does this account teach us about some of the decisions we make? (Students should identify a truth similar to the following: **Seemingly small choices can lead to large consequences.** In Lot’s case, his decision to pitch his tent toward Sodom led to serious consequences.)

Ask students to think about some seemingly small decisions they may face that could lead to serious consequences.

Testify that much like Lot’s decision regarding where to pitch his tent, the decisions we make on a daily basis can have enormous consequences.

### Genesis 14:13–24

#### *Abram rescues Lot and meets Melchizedek and the king of Sodom upon his return*

Summarize Genesis 14:13–16 by explaining that when Abram learned of Lot’s capture, he gathered and armed his servants and pursued the armies. He caught up with them, and during the ensuing battle, Abram and his allies freed the captives.

Invite a student to read Genesis 14:17–18 aloud, and ask the students to look for who came out to meet Abram. Invite students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Genesis 14:18–21 aloud, and ask the class to look for what each of these kings offered Abram. (Verse 17 in the Joseph Smith Translation adds that Melchizedek “brake bread and blest it; and he blest the wine, he being the priest of the most high God” [in Genesis 14:18, footnote *d*].)



Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote that this event “may well have . . . prefigured [the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper], some two thousand years before its formal institution among men . . . when Jesus and his apostolic witnesses celebrated the feast of the Passover during the week [of the Atonement and Crucifixion]” (*The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], 384).

- What did Melchizedek offer Abram? (A blessing.) Did he accept it? What did Abram give Melchizedek? (Tithes.)

- What did the king of Sodom offer Abram? (All the goods or spoils of the people of Sodom that had been taken by their enemies.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 14:22–23 aloud, and ask the class to look for Abram’s response to the king of Sodom.

- How would you summarize Abram’s response to the king of Sodom?

Ask the class if anyone has noticed anything about your clothing. Hold up the thread that you placed on your clothing before class, and ask the class if a little thread is really that big of a deal.

- Why do you think Abram would not accept even a “thread” (or small reward) from the king of Sodom?
- How might accepting a thread from the wicked king be like giving in to small temptations?

Ask students what lesson they learn from Abram’s interaction with the king of Sodom. (Students may use different words, but they should express the following principle: **Resisting evil influences, regardless of how small, helps us stay true to God and free from sin.**)

To help students better understand this principle, invite them to finish the following phrases:

Your friend says he or she is going to copy math homework from a friend only once. To resist evil influences, you should . . .

A family member chooses to watch an inappropriate television program or movie. To resist evil influences, you should . . .

Ask students to ponder what sins or temptations the adversary may be trying to convince them are not very serious. Invite them to set a goal for how they will resist and turn away from those sins or temptations.

## Genesis 14:25–40 (Joseph Smith Translation)

### *Melchizedek blesses Abram*

Ask students if they know why the Melchizedek Priesthood is called by that name. Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 107:2–3 aloud. Ask students to look for why the Melchizedek Priesthood is named for Melchizedek and what this priesthood was called before Melchizedek’s day.

Invite the class to look again at Genesis 14:18–20 and list everything we learn about Melchizedek from these verses. Write this information on the board. Point out that the biblical account doesn’t give us very much information about this “great high priest” (D&C 107:2).

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation gives us much more information about who Melchizedek was and what he did. Help students find Genesis 14:25–40 in the Joseph Smith Translation (in the appendix of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible), or prepare copies of this passage for each student.

Divide the class in half. Ask one side to read Genesis 14:25–31 in the Joseph Smith Translation and the other side to read Genesis 14:32–40 in the Joseph Smith Translation. You may want to suggest that they mark what their assigned verses teach about Melchizedek.

- Based on what you learned about Melchizedek, why do you think it is appropriate to call the priesthood after his name?

Explain that in addition to teaching more about the high priest Melchizedek, these verses also teach about the priesthood that was named after him. Invite a student to read aloud Genesis 14:30–31 in the Joseph Smith Translation, and ask students to listen for what the power of the priesthood can do. (You may have to explain that the phrase “ordained after this order” refers to those who have been ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood.)

- What does the Melchizedek Priesthood give worthy men the power to do? (Help students understand the following truth: **The Melchizedek Priesthood gives men the authority to act in God’s name.**)

As time allows, invite students to share how they have been blessed by a worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holder.

### *Ask questions and make invitations that encourage application*

Ultimately, the aim of gospel teaching is to help students apply the principles and doctrines found in the scriptures, become converted, and receive the blessings promised to those who are faithful and obedient. Questions that encourage application can play a vital role in helping students see how they can apply these principles in their current situations and consider how they can apply them in the future.

## LESSON 23

# Genesis 15–16

### Introduction

As Abram grew older, he was concerned about how God would fulfill the promises He had made regarding Abram's posterity. Abram conversed with the Lord in a vision, in which the Lord comforted him, reassuring him that all of the promises would be fulfilled. Sarai gave

her handmaid Hagar to Abram as a wife to raise up posterity to Abram. After Hagar conceived, a conflict arose between her and Sarai, during which Hagar received divine guidance.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Genesis 15:1–8; Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:9–12 (in the Bible appendix)

##### *Abram asks how the Lord will be able to fulfill His promises*

Ask students if they have ever been promised something but had to wait a long time before the promise was fulfilled.

- What thoughts went through your mind as time passed?
- Why is waiting sometimes difficult?

Remind students that earlier in Abram's life, the Lord had promised him that his posterity would be as numerous as the "dust of the earth" (Genesis 13:16). Abram had waited for many years and still did not have any children. Invite students to scan Genesis 15:1 and notice who spoke to Abram in a vision.

- Who spoke to Abram? What might you have asked the Lord if you had been in Abram's position?

Invite two students to come to the front of the class to read Genesis 15:1–6 aloud. Assign one student to read the verses in which the Lord is speaking (Genesis 15:1, 4–5), and assign the other to read the verses in which Abram is speaking or being described (Genesis 15:2–3, 6). Ask the students to read the verses in order, alternating parts. Invite half the class to listen for Abram's concern and the other half to listen for the Lord's response.

- What was Abram's concern? (That he was childless and therefore had no heir. To help students understand these verses, you might need to explain that Eliezer was the man in charge of Abram's house and that Abram wondered if Eliezer would become his heir.)
- What was the Lord's response? (Abram and Sarai would have their own child, and their posterity would be innumerable.)
- Why do you think Abram was able to believe the Lord despite his circumstances?

Abram also had a concern about the land that the Lord had promised to him and his posterity. Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation adds four verses to this account that show how the Lord addressed this concern. Ask students to turn to the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis 15:9–12 in the Bible appendix or Guide to the Scriptures.

Invite a student to read Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:9–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abram learned. (You may need to explain that the phrase "Son of Man" is a title for Jesus Christ.)

- According to this passage, the Lord told Abram that even if he were to die, God would be able to keep His promise. According to verse 11, why is this so?

Point out that Abram was reminded that he would live again after his mortal life was completed because of the Savior's Atonement and Resurrection. He was also reminded that God is able to keep His promises, whether in mortality or in the postmortal life.

- According to Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 15:12, what was Abram’s reaction when he understood this explanation and saw “the days of the Son of Man”? (“He believed in the Lord” and “was glad, and his soul found rest,” or peace.)

Consider inviting students to write a principle in their scriptures based on Abram’s experience. The following is one way students may express this principle: **When we believe that the Lord will fulfill His promises to us, whether in mortality or eternity, our souls can find peace.**

Ask students to think of any concerns or worries that they may have about their futures. Invite those who feel comfortable doing so to share some of their thoughts as you write them on the board. (Examples might include questions like the following: Will I find the right person to marry? Will I have children? Will I be able to serve a mission? What should I choose for my career?)

Invite students to ponder how the principle they have identified can help them have gladness and peace like Abram did.

### Genesis 15:9–21

#### *God covenants with Abram that His words will be fulfilled*

Explain that there are many ways by which people certify or show that they will keep a promise. Invite two students to the front of the class, and ask them to demonstrate how they might show that they would keep a promise with each other (for example, they could shake hands, sign their name to an agreement or contract, or do something similar).

Remind students that Abram asked the Lord how he would receive a land of inheritance. Explain that Genesis 15:9–18 contains the account of the Lord certifying in a unique way that He would keep His promises to Abram. God commanded Abram to take various animals, cut their carcasses into two pieces, and set them apart from each other. A “smoking furnace, and a burning lamp” representing the Lord’s presence then “passed between those pieces” (see verse 17). In ancient times, when such a covenant was made, the individual passing between the carcasses was essentially saying, “May I also be cut in two if I do not keep my part of this covenant.”

Invite a student to read aloud Genesis 15:18. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord promised Abram.

- What did the Lord promise Abram?
- Although Abram was assured that the Lord would fulfill His promises to him, what did Abram still not know? (He did not know *how* the promises of the Lord would be fulfilled.)
- What lesson can we learn from Abram’s experience? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **we can trust that the Lord will fulfill His promises even if we do not know how He will do so.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“This life is an experience in profound trust. . . . To trust means to obey willingly without knowing the end from the beginning (see Prov. 3:5–7). . . .

“To exercise faith is to trust that the Lord knows what He is doing with you and that He can accomplish it for your eternal good even though you cannot understand how He can possibly do it” (“Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- According to Elder Scott, how can we show the Lord that we trust Him?

Ask students to think about promises that the Lord has made to them (through patriarchal and other blessings, ordinances and covenants, the words of living prophets, or the scriptures).

Invite students to ponder the importance of obeying God’s commandments while they wait for the Lord’s promises to be fulfilled in their lives.

## Genesis 16:1–16

### *Sarai gives Hagar to Abram as his wife, and Hagar bears a son*

Invite students to write in their scripture study journals or class notebooks about a challenge they or their families have experienced. After sufficient time, ask a few students to share how they were able to get through that challenging time. Caution students not to share anything that might be too personal or private.

Encourage students as they study Genesis 16 to look for a principle that can help them when they face challenges in the future.

Summarize Genesis 16:1–3 by explaining that Sarai could not have any children, so she gave her handmaid Hagar to Abram as a plural wife. From latter-day revelation we understand that this was a commandment from God that Abram and Sarai obeyed (see D&C 132:34). In this way, Sarai could obtain children by her servant Hagar, thus fulfilling the Lord’s promise that Abram would have children.

Explain that at certain times in the history of the world, the Lord has commanded His people to practice plural marriage. Plural marriage was practiced by Abram and Sarai and by their grandson Jacob, and it was practiced for a time during the early days of the restored Church, beginning with Joseph Smith.

Explain that we read in Genesis 16:4–6 that Hagar conceived a child but began to feel jealousy and bitterness toward Sarai. Sarai responded by dealing “hardly” with Hagar, who fled into the wilderness.

- How would you feel if you had been in Sarai’s position? How would you feel if you had been in Hagar’s position?

Explain that while Hagar was in the wilderness, an angel appeared to her. Invite a student to read Genesis 16:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the angel told Hagar.

- What instructions did the angel give Hagar?
- According to Genesis 16:10, what promise did Hagar receive?

Explain that in the scriptures the names of people and places often have symbolic meanings. Divide the class in half and ask one half to read Genesis 16:11–12 and the other to read Genesis 16:13–14. Instruct each half to read their assigned verses and find the names contained in them. Ask students to report what they found. Invite students to use their footnotes to find the meanings of the names they discovered. For example, students should discover that the name *Ishmael* means “God hears” and the name *Beer-lahai-roi* means “the well of Him who liveth and seeth me.” (Note: Hagar and her son Ishmael are revered in the Islamic faith as ancestors of Muhammad, the founder of Islam. Muslims [followers of Islam] also honor Abraham as a prophet.)

- What can Hagar’s experience and the meanings of these names teach us about the Lord?

After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **The Lord hears and sees us in our trials and can help us through them.**

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:

“You are not alone on this journey. Your Heavenly Father knows you. Even when no one else hears you, He hears you. When you rejoice in righteousness, He rejoices with you. When you are beset with trial, He grieves with you” (“Your Wonderful Journey Home,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 127–28).

- How can knowing that Heavenly Father really does see and hear you help you deal with the challenges you face?

Consider inviting students to share their testimonies.

You might want to conclude by providing students with copies of President Uchtdorf’s statement and inviting them to consider giving their copy to someone they think might be having a challenging time and needs encouragement.

#### **Responding to difficult questions**

President Boyd K. Packer taught: “A teacher must expect to be confronted frequently with difficult questions. Often these are questions to which there is no satisfying or comforting answer. A teacher cannot know everything. The Lord has not yet revealed everything. And yet, to a teacher the questions will come, asking about everything. [A teacher] should have the humility to say, ‘I don’t know.’ Often that will be the only true answer” (*Teach Ye Diligently* [1975], 65; see also Alma 37:11).

## LESSON 24

# Genesis 17

### Introduction

The Lord had previously explained to Abram the covenant He would establish between them (see Genesis 12; Abraham 2), and He reassured Abram that the promised blessings would be his (see Genesis 15). In Genesis 17 we learn about further promises and responsibilities the Lord revealed pertaining to the Abrahamic covenant.

In connection with this covenant, the Lord changed Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah. Circumcision became a sign or token (a reminder) of the covenant between God and Abraham. The Lord also promised Abraham and Sarah that in their old age they would have a son, whom they were to name Isaac.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 17:1–8

#### *The Lord covenants with Abraham*

Before class begins, write the following questions on the board:

*What do you want to do when you are an adult?*

*What do you want to be when you are an adult?*

As you begin the lesson, ask students to discuss with a partner the difference between the two questions on the board. When they have finished, ask a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Invite a student to read Genesis 17:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord wanted Abram to *do* and *be*. Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think it means to “walk before” the Lord?
- What do you think it means to be perfect? (You may need to explain that the command to be perfect refers to becoming like Heavenly Father. This is an ongoing process that will extend beyond this life and can only be accomplished by drawing upon the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ through diligent efforts to live His gospel.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 17:2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord planned to do with Abram. Ask students to report what they find. You may want to suggest that they mark the phrase “I will make my covenant between me and thee.”

Invite students to open their class notebooks or scripture study journals to the page with the chart listing the responsibilities and blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. (They created this chart when they studied Abraham 2 and Genesis 12 in lesson 20). Ask students to use the list they created to review the responsibilities Abram had as part of the covenant. You may want to invite students to add the commandments from Genesis 17:1 (*walk before the Lord and be perfect*) to their list of responsibilities of the covenant. (You might also refer students to the entry “Abraham, covenant of” in the Bible Dictionary.)

Explain that as part of establishing His covenant with Abram, the Lord did something to remind Abram of the promised blessings. Invite a student to read Genesis 17:3–5 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord did.

- According to verse 5, what did the Lord do as a reminder of the covenant?

Explain that in Hebrew the name *Abram* means “exalted father” and *Abraham* means “father of a multitude” (see Bible Dictionary, “Abraham”). Both names represent what was possible for Abraham to become because of the covenant—an exalted being, like God. You may want to suggest that students write the meaning of these names in the margin of their scriptures.

Invite a student to read Genesis 17:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify promises the Lord confirmed upon Abraham that correspond to this new name. Invite them to share what they discovered.

Invite students to review the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant they listed on the chart in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

### *Follow the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning*

As you teach, emphasize the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, such as understanding the context and content of the scriptures; identifying, understanding, and feeling the truth and importance of gospel doctrines and principles; and applying doctrines and principles. These fundamentals are not methods to use but are outcomes to be achieved. They establish a pattern that teachers and students can follow to instill the gospel within their minds and hearts.

- As you look at the chart and consider the promises given to Abraham, what do you think the Lord was preparing him to become? (Through this covenant, the Lord was preparing Abraham to become like God, an exalted father with innumerable posterity.)

 To further emphasize that the Lord kept the covenant He made with Abraham and Sarah, you may want to show the video “Abraham” (00:58). This video can be found on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on LDS.org.

Invite a student to read Genesis 17:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who else the Lord is willing to establish the Abrahamic covenant with.

- According to verse 7, who else does the Lord say He will establish the Abrahamic covenant with? (Abraham’s seed, or posterity.)

You may want to explain that because of the scattering of Israel, most people in the world are likely the literal seed of Abraham. However, to help students understand what is required to receive the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, whether a person is a literal descendant of Abraham or not, invite a student to read the following from *True to the Faith*:

“To be counted as Abraham’s seed, an individual must obey the laws and ordinances of the gospel. Then the person can receive all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, even if he or she is not a literal descendant of Abraham” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 5).

Explain that this means we can receive the same spiritual blessings the Lord offered to Abraham.

- What would we need to do in order to receive the same blessings promised to Abraham? (We too must covenant with the Lord and take upon ourselves the same responsibilities as Abraham. This begins with baptism and includes each of the saving ordinances of the gospel.)

Write the following on the board: *As we \_\_\_\_\_, then we become heirs to the responsibilities and blessings given to Abraham.* Invite students to complete the principle. The following is one way students may phrase this principle: **As we make and keep covenants with the Lord, we become heirs to the responsibilities and blessings given to Abraham.**

To help students further understand this principle and how they can receive the promises given to Abraham, invite a student to read aloud the following prophetic explanations. (You may want to provide a copy for each student.)



Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles testified: “The ultimate blessings of the Abrahamic covenant are conferred in holy temples. These blessings allow us to come forth in the First Resurrection and inherit thrones, kingdoms, powers, principalities, and dominions, to our ‘exaltation and glory in all things’ (D&C 132:19)” (in “Special Witnesses of Christ,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Apr. 2001, 7).



Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “When he [or she] is married in the temple for time and for all eternity, each worthy member of the Church enters personally into the same covenant the Lord made with Abraham. This is the occasion when the promises of eternal increase are made, and it is then specified that those who keep the covenants made there shall be inheritors of all the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 508).

- What blessings will we inherit if we make and keep these sacred temple covenants? (You might give students a moment to consider the blessings they have listed in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.)

Explain that our making and keeping this covenant of exaltation can also bless our posterity. Invite a student to read Genesis 17:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord promised to do for Abraham and his seed. Encourage them to add any new promise they find to their charts.

- What did the Lord covenant to do for Abraham’s seed?
- What do you think it means that the Lord will be a God to Abraham’s posterity?

Testify that throughout the history of the Old Testament, it is evident that the Lord extended His arm of mercy to Abraham’s seed. Even when they strayed from the truth, the Lord made every attempt to bring them back, honoring the covenant He made with Abraham.

- In what ways can your decision to enter into covenants with the Lord bless your future children?

- In what ways have you seen the lives of children affected by their parents' making and keeping covenants? (You might want to share your own experience or an example here.)

Point to the questions on the board from the beginning of class, and ask:

- What does the Lord want you, as the seed of Abraham, to *do*?
- What does He want you to *be*?

Encourage students to keep the covenants they made at baptism and to look forward to making and keeping the other covenants available only in the temple.

### Genesis 17:9–14

#### *Circumcision is a token of the Abrahamic covenant*

Summarize Genesis 17:9–14 by explaining that as a token or reminder of the covenant God made with Abraham, He commanded that Abraham and all male members of his household be circumcised. This symbol would act as a reminder of the responsibilities and blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, which includes the promise of eternal increase, dedication to God, and separation from sin and the world. (See Bible Dictionary, "Circumcision.") The Joseph Smith Translation helps us understand that the people of Abraham's day had gone astray from God's ordinances and turned away from the proper performance of baptism, even participating in a form of infant baptism. Circumcision of a male child when he was eight days old was to be a reminder to parents that children need to be baptized when they are accountable at eight years of age. (See Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 17:3–7, 11–12 [in the Bible appendix]; see also Genesis 17:12). Circumcision as a token of the Abrahamic covenant was no longer required after Jesus Christ's mortal ministry (see Moroni 8:8).

### Genesis 17:15–27

#### *The Lord promised Abraham that Sarah would have a son and that he should be named Isaac*

Ask students to raise their hand if they have ever had a prayer answered in a way that was different from what they had expected.

Remind students that Abraham had desired and prayed for children. Because his wife, Sarai, was not able to have children, she gave her handmaid, Hagar, to Abraham to also be his wife and to bear him children. Hagar had a son named Ishmael. (See Genesis 16.)

Explain that Abraham may have considered Ishmael to be the answer to his prayers for children, but the Lord planned to fulfill His covenant with Abraham in an additional way. Invite a few students to take turns reading Genesis 17:15–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord further kept His covenant with Abraham.

- Notice how the Lord changed Sarai's name to Sarah as a part of the covenant. What did her new name mean? (See Genesis 17:15, footnote *a*.) What did the Lord reveal would happen to Sarah?
- What was Abraham's reaction? (You may need to explain that *laughed* means "rejoiced" [see Genesis 17:17, footnote *a*].)
- In what way might this revelation have surprised Abraham?
- Through whose lineage did the Lord reveal the covenant would be continued?
- What principle can we learn from Abraham and Sarah's experience about how the Lord will fulfill His promises? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **God will fulfill His promises, though it may not be in the way or at the time we might expect.** You may want to write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand and feel the truth and importance of this principle, invite them to ponder experiences they have had when the Lord has fulfilled a promise to them or answered a prayer in a way that was different from what they were expecting. After students have had time to reflect, invite a few to share their experiences with the class. You may also wish to share an experience of your own.

- How can experiences like these influence our trust in the Lord?

To conclude the lesson, invite students to review the elements of the Abrahamic covenant and share their feelings about it and its blessings. You may also want to share your feelings. Encourage students to choose one thing they can do to more fully live up to their covenants with God so they can receive His promised blessings.

#### *Invite students to participate*

Seek ways to appropriately invite all students to participate in class discussions. Some ways to do this include calling on students by name, rephrasing questions, listening carefully and asking follow-up questions, acknowledging students' responses positively, and not being afraid to give students time to reflect on a question and think of a response. Take care not to embarrass students by calling on them when they are not prepared to answer.

# Genesis 18

## Introduction

Three messengers from God visited Abraham on their way to the city of Sodom. They reiterated the promise that Sarah would have a son. They also revealed to Abraham that they had been sent by God to see that

Sodom and Gomorrah would be destroyed because of the wickedness of the cities' inhabitants. Abraham asked the Lord if He would spare Sodom if righteous people could be found there.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 18:1–15

*Messengers from God reiterate the promise that Abraham and Sarah will have a son*

Invite students to think about miraculous events they have read about in the scriptures. Ask several students to report which miraculous events they thought of. Write their responses on the board.

Then ask the following question:

- What makes these events miraculous?

Invite students to look for a promise about a miraculous event as they study Genesis 18.

Explain that while Abraham and Sarah were dwelling in the Plains of Mamre, three holy messengers visited Abraham. Invite a student to read Genesis 18:2–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Abraham treated these three messengers of the Lord. Ask them to report what they find.

To help students understand who these three messengers were, point out that Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 18:3 (in Genesis 18:3, footnote *a*) uses the phrase “My brethren” instead of “My Lord,” indicating that the Lord was not one of the three men. Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 18:23 (in Genesis 18:22, footnote *a*) clarifies that these three messengers were “holy men . . . sent forth after the order of God.” In the King James Version of the Bible, the word *angels*, which was used in reference to these men (see Genesis 19:1), was translated from the Hebrew word *malakhim*, which can also mean “messengers.” Although we do not know the identity of the three messengers, Abraham treated them as if they were presiding authorities of the Lord’s kingdom then on the earth, and their messages were directly from the Lord (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1965–73], 3:235; Sidney B. Sperry, “Abraham’s Three Visitors,” *Improvement Era*, Aug. 1931, 583, 585).

Summarize Genesis 18:6–8 by explaining that Abraham and Sarah quickly prepared a meal for the messengers. Invite a student to read Genesis 18:9–10 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the messengers announced would happen to Sarah. Ask students to report what they find. Remind them that although Sarah had hoped to have children, she was past childbearing age.

- If you were Sarah, what might you have thought and felt when you heard this news?

Invite students to read Genesis 18:11–12 silently and look for how Sarah reacted to this news. Ask them to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Genesis 18:13–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abraham and Sarah learned about the Lord. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What did Abraham and Sarah learn about the Lord? (Students may use different words, but they should identify one of the following truths: **Nothing is too hard for the Lord; the Lord is able to do all things.**)
- When have you seen evidence of this truth in your life or the life of someone you know?

Explain that even though the Lord is able to do all things, He blesses us “in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will” (D&C 88:68).

Testify of how you know the Lord is able to do all things. Encourage students to pray for the righteous desires of their hearts and to hope for and trust in the Lord's wisdom and timing.

### Genesis 18:16–33

#### *Abraham asks the Lord if Sodom can be spared if enough righteous people are found there*

Summarize Genesis 18:16–22 by explaining that because the Lord saw that Abraham would be faithful in keeping his covenants, He revealed to Abraham what He would do with Sodom and Gomorrah. Explain that while the Prophet Joseph Smith was working on his inspired translation of the Bible, he learned more about what the Lord planned to do with Sodom and why. Invite a student to read aloud the following excerpt from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. You may want to provide a copy for each student. (The ***bold-italic*** text represents material added by the Prophet; the crossed-out text represents material he removed.)

“And the ***angel of the*** Lord said ***unto Abraham, The Lord said unto us***, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, ***I will destroy them.***

“And I ***will send you, and ye shall*** go down now, and see ***that their iniquities are rewarded unto them.***

“~~And ye shall have all things done whether they have done~~ ***And ye shall have all things done*** ~~altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me.~~

“And if ~~ye do it not, I will know~~ ***ye do it not, it shall be upon your heads; for I will destroy them, and you shall know that I will do it, for it shall be before your eyes.***

“And the ***angels which were holy men, and were sent forth after the order of God,*** turned their faces from thence and went toward Sodom” (Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 18:19–23; bold, italics, and strikethrough added).

Invite a student to read Genesis 18:20 aloud. To help students discover what was included in the grievous sin being committed by people in Sodom and Gomorrah, invite them to silently read Genesis 19:5 and Jude 1:7. (If students have the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible, you might also want to draw their attention to Genesis 18:20, footnote *b*). After sufficient time, explain that these verses in Genesis 19 and Jude 1 help us understand that the grievous sin mentioned in Genesis 18:20 included homosexual behavior. This behavior was widely accepted and practiced among the inhabitants of Sodom and nearby cities (see Jude 1:7). The prophet Ezekiel spoke of additional sins that plagued the inhabitants of Sodom. He declared that they were full of pride and idleness and that although they had a “fulness of bread,” they rejected the poor and needy (see Ezekiel 16:49–50).

- Based on verse 20, how does the Lord view homosexual behavior? (As a “very grievous” sin. All violations of the law of chastity, or sexual sins, are very serious. Write the following truth on the board: **Homosexual behavior is a serious sin.**)

You may want to explain that from the beginning, and consistently throughout the scriptures, the Lord has condemned violations of the law of chastity, including homosexual behavior. Consider inviting students to read Romans 1:24–32.

*Note:* The topic of same-sex attraction requires great sensitivity. As your class discusses this issue, ensure that it is done with kindness, compassion, and civility.

Explain that in order to understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin, we must understand the doctrines behind the purposes of marriage and family in Heavenly Father's plan. To help students understand these doctrines, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (you may want to provide a copy for each student). Ask students to listen for doctrines that can help us understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin.

“We encourage all to bear in mind our Heavenly Father's purposes in creating the earth and providing for our mortal birth and experience here as His children. ‘God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth’ (Genesis 1:27–28). ‘Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh’ (Genesis 2:24). Marriage between a man and a woman was instituted by God and is central to His plan for His children and

#### **Helping students answer difficult questions**

Students will be asked difficult questions about the Church throughout their lives. Providing students with accurate information and helping them locate trustworthy sources can help them think about and explain challenging topics in a faithful manner. Allowing students to discuss and practice answering difficult questions in a faith-filled environment builds their confidence in having gospel conversations with others.

for the well-being of society. Strong families, guided by a loving mother and father, serve as the fundamental institution for nurturing children, instilling faith, and transmitting to future generations the moral strengths and values that are important to civilization and crucial to eternal salvation.

“Changes in the civil law do not, indeed cannot, change the moral law that God has established. God expects us to uphold and keep His commandments regardless of divergent opinions or trends in society. His law of chastity is clear: sexual relations are proper only between a man and a woman who are legally and lawfully wedded as husband and wife. We urge you to review and teach Church members the doctrine contained in ‘The Family: A Proclamation to the World.’

“Just as those who promote same-sex marriage are entitled to civility, the same is true for those who oppose it” (“Church Instructs Leaders on Same-Sex Marriage,” Jan. 10, 2014, mormonnewsroom.org).

- What are some doctrines that help us understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin?
- In what ways does homosexual behavior go against Heavenly Father’s plan?

Explain that those who experience same-sex attraction can enjoy all the blessings of the gospel as they keep the covenants they have made with God. As they choose to live the law of chastity, they can have pure and virtuous thoughts and avoid lusting. They can counsel with trusted family members and their bishops or branch presidents about how to remain sexually pure. Remind students that any member of the Church who breaks the law of chastity must repent, which includes confession to a bishop or branch president, who will lovingly help him or her obtain forgiveness from the Lord. The Lord loves all His children and wants them to repent and to be clean from sin.

Invite a student to read Genesis 18:22–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Abraham asked the Lord concerning Sodom.

- How did the Lord respond to Abraham’s questions?

Explain that Abraham continued to ask the Lord whether He would spare Sodom if any righteous people could be found there. Invite students to read Genesis 18:27–33 silently and look for the Lord’s responses to Abraham’s questions.

- How did the Lord respond to Abraham’s righteous concern for others?
- What principle about the Lord can we identify from His response to Abraham? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **The Lord listens to our righteous pleas for others.**)
- How can remembering and believing this principle help you when you have a family member or friend who needs help?
- When have you experienced the Lord answering your righteous prayers on behalf of others?

Encourage students to set a goal to pray for those people who they know need Heavenly Father’s help. Invite them to look for a fulfillment of Abraham’s requests to save the righteous as they study Genesis 19 in the next lesson.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Genesis 18. Same-sex attraction

For more information about the Church’s teachings regarding same-sex attraction and statements on same-sex marriage, visit the Newsroom or the Gospel Topics page

on LDS.org. Search for “same-sex attraction” or “same-sex marriage.” The following are a few suggested articles:

Church Instructs Leaders on Same-Sex Marriage

The Divine Institution of Marriage

Love One Another: A Discussion on Same-Sex Attraction

# Home-Study Lesson

## Abraham 3; Genesis 13–18 (Unit 5)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Abraham 3 and Genesis 13–18 (unit 5) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Abraham 3)

From the Lord's teachings to Abraham, students learned the following truths: Jesus Christ is the greatest and most intelligent of all Heavenly Father's children. Heavenly Father chose His noble and great children before they were born to become rulers and leaders upon the earth. If we do all that Heavenly Father commands us to do, then we will have glory added upon us forever.

#### Day 2 (Genesis 13–14)

As students studied a decision Abraham made, they learned that being a peacemaker may require us to place others' interests above our own. As they studied decisions that Lot made, they learned that seemingly small choices can lead to large consequences and that resisting evil influences, regardless of how small, helps us stay true to God and free from sin.

#### Day 3 (Genesis 15–16)

From God's assurances to Abraham that His promises would be fulfilled, students learned that when we believe that the Lord will fulfill His promises to us, whether in mortality or eternity, our souls can find peace. They also learned that we can trust that the Lord will fulfill His promises even if we do not know how He will do so. From Hagar's experience students learned that the Lord hears and sees us in our trials and can help us through them.

#### Day 4 (Genesis 17–18)

In this lesson students learned of Abraham entering into a covenant with the Lord. Students discovered that as we make and keep covenants with the Lord, we not only become heirs to the responsibilities of this covenant, but we also become recipients of the blessings promised to Abraham and his righteous posterity. While reading about the three holy messengers who visited Abraham and Sarah, students learned that nothing is too hard for the Lord.

### Introduction

This lesson addresses a sin that was prevalent among the people of Sodom and Gomorrah—homosexual behavior. Three messengers revealed to Abraham that they had been sent by God to ensure that Sodom and Gomorrah would be destroyed because of the wickedness of the cities' inhabitants. Abraham asked the Lord if He would spare Sodom if righteous people could be found there.

### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* This week students studied the scripture mastery passage in Abraham 3:22–23 and memorized a portion of it. As class begins, you may want to review or recite the passage with them and ask them to explain its meaning.

#### Genesis 18:16–33

*Abraham asks the Lord if Sodom could be spared if enough righteous people could be found there*

Ask students how they might react if they were told that a neighboring city (perhaps one where they had relatives) was going to be destroyed.

Remind students that three messengers from the Lord visited Abraham and revealed that the Lord planned to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Invite a student to read Genesis 18:20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Lord planned to destroy these cities. Then ask them to report what they find.

If students have the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible, invite them to look at Genesis 18:20, footnote *b*, to discover what was included among the grievous sins being committed by the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. If students do not have the LDS edition of the King James Bible, explain that the grievous sin mentioned in verse 20 included homosexual behavior. This behavior stemmed from pride and was widely accepted and practiced among the inhabitants of Sodom, Gomorrah, and nearby cities (see Ezekiel 16:49–50; Jude 1:7; note Jude 1:7, footnote *c*).

- Based on Genesis 18:20, how does the Lord view homosexual behavior? (As a "very grievous" sin. Explain that all violations of the law of chastity, or sexual sins, are very serious. Consider writing the following truth on the board: **Homosexual behavior is a serious sin.**)

You may want to explain that from the beginning, and consistently throughout the scriptures, the Lord has condemned violations of the law of chastity, including homosexual behavior. Consider inviting students to read Romans 1:24–32.

*Note:* The topic of same-sex attraction requires great sensitivity. As your class discusses this issue, ensure that it is done with kindness, compassion, and civility.

Explain that in order to understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin, we must understand the doctrines behind the purposes of marriage and family in Heavenly Father's plan. To help students understand these doctrines, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (you may want to provide a copy for each student). Ask students to listen for doctrines that can help us understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin.

"We encourage all to bear in mind our Heavenly Father's purposes in creating the earth and providing for our mortal birth and experience here as His children. 'God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth' (Genesis 1:27–28). 'Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh' (Genesis 2:24). Marriage between a man and a woman was instituted by God and is central to His plan for His children and for the well-being of society. Strong families, guided by a loving mother and father, serve as the fundamental institution for nurturing children, instilling faith, and transmitting to future generations the moral strengths and values that are important to civilization and crucial to eternal salvation.

"Changes in the civil law do not, indeed cannot, change the moral law that God has established. God expects us to uphold and keep His commandments regardless of divergent opinions or trends in society. His law of chastity is clear: sexual relations are proper only between a man and a woman who are legally and lawfully wedded as husband and wife. We urge you to review and teach Church members the doctrine contained in 'The Family: A Proclamation to the World.'

"Just as those who promote same-sex marriage are entitled to civility, the same is true for those who oppose it" ("Church Instructs Leaders on Same-Sex Marriage," Jan. 10, 2014, mormonnewsroom.org).

- What are some doctrines that help us understand why homosexual behavior is a serious sin?
- In what ways does homosexual behavior go against Heavenly Father's plan?

Explain that those who experience same-sex attraction can enjoy all the blessings of the gospel as they keep the covenants they have made with God. As they choose to live the law of chastity, they can have pure and virtuous thoughts and avoid lusting. They can counsel with trusted family members and their bishops or branch presidents about how to remain sexually pure. Remind

students that any member of the Church who breaks the law of chastity in any way must repent, which includes confession to a bishop or branch president, who will lovingly help him or her repent and obtain forgiveness from the Lord. The Lord loves all His children and wants them to repent and to be clean from sin.

Invite a student to read Genesis 18:22–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abraham asked the Lord concerning Sodom. Have students report what they find.

- Why do you think Abraham would ask the Lord whether He would destroy the righteous people along with the wicked? (Students may suggest that Abraham desired to minister and care for all people. He also knew that Lot and his family were living in Sodom.)
- How did the Lord answer Abraham's questions?

Explain that Abraham continued to ask the Lord whether He would spare Sodom if any righteous people could be found there. Invite students to read Genesis 18:27–33 silently, looking for the Lord's responses to Abraham's questions.

- How did the Lord respond to Abraham's righteous concern for others?
- What principle about the Lord can we identify from His response to Abraham? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **The Lord listens to our righteous pleas for others.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)
- How can remembering and believing this principle help you when you have a family member or friend who needs help?
- When have you experienced the Lord answering your righteous prayers on behalf of others?

Encourage students to set a goal to pray for those people who they know need Heavenly Father's help.

### Next Unit (Genesis 19–27)

Invite students to consider the following as they prepare to study Genesis 19–27: What happened to Lot's wife during the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? Why did God warn Abimelech in a dream and say, "Thou art but a dead man"? What did the angel say to Hagar after she went into the wilderness? Like Abraham, even after we enter into covenants with the Lord, we will still be tested and tried. As you study more about Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, consider how to increase your obedience to the Lord's commandments.

## LESSON 26

# Genesis 19

### Introduction

After three messengers of the Lord visited Abraham, they traveled to Sodom and insisted that Lot and his family leave before the city was destroyed. Lot's wife disobeyed counsel from God's servants and perished.

After the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, Lot's oldest daughter devised a wicked plan to preserve posterity for her father.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 19:1–29

#### *Holy messengers remove Lot's family from Sodom before God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah*

Write the following question on the board before class begins:

*Have you ever heard of someone who had something bad happen to them because they were in the wrong place or with people who were making inappropriate choices?*

Ask students to think about the question on the board as they study Genesis 19.

Remind students that three holy messengers had visited Abraham on their way to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and their wicked inhabitants. Invite students to read Genesis 19:1 silently and look for who these three messengers met when they arrived in Sodom. After students read, ask them to report what they have found. (The messengers met Lot, Abraham's nephew.) Explain that according to the Joseph Smith Translation (see Genesis 19:1, footnote *a*), there were three messengers, not two.

As a brief review, ask students to explain what they know about Lot and his family from their study of Genesis 13–14 and what they know about Sodom from Genesis 18.

Summarize Genesis 19:2–3 by explaining that Lot invited the three messengers to stay at his home for the night so they would not have to remain in the streets of Sodom. Invite students to ponder how they treat those whom the Lord sends to help us forsake sin and unrighteous influences.

Invite a student to read Genesis 19:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the men of Sodom did that evening.

- What did the men of Sodom request of Lot? (You might need to explain that the phrase “that we may know them” means they wanted to participate in sexual activities with Lot's visitors [see Genesis 19:5, footnote *a*; see also Genesis 4:1].)

Explain that Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 19:9–15 (in the Bible appendix) clarifies the events recorded in Genesis 19:8–10. Summarize Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 19:9–15 by explaining that the men of Sodom became angry with Lot when he refused their evil intentions toward his guests. The men of Sodom then threatened to take by force not only Lot's visitors (the holy men) but also his daughters for immoral purposes. When Lot tried to reason with the men of Sodom, they attempted to force their way into his house. The holy messengers miraculously protected Lot and his family by smiting the men with blindness (see Genesis 19:11).

- How do the actions of the men of Sodom help demonstrate the wickedness of the people in this city?

Invite a student to read Genesis 19:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the holy men instructed Lot to do with his family. Ask students to report what they find.

Ask a student to read Genesis 19:14–16 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for how Lot and his family responded to the instructions from the holy men.

- What evidence do you see in these verses that Lot and his family were reluctant to leave Sodom?

### *Help students fulfill their role in the learning process*

Spiritual learning requires effort and the exercise of agency by the learner. For many students, putting forth such effort to learn from the scriptures may seem unfamiliar and somewhat difficult. However, as you teach using the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, you will help students fulfill their role in gospel learning. As students actively fulfill their role in gospel learning, they open their hearts to the influence of the Holy Ghost.

Invite a student to read Genesis 19:17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify additional instructions the holy men gave to Lot and his family.

Invite a student to read Genesis 19:24–26 aloud, and ask the class to look for what happened as Lot was leaving Sodom with his wife and daughters. Ask students to report what they find.

To help the class understand why Lot's wife was turned into a "pillar of salt" (verse 26), invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"Apparently what was wrong with Lot's wife was that she wasn't just *looking* back; in her heart she wanted to *go* back. . . .

"It is possible that Lot's wife looked back with resentment toward the Lord for what He was asking her to leave behind" ("Remember Lot's Wife" [Brigham Young University devotional address, Jan. 13, 2009], 2; speeches.byu.edu).

- According to Elder Holland, what are some possible reasons why Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt?

Explain that it is also possible that Lot's wife may not have merely looked back but may have returned to Sodom (see Luke 17:28–32).

Point out that this account of Lot and his family leaving Sodom can be compared to our own experience of forsaking sin and evil influences.

- What principles can we learn from the example of Lot's wife about forsaking sin and evil influences? (Students' responses may vary. You may want to emphasize the following principle: **To forsake sin and evil influences, we must leave them entirely and not look back.**)
- What are some ways a person might be tempted to "look back" upon sins or evil influences that were previously a part of his or her life? Why is it dangerous to do so?
- What are some things a person can do to leave sins or evil influences entirely behind?

### Genesis 19:30–38

#### *Lot's daughters devise a wicked plan to ensure the continuation of Lot's posterity*

Summarize Genesis 19:30–38 by explaining that after Sodom, Gomorrah, and other cities were destroyed, Lot and his two daughters went to a nearby mountain to live in a cave. In an effort to preserve the seed of their father, the firstborn daughter proposed a wicked and deceptive plan to intoxicate their father and lie with him so they could each become pregnant (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 19:37 [in Genesis 19:31, footnote *a*]; see also Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 19:39 [in Genesis 19:35, footnote *a*]). As a result of this wickedness, each daughter had a son. The sons' descendants became the Moabite and Ammonite nations. There is no justification for Lot's daughters' choice to break the law of chastity.

Point out that the actions of Lot's daughters may provide another example of how the wickedness in Sodom had negatively influenced members of Lot's family. Although Lot was not a wicked man, his decision to bring his family to live among evil influences resulted in serious consequences.

- What are some consequences Lot and his family experienced for choosing to live in Sodom?
- How do you think life might have been different for Lot and his family if he had not chosen to associate with Sodom and the other wicked cities in the plains?
- What principles can we learn from Lot's decisions to place himself and his family close to unrighteous influences? (Students may identify principles such as the following: **If we choose to associate with unrighteous influences, then we may experience consequences we will regret. Our choices may affect not only ourselves but others as well.**)

Invite students to list on the board examples of unrighteous influences that some young people choose to associate with in our day. Then ask the following questions:

- What are some consequences that can come to us personally from associating with these unrighteous influences? What are some consequences that might affect others?

To help the class feel the truth and importance of the principles they have identified, invite a student to read aloud the following account by Bishop Gary E. Stevenson of the Presiding Bishopric:



“Some years ago, John was accepted at a prestigious Japanese university. . . .

“Soon after John’s arrival, word of a party to be held on the rooftop of a private residence spread among the foreign student population. That evening, John and two friends made their way to the advertised address.

“Following an elevator ride to the top floor of the building, John and his friends . . . began mingling with the others. As the night wore on, the atmosphere changed. The noise, music volume, and alcohol amplified, as did John’s uneasiness. Then suddenly someone began organizing the students into a large circle with the intent of sharing marijuana cigarettes. John grimaced and quickly informed his two friends that it was time to leave. Almost in ridicule, one of them replied, ‘John, this is easy—we’ll just stand in the circle, and when it is our turn, we’ll just pass it along rather than smoke it. That way we won’t have to embarrass ourselves in front of everyone by leaving.’ This sounded easy to John, but it did not sound right. He knew he had to announce his intention and act. In a moment he mustered his courage and told them that they could do as they wished, but he was leaving. One friend decided to stay and joined the circle; the other reluctantly followed John down the stairs to board the elevator. Much to their surprise, when the elevator doors opened, Japanese police officers poured out and hurried to ascend the stairs to the rooftop. John and his friend boarded the elevator and departed.

“When the police appeared at the top of the stairs, the students quickly threw the illegal drugs off the roof so they wouldn’t be caught. After securing the stairway, however, the officers lined up everyone on the roof and asked each student to extend both hands. The officers then walked down the line, carefully smelling each student’s thumbs and index fingers. All who had held the marijuana, whether they had smoked it or not, were presumed guilty, and there were huge consequences. Almost without exception, the students who had remained on the rooftop were expelled from their respective universities. . . .

“. . . As for John, the consequences in his life have been immeasurable. His time in Japan that year led him to a happy marriage and the subsequent birth of two sons. He has been a very successful businessman and recently became a professor at a Japanese university. Imagine how different his life would have been had he not had the courage to leave the party on that important evening in Japan. . . .

“. . . There will be times when you, like John, will have to demonstrate your righteous courage in plain view of your peers, the consequence of which may be ridicule and embarrassment. . . . Be courageous! Be strong!” (“Be Valiant in Courage, Strength, and Activity,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 51–52).

To conclude, invite students to testify of the principles they have discovered today. Share your testimony as well, and encourage students to entirely leave behind any sins or evil influences that may be influencing them.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

 **Genesis 19:30–38. Video presentation—“Leave the Party”**

Instead of having a student read Bishop Gary E. Stevenson’s account of the party, you could show the video

“Leave the Party” (6:26), which depicts the account. This video can be found on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org).

## LESSON 27

# Genesis 20–21

### Introduction

Following the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham and Sarah journeyed to the land of Gerar, where Sarah was taken from Abraham by Abimelech, king of Gerar. After learning that Sarah was Abraham's wife, Abimelech restored Sarah to Abraham and

allowed them to dwell in his land. In this land, Isaac was born in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham (see Genesis 17:19, 21). Hagar and her son, Ishmael, were sent away from Abraham's household into the wilderness but were not forsaken by the Lord.

### Using the curriculum

As you prepare each lesson, prayerfully review the scripture block along with your study of the curriculum. You may choose to use all or part of the curriculum suggestions for a scripture block, or you may adapt the suggested ideas according to the needs and circumstances of your class. As you do so, the Holy Ghost can help you adapt the lesson to the needs of your students.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Genesis 20:1–18

*Abimelech is blessed for obeying the Lord and honoring Abraham and Sarah*



Display (or draw on the board) pictures of a few common warning signs. For instance, you might display traffic signs or warning labels on food packaging. Ask students to explain the purpose of these signs. Invite them to think about a time when they received a warning. It might have been when they were little children and about to do something dangerous or when they were older and someone warned them about a choice they were making.

- Have you or someone you know ever received a warning from God when about to make a mistake? How was that warning given?

Explain that in Genesis 20 we read of the prophet Abraham and his wife Sarah journeying into a land named Gerar.

Invite a student to read Genesis 20:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when Abraham and Sarah arrived in Gerar.

- What happened to Sarah? What earlier experience of Abraham and Sarah is this similar to? (Pharaoh taking Sarah in Egypt [see Genesis 12:11–15; Abraham 2:22–25].)

Invite a student to read Genesis 20:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Abimelech's household as a result of taking Sarah. Ask students to report what they find. You may need to explain that "closed up all the wombs" means that the Lord caused that none of the women in Abimelech's household could bear children.

Explain that although Abimelech's household was immediately cursed because he had taken Sarah, the Lord warned him about his mistake and gave him an opportunity to avoid committing a great sin. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 20:3–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the warning the Lord gave to Abimelech. Invite students to report what they find.

- Why did Abimelech feel he was innocent of wrongdoing? (As students respond, it may be helpful to explain that in some ancient cultures it was an accepted practice for a king to take any woman of his choice to be his wife.)
- How was the warning Abimelech received an example of the Lord's mercy? (The Lord's warning kept him from committing a serious sin.)

As baptized members of the Church today, what are some ways the Lord warns us before we commit serious sin? (We can receive the whisperings and feelings that come from the Holy Ghost. We can also receive warnings from prophets, the scriptures, parents, teachers, advisors, and priesthood leaders.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for one way the Lord warns us.



“No member of this Church—and that means each of you—will ever make a serious mistake without first being warned by the promptings of the Holy Ghost. “Sometimes when you have made a mistake, you may have said afterward, ‘I knew I should not have done that. It did not feel right,’ or perhaps, ‘I knew I *should* have done that. I just did not have the courage to act!’ Those impressions are the Holy Ghost attempting to direct you toward good or warning you away from harm” (“How to Survive in Enemy Territory,” *New Era*, Apr. 2012, 3).

- When have you or someone you know been blessed by heeding a warning from the Holy Spirit or by heeding the counsel of the Lord through a priesthood leader?

Invite a student to read Genesis 20:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify what Abimelech did after receiving this warning from the Lord.

- What did Abimelech do after the Lord warned him? How quickly did Abimelech respond to the warning?
- How did Abimelech feel Abraham had treated him?

Invite another student to read Genesis 20:11–13 aloud, and ask the class to look for how Abraham explained his actions.

- What reasons did Abraham give for saying that Sarah was his sister? (After students respond, you may want to explain that Abraham was technically correct in stating that Sarah was his sister. After the death of Sarah’s father Haran [Abraham’s older brother], it is likely that Abraham’s father Terah took Sarah into his household and cared for her, and so she was, for all intents and purposes, the sister of Abraham.)

You may need to explain that in some ancient cultures if a king wanted to marry a woman and she was already married, the king might have her husband killed so he could take her as his own wife (see *Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 65–66). It appears that Abraham feared this might happen to him. Abraham may have also been relying on the instructions the Lord had given him when he was in a similar situation in Egypt (see Genesis 12:11–15; Abraham 2:22–25).

Invite a student to read Genesis 20:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abimelech did in addition to restoring Sarah to Abraham.

- In addition to restoring Sarah, what else did Abimelech give to Abraham?
- What are some things we can learn from Abimelech’s example about repentance and obedience? (When we recognize we have sinned or made a mistake, we should seek to fully and immediately correct it and make restitution, if possible.)

Read Genesis 20:17 and invite students to look for what happened to Abimelech and his family because he listened to and obeyed God’s warning. Ask students to report what they find.

- What can we learn from the account of Abimelech about what happens when we hearken to the Lord’s warnings? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we hearken to the Lord’s warnings, we can avoid sin and its consequences.**)

Invite students to think about how their obedience to the Lord’s promptings has blessed them. Invite them to ponder how quickly they respond when they receive warnings or promptings from the Lord.

## Genesis 21:1–8

### *Isaac is born in fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham and Sarah*

Ask students if anyone has ever promised them something, but it seemed unlikely that they would fulfill that promise.

#### **Help students understand the historical setting of the scriptures**

When students understand the context of the scripture text they are studying, they will be better able to understand the content as well. Context provides background information that clarifies and deepens understanding of the events, doctrines, and principles in the scripture text. For example, understanding the historical setting of a Bible passage can help students identify the doctrines and principles it contains.

- What promise had the Lord previously made to Abraham and Sarah that may have seemed unlikely to be fulfilled? (You may need to remind students that Abraham was almost 100 years old and Sarah was almost 90 years old when the Lord promised that Sarah would have a child [see Genesis 17:1, 15–19].)

Ask students to read Genesis 21:1–5 silently, looking for phrases that show that God kept His promise to Abraham and Sarah. Ask a few students to share what they found.

- What can we learn from this account about God’s promises? Write students’ responses on the board. (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **God always keeps His promises to the faithful according to His timetable.**)

To help students understand how this principle might relate to modern situations, read the following scenario aloud:

Your aunt has longed to marry a righteous priesthood holder and desires to raise a family of her own. Yet she is over 40 years old and has no prospects for marriage. She wonders if the Lord has forsaken her or forgotten her.

- How might you use the experience of Abraham and Sarah along with the principle on the board to comfort your aunt in this scenario?

Invite students to think of other types of situations in which knowledge of this principle could help someone.

- When have you or someone you know seen the Lord fulfill a promise that seemed unlikely to be fulfilled?
- How might knowing that God fulfills His promises to the faithful influence the choices you make?

Invite a student to read Genesis 21:6–8 aloud, and ask students to follow along, looking for how Sarah felt about the birth of Isaac. Ask students to report what they find. You may want to use footnote *a* in verse 6 to help explain that the word *laugh* in verse 6 also means to rejoice. In addition, the meaning of the name *Isaac* is “he laughs” or “he rejoices.”)

You may want to testify that God always keeps His promises to the faithful according to His timetable.

### Genesis 21:9–34

#### *Ishmael and Hagar are sent away into the wilderness*

Explain that Genesis 21 offers another example of God fulfilling His promises. Briefly summarize Genesis 21:9–11 by explaining that Sarah saw Hagar’s son Ishmael mocking, or persecuting, Isaac (see Galatians 4:28–30). Sarah told Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away into the wilderness, which grieved Abraham. While there are details of this story we do not possess, we do know that Sarah was a remarkable woman. However, she also possessed feelings and emotions like any human being and was protective of her covenant son, Isaac.

Invite a student to read Genesis 21:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Abraham to do. Ask students to report what they find.

- According to verse 13, what did the Lord promise Abraham about Ishmael?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 21:14–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional evidence that the Lord had not forsaken Hagar and Ishmael but was still mindful of them. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that Ishmael eventually became the principal ancestor of much of the Arab world in fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham (see Genesis 21:13).

- How do you think this account illustrates the principle that God always keeps His promises? (You may need to point out that God’s promises are sometimes kept in unforeseen and unlikely ways.)

Summarize Genesis 21:22–34 by explaining that Abraham and Abimelech continued to have positive dealings with each another.

As prompted by the Holy Ghost, you may want to share your testimony.

## LESSON 28

# Genesis 22

### Introduction

Abraham's faith in the Lord and His promises was tested when he was commanded to sacrifice his covenant son, Isaac. When Abraham proved his faithfulness, the Lord

spared Isaac and provided a substitute sacrifice. The Lord then confirmed the covenant He had previously made with Abraham.

## Suggestions for Teaching

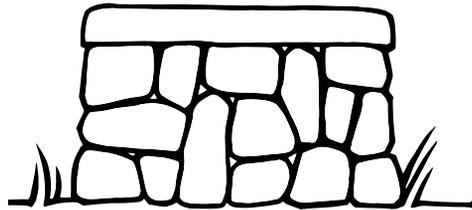
### Genesis 22:1–2

#### *Abraham is commanded to sacrifice Isaac*

Invite a student to read Genesis 22:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Abraham to do. Use footnote *a* in verse 1 to help students understand that the word *tempt* as used in verse 1 means “to test” or “to prove.” (You may need to explain that although Abraham had another son, Ishmael, Isaac was the only son born to Sarah and the son the Lord had promised to make His covenant with.)

- What did the Lord command Abraham to do? (To sacrifice Isaac as a burnt offering)

Draw a picture of an altar on the board. Remind students that after Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden, the Lord commanded them to offer as sacrifices the firstlings of their flocks. These sacrifices included killing a male, firstborn, unblemished animal with no broken bones, placing it on wood upon an altar, and then burning it, symbolically demonstrating to God a willingness to give Him everything.



- What words or phrases in verse 2 can help us understand how difficult this command must have been for Abraham?
- What promises had the Lord made to Abraham that would have made sacrificing his son an even more difficult trial of faith than it already was? (The Lord had promised that through Isaac, Abraham would become a father of many nations and that He would establish His covenant with Isaac [see Genesis 17:15–21].)

Point out that in addition to the promises Abraham had previously received, the command to offer his son as a human sacrifice might have been especially difficult because Abraham himself was almost offered as a human sacrifice to false gods, but the Lord saved him (see Abraham 1:7, 15).

### Genesis 22:3–14

#### *The Lord spares Isaac and provides a substitute sacrifice*

Display the picture *Abraham Taking Isaac to Be Sacrificed* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 9; see also LDS.org). Invite a student to read Genesis 22:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Abraham responded to the Lord's command. You may want to explain that *clave* means to cut or split.

- What stands out to you about Abraham's response?
- What can we learn about Abraham from his response to this heart-wrenching command?

Invite a student to read Genesis 22:4–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Isaac asked his father. Invite students to report what they find.

- How did Abraham respond to Isaac?

Invite a student to read Genesis 22:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Abraham did when they arrived in the land of Moriah.



- Why do you think Abraham was willing to obey the command to sacrifice his son Isaac? (One answer might be that Abraham obeyed because he knew God and trusted Him and His will.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 22:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened next.

- How do you imagine Abraham and Isaac might have felt after receiving this message?
- Through his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, what had Abraham shown about his feelings toward God?

Explain that Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that although “we generally interpret the word *fear* as ‘respect’ or ‘reverence’ or ‘love,’” we should also “so love and reverence Him that we fear doing anything wrong in His sight” (“A Sense of the Sacred,” [Church Educational System fireside for young adults, Nov. 7, 2004], 6, 7; LDS.org). You may want to suggest that students write this explanation in their scriptures.

- What can we learn from Abraham and Isaac’s experience about what we can do to show the Lord that we love Him? (Students may identify something similar to the following principle: **When we are willing to do what the Lord commands us, we show our reverence and love for Him.**)

Ask students to ponder some of the Lord’s commandments. Invite each student to come to the board and write one or two commandments above the drawing of the altar. You may want to add some commandments to their list based on the needs of your class (such as reading scriptures daily, partaking of the sacrament weekly, sharing the gospel, or keeping the law of chastity).

- How does our willingness to obey these commandments show the Lord that we love Him?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for why it is important that we willingly obey God.



“The submission of one’s will is really the only uniquely personal thing we have to place on God’s altar. The many other things we ‘give,’ brothers and sisters, are actually the things He has already given or loaned to us. However, when you and I finally submit ourselves, by letting our individual wills be swallowed up in God’s will, then we are really giving something to Him!” (“Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 24).

Refer to the list of commandments on the board, and ask students to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

Which commandments from the Lord do you willingly obey?

Which commandments can you begin obeying or obey more willingly to show your love for the Lord?

You may want to invite a few students to share what they wrote. Encourage students to pray for help to willingly obey the Lord.

Display the picture *The Crucifixion* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 57; see also LDS.org). Consider writing the following truth on the board: **Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac is a type of Heavenly Father’s sacrifice of Jesus Christ.** Explain that a *type* is a symbol that foreshadows a future event. Exploring the details of a type can help us learn more about the event it is designed to foreshadow.

Invite students to review Genesis 22:1–12 with a partner. Ask them to look for details in the verses that show similarities between Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac and Heavenly Father’s sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You might suggest that they mark the similarities in their scriptures, or you could ask them to write what they discover on a piece of paper. It might help them to organize what they find in a chart like the one that follows. Some examples have been provided.

Abraham’s Sacrifice of Isaac	Heavenly Father’s Sacrifice of Jesus Christ
Isaac was to be sacrificed in place of a lamb	Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for our sins
Abraham willingly _____	Heavenly Father willingly _____
Isaac carried _____	Jesus Christ carried _____

**Writing exercises**  
Inviting students to respond to thought-provoking questions in writing can help deepen and clarify their thoughts. As students respond to questions in writing before sharing their thoughts with the class, they have time to formulate their ideas and receive impressions from the Holy Ghost.



After students have completed their search, ask them to explain to the class what they discovered. You may want to explain the following additional similarities: The land of Moriah (see Genesis 22:2), where Isaac was to be offered as a sacrifice, included the places that would later be called Gethsemane and Golgotha, where Jesus Christ would suffer and be crucified almost 2,000 years later; Abraham's name means "father of a multitude," which parallels Heavenly Father being the father of all spirit children.

- What can Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac teach us about Heavenly Father's sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

Explain that if Heavenly Father had not chosen to sacrifice His Only Begotten Son, then none of us would be able to return to God's presence.

- Who was Heavenly Father showing His love for by sacrificing His Son, Jesus Christ? (Help students identify the following truth: **Heavenly Father demonstrated His love for us through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ.**)

If possible, provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder Melvin J. Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read the statement aloud. Ask the class to listen for how Heavenly Father might have felt as His Son was being crucified.



"In that hour I think I can see our dear Father behind the veil looking upon these dying struggles. . . . His great heart almost breaking for the love that He had for His Son. Oh, in that moment when He might have saved His Son, I thank Him and praise Him that He did not fail us. . . . I rejoice that He did not interfere, and that His love for us made it possible for Him to endure to look upon the sufferings of His [Only Begotten] and give Him finally to us, our Saviour and our Redeemer. Without Him, without His sacrifice, . . . we would never have come glorified into His presence. . . . This is what it cost, in part, for our Father in heaven to give the gift of His Son unto men" (in *Crusader for Righteousness* [1966], 137).

- How does the sacrifice of Jesus Christ demonstrate Heavenly Father's love for you?

Consider sharing your testimony of Heavenly Father's love for each of the students in your class.

Ask a student to read Genesis 22:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord provided as a sacrifice in the place of Isaac. Ask students to report what they find.

## Genesis 22:15–19

### *The Lord reconfirms the promises of the Abrahamic covenant*

Summarize Genesis 22:15–19 by explaining that because Abraham demonstrated His willingness to do what the Lord commanded, the Lord reassured him of the blessings promised in the Abrahamic covenant.

## Genesis 22:20–24

### *Abraham learns of children born to his brother*

Summarize Genesis 22:20–24 by explaining that after Abraham returned home, he learned about children born into the household of his brother Nahor, including a granddaughter named Rebekah, who would play an important role in the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the principles discussed today as prompted by the Spirit.

## Scripture Mastery Review

To help students review the five scripture mastery passages they have studied so far during this course, you may want to give them a brief quiz. Provide the key words from the seminary bookmark, and ask students to write the reference to the associated scripture mastery passage. Prior to the quiz, you may want to give students time to study with a partner the key words from the seminary bookmark associated with the five scriptures.

# Genesis 23–24

## Introduction

Following Sarah’s death and burial, Abraham sent a servant to his former homeland to find a wife for Isaac from among Abraham’s kindred, who were covenant people. The servant obeyed these instructions, prayed

for the Lord’s help, and met Rebekah. She chose to return with the servant and be sealed to Isaac in the covenant of eternal marriage (see D&C 132:19–20, 37).

### Lead students through the learning process

Students are edified when they are led through a learning process that is similar to what the teacher has experienced during lesson preparation. Students should be led to search the scriptures for understanding and to discover the truths of the gospel for themselves. They should be given opportunities to explain the gospel in their own words and to share and testify of what they know and feel. This helps to bring the gospel from their heads down into their hearts.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 23:1–24:9

*After Sarah dies, Abraham places his servant under oath to find a suitable wife for Isaac*

Invite students to imagine a young man and a young woman who are in love and who hope to build a lasting relationship.

- What are some important choices this couple would need to make if they want to build a relationship that will last?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“A couple in love can choose a marriage of the highest quality or a lesser type that will not endure. Or they can choose neither. . . .

“The best choice is a celestial marriage” (“Celestial Marriage,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 92, 94).

- Why is celestial marriage in the temple—or eternal marriage—the best kind of marriage? (In eternal marriages, righteous couples are sealed forever by the power of the priesthood and the family unit continues eternally.)

Invite the class to look for principles as they study Genesis 23–24 that can guide them in their efforts to one day obtain the blessings of eternal marriage.

Remind students that Abraham and Sarah entered into a covenant with God, and this covenant allowed them to have an eternal marriage. Summarize Genesis 23 by explaining that Sarah died and Abraham mourned for her and arranged for her body to be buried.

Remind students that the Lord had promised Abraham and Sarah that their son, Isaac, would receive the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant and that all the families of the earth would be blessed through Isaac’s descendants (see Genesis 17:19, 21; 22:17–18).

- What did Isaac need to do in order for these promises to be fulfilled? (Enter the covenant of eternal marriage.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 24:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify who Abraham did not want Isaac to marry.

- Who did Abraham not want Isaac to marry?

Explain that because the Canaanites did not believe in the Lord, no Canaanite woman would have been prepared to receive the responsibilities and blessings of the Abrahamic covenant and eternal marriage. The decision Isaac faced concerning whether or not to marry in the covenant is just like our choice today of whether to receive the marriage sealing ordinance in the temple.

Invite a student to read Genesis 24:4 aloud. Ask the class to look for an assignment Abraham gave to his servant.

- What assignment did Abraham give to his servant?

Point out that the journey from Abraham’s location in the land of Canaan to Mesopotamia where his relatives lived was a distance of approximately 1,200 miles (1,931 kilometers) round-trip. This journey would require substantial time, effort, and provisions.

- What do Abraham’s instructions to his servant teach us about the importance of obtaining the blessings of eternal marriage? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **It is worth great effort and sacrifice to obtain the blessings of eternal marriage.**)
- What efforts and sacrifices might today’s youth have to make in order to obtain the blessings of eternal marriage?

Ask a student to read aloud 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).

## Genesis 24:10–60

### *Abraham’s servant meets Rebekah and her family*

Invite a student to read Genesis 24:10–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Abraham’s servant did to fulfill the promise he had made to Abraham. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Genesis 24:15–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the servant’s prayer was answered.

- How was the servant’s prayer answered?

Display the picture *Rebekah at the Well* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 10; see also LDS.org).

Write the following heading on the board: *Character Traits of Rebekah*. Invite students to review verses 16–20 silently and look for words and phrases that imply some of Rebekah’s character traits. Ask students to report the character traits implied by these verses. List their responses under the heading on the board. The list could include the following: *virtuous, eager to serve, generous, hard-working*.

Point out that the servant did not yet know whether this young woman was a relative of Abraham. Summarize Genesis 24:21–25 by explaining that the servant asked Rebekah about her family and learned that she was the granddaughter of Abraham’s brother Nahor.

Invite a student to read Genesis 24:26–28 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Abraham’s servant did and what Rebekah did after they realized their mutual connection through Abraham. Ask students to report what they find.

Summarize Genesis 24:29–49 by explaining that Abraham’s servant was invited to eat with Rebekah’s family. He told the family that Abraham had directed him to find a suitable woman for Isaac to marry among Abraham’s relatives and that the Lord had led him to Rebekah.

Invite a student to read Genesis 24:50–51 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Rebekah’s brother Laban and her father, Bethuel, responded to Abraham’s servant. Ask students to report what they learn.

Explain that after this response, Abraham’s servant provided gifts to the family, and there was a celebration. The next morning, Abraham’s servant and Rebekah’s family discussed her departure. Invite students to read Genesis 24:54–56 silently to learn when Abraham’s servant wanted to depart and when Rebekah’s family wanted her to depart. Ask students to report what they find.

Ask a student to read Genesis 24:57–60 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for how this difference was resolved. Ask students to report what they learn.

- Why do you think Rebekah would commit to leave her family immediately to go and marry Isaac, even though she had never met him?
- What qualities did Rebekah exemplify when she stated, “I will go”? (Add students’ responses to the list on the board. Responses may include *faith in the Lord* and *courage*.)

Point out that the phrase “be thou the mother of thousands of millions” in verse 60 suggests that Rebekah and her family understood that she would play a pivotal role in helping



to accomplish the divine promise that Abraham’s descendants would be numbered as the stars in the heaven and the sand upon the seashore.

- How do you think Rebekah’s righteous qualities helped prepare her to enter the covenant of eternal marriage?
- What principle can we learn from Rebekah’s example? (Students may give a variety of answers. As they respond, you may want to emphasize the following principle by writing it on the board: **If we develop righteous qualities now, we will be better prepared for eternal marriage.**)

To help students understand how this principle relates to them, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“If you hope to have an eternal companion who has certain spiritual qualities, then you must strive to develop those spiritual qualities in yourself. Then someone who has those qualities will be attracted to you” (in “Understanding Heavenly Father’s Plan”; lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/understanding-heavenly-fathers-plan).

### Genesis 24:61–67

#### *Isaac and Rebekah are sealed in eternal marriage*

Invite the class to imagine what feelings Rebekah may have had as she traveled the long distance to meet Isaac or what Isaac may have felt as he awaited the servant’s return.

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 24:61–67. Invite the class to follow along and look for words or phrases suggesting that Isaac and Rebekah were happy to meet and be married to one another. Ask students to report what they find. (You may want to explain that when Rebekah covered herself with a veil, she was demonstrating modesty and respect for Isaac.)

Point out that prior to their marriage, both Isaac and Rebekah had demonstrated faithfulness to the Lord (see Genesis 22:6–13; 24:57–58). As a result, the Lord had provided a way for them to receive the blessings of eternal marriage.

- What principle can we learn from the example of Isaac and Rebekah as we seek the blessings of eternal marriage? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we are faithful to God, He will provide a way for us to receive the blessings of eternal marriage.**)

To help students deepen their understanding of this principle, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“Now, there are those among you fine young members of the Church who might never marry. Although they are worthy in every way, they may never find someone to whom they will be sealed in the temple of the Lord in this life. . . .

“ . . . I cannot tell you why one individual’s prayers are answered one way while someone else’s are answered differently. But this I can tell you: the righteous desires of your hearts will be fulfilled.

“ . . . The brief span of this life is nothing in comparison with eternity. And if only we can hope and exercise faith and joyfully endure to the end . . . there, in that great heavenly future, we will have the fulfillment of the righteous desires of our hearts and so very much more that we can scarcely comprehend now” (“The Reflection in the Water” [Church Educational System devotional, Nov. 1, 2009]; LDS.org).

- How does this statement help you understand Heavenly Father’s love for His children who may not have the opportunity to receive the blessings of eternal marriage in this life?

Testify of the importance of eternal marriage. Invite students to write down a goal that will help them prepare for eternal marriage. You might suggest that they write about a righteous quality they will seek to develop in their lives.

## LESSON 30

# Genesis 25–27

### Introduction

Before Abraham's death, he bestowed all he had upon Isaac. Isaac's wife, Rebekah, gave birth to twin sons named Esau and Jacob. Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, and Isaac

later bestowed the birthright blessing—which included the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant—upon Jacob.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 25:1–18

#### *Abraham gives all he has to Isaac*

Ask several students to tell the class what their favorite food is. Then display or draw on the board a small treat or food item (for example, a small piece of candy). Ask students to imagine they could choose to have one small treat now, or they could wait until tomorrow and then receive an endless supply of their favorite food.

- Which would you choose? Why?
- How is this scenario like some of the situations we face in life?

As students study the choices of someone who traded a valuable possession for something of far less but immediate value, invite them to look for principles that can guide them in similar situations.

Summarize Genesis 25:1–18 by explaining that these verses recount Abraham's final years on the earth, his death, and the death of Abraham and Hagar's son, Ishmael. Before Abraham died, he married a woman named Keturah, who bore six sons. Keturah is referred to in the scriptures as a concubine (see 1 Chronicles 1:32). Explain that the word *concubine* is used to describe women in the Old Testament who, in the time and culture in which they lived, were legally married to a man but had a lower social status than a wife.

Ask a student to read Genesis 25:5–6 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Abraham gave his sons before he died.

- What did Abraham give Isaac? What did Abraham give his other sons?
- Why do you think Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac instead of dividing his possessions evenly among all his sons?

Explain that Isaac received more than Abraham's other children because of Isaac's birthright. A son who held the birthright inherited not only his father's lands and possessions, but also his father's position as the spiritual leader of the family and the "authority to preside" (see Bible Dictionary, "Birthright"). The son was then responsible to use these resources to provide for the family's needs. The birthright was often passed from a father to his eldest son. However, righteousness was more important than being the firstborn. The birthright Isaac received from Abraham also included all the blessings and responsibilities of the Abrahamic covenant.

### Genesis 25:19–34

#### *Esau sells his birthright to Jacob*

Invite a student to read Genesis 25:20–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord blessed Isaac and his wife, Rebekah. (You may need to explain that *entreat* means to plead, such as in prayer, and *barren* means unable to conceive children.) Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that after Rebekah became pregnant, she felt a struggle within her womb that caused her concern. Ask a student to read Genesis 25:22–23 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Rebekah did.

### *Prepare with students in mind*

As you prepare to teach, consider what outcomes you hope to help students achieve as a result of the lesson. President Thomas S. Monson said: "The goal of gospel teaching . . . is not to 'pour information' into the minds of class members. . . . *The aim is to inspire the individual to think about, feel about, and then do something about living gospel principles*" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 107).

- What did Rebekah do to learn why she felt a struggle within her womb?
- What did the Lord teach Rebekah about the two children she would bear?

Point out the phrase “the elder shall serve the younger” in Genesis 25:23. Explain that this indicates the younger child would eventually inherit the birthright instead of the firstborn.

Invite a student to read Genesis 25:24–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, with half of them looking for the name and characteristics of the elder son, and the other half looking for the name and characteristics of the younger son. Invite students to report what they find.

Ask a student to read Genesis 25:29–31 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob asked of Esau in exchange for some pottage. (You may need to explain that the phrase “sod pottage” means that Isaac made soup.)

- What would you have done in this situation if you had been in Esau’s position?

Refer to the food item you previously displayed or drew on the board, and remind the class of the question you asked about whether they would want a small treat right away or wait to receive an endless supply of their favorite food.

- How is the choice Esau faced similar to the scenario with the treat?

Invite a student to read Genesis 25:32–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Esau chose.

- What do you think it means in verse 34 that “Esau despised his birthright”? (You may want to point out that Esau treated his birthright as though it had very little meaning or value.)

## Genesis 26

### *The Lord guides and blesses Isaac*

Summarize Genesis 26 by explaining that the Lord guided Isaac and blessed him both spiritually and temporally. By highlighting Isaac’s blessings, Genesis 26 can help us understand what Esau lost when he sold his birthright to Jacob.

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 26:2–5, 12–14. Invite the class to follow along and look for ways the Lord blessed Isaac. You may want to invite students to mark what they find.

Remind students that if Esau had retained his birthright, he would have inherited all that Isaac had, just as Isaac inherited all that Abraham had.

- Based on what you found in Genesis 26:2–5, 12–14, what blessings could Esau have inherited if he had retained his birthright?

Hold up a small bowl and ask students to ponder the choice Esau made.

- Thinking about what you have learned about the birthright blessings Esau sold, how would you describe his decision to sell his birthright for a bowl of pottage?

Explain that Esau lost blessings not only because of his choice to sell his birthright, but also because of other poor choices he made. Ask a student to read Genesis 26:34–35 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for additional choices Esau made that deprived him of blessings.

- According to Genesis 26:34, what kind of women did Esau marry? (Explain that Hittites were people who did not believe in God and worshipped idols instead.)
- Why might these marriages have saddened Isaac and Rebekah? (You may need to explain that Esau’s choices in marriage hindered him, his wives, and his children from receiving the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant—including the covenant of eternal marriage that is required for us to receive eternal life.)
- How was Esau’s choice to marry Hittite women similar to the choice he made to sell his birthright?
- What principle can we learn from Esau’s choices and their consequences? (After students respond, you may want to use their words to write on the board a statement similar to the following: **If we value temporary or worldly pleasures more than we value eternal blessings, then we may lose those blessings.**)

To help students understand how this principle relates to them, you may want to give them copies of the following handout. You could ask students to complete the handout individually or in small groups.

---

Because of the covenants we have made as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, we are heirs of all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant—just as Esau was before he sold his birthright.

List some temporary or worldly pleasures that young people today might be tempted to value more than eternal blessings: \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one item from your list and explain how seeking after that thing could cause a person to lose blessings: \_\_\_\_\_

---

After students have had sufficient time to complete the handout, consider inviting a few to share what they wrote with the class.

## Genesis 27

### *Isaac blesses Jacob to preside over his brethren*

Explain that although Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob, their father, Isaac, still had the responsibility to bestow the birthright blessing on one of his sons. Summarize Genesis 27:1–33 by explaining that Isaac intended to give the birthright blessing to Esau. However, Rebekah had previously learned by revelation that Jacob was to receive the birthright (see Genesis 25:23). Rebekah instructed Jacob to approach Isaac, who was physically blind, and present himself as though he were Esau so that Jacob could receive the birthright blessing. Jacob reluctantly carried out this plan and received the blessing.

You may want to explain that the Lord intended from the beginning that the birthright blessing be given to Jacob. After Isaac learned that he had unknowingly bestowed the birthright blessing on Jacob, he could have revoked the blessing and cursed Jacob instead. However, Isaac declared that Jacob “shall be blessed” (Genesis 27:33)—indicating that the Lord’s will had been accomplished.

Invite a few students to take turns reading Genesis 27:34–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases that indicate how Esau felt after he learned the birthright blessing had been confirmed upon Jacob instead of on himself.

- What principle can we learn from Esau’s response about the consequences of placing worldly or immediate desires above eternal priorities? (Students may use different words, but they might identify something similar to the following: **Placing worldly or immediate desires above eternal priorities will eventually lead to sorrow and regret.**)

Point out that it appears Esau did not immediately experience sorrow and regret. Rather, this occurred later when Esau began to experience the consequences of his poor choices.

- Why do you think it is important to realize that we may not experience immediate sorrow and regret for our poor choices?

Summarize Genesis 27:39–46 by explaining that Esau did receive a blessing from Isaac. However, angry about losing the birthright blessing, Esau decided to kill Jacob. Rebekah directed Jacob to travel to Haran, where he could be safe from Esau.

You may want to invite students to testify of the principles you have discussed today. Consider adding your testimony to those shared. Assure students that any poor choices they make can be overcome through faith in Jesus Christ and repentance.

To help students apply what they have learned, display the following statement. Invite students to write this statement on a piece of paper and put the paper where they will see it often and be encouraged to make righteous choices.

“Think of the long view of life, not just what’s going to happen today or tomorrow. *Don’t give up what you most want in life for something you think you want now*” (Richard G. Scott, “Jesus Christ, Our Redeemer,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 54).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Genesis 19–27 (Unit 6)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Genesis 19–27 (unit 6) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Genesis 19)

As students studied about the escape of Lot and some of his family from Sodom, they learned that to forsake sin and evil influences, we must leave them entirely and not look back. They also learned the following principles: If we choose to associate with unrighteous influences, then we may experience consequences we regret, and our choices may not only affect ourselves but others as well.

#### Day 2 (Genesis 20–22)

From the account of Sarah’s deliverance from King Abimelech, students learned that the Lord will warn us before we commit serious sin, and when we hearken to those warnings, we can avoid sin and its consequences. As students studied the circumstances of Isaac’s birth, they learned that God always keeps His promises to the faithful, even when the fulfillment of those promises seems unlikely. In their study of the account of Abraham being commanded to sacrifice Isaac, students discovered that when we are willing to do what the Lord commands us, we show our reverence and love for Him.

#### Day 3 (Genesis 23–24)

Students learned the following principles from the account of Isaac’s efforts to marry Rebekah: It is worth great effort and sacrifice to obtain the blessings of eternal marriage. If we develop righteous qualities now, then we will be better prepared for eternal marriage. If we are faithful to God, then He will provide a way for us to receive the blessings of eternal marriage.

#### Day 4 (Genesis 25–27)

As students studied the consequences of Esau’s willingness to sell his birthright for some pottage, they learned that if we value temporary or worldly pleasures more than we value eternal blessings, then we may lose those blessings. They also learned that placing worldly or immediate desires above eternal priorities will eventually lead to sorrow and regret.

### Introduction

The account of Abraham’s obedience to the Lord’s command to sacrifice his covenant son, Isaac, is a type and shadow of Heavenly Father’s sacrifice of His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Genesis 22:1–14

*Abraham obeys the Lord, demonstrating his willingness to sacrifice Isaac*

Consider using the following activity to introduce the lesson:

Place a light in the room in such a way that you can hold up an object in front of the light and see its shadow on the wall. Ask students to watch the shadow as you hold various objects in front of the light. Invite students to guess what the objects are as you hold them up.

Explain that there are many accounts in the scriptures that are intended to be “shadows” or “types” of something else. A type is a symbol that foreshadows a future event. We can learn more about an event by studying the details of types or shadows that foreshadow that event.

Display the picture Abraham Taking Isaac to Be Sacrificed (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 9; see also LDS.org). Explain that the account of Abraham and Isaac is a type or shadow of another specific event. Invite students to recall what they learned about the account of Abraham taking Isaac to the mountain to be sacrificed. You may want to ask a student to briefly summarize the story from his or her home study of Genesis 22.

- What significant event do you think the account of Abraham and Isaac could be a type or shadow of?

Next, display the picture The Crucifixion (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 57; see also LDS.org). Write the following truth on the board: **Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac is a type of Heavenly Father’s sacrifice of Jesus Christ.**

Explain that by exploring the details of this type, we can learn more about the love Heavenly Father has for us. Invite students to review Genesis 22:1–12 with a partner. Ask them to look for details in the verses that show similarities between Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac and Heavenly Father’s sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Consider inviting them to mark the similarities in their scriptures, or you could ask them to write what they discover on a piece of paper. It might help them to organize what they find in a chart like the one that follows. Some examples have been provided.

Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac	Heavenly Father's Sacrifice of Jesus Christ
Isaac was to be sacrificed in place of a lamb. Abraham willingly . . . Isaac carried . . .	Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for our sins. Heavenly Father willingly . . . Jesus Christ carried . . .

After students have completed their search, ask them to explain to the class what they discovered. You may want to explain the following additional similarity: Abraham's name means "father of a multitude," which parallels Heavenly Father being the father of all spirit children.

- What can Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac teach us about Heavenly Father's sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

Explain that if Heavenly Father had not chosen to sacrifice His Only Begotten Son, then none of us would be able to return to God's presence.

- Who was Heavenly Father showing His love for by sacrificing His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ? (Help students identify the following: **Heavenly Father demonstrated His great love for us through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ.** You may want to write this truth on the board.)

If possible, provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder Melvin J. Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read the statement aloud. Ask the class to listen for how Heavenly Father might have felt as His only Son was being crucified.

---

"In that hour I think I can see our dear Father behind the veil looking upon these dying struggles . . . , His great heart almost breaking for the love that He had for His Son. Oh, in that moment when He might have saved His Son, I thank Him and praise Him that He did not fail us. . . . I rejoice that He did not interfere, and that His love for us made it possible for Him to endure to look upon the sufferings of His [Only Begotten] and give Him finally to us, our Saviour and our Redeemer. Without Him, without His sacrifice, . . . we would never have come glorified into His presence. . . . This is what it cost, in part, for our Father in heaven to give the gift of His Son unto men" (in *Crusader for Righteousness* [1966], 137).

---

- How does the sacrifice of Jesus Christ demonstrate Heavenly Father's love for you?
- How do you think we could show our gratitude to Heavenly Father and to Jesus Christ for Their sacrifices for us?

Point out that in Genesis 22:8, Abraham said "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" for the sacrifice. Burnt offerings were how sacrifices were performed in Abraham's day, following the example set by Adam and Eve when they obeyed the Lord's command to offer the firstborn of their flocks as sacrifices after they were cast out of the Garden of Eden. The phrase also had reference to the Lamb of God.

- When would Heavenly Father provide a "lamb" for an offering? (You may need to explain that one of the titles of Jesus Christ is "the Lamb of God" [John 1:36]. The Lamb of God would be offered as the "great and last sacrifice" [see Alma 34:13–14] for the sins of all people many years after Abraham and Isaac's experience.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 22:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord provided as a sacrifice in the place of Isaac. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite students to look again at verse 14, and point out what Abraham called the place where he offered the ram (Jehovah-jireh). Use the footnotes to explain that this name means two things: "The Lord will see, or provide," and "In a mount the Lord shall be manifest (seen)." Explain that the land of Moriah (see Genesis 22:2) included the places that would later be called Gethsemane and Golgotha, where Jesus Christ would suffer and be crucified almost 2,000 years later.

Consider sharing your testimony of Heavenly Father's love for each of the students in your class. You might also give students an opportunity to share their testimonies.

### Next Unit (Genesis 28–39)

To prepare students for their study during the coming week, you may want to invite them to ponder the following: How did Jacob and Rachel meet and fall in love? What deceit did Laban perform on Jacob the night of Jacob's wedding? How did Jacob respond? Have you ever wondered how someone could stay righteous when his or her life is filled with trials and temptations? In the chapters of Genesis that you will study next, you will learn what Abraham's great-grandson Joseph did to remain righteous through difficult times.

## LESSON 31

# Genesis 28–30

### Introduction

Jacob departed the land of Canaan and journeyed to Padan-aram to find a suitable companion to marry in the covenant. While on this journey, Jacob saw a vision of the Lord, who promised him the same eternal blessings his

grandfather Abraham had been promised (the Abrahamic covenant). In Padan-aram, Jacob worked for Laban and married Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah, who eventually bore him twelve sons and one daughter.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 28:1–22

#### *Jacob is promised the blessings of Abraham*

Show students a picture of a temple, and ask why it is important to be married in the temple.

- What blessings do we lose if we choose not to be married in the temple?

Invite a student to read Genesis 28:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for instructions Isaac gave to his son Jacob. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that the Canaanites worshipped idols and engaged in other practices that were offensive to God. A daughter of Canaan would not be worthy to join Jacob in entering into a marriage covenant with the Lord. Marrying a daughter of Canaan would mean marrying out of the covenant.

Invite students to read Genesis 28:3–4 silently, looking for what Jacob was promised if he married in the covenant.

- According to verse 4, what was Jacob promised if he married in the covenant? (“The blessing of Abraham.” Point out that in order to receive the blessings of Abraham, Jacob would need to not only marry in the covenant but also remain faithful to that covenant.)
- What can we learn from Genesis 28:1–4 about what we must do to receive the blessings of Abraham? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we marry in the covenant and remain faithful, then we will receive the blessings of Abraham.** [See D&C 132:30–33.]
- What does it mean to receive the blessings of Abraham? (It means receiving the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant: numerous posterity [see Genesis 17:5–6; Abraham 2:9; 3:14]; receiving the gospel and bearing the priesthood to bless all the families of the earth; and an inheritance of land.)

Summarize Genesis 28:5–9 by explaining that Jacob obeyed his father by leaving the land of Canaan to find a suitable companion to marry in the covenant. By leaving Canaan, Jacob was also obeying his mother, who had warned Jacob of Esau’s plan to kill him. After Esau saw the blessings promised to Jacob for marrying in the covenant and realized that his marriages to Hittite women displeased his father, Esau married one of Ishmael’s daughters anyway.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 28:10–13. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened while Jacob traveled from Canaan to Haran. Ask students to report what they find.

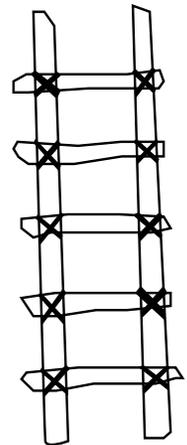
- What did Jacob see in his dream?

Show a picture of a ladder (or draw one on the board), and ask students how far the ladder extended. After students respond, label the bottom of the ladder *earth* and the top of the ladder *heaven or the presence of the Lord*.

- What do you think Jacob might have learned from the image of a ladder extending from earth to the Lord’s presence?

### Decide what to teach

There will usually be more material in a scripture block than can be meaningfully discussed in a class period. Prayerfully study the scriptures and the curriculum to discern which doctrines and principles are the most important for your students to discover, understand, and apply.



Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for what President Romney taught about what rungs of the ladder represent.

“Jacob realized that the covenants he made with the Lord there were the rungs on the ladder that he himself would have to climb in order to obtain the promised blessings—blessings that would entitle him to enter heaven and associate with the Lord” (“Temples—The Gates to Heaven,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1971, 16).

- Based on what Jacob saw in his vision, why is it important to receive the saving ordinances of the gospel and keep their associated covenants? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **We must receive the saving ordinances of the gospel and keep their associated covenants in order to return to the presence of the Lord.**)

Invite a student to read Genesis 28:13–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord promised to give Jacob. Ask students to report what they find.

- Considering that Jacob was traveling alone and escaping the threat of violence from Esau, how might the Lord’s promise, “I am with thee,” in verse 15 have helped him?

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 28:16–19, 22. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how Jacob described the place where he had the dream. (You may need to explain that the phrases “he was afraid” and “how dreadful is this place” in verse 17 refer to feelings of reverence and awe. These phrases indicate that Jacob understood the seriousness of entering the presence of God.)

- According to verse 17, what did Jacob call the place where he had his dream? (The “house of God” and the “gate of heaven.” Explain that the phrase “gate of heaven” refers to a gateway to God’s presence where we can receive the promise of eternal life.)
- Where can we go to be in the house of God and prepare for eternal life? (After students respond, consider writing the following truth on the board: **The temple is the house of God and the gate to eternal life.**)

Point to the picture of the temple you showed at the beginning of class. Ask students to imagine that someone has asked them why temples are so important to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Invite a few students to explain how they would respond.

Consider sharing your testimony of temples and the ordinances and covenants we can receive there. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a goal for what they will do to better keep the covenants they have already made so they can be prepared to enter the temple and receive additional ordinances and covenants.

Summarize Genesis 28:20–22 by explaining that Jacob vowed that if the Lord would be with him, he would serve Him as his God. As part of this vow, Jacob committed to pay “the tenth” (tithing) to the Lord. (You may want to remind students that the Lord sets the conditions of the covenants we make with Him.)

## Genesis 29:1–29

### *Jacob works for Laban for 14 years so he can marry Rachel*

Ask students to name some examples of things that require hard work and patience. After students respond, explain that Jacob had to work hard and be patient to receive the blessings the Lord had promised him.

Summarize Genesis 29:1–14 by explaining that when Jacob arrived in Haran he met Rachel, one of Laban’s daughters, at a well. Laban welcomed Jacob to stay at his house. Explain that when Jacob said that he was Laban’s brother (see verse 12), this was another way of saying, “We are all family.” More specifically, Laban was Jacob’s uncle.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 29:15–20. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob was willing to do so he could marry Rachel.

- What was Jacob willing to do so he could marry Rachel?

Point out that Jacob’s years of labor not only demonstrated his love for Rachel, but also demonstrated his commitment to marry in the covenant as his father, Isaac, had instructed him (see Genesis 28:1–4).

Summarize Genesis 29:21–29 by explaining that after Jacob worked seven years to marry Rachel, Laban tricked him into marrying his older daughter, Leah, instead. Laban justified his actions by claiming that the oldest daughter should be married first. Laban told Jacob he could still marry Rachel after the weeklong wedding feast for Leah, but Jacob would have to agree to work for him another seven years. Jacob agreed to these conditions. Remind students that the Lord approved of Jacob’s plural marriages (see D&C 132:37).

- What can we learn from Jacob’s example about obtaining the blessings the Lord has promised us? (Students may use different words, but they might identify a principle similar to the following: **We must work diligently and be patient as we seek to obtain the blessings the Lord has promised us.**)

### Genesis 29:30–30:43

#### *Children are born to Jacob, and the Lord prospers him*

Ask students to think about a challenge their family has experienced and what made it difficult. Explain that Jacob’s family went through difficulties as well.

Invite a student to read Genesis 29:30–35 aloud and another student to read Genesis 30:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the challenges Leah and Rachel experienced.

- What difficulty did Leah have in her life? (Explain that the word *hated* as used in verse 31 was translated from the Hebrew word *sahmay*, which means “loved less.”)
- How did the Lord help Leah cope with her challenge?
- What challenge did Rachel have in her life?
- What feelings did Rachel struggle with during this difficult time?

Explain that in their time and culture, it was considered a great honor for a wife to bear a male child. Because of this, a competitive spirit developed between Leah and Rachel as well as disappointment and frustration. Summarize Genesis 30:3–21 by explaining that because Rachel could not have children, she gave Jacob her servant Bilhah to marry. Leah, afraid that she would no longer have children, likewise gave Jacob her servant Zilpah to marry.

Eventually Jacob and his wives had twelve sons and one daughter. The twelve sons’ posterity became known as the twelve tribes of Israel. (You may want to explain that the Lord later changed Jacob’s name to Israel. This will be discussed in a future lesson.)

Point out that Rachel was the last of the wives to bear children. Invite students to read Genesis 30:22 silently, looking for how Rachel was finally able to bear a child.

- We know that God does not forget us, so what do you think it means that “God remembered Rachel”?
- What does the phrase “God hearkened to her” tell us about what Rachel had been doing during her struggles?
- What can we learn from verse 22 that could help us when we experience challenges? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **When we experience challenges, we should realize that God does not forget us.**)

Summarize Genesis 30:25–43 by explaining that because Jacob was faithful to his covenants, the Lord blessed him by increasing his wealth in preparation for his return to his homeland.

## LESSON 32

# Genesis 31–32

### Introduction

After working for Laban 20 years, Jacob was commanded to “return unto the land of thy fathers,” or Canaan (Genesis 31:3). Jacob and his family departed in secret because they were afraid of what Laban might do to them. When Laban discovered their departure, he pursued them, but he ultimately let them go in peace.

As they continued their journey, Jacob worried that his twin, Esau, would seek revenge on him. Jacob prepared gifts for his brother, prayed that the Lord would protect his family, and received divine assurance that he and his family would be preserved.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Genesis 31:1–55

##### *The Lord commands Jacob to return to Canaan*

Write the following on the board before class:

*When you strive to obey a command from the Lord, He will . . .*

- a. Change the command so it will be simple and easy for you to accomplish.*
- b. Bless your efforts by providing a way for you to fulfill the command, even if it is difficult.*
- c. Intervene and do all the work for you.*
- d. Require you to do it entirely on your own without any help.*

Ask students to select the statement that best describes how they believe the Lord helps us when He asks us to do difficult things. Invite a few students to explain the statement they selected and why they chose it.

Explain that there are many ways the Lord can bless us as we strive to obey His commandments. Invite students to look for doctrines and principles as they study Genesis 31–32 that teach us how the Lord can help us when He asks us to do difficult things.

Invite a student to read Genesis 31:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Jacob. Ask students to report what they find.

- Why might returning to the land of his fathers have been difficult for Jacob? (Students might mention that Esau lived in the land of Jacob’s fathers and when they were last together Esau wanted to kill Jacob.)
- Even though the command to return home would not be easy, what did the Lord promise Jacob according to verse 3?
- What can we learn from the Lord’s words to Jacob? (Students may use different words, but they should identify something similar to the following principle: **The Lord will be with us when we do what He asks.** Write this principle on the board.)
- How can believing this principle help us do what the Lord asks, even when it is difficult?

Summarize Genesis 31:4–23 by explaining that Jacob and his family were obedient to the Lord’s command. They began their journey to the land of Canaan while Laban was away shearing his sheep. As they left, Rachel took some of Laban’s “images” (verse 19). (You may want to explain that the word *images* could refer to household idols and that some believe the images could represent Rachel’s dowry. Explain that we do not know why Rachel took the images or why Laban later referred to them as “my gods” [Genesis 31:30].) When Laban returned home, he learned of Jacob’s departure and discovered that his images were missing. He chased after Jacob and his family and, after seven days, overtook them.

- Why do you think Jacob and his family decided to leave without telling Laban?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 31:24–29. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord was with Jacob.

#### **Encourage daily scripture study**

Few things teachers can do will have a more powerful and long-lasting influence for good in the lives of their students than helping them learn to love the scriptures and to study them daily. Encourage daily scripture study by giving students regular opportunities to share some of the things they have learned and felt during their personal scripture study.

- According to verse 27, what did Laban claim he would have done if Jacob had not left in secret?
- What do you think Laban might have been planning to do to Jacob before the Lord spoke to him in the dream?
- According to verses 24 and 29, how did the Lord fulfill His promise that He would be with Jacob (see verse 3)?

Summarize Genesis 31:30–40 by explaining that Laban searched Jacob’s camp for his images but did not find them because Rachel hid them under the cushion she used to sit on a camel. After Laban finished searching for the images, Jacob recounted how Laban had mistreated him numerous times during the preceding 20 years.

Invite a student to read Genesis 31:41–42 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob told Laban.

- What evidence do you see in these verses that the Lord had fulfilled His promise to be with Jacob?

Summarize Genesis 31:43–55 by explaining that Jacob and Laban made a covenant that they would not harm each other. Laban then returned to his own land.

### Genesis 32:1–21

#### *Jacob worries that Esau will seek revenge against him and his family*

Ask students to imagine that they have a serious problem and they ask one of their trusted friends for advice. The friend listens carefully to the problem and then says, “Pray about it.”

- What would you think if you were given that advice?

Point out that while it is always important to pray, we can learn an important lesson from what Jacob did after he prayed about the possibility of Esau seeking revenge against him.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 32:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob did on his journey back to his homeland. Ask students to report what they find.

- Why do you think Jacob sent messengers to Esau?

Invite a student to read Genesis 32:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob learned and how he responded.

- What did Jacob learn from the messengers?
- How did he respond to this news?
- Why might Jacob have been “greatly afraid and distressed” (verse 7) when he heard that Esau was coming with 400 men?

Invite a student to read Genesis 32:9–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Jacob did after he received the report about Esau. Ask students to report what they find.

- What stands out to you about Jacob’s prayer?
- How does Jacob’s prayer illustrate his faith in the principle written on the board?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 32:13–18. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob did after praying for God’s help.

- What did Jacob do after he prayed for help? (You may need to explain that Jacob instructed his servants to divide nearly 600 of his animals into many groups and deliver them, one group at a time, to Esau as gifts.)
- Based on Jacob’s example, what should we do, after praying for help, when we face difficulties? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **When we face difficulties, we should earnestly pray for help and then do what we can to overcome them.**)
- How can praying help us know what we can do to overcome our challenges?
- Why is it important that, after we pray, we also do what we can to overcome our challenges?

Invite students to think about a challenge they are currently facing. Encourage them to pray for help *and* do what they can to overcome the difficulty. Explain that the Lord can inspire them to know what to do to help them overcome the difficulty. You may want to invite them to write down a few things they can do to overcome their challenge after praying for help.

### Genesis 32:22–32

#### *Jacob seeks a blessing from the Lord, and the Lord changes Jacob’s name to Israel*

Write the word *wrestle* on the board. Ask students how they would explain what it means to wrestle. You may want to point out that the word *wrestle* can refer to more than the physical sport. Invite students to look for important principles as they study Jacob’s experience recorded in Genesis 32:22–32.

Summarize Genesis 32:22–23 by explaining that the night before Jacob was to meet Esau, he sent his family ahead across the river Jabbok. Jacob knew that he had to face his brother the following day, and he was likely feeling worried about the outcome and may have wanted to be alone.

Invite a student to read Genesis 32:24–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Jacob the night before he was to meet Esau. Ask students to report what they find.

You may want to invite students to mark the phrase “I will not let thee go, except thou bless me” in verse 26. Explain that the blessing Jacob sought may have been an assurance from the Lord that he and his family would be safe from Esau. Although we do not know exactly what was transpiring here, we do know that Jacob wrestled all night for a blessing that he eventually received. This experience represents the great effort Jacob put forth as he sought this blessing from the Lord.

- Why might wrestling be a good way to describe what we must do as we seek blessings from the Lord?
- What can we learn from Jacob’s example about obtaining blessings from the Lord? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **At times, we may need to put forth great effort as we seek the Lord’s help and blessings.**)
- Why do you think the Lord requires us to put forth great effort before we receive some blessings?

Invite a student to read Genesis 32:27–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessings Jacob received after he put forth great effort to seek the Lord’s help. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord change Jacob’s name to?

Explain that the name *Israel* means “One who prevails with God” (Bible Dictionary, “Israel”).

Explain that Jacob’s descendants are known as the house of Israel. As we are true to the covenants we make with God, we qualify for and secure for ourselves the fulness of the blessings that God promised Abraham and his descendants. Write the following principle on the board: **We will prevail with God as we make and keep sacred covenants.**

- What does it mean to prevail with God? (It can mean that as we persist in earnest prayer, we can receive assurance that Heavenly Father will grant us the blessings we have sought for.)

You may want to testify of this principle.

To conclude, briefly review the principles students discovered today. Ask students to ponder how they can act on the truths they have learned, and invite them to do so.

## LESSON 33

# Genesis 33–34

### Introduction

After being separated for 20 years, Jacob and Esau met and were reconciled. After their meeting, Jacob continued traveling to the land of Canaan and pitched his tent near the city Shalem. Shechem, who lived nearby,

violated Jacob's daughter Dinah by forcing her to have sexual relations with him. Infuriated by Shechem's actions, two of Dinah's brothers killed the males in Shechem's city.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 33:1–11

#### *Jacob and Esau meet and are reconciled*

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson. Ask the class to consider how the brothers he spoke of harmed themselves and their relationship through the choices they made.



"Many years ago I read the following Associated Press dispatch which appeared in the newspaper: An elderly man disclosed at the funeral of his brother, with whom he had shared, from early manhood, a small, one-room cabin near Canisteo, New York, that following a quarrel, they had divided the room in half with a chalk line, and neither had crossed the line or spoken a word to the other since that day—62 years before. Just think of the consequence of that anger.

What a tragedy!" ("School Thy Feelings, O My Brother," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 68–69).

- What experiences or blessings might individuals miss out on when they maintain grudges?

Ask students to think about any troubled relationships they may be experiencing or that they know about. Encourage them to look for principles that can help restore peace to these relationships as they study about Jacob and Esau's relationship in Genesis 33.

Remind students that as Jacob traveled back to the land of Canaan after working for Laban for 20 years, Jacob was afraid of what Esau might do to him and his family when he returned.

- Why was Jacob afraid of what Esau might do to him and his family? (When they parted ways 20 years earlier, Esau hated Jacob and had threatened to kill him [see Genesis 27:41–43].)

Divide the class into pairs. Assign each pair to read Genesis 33:1–11 aloud together, looking for what happened when Jacob and Esau met. Instruct one student in each pair to imagine experiencing the events recorded in these verses as though he or she were Esau and the other student to imagine them as though he or she were Jacob.

After sufficient time ask students to discuss the following questions with their partners, using what they learned from imagining the reunion of Esau and Jacob. (Write these questions on the board or provide a copy for each pair of students.)

*What did you think and feel as you approached your brother?*

*What did you do to restore peace to your relationship with your brother?*

Once students have completed this activity, ask the class the following questions:

- What did Jacob do to restore peace to his relationship with Esau? (Answers might include the following: Jacob addressed Esau using respectful terms [see Genesis 32:4–5; 33:5, 8]; he showed courtesy, humility, and reverence by bowing before Esau [see Genesis 33:3]; and he offered a generous gift to Esau [see Genesis 32:13–19; 33:8–11].)
- If you were Esau, how might you feel about Jacob's efforts to establish a peaceful relationship with you?
- What principle can we learn from Jacob's example about what we can do to restore peace in troubled relationships? (As students respond, emphasize the following

### **Encourage students to visualize the scriptures**

Visualization occurs as students picture in their minds the events recorded in the scriptures. Picturing these events can help make the accounts in the scriptures more vivid and realistic. One way to help students visualize an event is by inviting them to imagine experiencing the event from the perspective of the individuals involved in it. Encourage students to use this approach to understanding the scriptures throughout their study of the Old Testament.

principle: **If we make the effort to settle conflicts in the Lord’s way, then we can help restore peace to troubled relationships.**)

Help students understand and feel the truth and importance of this principle by asking the following questions:

- Why can it sometimes be hard to attempt to settle conflicts in troubled relationships?
- When have you seen peace restored to a relationship because someone made an effort to settle a conflict? What thoughts or feelings did you have as you saw this happen?

To help students identify another principle in Genesis 33:1–11, ask the following questions:

- What did Esau do to show that he had overcome his hatred and forgiven Jacob? (He ran to meet Jacob, embraced him, and wept with him [see verse 4]. He also accepted Jacob’s gift [see verse 11].)
- What principle can we learn from Esau’s example about restoring peace in troubled relationships? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but make sure they understand that **if we overcome hatred and forgive others, then we can help restore peace to troubled relationships.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Marion D. Hanks of the Seventy. Ask students to listen for reasons why we need to overcome hatred or resentment when we feel others have wronged us.



“What is our response when we are offended, misunderstood, unfairly or unkindly treated, or sinned against, made an offender for a word, falsely accused, passed over, hurt by those we love, our offerings rejected? Do we resent, become bitter, hold a grudge? Or do we resolve the problem if we can, forgive, and rid ourselves of the burden?

“The nature of our response to such situations may well determine the nature and quality of our lives, here and eternally. . . .

“. . . Even if it appears that another may be deserving of our resentment or hatred, none of us can afford to pay the price of resenting or hating, because of what it does to us” (“Forgiveness: The Ultimate Form of Love,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 20, 21).

- What is the value of forgiving others, even if it seems they are in the wrong? (To help students answer this question, you may want to suggest they read Doctrine and Covenants 64:9–11.)
- What can we do to overcome hatred and forgive others?

Invite students to think of a time when they experienced or witnessed the return of peace to a relationship because someone was willing to overcome hatred and forgive others.

- What helped you or the person you thought of to overcome hatred and forgive others?

Consider sharing a personal experience or testimony that relates to one or more of the principles students identified. To help students apply the principles they have learned, give them time to respond to one of the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What will you do to overcome hatred or resentment you might feel toward someone and to forgive this person?
- What efforts will you make to settle conflicts in a troubled relationship?

Encourage students to apply what they wrote.

## Genesis 33:12–20

### *Esau returns to Seir, and Jacob travels to the land of Canaan*

Summarize Genesis 33:12–17 by explaining that after Jacob and Esau’s reunion, Esau offered to travel with Jacob and his family as they continued their journey to the land of Canaan. Jacob said his caravan would need to travel at a slow pace because of the animals and children and suggested that Esau proceed without them. Esau then returned to the land of Seir.

Invite a student to read Genesis 33:18–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob built. Point out that the name of the altar Jacob built in Shalem means “El (God) is the God of Israel” (see verse 20, footnote *a*). By dedicating this altar, Jacob

confirmed his promise that if God would help him return home in peace, then the Lord would be his God (see Genesis 28:20–21).

### Genesis 34:1–31

*Shechem violates Dinah, and Simeon and Levi take revenge on Shechem and his city*

Write the following words on the board: *Love* and *Lust*. Then ask the following questions:

- What are some differences between love and lust?
- Why is it important to know the difference between love and lust?

Invite a student to read Genesis 34:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to determine whether they see evidence of love or lust.

- Even though Shechem claimed that he loved Dinah, what did he do that showed that he lusted after her rather than truly loved her? (“He took her, and lay with her, and defiled her” [verse 2], which means that Shechem violated and dishonored Dinah by forcing her to engage in sexual relations with him.)

You may want to write the following principle on the board: **Lusting after others shows a lack of love and respect for them.**

- How does this principle differ from what society frequently tells us about love?

Read the following statements aloud. Ask students to listen for differences between love and lust:

“Never do anything that could lead to sexual transgression. Treat others with respect, not as objects used to satisfy lustful and selfish desires. . . . Do not participate in discussions or any media that arouse sexual feelings. Do not participate in any type of pornography” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 36).

“Love makes us instinctively reach out to God and other people. Lust, on the other hand, is anything but godly and celebrates self-indulgence. Love comes with open hands and open heart; lust comes with only an open appetite” (Jeffrey R. Holland, “Place No More for the Enemy of My Soul,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 45).

Explain that acting in lust stems from having unclean and undisciplined thoughts and desires.

- How can we prevent lust from developing in our minds and hearts?

Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they think Genesis 34:2 might have been written if Shechem had truly loved and respected Dinah. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they wrote.

Ask students to look for the chain of events that resulted from Shechem’s lustful actions. Summarize Genesis 34:4–31 by explaining that after Shechem took Dinah and defiled her, Shechem desired to marry her. Shechem’s father approached Jacob and proposed that Dinah be allowed to marry Shechem. He also suggested that their people engage in trade relations with each other and further intermarry. The sons of Jacob were angry about what Shechem had done and deceitfully suggested that they should agree to the proposed arrangement only if all of the men in Shechem’s city agreed to be circumcised, which was symbolic of entering into the Abrahamic covenant. The men agreed to this proposal, and all were circumcised. While the men of the city were recovering from being circumcised, Simeon and Levi entered the city, killed all of the males, and rescued their sister Dinah from Shechem’s house. Jacob was greatly distressed by what Simeon and Levi had done and worried that surrounding tribes would gather together to destroy his household.

Explain that although the outrage of Simeon and Levi may to some seem justified, deceiving and slaughtering the men of the city was not justified. Invite students to ponder how lust, anger, and revenge can lead to immoral choices that result in regret and misery.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the principles students identified in today’s lesson.

## LESSON 34

# Genesis 35–37

### Introduction

God commanded Jacob and his family to travel to Bethel, and the Lord appeared to him there. Following this event, Jacob's wife Rachel and his father, Isaac,

died. Jacob favored his son Joseph, who was hated and envied by his brothers. Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, and Joseph was taken to Egypt.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 35:1–15

#### *Jacob travels to Bethel, and the Lord reaffirms His covenant with Jacob*

Invite four students to come to the front of the class. Give each of them a slip of paper with one of the following events written on it: *a music concert, an athletic contest, a school test, a sacrament meeting*. Ask each student to explain what they would do to prepare to participate in that event.

- In what ways might your preparation for each of these events affect your experience?

As students study Genesis 35, encourage them to look for what Jacob did to prepare himself for a spiritual experience and what the result was.

Invite a student to read Genesis 35:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and notice where God commanded Jacob to travel in order to worship Him.

Explain that the meaning of the Hebrew name *Bethel* is “house of God.” Write the following statement by President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency on the board (from “Temples—the Gates to Heaven,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1971, 16), and consider suggesting that students write it in their scriptures next to verse 1: “*Temples are to us all what Bethel was to Jacob.*”

Invite a student to read Genesis 35:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob asked his people to do to prepare to worship the Lord in Bethel.

- According to verse 2, what did Jacob ask his people to do?
- What do you think it means to “put away the strange gods”? (You may need to explain that “strange gods” refers to idols or other objects associated with false gods of other nations.) Why do you think it was important for Jacob's people to “be clean” and to “change [their] garments”?
- How do you think doing each of these things might have helped them prepare to worship the Lord in Bethel?
- How did Jacob's household respond to his counsel?

Summarize Genesis 35:5–8 by explaining that Jacob's household traveled to Bethel, and he built an altar there.

Invite a student to read Genesis 35:9 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what happened in Bethel. Ask a student to explain what happened.

Write the following statement on the board: *As we prepare ourselves to worship the Lord . . .*

Ask students how they would complete this principle based on Jacob's experience. One way students could complete this principle is: **As we prepare ourselves to worship the Lord, we invite His revelation.**

Remind students that Jacob's family put away strange gods, cleansed themselves, and changed the garments they had been traveling in to prepare to worship the Lord.

- What are similar ways we can prepare to worship the Lord in our day?
- What have you experienced when you have made a special effort to prepare yourself to worship the Lord?

### *Allow students to use their own words*

When you ask students to identify doctrines and principles, it is not necessary that they express these truths exactly as they are written in this manual. It is more important that they discover and recognize the main idea of the truth being taught. As students learn to express doctrines and principles in their own words, they will improve their ability to identify sacred truths in their personal study.

Ask students to ponder what they can do to better prepare themselves to worship the Lord and invite His revelation. Invite them to consider recording in their class notebooks or scripture study journals any impressions they receive regarding what they should do.

Invite a student to read Genesis 35:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the promises the Lord reaffirmed to Jacob as he worshipped in Bethel.

- What promises did the Lord reaffirm to Jacob?
- Who else had been promised these blessings?
- What did the Lord change Jacob’s name to?

Summarize Genesis 35:13–15 by explaining that after God left Jacob, Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had talked with God to memorialize the event.

### Genesis 35:16–29

#### *Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin, Reuben sins with Bilhah, and Isaac dies*

Invite students to reflect on times they have experienced trials or sorrow when they felt they were striving to do what was right.

- What would you say to someone who thinks “I must not be righteous enough because if I were, I would be spared from suffering difficulties”?

Divide students into groups of three. Invite one student in each group to read Genesis 35:16–19, another student to read Genesis 35:21–22, and the third student to read Genesis 35:27–29. Ask them to look for what Jacob experienced following his sacred experience with the Lord in Bethel. After students have had sufficient time to read their assigned verses, invite them to report their findings in their groups.

- What can we learn from knowing Jacob experienced trials even while living faithfully? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but be sure they understand that **even those who are faithful to the Lord experience trials and sorrow.**)

Invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for further insight regarding why faithful individuals still experience trials and sorrow:

“I love the scriptures because they show examples of great and noble men and women such as Abraham, Sarah, Enoch, Moses, Joseph, Emma, and Brigham. Each of them experienced adversity and sorrow that tried, fortified, and refined their characters” (“Come What May, and Love It,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 27).

- What are some reasons why faithful individuals still experience trials and sorrow?
- What examples have you seen of adversity strengthening and refining faithful and righteous individuals?

Share your testimony that although striving to live righteously does not mean we will experience only ease in life, it does mean we can experience peace from God as we are refined by our trials.

### Genesis 36

#### *The generations of Esau are set forth*

Summarize Genesis 36:1–43 by explaining that the descendants of Esau, who was the son of Isaac and brother of Jacob, are listed in this chapter.

### Genesis 37

#### *Joseph is favored by his father, has prophetic dreams, and is sold by his brothers*

Ask students to think about how they would feel if a sibling or close friend received an important award; was selected for an athletic team, band, orchestra, or choir; or performed the best in his or her class on an exam.

- What are some ways a person might feel about someone else’s good fortune in these situations?
- What is the danger of feeling envious or jealous of others who experience good fortune?

Invite students to consider, as they study Genesis 37, the dangers of feeling hatred or envy toward others.

Invite a student to read Genesis 37:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jacob treated his son Joseph and how Joseph’s brothers reacted. (You may need to explain that the phrase “could not speak peaceably unto him” means they could not be friendly or desire any happiness for him.) Ask students to report what they found.

Ask two students to come to the board. Invite a few other students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 37:5–11. As the students read, ask one student at the board to draw a picture depicting Joseph’s first dream (verses 7–8). Invite the second student to draw a picture depicting Joseph’s second dream (verses 9–10). (To help students understand these verses, you may need to explain the following: *Sheaves* are bundles of wheat. To *make obeisance* means to bow down before a superior to show deep respect. To *rebuke* is to correct or reprimand. To *observe*, in this context, means to consider and reflect.)

- According to verses 8 and 11, how did Joseph’s brothers react to his dreams?
- What does it mean to envy someone?

Invite a student to read Genesis 37:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob asked Joseph to do. Invite students to report what they found.

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 37:18–22. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joseph’s brothers considered doing with him because of their envy.

- What did the brothers’ envy lead them to consider doing?

Ask a student to read Genesis 37:23–28 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Joseph’s brothers ultimately did with him.

- What sins did the hatred and envy of Joseph’s brothers lead them to commit?
- What is a principle we can learn from this account about the dangers of choosing to hate or envy others? (The following is one principle students may identify: **Choosing to hate or envy others can lead us to commit additional sins.** You may want to write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, ask:

- What have you seen hatred and envy lead people to do in our day?
- When others have possessions, talents, or attention that we would like to have, how can we avoid feelings of hatred and envy toward them? (You may want to write students’ responses on the board.)

Explain that this principle is further illustrated by what Joseph’s brothers did after they sold him. Summarize Genesis 37:29–36 by explaining that when Reuben returned to the pit and found that Joseph was gone, he rent, or tore, his clothes, thereby manifesting intense grief or distress. Despite the grief Reuben felt, however, Reuben and his brothers dipped Joseph’s coat in animal blood and gave it to their father. Jacob assumed that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. He mourned deeply, putting on sackcloth, which was clothing worn in times of sorrow. Once in Egypt, Joseph was sold to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officers.

- What additional sins did Joseph’s brothers commit in this situation?
- What feelings do you think Joseph’s brothers might have had when they saw their father’s reaction?

Ask students to think about situations in their lives that might present a temptation to feel hatred or envy toward someone else. Invite them to prepare a plan for what they will do to avoid feeling hatred or envy toward another person if the temptation arises.

Testify that as we keep our hearts free from hatred and envy toward others, we will be blessed.

# Genesis 38–39

## Introduction

Genesis 38 and 39 present contrasting experiences from the lives of Judah and Joseph. Genesis 38 gives an account of Judah’s wickedness. Conversely, Genesis 39

illustrates Joseph’s righteousness and shows how the Lord prospered him in all circumstances.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 38

#### *Judah’s unrighteousness is exposed*

Read aloud each of the scenarios below. After each one, ask the class to explain what choices are available to them in that scenario and what short-term or long-term consequences may follow those choices.

1. A friend tells you that it is okay to engage in sexual behaviors together because you love and trust each other.
2. A friend keeps trying to get you to use pornographic material.
3. A friend of the opposite gender invites you into his or her bedroom so you can be alone to talk.

Explain that as students study Genesis 38 and 39, they will learn about two brothers—Judah and Joseph—who made very different choices when they were in tempting situations. Invite students to consider what lessons they can learn from the choices of these two brothers.

Draw the following chart on the board. (You may want to do this before class.)

Judah	Joseph

### Summarize

Occasionally you will need to summarize a scripture block by briefly explaining what is described in verses that are not emphasized in class. This can allow you to move quickly through portions of the scripture block without omitting the content and messages expressed in those portions. In some cases, like for Genesis 38, you must be judicious about what and how you summarize.

Summarize Genesis 38:1–11 by explaining that after Joseph was sold to the Ishmaelites, one of his older brothers, Judah, married a Canaanite woman (a daughter of Shuah). Judah and his wife had three sons together: Er, Onan, and Shelah. The oldest son, Er, married a woman named Tamar, but he died before they had children. According to the customary law at that time, a widow who had no children had claim on her husband’s next oldest brother or his closest living male relative. This man, if asked by the widow, was obligated to marry her and raise up seed, or produce children, on behalf of his deceased brother. This practice is known as a “Levirate marriage” (see Bible Dictionary). Onan married Tamar but also died soon after. Judah then promised Tamar that Shelah could be her husband when he was grown.

However, when Shelah was old enough, Judah did not keep his promise to Tamar. Tamar then resorted to deception in order to bear children by Judah, who had the responsibility to provide a husband and children for her.

Invite a student to read Genesis 38:13–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for choices that Tamar and Judah made. Tamar’s choice to pretend to be a harlot so she could become pregnant by Judah violated the law of chastity. Tamar knew that her actions might have serious consequences, such as being sentenced to death. By requesting Judah’s signet, bracelets, and staff, Tamar gathered evidence to show who the father of her child was.

- How did Judah respond to this temptation?

After students respond, write on the board *Immediately gave in to temptation* under “Judah.”

Summarize Genesis 38:19–23 by explaining that Judah sent his friend with a kid (a young goat) to pay the harlot and retrieve his signet, bracelets, and staff, but his friend could not find her. Point out that Judah still did not realize that the woman he believed was a harlot was actually his daughter-in-law, Tamar.

- Why do you think Judah sent a friend to pay the harlot for him?

Write the following statement on the board under “Judah”: *Tried to keep his sin a secret.*

Ask a student to read Genesis 38:24–26 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened three months later.

- How might you have felt at this point if you had been in Judah’s position?

Write on the board *Humiliated when his sin was exposed* under “Judah.”

## Genesis 39:1–19

### *Joseph is brought to Egypt and resists temptations from Potiphar’s wife*

To help students understand the context for Genesis 39, ask a student to briefly summarize how Joseph came to be in the possession of the Ishmaelites. (You might refer students to the chapter summary of Genesis 37 to help them remember.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Joseph after he was sold to the Ishmaelites. Ask students to report what they find. You may want to invite students to mark the phrase “the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man” in verse 2.

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord blessed Joseph.

- How did the Lord bless and prosper Joseph?
- What do you think “goodly person, and well favoured” means?

Ask a student to read Genesis 39:7 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how Joseph was tested. Ask students to report what they find. You may need to explain that the phrase “lie with me” was a command to have sexual relations.

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Joseph responded to Potiphar’s wife.

- How did Joseph respond to Potiphar’s wife? (Point out that according to the Joseph Smith Translation, “wotteth not” in verse 8 means “knoweth not.” Joseph was explaining to Potiphar’s wife that Potiphar trusted him greatly.)
- What do Joseph’s words recorded in verse 9 indicate about his relationship with God?
- Based on Joseph’s example, what can our devotion to God give us strength to do? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **Our devotion to God gives us strength to resist temptation.**)
- What do you think we can do to develop strong devotion to God like Joseph had?

Invite students who feel comfortable to share how their devotion to God has helped them to resist temptation. (Explain that students should not share experiences that are too personal or private.)

Ask students to read Genesis 39:10 silently and look for how often Joseph faced temptation from Potiphar’s wife. Ask students to report what they find. Write on the board *Resisted temptation day after day* under “Joseph.”

Ask a student to read Genesis 39:11–12 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Joseph did when Potiphar’s wife became more demanding. Invite students to report what they find.

- Why was it wise for Joseph to run out of the house in this situation?
- What can we learn from Joseph’s example about what to do when we find ourselves in tempting situations? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we remove ourselves from tempting situations, then we will have greater ability to resist temptation.**)

Point out that one way to remove ourselves from tempting situations is to do all we can to avoid those situations. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement. Ask the class to listen for counsel that they feel they need to apply more fully in their lives.

“Never do anything that could lead to sexual transgression. Treat others with respect, not as objects used to satisfy lustful and selfish desires. Before marriage, do not participate in passionate kissing, lie on top of another person, or touch the private, sacred parts of

### Genesis 39:9

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

another person's body, with or without clothing. Do not do anything else that arouses sexual feelings. Do not arouse those emotions in your own body. Pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit so that you can be clean and virtuous. . . .

"Avoid situations that invite increased temptation, such as late-night or overnight activities away from home or activities where there is a lack of adult supervision. Do not participate in discussions or any media that arouse sexual feelings. Do not participate in any type of pornography. The Spirit can help you know when you are at risk and give you the strength to remove yourself from the situation. Have faith in and be obedient to the righteous counsel of your parents and leaders" (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 36).

- What are some specific ways you can avoid compromising situations that may threaten your virtue?

Encourage students to live this counsel so they can be protected from sin.

Summarize Genesis 39:13–18 by explaining that Potiphar's wife lied and accused Joseph of seeking to have inappropriate relations with her.

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Joseph as a result of the lies Potiphar's wife told about him. Invite students to report what they find. Write on the board *Falsely accused of sin* under "Joseph."

### Genesis 39:21–23

#### *The Lord blesses Joseph in prison*

Begin this scripture block by asking the class the following question:

- Have you ever experienced painful or difficult consequences for choosing to do what is right?

Ask a student to read Genesis 39:21–23 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for ways Joseph was blessed while in prison. Ask students to report what they find. You may want to invite students to mark the phrase "the Lord was with Joseph" in verse 21. Write on the board the following statement under "Joseph": *The Lord blessed and prospered him because of his righteousness.*

- What can we learn from Joseph's experience? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **If we do what is right, then the Lord will be with us and help us.**)
- When have you felt the truthfulness of this principle in your life? (You may also want to share an experience.)

Ask one or two students to summarize the differences between Judah's and Joseph's responses to temptation and the short- and long-term consequences of their choices. Then invite students to ponder the temptations they face. Invite them to complete the following statement in their class notebooks or scripture study journals with those temptations in mind: *I will follow Joseph's example by . . .*

Testify of the truths discussed today, and encourage students to resist temptation as Joseph did.

#### Scripture Mastery—Genesis 39:9

To help students apply one of the principles we can learn from Genesis 39:9, ask them to memorize the sentence, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Ask them to repeat the phrase several times until they can do so without help. Invite students to think or say this sentence when they face temptation.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Genesis 28–39 (Unit 7)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Genesis 28–39 (unit 7) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Genesis 28–30)

From Jacob's experiences traveling to the land Padan-aram to seek a wife, students learned that we must receive the saving ordinances of the gospel, including eternal marriage, and keep their associated covenants in order to receive the blessings of Abraham and return to the presence of the Lord. Jacob's experience in the sacred place called Bethel helped students identify that the temple is the house of God and the gate to eternal life. Rachel's experience with childbearing taught students that when we experience challenges, we can remember that God does not forget us.

#### Day 2 (Genesis 31–32)

Students identified the following principles as they studied Jacob's return to the land of Canaan: The Lord will be with us when we do what He asks. When we face difficulties, we should earnestly pray for help and then do what we can to overcome them. At times, we may need to put forth great effort as we seek the Lord's help and blessings. We will prevail with God as we make and keep sacred covenants.

#### Day 3 (Genesis 33–37)

In studying the reunion of Esau and Jacob, students learned that if we make the effort to settle conflicts in the Lord's way, then we can help restore peace to troubled relationships. From Jacob's return to Bethel, students learned that if we prepare ourselves to worship the Lord, we invite His revelation. The actions of Jacob's sons against their younger brother Joseph taught students that choosing to hate or envy others can lead us to commit additional sins.

#### Day 4 (Genesis 38–39)

As students studied about Joseph's experience as a servant in Potiphar's house, they learned that our devotion to God gives us strength to resist temptation. They also discovered that if we remove ourselves from tempting situations, then we will have greater ability to resist temptation. From Joseph's early experience in prison, students identified that if we do what is right, then the Lord will be with us and help us.

### Introduction

This lesson focuses on Joseph's righteous decisions and reinforces what students learned about him in their daily lessons. Genesis 39 illustrates Joseph's righteousness and shows how the Lord prospered him in all circumstances.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Genesis 39:1–19

*Joseph is brought to Egypt and resists temptations from Potiphar's wife*

Read aloud each of the scenarios below. After each one, ask the class to explain what choices are available to them in that scenario and what short-term or long-term consequences may follow those choices.

1. A friend tells you that it is okay to engage in sexual behaviors outside of marriage when you love and trust each other.
2. A friend of the opposite gender invites you into his or her bedroom so you can be alone to talk.

Explain that as students study Genesis 39, they will learn from the good choices Joseph made when he was in tempting situations.

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Joseph after he was sold to the Ishmaelite and Midianite merchants. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:3–6 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for how the Lord blessed Joseph.

- How did the Lord bless and prosper Joseph?
- What do you think "goodly person, and well favoured" means? (As students respond, you may need to explain that it means that Joseph was kind and handsome.)

Ask a student to read Genesis 39:7 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how Joseph was tested. Ask students to report what they find. You may need to explain that the phrase "lie with me" was a command to have sexual relations.

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Joseph responded to Potiphar's wife.

- How did Joseph respond to Potiphar's wife? (Point out that according to the Joseph Smith Translation, "wotteth not" in verse 8 means "knoweth not." Joseph was explaining to Potiphar's wife that Potiphar trusted him greatly.)
- What do Joseph's words in verse 9 indicate about his relationship with God?
- Based on Joseph's example, what can our devotion to God give us strength to do? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **Our devotion to God gives us strength to resist temptation.**)

- What do you think we can do to develop a strong devotion to God like Joseph had?

Remind students that Genesis 39:9 is a scripture mastery passage. You may want to invite the class to recite this verse aloud and then invite a student to recite it from memory.

Ask students to read Genesis 39:10 silently, looking for how often Joseph faced temptation from Potiphar's wife. Ask students to report what they find.

Ask a student to read Genesis 39:11–12 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Joseph did when Potiphar's wife became more demanding. Invite students to report what they find.

- What can we learn from Joseph's example about what to do when we find ourselves in tempting situations? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we remove ourselves from tempting situations, then we will have greater ability to resist temptation.**)

Point out that one way to remove ourselves from tempting situations is to do all we can to avoid those situations. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement. Ask the class to listen for counsel that they feel they need to apply more fully to their lives.

"Never do anything that could lead to sexual transgression. Treat others with respect, not as objects used to satisfy lustful and selfish desires. Before marriage, do not participate in passionate kissing, lie on top of another person, or touch the private, sacred parts of another person's body, with or without clothing. Do not do anything else that arouses sexual feelings. Do not arouse those emotions in your own body. Pay attention to the promptings of the Spirit so that you can be clean and virtuous. . . .

"Avoid situations that invite increased temptation, such as late-night or overnight activities away from home or activities where there is a lack of adult supervision. Do not participate in discussions or any media that arouse sexual feelings. Do not participate in any type of pornography. The Spirit can help you know when you are at risk and give you the strength to remove yourself from the situation. Have faith in and be obedient to the righteous counsel of your parents and leaders" (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 36).

- How can this counsel help you?

Encourage students to live this counsel so they can be protected from sin.

Summarize Genesis 39:13–18 by explaining that Potiphar's wife lied and accused Joseph of seeking to have inappropriate relations with her.

Invite a student to read Genesis 39:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Joseph as a result of the lies Potiphar's wife told about him. Invite students to report what they find.

## Genesis 39:21–23

### *The Lord blesses Joseph in prison*

Point out that although it may have been painful or difficult for Joseph to be cast into prison for a crime he did not commit, being in prison allowed him to escape further temptation from Potiphar's wife.

Ask a student to read Genesis 39:21–23 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for additional ways Joseph was blessed while in prison.

- What principle can we learn from Joseph's experience? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **If we do what is right, then the Lord will be with us and help us.**)

Testify of the truths discussed today, and encourage students to resist temptation as Joseph did.

## Next Unit (Genesis 40–50)

Invite students to imagine being sold into slavery by their siblings. Ask students to ponder the following questions: How would you feel toward your siblings if you were later reunited with them, but you were then in a position of great power? Would you forgive your siblings? Encourage students as they study Genesis 40–50 to watch for how Joseph reacts to the mistreatment from his brothers of selling him into slavery.

## LESSON 36

# Genesis 40–41

### Introduction

While in prison because of the false accusations of Potiphar's wife, Joseph interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker. Two years later, when Pharaoh had dreams that others could not interpret, the butler remembered Joseph. Pharaoh sent for Joseph and described his dreams. Joseph explained that

God was warning Pharaoh about an upcoming famine. Pharaoh recognized the Spirit of God in Joseph, and he made him a ruler in Egypt. He also made him responsible for devising a plan to store large amounts of food to prepare the country for the coming famine.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 40:1–23

#### *While in prison, Joseph interprets the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker*

Write the following on the board: *How does God communicate with His children?*

Invite students to take turns coming to the board to list ways that God communicates with us. After they have listed as many ways as they can think of, invite them to ponder the ways in which they have personally experienced God communicating with them.

- Have you ever had an opportunity to help another person recognize that God was communicating with him or her? (Invite students who feel comfortable doing so to share their experiences.)

Invite students to watch, as they study Genesis 40–41, for how the Lord communicated with some individuals in Egypt and how they were able to recognize that the messages were from God.

Invite four volunteers to participate in a role play of the events recorded in Genesis 40, and assign them the following parts: Narrator, Joseph, Butler, Baker. Provide them a copy of the following script. Ask them to bring their scriptures and come to the front of the class. Ask the rest of the class to follow along in Genesis 40 and look for how God communicated with two prisoners in Egypt.

---

Narrator: Sometime after Joseph was placed in prison, Pharaoh became upset with his chief butler and chief baker and placed them in prison. Joseph was assigned to be their servant. One night both the butler and the baker had troubling dreams. In the morning Joseph noticed that they were sad.

Joseph: Wherefore look ye so sadly today?

Butler: We have dreamed a dream . . .

Baker: . . . and there is no interpreter of it.

Joseph: Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you.

Narrator: And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph.

Butler: [Read Genesis 40:9–11, beginning with "In my dream . . ."]

Joseph: [Read Genesis 40:12–15, beginning with "This is the interpretation . . ."]

Narrator: When the chief baker saw that the interpretation of the butler's dream was good, he told Joseph his dream.

Baker: [Read Genesis 40:16–17, beginning with "I also was in my dream . . ."]

Joseph: [Read Genesis 40:18–19, beginning with "This is the interpretation . . ."]

Narrator: [Read Genesis 40:20–23.]

---

Have the participants remain at the front of the room, and ask the class the following questions:

- How did God communicate with the butler and the baker? (God gave them dreams, and Joseph was able to interpret their dreams.)
- According to verse 8, to whom did Joseph give credit for the interpretation of the dreams? Why do you think Joseph was so willing to give credit to God for the interpretation of the dreams?

Ask the students playing the Narrator, the Butler, and Joseph to remain at the front of the class. Ask the student playing the Baker to be seated.

### Genesis 41:1–45

#### *Joseph interprets the dreams of Pharaoh*

Summarize Genesis 41:1–7 by explaining that two years later, Pharaoh also had some troubling dreams.

Continue the role play by asking for a volunteer to play the part of Pharaoh. Provide a copy of the following script to the participants, and invite them to read their parts aloud. Ask the class to follow along in Genesis 41, beginning with verse 8, and look for what Pharaoh discovered about his dreams. (At the appropriate time, you may need to explain that the word *kine* is another word for cattle and that the phrase “ears of corn” is used to represent several types of grain [see Bible Dictionary, “Corn”].)

Narrator: [Read Genesis 41:8–9, ending with the phrase “Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh . . .”]

Butler: [Read Genesis 41:9–13, beginning with “I do remember . . .”]

Narrator: [Read Genesis 41:14.]

Pharaoh: [Read Genesis 41:15, beginning with “I have dreamed a dream . . .”]

Joseph: It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

Pharaoh: [Read Genesis 41:17–24, beginning with “In my dream . . .”]

Joseph: The dream of Pharaoh is one: God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. The seven good cows and seven good ears of corn represent seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt. The seven lean, ill cows and seven thin ears of corn represent seven years of famine that will consume the land after the seven years of plenty. [Read Genesis 41:32.]

Narrator: After interpreting Pharaoh’s dreams, Joseph offered Pharaoh some counsel.

Joseph: [Read Genesis 41:33–36.]

Narrator: [Read Genesis 41:37–38. End with the phrase “And Pharaoh said unto his servants . . .”]

Pharaoh: [Pointing to Joseph] Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

Narrator: Pharaoh gave Joseph his ring, and he clothed him in fine linen. Joseph became a ruler over all the land of Egypt and was married to Asenath, the daughter of the priest of On.

Thank the participants, and ask them to return to their seats. Ask the class the following questions:

- According to verses 32, 38, and 39, what did Pharaoh discover about the source of his dreams?
- According to verse 16, how would Pharaoh know that Joseph’s interpretation of his dreams was from God?
- What did Pharaoh do for Joseph because he helped him understand the dreams? (Pharaoh made him second in command over all of Egypt. He also appointed Joseph to oversee storing grain and other food to prepare for the famine.)

Invite students to answer the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What principles can we learn from Joseph helping Pharaoh to recognize that God was communicating with him?

Ask a few students to report what they wrote. After students respond, write the following principle on the board: ***When we help others recognize God’s involvement in their lives, it can inspire them to act in faith.***

- How often do you think God is influencing your life and the lives of others around you? Why is it sometimes difficult to recognize God’s hand in our lives?
- If you could see perfectly how much Heavenly Father is involved in your life, how do you think it would influence your faith in Him?
- When has someone helped you see how the Lord is influencing your life? What effect did recognizing this influence have on you?
- When have you helped someone else recognize the Lord’s hand in his or her life?

Consider inviting students to look for an opportunity today or this week to help someone recognize the Lord’s hand in his or her life. (You may want to invite a few students to share their experiences when you meet next as a class.)

Invite a student to reread Genesis 41:38. Ask the class to follow along and look for what we need to have in our lives in order to help others recognize God’s hand in their lives. Ask students to report what they find.

- Why is it important to have the Spirit with you in order to help others recognize the Lord’s hand in their lives? How does this apply to modern-day missionary work?

Explain that because Joseph lived in a way that enabled the Spirit to be with him, the Lord could use Joseph as a tool to help fulfill His purposes.

## Genesis 41:46–57

### *Joseph gathers grain during the seven years of plenty and sells it during the seven years of famine*

Summarize Genesis 41:46–52 by explaining that for seven years Joseph went throughout all of Egypt gathering food until there was more grain in storage than could be measured. Point out that during this time, Joseph and Asenath had two sons. You may want to suggest that students mark the names of these sons in verses 51 and 52.

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 41:53–57. Ask the class to follow along and look for the result of Pharaoh’s decision to follow Joseph’s counsel.

- What was the result of Pharaoh’s decision to follow Joseph’s counsel?
- In what ways have prophets in our day asked us to prepare for future physical or temporal challenges?
- How have latter-day prophets asked us to prepare for future spiritual difficulties or trials of our faith?

What blessings can come to us if we follow the counsel of prophets and inspired leaders to prepare ourselves and our families for the future? (As students respond, you may want to emphasize the following principle: ***If we follow the counsel of the prophets and inspired leaders, then we will be better prepared to face difficulties.***) Encourage students to consider ways they can apply this principle in their efforts to be prepared for difficulties that may come in the future.

Conclude by inviting two or three students to summarize what they have learned today and explain how they plan to apply that knowledge in their lives.

## Scripture Mastery Review

If you have extra time at the end of the lesson, consider using it to review a scripture mastery passage that students are memorizing. Or you could introduce them to new passages and discuss the main doctrines or principles they teach. (Scripture mastery passages like Joshua 24:15, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 3:5–6, and Amos 3:7 contain principles that relate to this lesson and could be used to support what students have learned in Genesis 40–41.) If you prefer a more visual approach, you could choose a scripture mastery passage and invite students to draw a picture of a situation in which knowing or applying the truths in the passage would be helpful or a picture that would help them remember the main idea and reference of the scripture passage. Invite students to explain their drawings and how the passage relates to them.

### **Clearly identify doctrines and principles**

As students identify doctrines and principles, be sure to help them state the truths clearly and simply. Write the truths on the board, or invite students to write them in their class notebooks or mark them in their scriptures. This will help the class focus on the principles they are working to understand, believe, and apply as they continue their discussion.

# Genesis 42–43

## Introduction

Because of widespread famine, Jacob sent 10 of his sons to Egypt to purchase grain. There they met but did not recognize their brother Joseph. Joseph accused them of being spies, imprisoned Simeon, and sent the others

back to Canaan with a charge to return with their brother Benjamin. Because the family needed more grain, Jacob reluctantly agreed to send Benjamin with his brothers to travel back to Egypt.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 42:1–20

#### *Joseph's brothers travel to Egypt to buy grain*

Write the following question on the board, and invite students to ponder it:

*How often are God's words or prophecies fulfilled?*

As students study Genesis 42:1–20, invite them to look for how God's word was fulfilled in Joseph's life.

To help students understand the context of Genesis 42–43, remind them that in Genesis 41 they learned that Pharaoh had appointed Joseph to gather and store grain for seven years in preparation for a famine. After the famine began, Joseph sold grain to the people of Egypt and other nations.

Invite a student to read Genesis 42:1–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Jacob told his sons to do in order to survive the famine. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Genesis 42:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to identify who Jacob's sons encountered in Egypt.

- Who did Jacob's sons encounter? Why do you think they did not recognize him?
- What had happened the last time Joseph was with his brothers?
- What feelings might you have had if you were Joseph and you saw your brothers for the first time in over 20 years?

Read Genesis 42:9 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Joseph remembered when he saw his brothers bowing before him.

- What dreams did Joseph remember? (You might want to review Genesis 37:6–7, 9–10 with the class. Remind them that obeisance is an expression of deep respect or courtesy before a superior, often made by bowing.)
- Based on Joseph's experience, what truth can we learn about the prophecies the Lord gives through His servants? (Students may identify a truth such as the following: **God's words or prophecies given through His servants are fulfilled according to His will.**)
- How have you seen God's words fulfilled in your life or the life of someone you know?

Summarize Genesis 42:10–18 by explaining that after Joseph accused his brothers of being spies, he put them in prison for three days.

Ask a student to read Genesis 42:19–20 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what Joseph instructed his brothers to do to prove they were telling the truth. Ask students to report what they find.

- Why do you think Joseph's brothers may have been worried in this situation? (In order to prove their innocence, they needed to bring Benjamin to Egypt. However, their father Jacob had already indicated that he did not want Benjamin to go to Egypt.)

## Genesis 42:21–38

### Joseph sends his brothers home to retrieve Benjamin

Write the following questions on the board, and invite students to respond.

*Do you think feeling guilty is good or bad? What is the purpose of guilt? When might feeling guilt be a blessing?*

For variety, you may want to invite students to discuss these questions in pairs. After students have had sufficient time to discuss these questions, invite a few of them to explain their responses to the class.

Invite a student to read Genesis 42:21–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Joseph’s brothers began to think about as they experienced this difficult situation in Egypt.

Who is the brother they were referring to in these verses? (Joseph.)

- What evidence do you see in verses 21–23 that Joseph’s brothers were still suffering for what they had done more than 20 years previously when they sold Joseph into slavery and then lied to their father about it? (After students respond, you may want to suggest that they mark the phrase “we are verily guilty concerning our brother” in verse 21.)
- Why do you think Joseph’s brothers would have felt guilt about what they had done to Joseph so many years earlier? (They had not fully repented, so their guilt remained.)

Explain that the phrase “his blood is required” in verse 22 suggests that Joseph’s brother Reuben realized they would be held accountable for what they had done to Joseph.

- From verses 21–22 and the ideas we have discussed, what truths can we learn about guilt? (Truths students identify may include the following: **Guilt accompanies sin. Guilt can cause us to regret our sins.** Consider writing these truths on the board.)

To help students further understand some of the purposes of guilt, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“All of us have experienced the pain associated with a physical injury or wound. When we are in pain, we typically seek relief and are grateful for the medication and treatments that help to alleviate our suffering. Consider sin as a spiritual wound that causes guilt. . . . Guilt is to our spirit what pain is to our body—a warning of danger and a protection from additional damage” (“We Believe in Being Chaste,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 44).

- According to Elder Bednar, what are some purposes of feeling guilt?
- How does guilt protect us from additional damage? (Guilt protects us from further spiritual damage by alerting us when we have done something wrong. Guilt can also motivate us to make changes that will help us avoid future mistakes.)

Consider writing another truth on the board: **Guilt can motivate us to repent, seek forgiveness, and avoid future sin.**

Invite a student to read aloud another statement by Elder Bednar. Ask students to listen for what happens when we repent of our sins.

“The Savior is often referred to as the Great Physician, and this title has both symbolic and literal significance. . . . From the Atonement of the Savior flows the soothing salve that can heal our spiritual wounds and remove guilt. However, this salve can only be applied through the principles of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, and consistent obedience. The results of sincere repentance are peace of conscience, comfort, and spiritual healing and renewal” (“We Believe in Being Chaste,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 44).

- What counsel did Elder Bednar give to those who are suffering guilt because of their sins?
- What is the promise to all who sincerely repent?

Invite students to follow Elder Bednar’s counsel to seek peace and spiritual healing by exercising faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repenting of their sins. You may also want to testify of the principles the class has just discussed.

Invite a student to read Genesis 42:24 aloud. Ask the class to look for Joseph’s reaction to seeing and hearing his brothers’ expressions of guilt and regret. Ask students to report what they find.

### Use a variety of teaching methods

Many effective teachers vary the ways they teach during their lessons and also from day to day. Be willing to experiment with new methods and approaches. And be prepared to change methods during the lesson if students lose interest or if an activity does not seem to be helping students reach the desired outcomes.

Summarize Genesis 42:25–35 by explaining that after Joseph imprisoned Simeon, he sent the other brothers home with grain. But before they left, he commanded his servants to hide the money they used to purchase the grain in the brothers' sacks of grain. When they later discovered the money in their sacks, they were afraid.

Invite a student to read Genesis 42:36–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Jacob initially responded to his sons' request to take Benjamin back to Egypt with them. (You may want to explain that the word *bereaved* in verse 36 means to lose or be deprived of something or someone.) Invite them to report what they find.

### Genesis 43:1–15

#### *Jacob's sons repeat their request to return to Egypt with Benjamin*

Invite students to ponder some of the trials in Jacob's life by asking the following question:

- By this point in Jacob's life, which of his loved ones had he lost?

You may need to remind students that Jacob worked for Laban for 14 years to be able to marry Rachel, whom he loved dearly. After Rachel was not able to have children for many years, she bore Joseph and then later died while giving birth to Benjamin. Jacob believed that Joseph was dead.

- Why do you think Jacob was reluctant to send Benjamin to Egypt with his brothers? (You may want to point out that Benjamin was Jacob's only remaining son from his beloved wife Rachel [see Genesis 44:27–29].)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 43:1–15. Invite the class to follow along and look for what persuaded Jacob to allow his sons to return to Egypt with Benjamin. Ask students to report what they find.

- According to verses 8–10, what did Judah promise his father?
- How did Jacob respond?

### Genesis 43:16–34

#### *Joseph's brothers return to Egypt and dine with him*

Summarize Genesis 43:16–25 by explaining that Jacob's sons returned to Egypt. When Joseph saw that they had brought Benjamin with them, he instructed his servant to bring them to his house. The brothers feared that Joseph would put them in bonds because of the money that had been returned to their sacks of grain during their previous visit.

Remind students that this was the first time Joseph had seen Benjamin in many years. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 43:26–34. Consider stopping periodically to ask students what they think Joseph and his brothers might have been feeling.

Explain that in the next lesson students will learn how and when Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers.

## LESSON 38

# Genesis 44–46

### Introduction

To prevent his brothers from returning to Canaan, Joseph accused Benjamin of being a thief. Judah offered himself as Joseph's servant in exchange for Benjamin's freedom. After hearing Judah express concern for their father, Jacob, who would be devastated if Benjamin did not return

home, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers and forgave them for what they had done to him. Joseph and Pharaoh then sent the brothers back to Canaan to move their father, Jacob, and his household to Egypt.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 44

*Joseph arranges to stop the return of his brethren to Canaan by accusing Benjamin of theft*

Write the following questions on the board: *What do I need to repent of? How do I repent?*

Ask students to silently ponder both questions. Invite them to look for insights into what we must do to repent of our sins as they study the actions of Joseph's brothers in Genesis 44.

Remind students that in Genesis 42–43 they read about how Joseph's older brothers came to Egypt to buy grain during a famine but did not recognize him. Joseph recognized them, and he questioned them about their family under the pretext of accusing them of being a group of spies. By imprisoning Simeon, Joseph forced his other brothers into a situation where they would need to bring his younger brother, Benjamin, to Egypt. When the brothers returned for more grain, they brought Benjamin with them.

Explain that as his brothers were preparing to return to Canaan the second time, Joseph devised a plan that would prevent them from leaving Egypt. Invite one or more students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 44:1–14. Ask the class to follow along and visualize in their minds what was happening.

- According to verse 9, what did the brothers say they would accept as consequences if one of them was found with the silver cup?

Invite another student to read Genesis 44:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Judah said about their predicament.

- In verse 16, what do you think Judah meant when he said, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants"?
- According to verse 17, what did Joseph propose doing with Benjamin?

Summarize Genesis 44:18–29 by explaining that Judah told Joseph how worried their father Jacob was about letting his youngest son, Benjamin, go to Egypt for fear of losing him like he had lost another son—Joseph.

Invite a student to read Genesis 44:30–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Judah said would happen to Jacob if Benjamin did not return. Ask them to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Genesis 44:32–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Judah was willing to do for Benjamin. (To help students understand these verses, you may need to explain that a *surety* is similar to a guarantee.)

- What was Judah willing to do so that Benjamin could go free?
- How does Judah's behavior in these verses compare with how he and his brothers dealt with Joseph in Genesis 37?
- How does Judah's behavior in these verses show that his heart had changed? (Help students recognize that Judah's willingness to acknowledge his iniquity [verse 16] and to be enslaved in place of his younger brother shows how dramatically he had changed.)

Explain that while we may not know how completely repentant Judah and his brothers were from this account, from Judah's example we can learn a valuable truth regarding repentance for our own sins. Write the following on the board: *Sincere repentance includes . . .*

Invite students to complete the doctrinal statement using what they have learned from Judah's example. Although they may phrase it differently, students should identify a doctrine similar to the following: **Sincere repentance includes acknowledging our wrongs, turning away from sinful actions, and having our heart changed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.**

- Why do you think change is a part of repentance?

Invite students to think of people they know who have been willing to make significant changes to their behaviors and attitudes in order to repent. Encourage students to think about any attitudes or behaviors that Heavenly Father would like them to change. Invite them to record in their personal journals how they will do this.

### Genesis 45:1–15

#### *Joseph makes himself known to his brothers*

Fill a glass jar three-fourths full of rice or wheat, place a ping-pong ball on top, and then place the lid on the jar. Explain to the students that the ping-pong ball represents them, and the rice or wheat represents trials and difficulties they face today in their homes, school, or community. Tip the jar upside down so the ping-pong ball is now buried by the rice, and invite students to describe some of these trials or difficulties. After students respond, shake the jar up and down until the ping-pong ball rises to the top. Invite students to think of a principle that this illustration could teach about the life of Joseph and that could help them know how to rise above their own trials and discouragements.

Invite two students to take turns reading Genesis 45:1–4 aloud. Invite half of the class to follow along and consider what Joseph might have been thinking and feeling. Invite the other half to imagine what the brothers might have been thinking and feeling.

- After hearing Judah express his concern for his father and brother Benjamin, what do you think Joseph may have thought and felt as he decided to reveal his identity to his brothers?
- Verse 3 indicates that Joseph's brothers "were troubled" when Joseph told them who he was. What thoughts and feelings might Joseph's brothers have had when they learned that this Egyptian ruler was really their brother?

Divide the class into groups of three or four students, and invite each group to list the trials and difficulties Joseph had experienced throughout his life. After a few minutes, invite the groups to share their answers and write them on the board. (Their answers might include the following: his brothers hated him, his brothers threw him into a pit and then sold him into slavery, he was separated from his parents, he was tempted to be immoral, he was falsely accused, and he was kept in prison for years.)

Invite students to read Genesis 45:5–11 silently, looking for Joseph's perspective about his trials. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did Joseph understand about his trials? (Help students understand that Joseph recognized God's hand in his life.)
- According to verse 8, who did Joseph say sent him to Egypt?
- What advice might Joseph give today to someone experiencing trials or difficulties in life? (Students' answers may include something similar to the following principle: **If we are faithful, God can direct our lives and help us make trials become blessings for ourselves and others.**)

Invite students to share experiences in which God has directed the course of their lives (or the lives of people they know) and helped them make trials or difficulties become blessings. Remind students not to share experiences that are too private or personal.

- What has helped you remain faithful to God during the trials you have experienced in your life?

You may wish to share how you have seen this principle in your own life. Encourage students to look for God's hand in their lives and to see how He can help us turn challenges to our benefit and the benefit of others.

Remind students that Joseph’s brothers “were troubled at his presence” (Genesis 45:3) when they discovered who he was.

- Why would the brothers have felt troubled?

Invite a student to read Genesis 45:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Joseph helped ease their concerns. Ask students to report what they find.

- How do you think Joseph and his brothers felt at this time?
- What can we learn from Joseph’s response to his brothers and the joy he experienced as a result? (Among other things, students may identify the following principle: **Forgiving those who have wronged us helps us experience healing and peace.**)

To help students better understand this truth, consider sharing the account of Christopher Williams. Explain that while Christopher was driving home one night, his car was struck by a drunk teenage driver, killing his pregnant wife and two of his children. President James E. Faust of the First Presidency referred to this experience in a general conference talk. Invite a student to read the following statement aloud. Ask the class to listen for why it is important to forgive those who have wronged us.

“When a car crashed into Bishop Christopher Williams’s vehicle, he had a decision to make, and it was to ‘unconditionally forgive’ the driver who had caused the accident so that the healing process could take place unhampered” (“The Healing Power of Forgiveness,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 69).

Invite students to think about someone who may have hurt or wronged them. Ask them to consider what they can do to forgive so that they and others can experience greater healing and joy.

### Help students understand doctrines and principles

When students understand doctrines and principles, it means they comprehend these truths and the circumstances in which they might be applied in their lives. Understanding a doctrine or principle is a prerequisite to feeling its truth and importance and recognizing how it can be applied. Teachers can help students understand doctrines and principles by asking questions that lead students to analyze their meaning or liken them to modern situations.

## Genesis 45:16–28

### *Joseph’s brothers return to Canaan and tell Jacob that Joseph is alive*

Summarize Genesis 45:16–28 by explaining that when Pharaoh heard about Joseph’s family, he sent Joseph’s brothers back to Canaan with wagons loaded with food and gifts and invited Jacob’s family to come to Egypt. When the brothers arrived home in Canaan, they told Jacob that Joseph was alive and in Egypt. At first Jacob did not believe them, but when he saw the wagons, he said, “Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die” (Genesis 45:28).

## Genesis 46

### *Jacob and his family go to Egypt, where Jacob is reunited with his son Joseph*

Summarize Genesis 46:1–28 by explaining that Jacob took all of his family and their possessions and traveled to Egypt. On the way, the Lord spoke to Jacob in a vision and told him not to fear settling his family in Egypt because He would be with him and would make of him a great nation.

Invite a student to read Genesis 46:29–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and imagine the tender reunion between Joseph and his father, Jacob.

- Both Jacob and Joseph had likely thought that they would never see each other again in this life. How might their reunion have strengthened their trust in God and His plan for their lives?

Conclude by inviting one or two students to share what they learned today that was meaningful to them and why it was important to them.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Genesis 45:1–15. Video presentation— “Forgiveness: My Burden Was Made Light”

Instead of having a student read the statement by President Faust, you could show the video “Forgiveness: My

Burden Was Made Light” (8:24), in which Christopher Williams recounts his experience of forgiving the drunk driver who killed his pregnant wife and two of his children. Ask students to watch for the results of choosing to forgive. This video can be found on LDS.org.

## LESSON 39

# Genesis 47–49

### Introduction

Jacob and his family settled in the land of Goshen in Egypt. Throughout the seven years of famine, Joseph wisely administered the affairs of Egypt. Joseph introduced his father, Jacob, to Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed

Pharaoh. Before Jacob died, he blessed Joseph and his two grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh; Jacob then blessed his other eleven sons.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 47

*Pharaoh allows Jacob and his family to dwell in the land of Goshen*

Write the following on the board:

My Life:				
Education or Training	Occupation	Achievements	Family	Church

Invite students to talk in pairs (or you could have them write on a piece of paper) about what they would like to accomplish in each of the categories on the board. After a few minutes, ask one or two students to talk briefly about their goals in each of these areas.

- If you were to choose between your plan for your life and what Heavenly Father might have planned for your life, which would you choose? Why?
- In what ways do you think Joseph's life may have gone differently than he had planned?

Explain that because Joseph lived worthily, the Lord directed his life in a way that would allow Joseph to do much good and even save the lives of his family. Summarize Genesis 47 by explaining that Pharaoh invited Joseph's father, Jacob, and his family to dwell in Egypt in the land of Goshen. When Joseph introduced his father to Pharaoh, Jacob blessed Pharaoh. Joseph wisely administered the affairs of Egypt during the famine, saving the lives of the people and gathering great wealth for Pharaoh.

### Genesis 48

*Jacob blesses Joseph's sons and gives Ephraim the birthright*

Explain that when Jacob was old, Joseph brought his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to visit him. Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 48:7–10 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to follow along and look for what Jacob said about Joseph.

- What did Jacob say about Joseph?

Invite a student to read Genesis 48:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jacob wanted to do for Manasseh and Ephraim. Ask students to report what they learned.

Ask students to raise their hands if they have received a patriarchal blessing. Explain that the blessings Jacob desired to give Manasseh and Ephraim were similar to patriarchal blessings because they described Manasseh and Ephraim's future possibilities.

Explain that Jacob was the patriarch of his family, which means he was the father or head of his family. As the prophet and presiding priesthood authority, Jacob was authorized to bestow blessings that were similar to what we know today as patriarchal blessings.

You might want to explain the difference in our day between a father's blessing given by the patriarch of a family and a patriarchal blessing given by an ordained patriarch. A father who holds the Melchizedek Priesthood may give his children healing blessings or blessings of comfort and counsel at any time. A patriarchal blessing may be given to any worthy

member of the Church by a patriarch who has been called and ordained under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. A patriarchal blessing contains a declaration of the recipient's lineage in the house of Israel as well as guidance to help direct his or her life according to Heavenly Father's will. Those who wish to receive a patriarchal blessing must be interviewed by their bishop or branch president and receive a recommend.

Invite a student to read Genesis 48:13–14 aloud, and ask the class to identify what happened when Jacob laid his hands on Joseph's sons.

- Which hand did Jacob place on Ephraim's head? (His right hand. You may want to explain that in Jacob's day, a patriarch's right hand usually was to be placed on the first-born son's head, symbolizing that the birthright blessing belonged to him.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Genesis 48:17–20. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Joseph reacted to the placement of Jacob's hands. Ask students to report what they find.

- Why did Jacob place his right hand on Ephraim?
- How do you think Jacob knew that Ephraim was to receive the birthright blessing?
- What can we learn about patriarchal blessings from Jacob blessing his grandsons? (After students answer, write the following truth on the board: **Patriarchal blessings are given through the inspiration of God.**)

The promises in a patriarchal blessing are conditional on the recipient's faithfulness. To illustrate the importance of heeding warnings and following the counsel given in patriarchal blessings, read the following story as told by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:



"Once, long ago, when I was serving as a bishop, a young woman in my ward came for an interview. We somehow got around to her telling me her feelings about her patriarchal blessing. She said that it depressed her rather than helped her. I must have looked surprised, because she explained her feelings by telling me this: She said that her blessing warned her about sexual immorality. And, at least by her report, it did little else. It apparently warned her by describing a situation in which she might find herself, and in which, if she yielded to temptation, she would come to great harm and sorrow. She said something about how that hurt her doubly, not only by being about something so depressing when she needed encouragement, but her social life then was so barren that such a situation could never arise. . . .

"I remember better the interview I had with her less than a year later. She sobbed for a while, sitting in a chair on the other side of my desk in the bishop's office. And then she blurted out her tragedy and how it happened, exactly as she had told me the patriarch so long before had described. In her little season of doubt that a patriarch could see with inspiration, she had made choices that led to years of sorrow" ("And Thus We See": Helping a Student in a Moment of Doubt" [evening with Elder Henry B. Eyring, Feb. 5, 1993], 1–2; si.lds.org).

Invite a student who has received a patriarchal blessing to share how it has blessed his or her life or helped him or her make correct decisions. Caution the student not to share details of the blessing. If none of your students have received their blessings, or if no one wants to share, consider expressing your own feelings.

Encourage students who have not yet received their patriarchal blessings to ponder their own situations and consider what they must do to prepare or to be motivated to receive their blessings. Explain that to receive a patriarchal blessing, they will need to have an interview with their bishop or branch president, who can tell them how to proceed.

Without sharing the specifics of a patriarchal blessing, you may want to testify how you know that patriarchal blessings are given through the inspiration of God.

*Note:* The Young Women Personal Progress program includes a value experience that encourages young women to learn how to prepare to receive a patriarchal blessing (see *Young Women Personal Progress* [booklet, 2009], 30).

## Genesis 49

### *Before his death, Jacob blesses his twelve sons*

Display the picture *Jacob Blessing His Sons* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 12; see also LDS.org). Explain that Genesis 49 recounts the blessings that Jacob gave to each of his twelve sons.

### *Sharing feelings and experiences*

Sharing insights and relevant experiences can clarify a student's understanding of gospel doctrines and principles. Teachers should ensure that students never feel forced to answer a question, share feelings or experiences, or bear testimony. In addition, teachers should help students understand the sacred nature of personal spiritual experiences and encourage them to share those experiences appropriately.



You may want to suggest that students scan the chapter and mark the names of Jacob's sons so they can quickly see where to find each son's blessing.

Invite a student to read Genesis 49:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify what Jacob was planning to tell his sons as he blessed them.

- What did Jacob say he planned to reveal to his sons? (He planned to reveal what would happen to them, or their posterity, in the last days.)

Tell students that the two most detailed blessings were given to Judah and Joseph. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Judah's blessing in Genesis 49:8–10. Ask the class to follow along and look for the blessings and prophecies that were given to the tribe of Judah. Explain that the word *whelp* means "offspring" and the word *sceptre* has reference to the right or authority to rule.

- What are some of the blessings you found?
- What are some of the prophecies you found? (Explain that the reference to "the sceptre" was an indication that kings, such as David and Solomon, would be among Judah's posterity. In Hebrew, the name *Shiloh* means "He to whom it belongs" and refers to the Messiah. Joseph Smith affirmed that Shiloh is Jesus Christ, who would be born in the lineage of Judah.)

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Joseph's blessing in Genesis 49:22–26. Ask the class to follow along and search for blessings and prophecies given to Joseph and his posterity. Explain that the word *bough* in verse 22 refers to a large, strong branch.

- What are some of the blessings you found?
- What are some of the prophecies you found? (Help students understand that the prophecy that Joseph's "branches [will] run over the wall" refers to the scattering of his posterity throughout the earth, especially across the sea to the Americas [see 1 Nephi 15:12]. Lehi's family in the Book of Mormon would be "a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph" [Alma 10:3].)

Invite a student to read Genesis 49:28 aloud, and ask the class to look for something a righteous father can do for his family.

- What can we learn from Jacob about being a righteous father? (Students should point out that a righteous father can bless his children.)
- What can young men do now to prepare to be ready to bless their families?

Ask students if they have ever received a blessing from their father or from another priesthood holder. You may want to invite a few students to share experiences they have had when they received a priesthood blessing.

- What are some times in a person's life when it might be appropriate to receive a blessing from a priesthood holder?

Encourage students to consider asking their fathers or another trusted priesthood holder for a blessing, not just when they are sick but whenever they are in need of comfort or direction. You may want to conclude by sharing your own experience with and testimony of receiving priesthood blessings from your father or another priesthood holder.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Genesis 49. Patriarchal blessings

President Thomas S. Monson spoke about the uniqueness of each individual's patriarchal blessing:

"Your patriarchal blessing . . . may be brief or lengthy, simple or profound. . . . It is the Spirit that conveys the

true meaning. Your blessing is not to be folded neatly and tucked away. It is not to be framed or published. Rather, it is to be read. It is to be loved. It is to be followed. Your patriarchal blessing will see you through the darkest night. It will guide you through life's dangers" ("Your Patriarchal Blessing: A Liahona of Light," *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 66).

## LESSON 40

# Genesis 50

### Introduction

After Jacob died, his body was embalmed in Egypt. Following a period of mourning, it was taken and buried in the land of Canaan, according to his wishes. With their father dead, Joseph's brothers feared that Joseph would seek revenge on them for their past injustices to him.

Joseph reassured them that he held no grudge against them. Prior to Joseph's death, he prophesied of Moses and Joseph Smith and their future dealings with his descendants.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Genesis 50:1–14

#### *Jacob dies and is buried in Canaan*

Write the following questions on the board, and display a picture of a happy family. (You may want to prepare these items before class.)

*What are examples of events that could help bring a family closer together?*

*What are examples of events that might divide a family?*

Invite students to ponder and then respond to the questions on the board.

Remind students that Jacob died after giving blessings to his sons and their families (see Genesis 49). Invite a student to read Genesis 50:1–2, 12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Joseph responded to the death of his father. (You may want to explain that to embalm a body is to treat it with preservatives to protect it from decay.)

- How did Joseph respond to the death of his father?
- What did Jacob's sons do for him after he died?
- How might Jacob's death have helped to bring his family closer together? How might it have divided his family?

### Genesis 50:15–21

#### *Joseph comforts and shows mercy toward his brothers*

Invite a student to read Genesis 50:15–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joseph's brothers worried about after their father died. (You may want to explain that the word *requite* in verse 15 means to repay or retaliate.)

- After Jacob's death, what were Joseph's brothers concerned about? (That Joseph would hate them and seek revenge on them for mistreating him and selling him as a slave.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 50:19–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Joseph's response to his brothers' concerns.

- How did Joseph respond to his brothers? What impresses you most about his response?
- What do you think Joseph meant when he said, "Am I in the place of God?" (Genesis 50:19).
- If you were in the position of Joseph's brothers, how might you have felt after hearing his response?
- What principles can we learn from Joseph's response to his brothers? (Principles students identify may include the following: **When others sin against us, we should leave judgment to God. If we let go of past offenses, we can bring peace to ourselves and our families.**)

To help students understand how leaving judgment to God and letting go of past offenses can bring peace to our families, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for what President Uchtdorf said could help families live in peace.



“I have discovered one thing that most [happy families] have in common: they have a way of forgiving and forgetting the imperfections of others and of looking for the good.

“Those in unhappy families, on the other hand, often find fault, hold grudges, and can’t seem to let go of past offenses. . . .

“It is through our Savior’s sacrifice that we can gain exaltation and eternal life. As we accept His ways and overcome our pride by softening our hearts, we can bring reconciliation and forgiveness into our families and our personal lives. God will help us to be more forgiving, to be more willing to walk the second mile, to be first to apologize even if something wasn’t our fault, to lay aside old grudges and nurture them no more” (“One Key to a Happy Family,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Oct. 2012, 5–6).

- What did President Uchtdorf say could help us live in peace with our families?

Consider sharing an example from your life of how letting go of past offenses and forgiving others has blessed you and your family.

Ask students to think about someone they need to forgive, especially in their families. Invite them to ask Heavenly Father for help to forgive.

**Applying gospel doctrines and principles**

Application takes place when students think, speak, and live according to the truths they have learned. Be careful not to be too prescriptive in assigning specific applications for students. Remember that the most meaningful direction for personal application comes individually through inspiration or revelation from the Lord through the Holy Ghost.

**Genesis 50:22–26; Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:24–38**

*Joseph prophecies of Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the gospel*

*Note:* You may want to point out to students that the prophet Lehi quoted the words of Joseph in this scripture block to his youngest son, whose name was also Joseph (see 2 Nephi 3).

Ask the class:

- Do you think it is possible to die with joy? Why or why not?

After a few students have responded, invite the class to scan Genesis 50:22, looking for how long Joseph lived. Ask them to report what they find.

Then ask students to turn to Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:24 (in the Bible appendix) and read what Joseph said he felt as he was dying.

- Based on what you have learned about Joseph’s life, why do you think he said he would die with joy?

Explain that in addition to the things he had done during his life that brought him joy, Joseph could also go down to his grave with joy because the Lord had revealed to him how two great prophets—Moses and Joseph Smith—would bless his descendants. If possible, display pictures of Moses and Joseph Smith (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], nos. 14, 87; see also LDS.org).

Explain that the Lord promised Joseph that Moses would deliver his descendants from Egyptian bondage (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:24 [in the Bible appendix]).

Explain to students that Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:25 (in the Bible appendix) contains Joseph’s prophecy of the scattering of Israel. You may want to invite students to underline the phrase “a branch shall be broken off, and shall be carried into a far country.”

- What group of people do you think this could be referring to? (Lehi and his family could be one fulfillment of this prophecy; see also Genesis 49:22.)

Invite a student to read Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:25 (in the Bible appendix) aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the promises given concerning the descendants of Joseph who would be scattered.

- What promises did the Lord make concerning these descendants of Joseph?

Explain that in order to bring His people out of spiritual darkness and captivity, the Lord raised up a “choice seer” (Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:26–27) named Joseph Smith.

Invite a student to read Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:26–27 (in the Bible appendix) aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words and phrases that describe the Prophet Joseph Smith. Have them report what they find, and write their responses on the board.

You may want to explain that a *seer* is “a person authorized of God to see with spiritual eyes things that God has hidden from the world (Moses 6:35–38). He is a revelator and a prophet (Mosiah 8:13–16)” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Seer”; scriptures.lds.org).



- What do you think the description of the Prophet Joseph Smith being “a choice seer” (Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:26) means?

Invite a student to read Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:28–29, 32–33 (in the Bible appendix) aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for more words and phrases that describe the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask them to report what they find, and write their responses on the board.

- According to Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:28, what covenants would Joseph Smith bring to our knowledge?
- In verse 29, the Lord said that this choice seer, Joseph Smith, “shall do my work.” What is the “work” the Lord gave Joseph Smith to do? (Help students identify the following truth: **Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord restored His gospel to the earth.**)

Invite a student to read Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:30–31 (in the Bible appendix) aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would give Joseph Smith power to bring forth.

- What words of God did the Lord give the Prophet Joseph Smith power to bring forth?

Explain that in verse 31 the phrase “the fruit of thy loins shall write” refers to a record written by descendants of Joseph of Egypt. The phrase “the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write” refers to a record written by descendants of Judah, or the Jews.

- What do you think these two records are? (Wait for students to answer. Then hold up a copy of the Book of Mormon and a Bible.)
- What did the Lord say would happen to these two records?
- As the Book of Mormon and the Bible grow together, what impact will they have on the world?

After students respond, consider inviting them to write the following truth in the margin of their scriptures near Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:31: **The Book of Mormon and Bible bring peace, truth, and a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.**

To illustrate how the Book of Mormon and the Bible bring people to a true knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ, draw a point or dot on the board. Ask the students how many straight lines can be drawn through this single point. Draw many lines through the point.

- How might this illustration represent the Bible and the various interpretations of what the Bible teaches?

Draw a second point on the board. Explain that this point represents the Book of Mormon. Ask students how many straight lines could be drawn between the two points on the board. Draw a single line through the two points.

- From this illustration, how do the Book of Mormon and the Bible work together to confound false doctrine and help bring people to a true knowledge of Jesus Christ and His gospel?
- How have the Book of Mormon and the Bible helped you draw closer to your Savior, Jesus Christ, and His gospel?

Invite students to look back at Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:27 (in the Bible appendix) and underline the phrase “he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins.”

- What do you think this phrase means? (Explain that to be *esteemed* is to be respected and admired.)

Explain that whether we descend from Joseph of Egypt or belong to another tribe of Israel, we who have been blessed by the restored gospel of Jesus Christ have many reasons to highly esteem the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Write the following questions on the board and invite students to answer them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

*What do you respect or admire about the Prophet Joseph Smith?*

*In what ways has your life been blessed because the Lord restored the gospel of Jesus Christ through Joseph Smith?*

Invite a few students to share their responses with the class. Conclude the lesson by testifying of the Restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Genesis 40–50 (Unit 8)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Genesis 40–50 (unit 8) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Genesis 40–41)

As students studied this lesson, they learned about Joseph's experience in prison and his gift to interpret dreams. From Joseph's example they learned that when we help others recognize God's involvement in their lives, it can inspire them to act in faith. They also learned that if we follow the counsel of the prophets, then we will be better prepared to face difficulties.

#### Day 2 (Genesis 42–46)

In this lesson students studied how Joseph dealt with his brothers who had come to Egypt to buy food for their families. From this they learned that sincere repentance includes acknowledging our wrongs and changing our hearts and actions. They also learned that if we are faithful, God can direct our lives and help us make trials become blessings for ourselves and others.

#### Day 3 (Genesis 47–49)

In this lesson students learned that Jacob and his posterity settled in the land of Goshen in Egypt. While there, Jacob gave blessings to Pharaoh, to his sons, and to his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh. Students learned that patriarchal blessings are given by inspiration of God. They declare our lineage and can warn us about our weaknesses as well as tell us about our earthly and eternal possibilities.

#### Day 4 (Genesis 50)

As they studied Genesis 50, students learned that if we let go of past offenses, we can bring peace to ourselves and our families. When others sin against us, we should leave judgment to God. From the Joseph Smith Translation additions to this chapter, students discovered that Joseph of Egypt received revelation about Moses and Joseph Smith, both of whom would be instrumental in delivering his descendants from physical and spiritual bondage. They also learned that the Book of Mormon and the Bible bring peace, truth, and a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.

### Introduction

This lesson focuses on Genesis 45, which tells how Joseph made himself known to his brothers and how his brothers returned to Canaan to bring their father, Jacob, to Egypt.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Genesis 45:1–15

##### *Joseph makes himself known to his brothers*

Fill a glass jar three-fourths full of rice or wheat, place a ping-pong ball on top, and then place the lid on the jar. Explain to the students that the ping-pong ball represents them, and the rice or wheat represents trials and difficulties they face today in their homes, school, or community. Tip the jar upside down so the ping-pong ball is buried by the rice or wheat, and invite students to describe some of these trials and afflictions. After students respond, shake the jar up and down until the ping-pong ball rises to the top. Invite students to think of a principle that this illustration could teach about the life of Joseph and that could help them know how to rise above their own trials and discouragements.

Invite two students to take turns reading Genesis 45:1–4 aloud. Ask half of the class to follow along and consider what Joseph might have been thinking and feeling. Ask the other half to follow along and consider what the brothers might have been thinking and feeling.

- After hearing Judah express his concern for his father and brother Benjamin (see Genesis 44:18–34), what do you think Joseph may have thought and felt as he decided to reveal his identity to his brothers?
- Verse 3 indicates that Joseph's brothers "were troubled" when Joseph told them who he was. What thoughts and feelings might Joseph's brothers have had when they learned that this Egyptian ruler was really their brother?

Invite students to review what they have studied about Joseph and think about the trials and difficulties he experienced throughout his life. After students have had sufficient time, invite them to list the trials and difficulties on the board. (Their list might include the following: Joseph's brothers hated him, his brothers threw him into a pit and then sold him into slavery, he was separated from his parents, he was tempted to be immoral, he was falsely accused, and he was kept in prison for years.)

Invite a student to read Genesis 45:5–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Joseph's perspective about his trials. Have students report what they find.

- What did Joseph understand about his trials? (Help students understand that Joseph recognized God's hand in his life.)
- According to verse 8, who did Joseph say sent him to Egypt?

- What advice might Joseph give today to someone experiencing trials or difficulties in life? (Students' answers may include something similar to the following principle: **If we are faithful, God can direct our lives and help us make trials become blessings for ourselves and others.** Using the students' words, you may want to write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to share experiences in which God has directed the course of their lives (or the life of someone they know) and helped them make trials or difficulties become blessings.

- What has helped you remain faithful to God during the trials you have experienced in your life?

You may wish to share how you have seen this principle in your own life. Encourage students to look for God's hand in their lives and to see how He can help us turn challenges to our benefit and the benefit of others.

Remind students that Joseph's brothers "were troubled at his presence" (Genesis 45:3) when they discovered who he was.

- Why would the brothers have felt troubled?

Invite a student to read Genesis 45:9–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Joseph helped ease their concerns. Ask students to report what they find.

- How do you think Joseph and his brothers felt at this time?
- What can we learn from Joseph's response to his brothers and the joy he experienced as a result? (Among other things, students may identify the following truth: **Forgiving those who have wronged us helps us experience healing and peace.** You may wish to write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle better, consider sharing the account of Christopher Williams. Explain that while he was driving home one night, his car was struck by a drunk teenage driver, killing his pregnant wife and two of his children. President James E. Faust of the First Presidency referred to this experience in a general conference talk. Invite a student to read the following statement aloud. Ask the class to listen for why it is so important to forgive those who have wronged us.

"When a car crashed into Bishop Christopher Williams's vehicle, he had a decision to make, and it was to 'unconditionally forgive' the driver who had caused the accident so that the healing process could take place unhampered" ("The Healing Power of Forgiveness," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2007, 69).

Explain that while it can be very difficult to forgive some wrongs against us, President Faust taught of the necessity to forgive others as soon as possible. Invite a student to read the following statement aloud:

"Most of us need time to work through pain and loss. We can find all manner of reasons for postponing forgiveness. One of these reasons is waiting for the wrongdoers to repent before we forgive them. Yet such a delay causes us to forfeit the peace and

happiness that could be ours. The folly of rehashing long-past hurts does not bring happiness.

"Some hold grudges for a lifetime, unaware that courageously forgiving those who have wronged us is wholesome and therapeutic. . . .

". . . Only as we rid ourselves of hatred and bitterness can the Lord put comfort into our hearts" ("The Healing Power of Forgiveness," 68–69).

Invite students to think about someone who may have hurt or wronged them. Ask them to consider what they can do to forgive so that they and others can experience greater healing and joy.

### Genesis 45:16–46:34

*Joseph's brothers return to Canaan and tell Jacob that Joseph is alive; Jacob and his family go to Egypt, where Jacob reunites with his son Joseph*

Summarize Genesis 45:16–46:34 by explaining that when Pharaoh heard about Joseph's family, he sent Joseph's brothers back to Canaan with wagons loaded with food and gifts and invited Jacob's family to come to Egypt. When the brothers arrived home in Canaan, they told Jacob that Joseph was alive and in Egypt. At first Jacob did not believe them, but when he saw the wagons, he said, "Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die" (Genesis 45:28). Jacob took all of his family and their possessions and traveled to Egypt. On the way, the Lord spoke to Jacob in a vision and told him not to fear settling his family in Egypt because He would be with Jacob and would make of him a great nation.

Invite a student to read Genesis 46:29–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and imagine the tender reunion between Joseph and his father, Jacob.

- Both Jacob and Joseph had likely thought that they would never see one another again in this life. How might their reunion have strengthened their trust in God and His plan for their lives?

Conclude by inviting one or two students to share what they learned today that was meaningful to them and why it was important to them.

### Next Unit (Exodus 1–13)

Ask students if they have ever seen someone courageously refuse to follow someone who was trying to get him or her to do something wrong. Explain that in the next unit they will study about the Hebrew midwives who defied an evil command of Pharaoh and chose to obey God rather than man. Ask students: How would you feel if you were asked to go before the leader of the most powerful nation in the world and demand that he let God's people go? How many miraculous signs did Pharaoh need to witness before he finally softened his heart?

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Exodus

### Why study this book?

The word *exodus* means “exit” or “departure.” The book of Exodus provides an account of Israel’s departure from bondage in Egypt and their preparation to inherit the promised land as the Lord’s covenant people. Israel’s departure from bondage and journey through the wilderness can symbolize our journey through a fallen world and back to the presence of God (see Bible Dictionary, “Pauline Epistles,” “Analysis of Hebrews,” 6b). As students study this book they will learn about the Lord’s power to deliver them from sin. They will also learn that commandments, ordinances, and covenants can help them prepare to receive the blessings of eternal life.

### Who wrote this book?

Moses is the author of Exodus. He was raised in the royal court of Egypt by Pharaoh’s daughter, but he left this place of privilege “to suffer affliction with the people of God” (Hebrews 11:25). After Moses fled Egypt he traveled to the land of Midian. There he received the Melchizedek Priesthood from his father-in-law, Jethro (see D&C 84:6). At some point Moses also received the keys of the gathering of Israel (see D&C 110:11). Moses ushered in a dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and served as a prophet and a revelator of God’s words (see Exodus 3–4; Moses 1).

### When and where was it written?

There are varying opinions on when Exodus and the other books of Moses were written, and we do not know exactly where Moses was when he wrote this book.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Exodus provides details about Moses’s upbringing and calling as a prophet (see Exodus 1–4), the institution of the Passover (see Exodus 11–12), and the Lord’s covenant with Israel at Sinai—including His declaration of the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 19–20). The events recorded in Exodus became an important part of Israel’s historical identity and have been cited by Jesus Christ and His prophets to teach a variety of gospel principles (see D&C 8:2–3; John 6:48–51; 1 Corinthians 10:1–7; Hebrews 11:23–29; 1 Nephi 4:1–3; 17:23–31; Helaman 8:11–13).

### Outline

**Exodus 1–4** The Lord answers Israel’s cries by raising up Moses to deliver them from bondage in Egypt.

**Exodus 5–12** Moses and Aaron ask Pharaoh to set the children of Israel free. Pharaoh refuses, and the Lord sends plagues upon Egypt. The Feast of the Passover is established among Israel to commemorate the passing over of the houses of the Israelites when God smote the firstborn of the Egyptians.

**Exodus 13–15** The children of Israel leave Egypt. Pharaoh and his army pursue Israel. The Lord parts the Red Sea for Israel, and Pharaoh’s army is drowned. Israel praises the Lord for their deliverance.

**Exodus 16–18** Israel murmurs about the lack of food and water in the wilderness. The Lord sends manna and quail for Israel to eat and commands Moses to bring forth water from a rock. Israel defeats the armies

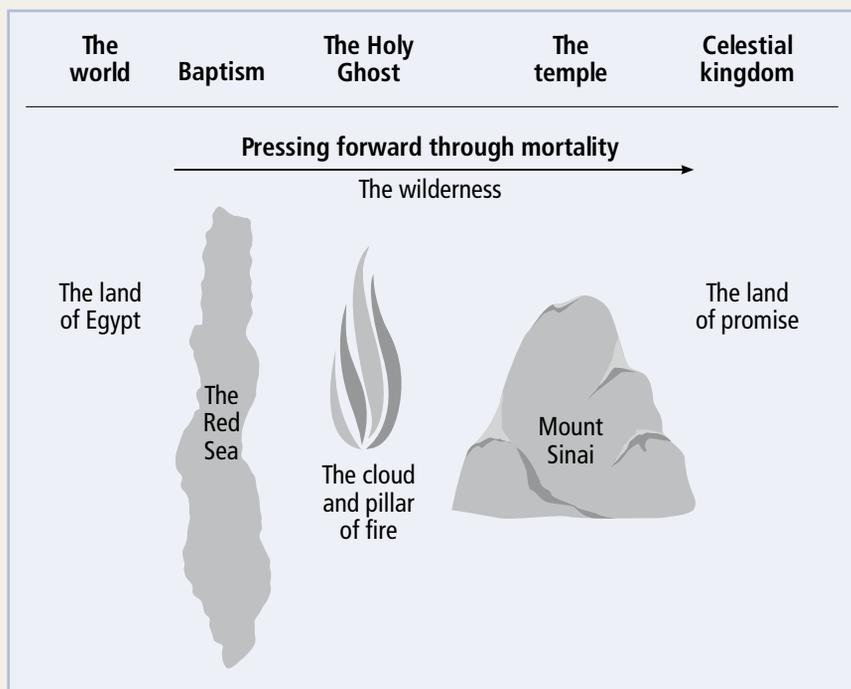
of Amalek. Moses establishes rulers among Israel.

**Exodus 19–24** At Mount Sinai the Lord reveals the conditions of His covenant, and Israel covenants to obey the Lord.

**Exodus 25–31** Moses receives instructions concerning the construction of the tabernacle, the consecration of priests, and the performance of sacrifices. Moses is given two stone tables containing the Lord’s covenant with Israel.

**Exodus 32–34** Israel worships a golden calf. Moses breaks the stone tables and pleads with the Lord for Israel. After the people repent, the Lord makes another covenant with Israel and writes it on two new tables of stone.

**Exodus 35–40** Skilled workmen construct the tabernacle, and the glory of the Lord rests upon it.



## LESSON 41

# Exodus 1–2

### Introduction

The children of Israel increased in number while in Egypt, and a new pharaoh placed them in bondage. Pharaoh decreed that every newborn Hebrew male be killed. Moses's mother saved him from the decree, and he was raised by Pharaoh's daughter. When Moses was

grown, he slew an Egyptian while defending a Hebrew slave. Moses fled Egypt and dwelt in Midian, where he married Zipporah. Meanwhile in Egypt, the Israelites cried unto the Lord because of their bondage.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 1:1–22

#### *A new pharaoh places the children of Israel in bondage*

Ask students to think of situations they have been in when others have wanted them to do something that was contrary to Heavenly Father's will.

- Why is it sometimes difficult or frightening to keep the commandments when others want you to do something different?

As students study Exodus 1, invite them to look for a principle that will help them understand the blessings of following God's commandments, even when it is difficult to do so.

Ask a student to briefly remind the class about the circumstances that led to the children of Israel living in Egypt (see Genesis 37–47). Summarize Exodus 1:1–8 by explaining that eventually Joseph and his generation died and a new pharaoh rose to power. By this time the children of Israel had greatly increased in number.

- How did the pharaoh in Joseph's day regard Joseph? (Pharaoh trusted Joseph and placed him as second-in-command in Egypt.)

Write the following references on the board: *Exodus 1:9–10; Exodus 1:11; Exodus 1:12–14; Exodus 1:15–16; Exodus 1:17; Exodus 1:18–19*. Give a half sheet of paper to each student. Invite students to open to Exodus 1 and cover the page with the paper. Instruct students not to uncover the verses until you direct them to.

Write the following question on the board: *What happens next?* Explain to students that they will be asked to predict some of the events recorded in Exodus 1 before they read about them. Ask question 1 below, and invite students to write their predictions of what happened on their pieces of paper. Invite one or two students to share their predictions, and then ask students to uncover and silently read the first set of verses listed on the board (Exodus 1:9–10) to discover how well their predictions match what really happened. Invite students to report what they find. Repeat this process for the remaining references on the board.

1. How do you think the new pharaoh felt about the increase in the number of Israelites? (See Exodus 1:9–10.)
2. What do you think Pharaoh did about the increasing number of Israelites? (See Exodus 1:11.)
3. What do you think occurred after the Israelites were put in bondage? (See Exodus 1:12–14.)
4. Since placing the Israelites in bondage did not slow their growth in numbers, what do you think Pharaoh did next? (See Exodus 1:15–16.) (To help students understand these verses, you may need to explain that [1] the term *Hebrew* refers to an Israelite, [2] a *midwife* is a woman who assists in childbirth, and [3] the phrase "upon the stools" refers to a device [a birthing stool] on which women gave birth.)
5. What do you think the Hebrew midwives did in response to Pharaoh's edict? (See Exodus 1:17.)
6. How do you think Pharaoh responded when he learned that the midwives had not obeyed his command? (See Exodus 1:18–19, 22.)

Invite students to look back at Exodus 1:17, and ask:

- What does it mean that the midwives “feared God”? (To fear God means to revere or have great respect for Him.)
- How did the midwives show that they revered God?
- What might the midwives have risked by choosing to revere God more than Pharaoh?

Invite a student to read Exodus 1:20–21 aloud, and ask the class to look for what God did as a result of the midwives’ choice to revere Him rather than obey Pharaoh’s command.

Invite students to report what they discover.

- According to these verses, how did the Lord “[deal] well” with the midwives? (You may want to point out that verse 21, footnote *b*, indicates that the Lord blessed the midwives with descendants.)
- What principle can we learn from this account about what God will do when we revere Him and put His will above that of others? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **As we revere God by putting His will above that of others, He will bless us.**)

To help students begin to identify ways to apply this principle in their lives, ask the following question:

- What are some modern-day challenges that could be likened to what the Israelite midwives faced?

Invite a student read aloud the following statement by Bishop Gary E. Stevenson, Presiding Bishop of the Church. Ask the class to listen for counsel that can help them choose the will of God over the will of others.



“There will be times when you . . . will have to demonstrate your righteous courage in plain view of your peers, the consequence of which may be ridicule and embarrassment. . . . He will reward you for your courage and righteous behavior—with happiness and joy. Such courage will be a byproduct of your faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, your prayers, and your obedience to commandments” (“Be Valiant in Courage, Strength, and Activity,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 52).

- According to Bishop Stevenson, what does it take to choose the will of God over the will of others?
- When have you or someone you know chosen to revere God by putting His will above the will of others? How did God deal well with you or this person?

Invite students to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals some things they are currently doing to put the Lord first in their lives. (You may want to suggest an example or two to get them thinking, such as the fact that their attendance in seminary shows reverence for God.) Also ask them to write how God has dealt well with them because of their decision to put His will above the will of others. Invite them to ponder how they can improve in showing reverence for God.

Explain that because Pharaoh was unable to convince the midwives to kill the newborn Hebrew males, he issued a decree to his people. Invite a student to read Exodus 1:22 aloud, and ask the class to look for Pharaoh’s decree. Ask students to report what they find. You may want to ask students what they would do if such a decree were in place and they or someone in their family were about to have a baby.

## Exodus 2:1–10

### *Moses is born to a Levite woman and raised by Pharaoh’s daughter*

Explain that one Hebrew mother took steps to preserve the life of her son. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 2:1–4, and ask the class to look for what this mother did to save her son. Invite students to report what they find. You may want to point out that both Jesus Christ and Moses were in danger of being killed in infancy and were preserved through the power of God (see Matthew 2:16). Pharaoh’s decree to kill the newborn males and Moses’s miraculous survival foreshadowed (was a type of) Herod’s decree to kill the infant children in Bethlehem and surrounding areas and Jesus’s survival through divine intervention. (See Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], 446.)

Invite students to take turns reading Exodus 2:5–10 aloud with a partner, and ask them to look for the answers to the following questions (you may want to write these questions on the board):

- Who discovered the child? What did she name him?
- How was the child’s mother still able to be involved in his upbringing?

After sufficient time, invite students to share their answers to these questions.

### Exodus 2:11–22

#### *Moses flees to Midian, marries Zipporah, and becomes a father*

Invite students to open to Bible Maps, no. 9, “The World of the Old Testament,” in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible and locate the land of Midian. Summarize Exodus 2:11–15 by explaining that when Moses was grown, he defended a Hebrew slave by killing an Egyptian who was attempting to beat or kill the slave. When Pharaoh learned about the death, he sought to kill Moses, but Moses fled to Midian.

Summarize Exodus 2:16–22 by explaining that while in Midian, Moses married a woman named Zipporah, with whom he had a son.

### Exodus 2:23–25

#### *The children of Israel cry to the Lord in their bondage*

Explain that while Moses was in Midian, the children of Israel remained in bondage in Egypt. Invite a student to read Exodus 2:23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the children of Israel did because of their bondage. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite another student to read Exodus 2:24–25 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Lord did when the children of Israel cried to Him. You may want to explain that the phrase “God had respect unto them” means that the Lord was mindful of the children of Israel and their trials (see verse 25, footnote a).

- What do you think it means that “God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob” (verse 24)?
- What doctrines do these verses teach us about God? (Students may suggest a variety of doctrines, but be sure to emphasize that **God hears and answers our prayers** and **God keeps His covenants with His people**.)

Explain that although God does hear the prayers of all of His children, His answers and His keeping of His covenants with us are dependent upon our faithfulness (see D&C 82:10). Testify that as students study the remainder of the book of Exodus, they will see evidence of the truthfulness of these doctrines.

Ask students to think about something they have been praying about. Point out that even though Heavenly Father hears and answers our prayers, He will not necessarily answer them immediately or in the way in which we hope or expect He will answer them. For instance, at this point in the account in Exodus, the children of Israel were still in bondage and God had not yet delivered them. However, He had begun to prepare the way for them to be delivered through Moses even before they cried unto Him for help. Testify that in a similar way, God may currently be preparing the way for our own prayers to be answered, although we may not be aware of it at this time. Invite students to ponder how God may be doing this in their lives.

To conclude the lesson you may want to testify of the truths you have discussed today.

#### *Use scripture study aids*

The Church has prepared a variety of scripture study aids and included them in the standard works for some languages. These study aids include such things as footnotes, topical indexes, pictures, and maps. They are valuable resources for teachers and students to use as they study the scriptures. Encourage students to use these study aids in their personal scripture study.

# Exodus 3–4

## Introduction

The Lord called Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt. Moses expressed concern about his inadequacies and his ability to deliver Israel. The Lord reassured Moses that He would

be with him and give him power to deliver Israel. Aaron was called to be a spokesman for Moses. Aaron and Moses traveled to Egypt and spoke to the elders of Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 3:1–10

#### *The Lord speaks to Moses from a burning bush*

As students enter the classroom, invite them to remove their shoes. (Those who desire to leave their shoes on should be allowed to do so.)

- What are some reasons you would remove your shoes when you enter a place?

Invite students to look for an important spiritual lesson the Lord taught Moses using Moses's shoes as a symbol as they study Exodus 3.

Ask students to turn to Bible Photographs, no. 2, "Mount Sinai (Horeb) and the Sinai Wilderness," in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. Explain that this mountain is called Horeb (see Exodus 3:1) or Mount Sinai (see Exodus 19:20).

Invite a student to read Exodus 3:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses saw while on this mountain.

- According to verse 3, what did Moses see that caused him to "turn aside" and have a closer look?
- According to verse 2, who appeared to Moses in the flame of the burning bush?

Invite students to look at verse 2, footnote *a*, and notice how the Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase "angel of the Lord."

- Rather than an angel, who was it that appeared to Moses? (The Lord Jesus Christ [Jehovah] in His premortal state before His birth into the world.)

Invite a student to read Exodus 3:4 aloud. Ask students to follow along and ponder how they might have responded if they had been in Moses's situation.

- How might you have reacted if you had heard the Lord calling to you as you approached the bush? Why?

Ask a student to read Exodus 3:5–6 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said as Moses approached.

- According to verse 5, why did the Lord stop Moses from coming closer? (Moses needed to remove his shoes because he was on sacred ground.)
- What can we learn from the fact that the Lord asked Moses to remove his shoes? (We are to be reverent in sacred places; showing reverence to the Lord when we are in sacred places prepares us to draw near to Him.)

Ask students to share some ways they can demonstrate their respect and reverence for God.

Explain that once Moses had removed his shoes, the Lord proceeded to teach Moses why He had come to speak with him. Invite a student to read Exodus 3:6–7 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for the Lord's explanation. Invite students to report what they find.

To help students identify a truth in verse 7, write the following statement on the board and ask them to fill in the blanks after reviewing verse 7: "God sees our \_\_\_\_\_, hears our \_\_\_\_\_, and knows our \_\_\_\_\_." The truth should read:

**God sees our afflictions, hears our prayers, and knows our sorrows.** You may want to suggest that students mark the words that teach this truth in their scriptures.

- What experiences have you had that have confirmed this truth to you?

Invite students to read Exodus 3:8 silently, looking for what the Lord planned to do for the children of Israel. Ask them to report what they discover. Then invite them to read Exodus 3:10 silently, looking for how (or through whom) the Lord planned to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt.

- According to verse 10, how did the Lord plan to answer the prayers of the children of Israel? (By raising up Moses to deliver them.)

Explain to the class that the Lord’s prophets were foreordained to perform certain missions on earth. As evidence of this truth, invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:24, 29 (in the Bible appendix), which records Joseph of Egypt’s prophecy of a prophet who would deliver his people out of the land of Egypt. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Joseph said about this prophet. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the life and ministry of Moses were an answer to many prayers (see Exodus 3:7).

- How was Moses’s ministry an answer to prayers?
- When we understand that the life and ministry of Moses were an answer to many prayers, what can we learn about how God may answer our prayers? (Students may use other words but should identify a truth similar to the following: **The Lord often answers our prayers through other people.**)

When Moses was called to be a prophet, the Lord told him, “Thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth” (Moses 1:6). The similarities between the life of Moses and the life of Jesus Christ are interesting and instructive. The following chart lists many ways in which Moses is a type of Jesus Christ. If time permits, you could provide students with a copy of the chart with the scripture references filled in but the “Similarities” column left blank. Invite students to work in pairs reading the references and filling in the similarities between Moses and Jesus Christ in the center column.

Moses	Similarities	Jesus Christ
Exodus 1:15–16, 22; 2:1–3	Both escaped a decree of death while in their infancy.	Matthew 2:13–16
Exodus 3:7–10	Both were called to deliver Israel.	2 Nephi 6:17
Moses 1:1, 8, 11	Both were carried away by the Spirit to a high mountain where they were shown the kingdoms of the world.	Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 4:8 (in Matthew 4:8, footnote a)
Moses 1:12–22	Both overcame confrontations with Satan.	Matthew 4:3–11
Exodus 4:19	Both remained in exile until the kings who sought to kill them had died.	Matthew 2:19–20
Exodus 14:21	Both controlled the winds and the sea.	Mark 4:37–39
Exodus 16:15–18	Both miraculously provided bread.	John 6:5–35
Exodus 17:5–6	Both provided lifesaving water.	John 4:10–14
Exodus 20–23	Both were great lawgivers.	3 Nephi 15:5–10
Deuteronomy 9:16–20, 23–26	Both were mediators between God and their people.	1 Timothy 2:5

**Exodus 3:11–4:17**

*Moses expresses his concerns about his calling and is reassured by the Lord*

Invite students to imagine they have been called by the Lord to tell a world leader who is oppressing his people and who opposes the Church to allow Church members in his country to worship God freely.

- How would you feel if you were called to accomplish this mission?
- What would give you courage to accept this call?

Explain that Moses expressed a number of concerns to the Lord about his ability to deliver Israel as the Lord had called him to do. Invite a student to read Exodus 3:11 aloud, and ask the class to look for the first concern Moses expressed to the Lord. Invite students to report what they find.

Point out the question “Who am I?” in verse 11.

- What do you think Moses may have been expressing by asking this question?

To help students identify other concerns Moses had, divide the class into groups of two or three and provide a copy of the following chart for each student (leave the italicized answers off the chart). Instruct students to study the verses listed on the chart as a group. Ask them to list Moses’s concerns and the Lord’s solutions to his concerns in the boxes provided for each verse.

(To help students understand how to complete this activity, consider completing the first two boxes together as a class.)

Moses’s Concerns	The Lord’s Responses
<p><b>1. Exodus 3:11</b> <i>Who am I to be able to do what you have asked?</i></p>	<p><b>1. Exodus 3:12</b> <i>I will be with you.</i></p>
<p><b>2. Exodus 3:13</b> <i>Who should I tell them sent me?</i></p>	<p><b>2. Exodus 3:14–17</b> <i>Tell them I Am sent you unto them. (You might need to explain that “I Am” is another name for Jehovah.)</i></p>
<p><b>3. Exodus 4:1</b> <i>But they will not believe me or listen to me. They will say I am lying.</i></p>	<p><b>3. Exodus 4:2–9</b> <i>Perform the three signs that I will give you (turn a rod into a snake, display a hand bearing leprosy, and turn water into blood).</i></p>
<p><b>4. Exodus 4:10</b> <i>I have never been a good speaker. I am slow of speech.</i></p>	<p><b>4. Exodus 4:11–12</b> <i>I made your mouth, and I will be with you and teach you what to say.</i></p>
<p><b>5. Exodus 4:13</b> <i>Please, Lord, send someone else.</i></p>	<p><b>5. Exodus 4:14–17</b> <i>I will make Aaron a spokesman for you and teach you what to do.</i></p>

After giving students sufficient time to fill out the chart, ask:

- What did the Lord tell Moses that could help someone who feels inadequate to accept or perform a difficult calling?
- What are some doctrines and principles we could learn from the Lord’s response to Moses’s concerns? (After students respond, summarize their answers by writing the following truth on the board: **The Lord is with those He calls, and He gives them power to accomplish His work.**)

To help students better understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“Now, some of you may be shy by nature or consider yourselves inadequate to respond affirmatively to a calling. Remember that this work is not yours and mine alone. It is the Lord’s work, and when we are on the Lord’s errand, we are entitled to the Lord’s help. Remember that whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies” (“Duty Calls,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 44).

- What experiences in your life have shown you that the Lord gives His servants, including you, power to accomplish His work?

You may want to share an experience you have had when the Lord strengthened you as you sought to do His will. Testify that just as the Lord promised to be with and strengthen Moses, He will be with and strengthen us as we seek to do His work according to His will.

## Exodus 4:18–31

### *Moses and Aaron journey to Egypt and speak to the elders of Israel*

Summarize Exodus 4:18–31 by explaining that after his encounter with the Lord, Moses left Midian, met Aaron, and traveled with him to Egypt. Together they told the elders of Israel all that the Lord had commanded. The children of Israel believed Moses and Aaron and worshipped the Lord.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Exodus 3–4. The similarities of Moses’s life and mission to the life and mission of Jesus Christ

Moses’s life and mission bear many similarities to the life and mission of Jesus Christ. In fact, Moses was told, “Thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten” (Moses 1:6). God raised up Moses to perform a divine mission that included not only physically delivering Israel but also teaching them how to be spiritually delivered. His ministry extended beyond the limits of his own mortal lifetime. Joseph Smith taught that, in company with Elias (Elijah), Moses came to the Mount of Transfiguration and bestowed priesthood keys upon Peter, James, and John (see Matthew 17:3–4; Mark 9:4–9; Luke 9:30; D&C 63:21). Moses appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836, in the temple in Kirtland, Ohio, and conferred on them the keys of the gathering of Israel (see D&C 110:11). (See Guide to the Scriptures, “Moses”; scriptures.lds.org; see also Bible Dictionary, “Moses.”)

The significance of Moses as a prophet, lawgiver, and holy messenger places him as one of the noble and great sons of God. Moses is referred to in the scriptures as being like unto Jesus Christ (see Deuteronomy 18:15–19; 3 Nephi 20:23). Just as Moses helped deliver Israel from the bondage of Egypt, Jesus Christ delivers mankind from the bondage of sin and death. As Moses worked to prepare the children of Israel to enter the promised

land, Jesus Christ works to bring the children of Israel to the celestial kingdom.

For a more detailed comparison of the similarities between Moses and Jesus Christ, you may want to refer to Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* (1978), 442–48.

### Exodus 3:11–16. “I Am That I Am”

“I Am” is a form of “Jehovah,” one of the names of Jesus Christ recognized by the prophets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 6:3 [in Exodus 6:3, footnote c]). Moses and the Israelites understood the name to mean that God is eternal and not created by man, as were other gods of the day. This name was a way for the Lord to identify Himself as the all-powerful true and living God. The Israelites came to greatly reverence this name and declared that speaking it was blasphemy. The name was so sacred that once the Tabernacle was built, only the high priest was allowed to speak the name in the Holy of Holies, once a year, on the Day of Atonement.

Whenever the name *I Am* or *Jehovah* occurs in the Old Testament’s Hebrew text, it is almost always rendered as “Lord.” In the New Testament, a group of Jews sought to kill Jesus because He said, “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58). This New Testament reference confirms that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament.

# Exodus 5–6

## Introduction

Moses and Aaron obeyed the Lord by commanding Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go into the wilderness to worship the Lord. Pharaoh refused and increased the burdens of the Israelites. The Israelites were angry

that their burdens had been increased and complained. As Moses prayed for help, the Lord reaffirmed that He would fulfill His covenants and deliver the children of Israel from bondage.

### Refer to the plan of salvation

When appropriate, talk about the plan of salvation as you teach gospel principles. For example, you could explain that the Exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt to the promised land may be viewed as a type or symbol of our journey back to Heavenly Father. Four main stages of Israel's journey can be compared to mortality: bondage (see Exodus 1:13–14), deliverance (see Exodus 3:7–8), wandering in the wilderness (see Exodus 17:1; 19:1–2), and entering into the land of promise (see Exodus 33:1–3).

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 5:1–23

#### *Pharaoh responds to Moses and Aaron's command to free Israel by increasing the Israelites' burdens*

Ask students if they or someone they know has ever experienced opposition when trying to obey the Lord. Invite a few students to share their experiences.

Explain that Moses had a similar experience when he followed the Lord's command to ask Pharaoh to free the Israelites from slavery. Invite a student to read Exodus 5:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened when Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh.

- What was the result of their visit with Pharaoh?
- What does Pharaoh's response tell us about him?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 5:3–9. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after Moses and Aaron obeyed the Lord's command to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go.

- What happened after Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to let the Israelites go?
- According to these verses, what may we experience even when we are following the Lord's commands? (Summarize students' answers by writing the following truth on the board: **Even when we are following the Lord's commands, we may experience opposition.**)
- Why do you think we may experience opposition even when we are following the Lord's commands?

Explain that although our opposition will not be like the opposition Moses and Aaron faced from Pharaoh, we all face possible resistance. Read the following scenarios aloud. Ask the class to describe the opposition they may face in each situation. (You may want to substitute scenarios that are more relevant to your students.)

1. You choose to use clean language and ask others not to swear when they are around you.
  2. You choose to support traditional marriage.
  3. You choose to support the roles of men and women as given in the proclamation on the family.
- What reasons do we have for being obedient even though we may experience opposition as a result?

Summarize Exodus 5:10–19 by explaining that Pharaoh's taskmasters told the Israelite slaves that in addition to making the same number of bricks each day, they would now have to collect the straw needed to make the bricks. When the Israelites failed to make the same amount of bricks as before, the taskmasters beat them. The Israelite officers complained to Pharaoh about their plight, but he was unsympathetic and rebuked them for being idle.

Invite a student to read Exodus 5:20–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened as the Israelite officers were leaving Pharaoh. (To help students understand these verses, it might help to explain that when the Israelites told Moses "ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh," they were likely saying that their lives were now harder because of what Moses and Aaron had done.)

- How did the Israelite officers respond to Moses? (They blamed Moses for Pharaoh’s actions.)
- If you had been in Moses’s position, how might you feel at this moment? What questions might you have for the Lord?

Invite students to read Exodus 5:22–23 silently, looking for what Moses did after the Israelite leaders complained.

- What did Moses ask the Lord? (He asked why the Lord had allowed the Israelites to be treated so badly and why the Lord had commanded him to ask Pharaoh to let them leave.)

### Exodus 6:1–13

#### *The Lord declares that He will fulfill His covenants and deliver Israel out of Egypt*

Invite students to ponder why the Lord didn’t immediately intervene to deliver Israel and why He allowed them to continue to suffer.

- Why do you think the Lord doesn’t immediately solve all of our difficulties, even when we are being obedient?

Invite students to consider, as they study Exodus 6, reasons why the Lord does not immediately solve all of our difficulties.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 6:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord responded to Moses’s prayer. (You might want to point out the Joseph Smith Translation in Exodus 6:3, footnote c).

- What did the Lord say in verse 1 that might have been reassuring to Moses?
- What do you think it means that the Lord would use a “strong hand”? (As students respond, you might need to clarify that it means that Israel would be delivered from Egypt by the power of the Lord [see footnote a].)
- According to verses 4–5, why would the Lord deliver Israel? (One reason the Lord would deliver Israel was to fulfill the covenant He had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for their posterity to inherit the land of Canaan.)

Invite students to identify a doctrine we learn about the Lord from verses 4–5. (Write the following doctrine on the board: **The Lord remembers and fulfills His covenants.**)

- How might having faith that the Lord remembers and fulfills His covenants have helped Moses and the Israelites at this difficult time?

On the board, write the words *I will . . .*

Invite a student to read Exodus 6:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the message the Lord wanted Moses to deliver to the discouraged Israelites. You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “I will” each time they find it in the text.

- What did the Lord say He would do for the children of Israel?
- If you had been in the Israelites’ position, which “I will” statement might have been most meaningful to you?
- What truth do you see in verse 6 that can apply to us as well as the ancient Israelites? (Students may identify a variety of doctrines and principles, but be sure they understand the following: **The Lord has power to redeem us from our bondage and to lighten or remove our burdens.**)

To help students understand this truth, you might explain that in this context the word *redeem* means to free from bondage by paying a ransom.

- What are some things that can put us in bondage? (Examples might include ignorance, sin, illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, pornography, eating disorders, guilt, or doubt.)
- In addition to freeing us from bondage, what types of burdens can the Savior lighten or remove from our lives?

Invite students to share experiences they have had when they have felt the Lord redeem them from bondage or lighten or remove burdens from their lives. (Remind them that they should not share experiences that are sacred or private.) You might also want to share an experience.

Invite students to reread Exodus 6:7 silently, looking for what the Lord said the Israelites would come to know when He delivered them.

- What would the children of Israel come to know as the Lord delivered them from their difficulties?
- What truth can we learn from the Lord’s promise in verse 7? (Students may give various responses, but emphasize the the following truth: **As we experience the Lord’s help during our difficulties, we can come to know Him.**)
- How can being delivered by the Lord help us come to know Him?

Invite students to think about any bondage or burdens they have been delivered from (or have seen others delivered from) and how that experience helped them come to know the Lord. Ask a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Encourage students, as they continue to study Exodus, to look for how the Lord delivered Israel from their bondage and how this helped the Israelites come to know Him. Testify that the Lord will deliver us from bondage or lighten or remove our burdens in His own way and time, according to His will. As we endure challenges and rely on the Lord in faith, we can come to know Him.

Invite a student to read Exodus 6:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the children of Israel responded to Moses’s message.

- How did the children of Israel respond to Moses’s message?
- Why do you think they reacted that way? What might have caused them to have “anguish of spirit”?

Remind students that the Israelites had been in bondage for approximately 400 years (see Acts 7:6). During that time, they were influenced by idol worship and beliefs about Egyptian gods. The Israelites responded negatively to Moses because they did not know the Lord and had been in bondage and suffering for a long time. It was one thing to take the Israelites out of Egypt but quite another to get Egypt out of the Israelites.

Invite a student to read Exodus 6:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Moses and how Moses responded. (To help students understand these verses, direct them to look at Exodus 6:12, footnote *a*, to discover what the phrase “uncircumcised lips” means [see also Exodus 6:30, footnote *a*].)

- Why do you think Moses was concerned about doing what the Lord asked?

Invite a student to read Exodus 6:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord responded to Moses’s concern.

- How did the Lord respond?

Point out that the Lord’s response required Moses to exercise faith in the promises the Lord had just made to him. As he followed the Lord’s commands, Moses would receive the Lord’s help. Testify about why we need to exercise faith in the Lord and be willing to do difficult, even seemingly impossible, things.

### Exodus 6:14–30

#### *The genealogy of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi is explained*

Summarize Exodus 6:14–30 by explaining that these verses present the genealogy of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi.

### Scripture Mastery Review

So far this year students have learned six scripture mastery passages from the Pearl of Great Price and the Old Testament. To help students remember and locate these passages, you could read aloud the key phrase for one of the passages from the Old Testament bookmark or the Old Testament scripture mastery cards. (If you do not have the bookmark or the cards, refer to the scripture mastery list in the appendix of this manual and prepare key phrases of your own.) Challenge students to find the related passage in their scriptures after you read the phrase. Continue this activity as time allows, until you have reviewed the first six scripture mastery passages.

## LESSON 44

# Exodus 7–11

### Introduction

After Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, the Lord revealed that He would “multiply [His] signs and [His] wonders” in Egypt (Exodus 7:3). However,

even after witnessing a miracle and the plagues that afflicted Egypt, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to let the children of Israel go.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 7:1–13

#### *God sends Moses and Aaron to free the children of Israel from bondage*

To help establish the context of the events recorded in Exodus 7, read aloud the following statements. Invite students to verbally indicate whether each statement is true or false.

1. Pharaoh said he was willing to let the children of Israel go free, because he respected the Lord’s power. (False. See Exodus 5:1–2.)
2. After Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, the Israelites were eager to listen to Moses and follow his leadership. (False. See Exodus 5:19–21.)
3. Moses was confident in his abilities and excited about his responsibility to free the children of Israel from bondage. (False. See Exodus 3:11.)
4. Moses was slow of speech and wondered why the Lord had sent *him* to free the children of Israel. (True. See Exodus 4:10; 5:22–23; 6:12, 30.)

Summarize Exodus 7:1–5 by explaining that the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to return to Pharaoh and tell him again to free the children of Israel.

- If you had been in Moses’s position, do you think you might have been reluctant to return to speak with Pharaoh? Why or why not?

Consider inviting students to ponder situations in which they might be reluctant to follow counsel from the Lord, their parents, or Church leaders.

Invite a student to read Exodus 7:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Moses and Aaron did in response to the Lord’s direction to return to speak with Pharaoh.

- As you consider the challenges Moses and Aaron faced, what stands out to you about their obedience to the Lord’s direction?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we act in faith and obey the Lord, then . . .*

Invite students to consider how they might complete this statement as they learn what happened as a result of Moses and Aaron’s obedience to the Lord.

Invite a student to read Exodus 7:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened when Moses and Aaron did what the Lord had commanded them.

If possible, hold up a rod (a long piece of wood, such as a broomstick). Drop the rod on the floor.

- How do you think you might have responded if you had been in Pharaoh’s position and had just seen Aaron’s rod turn into a serpent?

Invite a student to read Exodus 7:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Pharaoh responded after Aaron’s rod turned into a serpent. Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think Aaron’s rod swallowing the rods of the magicians symbolized? (As students respond, you might point out that the Lord’s power is greater than the power of mortals or of the devil.)
- How do you think this experience might have influenced Moses and Aaron?

Point to the incomplete statement on the board. Ask students how they might complete the statement based on what Moses and Aaron experienced as they were obedient to the Lord. Using students' words, complete the statement on the board so it conveys the following principle: **If we act in faith and obey the Lord, then He will bless us to be able to do what He asks of us.**

Pick up the rod on the floor and display it again for the class. Invite a student to read Exodus 7:13, and ask the class to look for Pharaoh's response after Aaron's rod swallowed the magicians' rods. Ask students to report what they find.

Point out that verse 13, footnote *a*, includes an important clarification from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. It explains that the Lord did not harden Pharaoh's heart but that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. As the Prophet Joseph Smith was working on his inspired translation of the King James Version of the Bible, he corrected each indication that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, because in each case, Pharaoh had hardened his own heart (see the Joseph Smith Translation in footnotes to Exodus 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10). You may want to testify that Joseph Smith was a prophet and that he restored many plain and precious truths.

- Why do you think it is important to know that Pharaoh, not the Lord, hardened Pharaoh's heart?

### Exodus 7:14–Exodus 11:10

#### *The Lord sends 10 plagues upon Egypt*

Invite a student to read Exodus 5:2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the question Pharaoh asked when Moses first told him to let the children of Israel go.

Explain that the Lord answered Pharaoh's question by performing miracles and sending plagues as a witness of His power. Explain that each of the following scripture references describes one of the 10 plagues the Lord sent upon Egypt. (Write these scripture references on the board before class or provide students with a copy of the list.)

#### **The 10 Plagues**

1. Exodus 7:14–25
2. Exodus 8:1–15
3. Exodus 8:16–19
4. Exodus 8:20–32
5. Exodus 9:1–7
6. Exodus 9:8–12
7. Exodus 9:13–35
8. Exodus 10:1–20
9. Exodus 10:21–29
10. Exodus 11:4–10; 12:29–33

The following three activities are suggestions for how you might study the plagues as a class. Choose the option that best meets students' needs. (You might also want to adapt these suggestions as needed.)

1. Give students 10–15 minutes to silently study each of the plagues. You may want to suggest that they mark and number each of the plagues in their scriptures. Students could also write a summary of each plague in the margin of their scriptures. Invite them to also look for how Pharaoh responded to each of the plagues.
2. Ask students to divide a piece of paper into ten sections. Invite students to label each section with the number and scripture reference of the plagues as indicated on the list of the 10 plagues. Explain that they will have 10–15 minutes to read the scripture references and draw a picture depicting the plague that is described in the appropriate box on their paper. Invite them to also look for how Pharaoh responded to each of the plagues. You may want to collect their drawings and display them for the class.
3. Assign one or more students to study one of the scripture references on the list of the 10 plagues until each of the references has been assigned. Invite them to also look for

#### **Adapt teaching methods according to students' needs**

There are many methods you can use to help students understand the content and identify the doctrines and principles in a particular scripture block. Seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost and consider the needs and personalities of your students as you determine which approach will best help them fulfill their role in the learning process.

how Pharaoh responded to each of the plagues. Give students 5–7 minutes to read their assigned reference and draw the plague it describes on the board or pieces of paper.

After the activity, invite students to report to the class what they learned about each of the plagues. (If students drew pictures, you may want to encourage them to use the pictures they drew to help them explain the plagues to the class.)

After students have summarized the 10 plagues, ask the class the following questions:

- What can we learn about the Lord’s power from the 10 plagues? (The Lord’s power is far greater than the power of mankind, the devil, and the false gods mankind worships.)
- How did Pharaoh respond to each of the plagues? (He continued to harden his heart and refused to let the children of Israel go.)
- Why do you think the Lord gave Pharaoh so many opportunities to soften his heart, repent, and obey the command to let the children of Israel go instead of forcing Pharaoh to let them go?

After students respond, you may want to invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Gerald N. Lund of the Seventy:



“Individual agency is so sacred that Heavenly Father will never force the human heart, even with all His infinite power. Man may try to do so, but God does not. To put it another way, God allows us to be the guardians, or the gatekeepers, of our own hearts. We must, of our own free will, open our hearts to the Spirit, for He will not force Himself upon us” (“Opening Our Hearts,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2008, 33).

- Based on the scriptures we have studied today, how would you state a truth about our agency? (Students may identify a variety of truths, but make sure it is clear that **the Lord allows us opportunities to soften our hearts and repent, but He will not force us to repent.**)

You may want to explain that we have the ability to choose whether or not to follow the Lord. Although we have the ability to make choices for ourselves, we do not have the ability to choose the consequences of our actions.

- What do you think might have happened if Pharaoh had chosen to soften his heart? (As students respond, you may need to point out that much of his people’s suffering and sorrow could have been prevented.)
- What principle can we learn from the consequences that resulted because Pharaoh refused to soften his heart? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we refuse to soften our hearts and repent of our sins, then we will bring negative consequences upon ourselves and others.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)
- How might we be blessed by choosing to repent and follow the Lord sooner rather than later?

After students respond, you may want to ask a student to read aloud the following statement:

“If you have sinned, the sooner you repent, the sooner you begin to make your way back and find the peace and joy that come with forgiveness. If you delay repentance, you may lose blessings, opportunities, and spiritual guidance. You may also become further entangled in sinful behavior, making it more difficult to find your way back” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 28).

Share your testimony of the truths you have identified and discussed in this lesson. Invite students to write a goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals concerning how they will act on one or more of these truths.

# Exodus 12–13

## Introduction

After Moses warned Pharaoh that the firstborn sons of Egypt would die, he instructed the Israelites how to escape that plague. The Lord explained the feast of unleavened bread, or Passover, which would become a

memorial to the Lord’s deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt. The ordinance of the Passover would help the Israelites look forward to the Messiah’s coming and the deliverance of God’s children from spiritual death.

### Classroom preparation

Preparing a classroom in advance can provide interest and engagement as students enter the learning environment. Generally, avoid explaining the items you have prepared until they become relevant within the scripture block.



Israelites eat the Passover feast.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 12

#### *The Lord institutes the Passover*

The following foods discussed in Exodus 12 are part of the Passover feast: unleavened bread, bitter herbs, and lamb meat. If possible, you might consider preparing a table with some of these food items before class. Crackers or tortillas might be used as substitutes for unleavened bread; you might use parsley, horseradish, or romaine lettuce for the bitter herbs; and you could use any kind of meat as an example of the lamb. If you are unable to bring food to class, you might show students pictures of some of the specified food or ask students to visualize the foods at the appropriate points in the lesson. Any examples of the Passover feast should be done with reverence and dignity.

Begin the lesson by asking students to try to list from memory the 10 plagues that befell Egypt (see Exodus 7–11). Then invite a student to read Exodus 11:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord’s description of the calamity that would result from the 10th plague.

Explain that the Lord gave very specific instructions for the Israelites to follow in order to escape this plague. If the Israelites would obey those instructions, the Lord would “put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel” (Exodus 11:7) and protect their firstborn.

Invite students to read Exodus 12:3–14 silently or quietly with a partner, looking for the Lord’s specific instructions that would help Israelite families escape the plague. You might invite them to mark what they find.

- What did the Lord instruct the Israelites to do? (As students describe what they read, list the following items on the board: *lamb, blood, bitter herbs, and unleavened bread.*)

#### Passover

*Lamb (Jesus Christ)*

*Blood (Atonement of Jesus Christ)*

*Bitter herbs (bondage, sin)*

*Unleavened bread (repentance, removal of sin)*

- According to verse 11, what did the Lord call the meal Israel was to eat? (Write *Passover* on the board, above the items you listed.)
- According to verses 12–13, why was it called Passover?

Explain that the foods in the Passover meal and the way the Israelites were supposed to eat the meal were symbolic. This symbolism taught the Israelites about the Lord’s hand in their deliverance.

To help students analyze and understand these symbols, you might start by inviting students to eat or imagine some of the bitter herbs.

- What part of the Israelites’ lives had been bitter? (As students respond, you may need to point out that as the Israelites ate the bitter herbs, they were to remember their bondage to the Egyptians. Write *bondage* next to “bitter herbs” on the board.)
- What else might the bitter herbs have symbolized in the Israelites’ spiritual life? (The bitter herbs are like the effects of sin.)

Invite students to remember when they have felt the bitterness of their sins as they eat the bitter herbs. Explain that sin places us in bitter bondage, unable to return to the presence of God. Write *sin* next to “bitter herbs” on the board.

Point to the phrase “unleavened bread” on the board. Ask students if they can explain what leaven is. (Leaven, or yeast, causes bread to rise; it also causes bread to spoil and get moldy.) Explain that leaven can symbolize corruption and sin. Invite a student to read Exodus 12:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Israel was to do with any leaven in their homes. Ask them to report what they find.

- What do you think removing all the leaven from the home and eating only unleavened bread could symbolize? (As students respond, write *repentance* or *removal of sin* on the board next to “unleavened bread.”)

Invite students to eat or imagine some unleavened bread. Ask them to notice what begins to happen to the bitter taste from the herbs. (You may need to point out that the bread cleanses the bitter taste from the mouth.)

Refer to the word *lamb* on the board. Invite students to silently review verse 5, looking for the Lord’s description of the lamb each family was to sacrifice. Then invite a student to read Exodus 12:46. Ask the class to notice one additional instruction concerning the bones of the lamb.

- What do you think the lamb might symbolize? (As students respond, write *Jesus Christ* next to “lamb” on the board.)

Invite students to eat or imagine some of the meat and think about Jesus Christ’s sacrifice to deliver us from our sins.

Invite a student to read Exodus 12:21–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord would do for the families who put the lambs’ blood around their doors. Point out that the sacrifice of the lamb alone did not bring protection from the destroying angel. Only those who properly marked their doors with the blood of the lamb were promised safety.

- What kind of death was Israel saved from that first Passover night? (Physical death.)
- What kinds of death do we all need to be saved from? (Physical and spiritual death.)
- What do you think the blood of the lamb that saved Israel from death represents? (As students respond, emphasize that Jesus Christ’s Atonement was a blood sacrifice for sin. Write *Atonement of Jesus Christ* next to “blood” on the board.)
- Like the Israelites who were protected from physical death by placing the lambs’ blood around their doors, how can we be delivered from spiritual death? (Students may use different words, but they should identify something similar to the following doctrine: **We can be delivered from spiritual death through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.**)

Invite a student to read Exodus 12:28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a phrase that summarizes how the children of Israel qualified for deliverance. Ask students to report what they find.

- What would have happened if the Israelites had chosen not to put blood around their doors as the Lord had commanded?
- What can we learn from the Israelites’ example about what we must do to apply the atoning blood of Jesus Christ in our lives? (Students may use different words, but they should identify something similar to the following principle: **We can apply the atoning blood of Jesus Christ through repentance and obedience.**)

To help students comprehend the truth and importance of this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



“Repentance and obedience are absolutely essential for the Atonement to work its complete miracle in your life. . . .

“The Atonement was a selfless act of infinite, eternal consequence. . . . Through it the Savior broke the bonds of death. . . . It opens the gates to exaltation for all who qualify for forgiveness through repentance and obedience” (“The Atonement Can Secure Your Peace and Happiness,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 42).

Invite students to read Exodus 12:29–30 silently, looking for what happened to families who did not have the lambs’ blood around their doors. Ask students to report what they find.

Summarize Exodus 12:31–51 by explaining that as a result of this last plague, Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to go free.

### Exodus 13

#### *The Lord commands the Israelites to remember the Passover after their departure from Egypt*

Invite students to share experiences their older family members have had that have helped strengthen the students' faith.

Summarize Exodus 13:1–7 by explaining that Moses told the Israelites to remember the day they were brought out of Egypt by repeating the Passover feast each year on the anniversary of their deliverance (see Bible Dictionary, "Feasts"). Invite a student to read Exodus 13:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Israelites were to tell their children at the Passover feast each year.

- What did the Lord want the Israelites and their children to remember?
- According to verse 10, what was the Passover feast?

Invite students to silently read the following verses: Exodus 12:14, 17, 24.

- According to these verses, how long did the Lord say His people were to keep the ordinance of the Passover?
- Do we still observe the ordinance of the Passover in our day?
- What ordinance do we observe today in the place of the Passover to help us remember Jesus Christ? (The sacrament.)
- How is the sacrament like the Passover feast? (Students may identify a variety of truths, including the following: **The sacrament helps us remember the Savior's atoning sacrifice.** Write this truth on the board.)

To help students understand this truth, you might want to draw the following diagram on the board:



Explain that on the evening before Jesus Christ was crucified, He and His disciples shared a Passover meal together. At the end of this meal, Jesus introduced the ordinance we now recognize as the sacrament, which He told His disciples to repeat in remembrance of Him. The following day, as a fulfillment of the Passover, the Lamb of God was sacrificed on the cross for the sins of the world. His sacrifice ended the ordinance of blood sacrifice (see 3 Nephi 9:19–20). After the Savior's Crucifixion, His followers began to meet on the first day of the week to partake of bread and wine in remembrance of Him (see Acts 20:7).

- How can understanding the Passover influence your experience of partaking of the sacrament?

Encourage students to think about what they have learned about the Passover and its symbolism the next time they partake of the sacrament.

Summarize Exodus 13:11–22 by explaining that Moses told the children of Israel they were to sacrifice the firstborn males of their flocks and herds to the Lord. They were also to offer a sacrifice for each of their firstborn sons.

Explain that when the Israelites left Egypt, they took Joseph's bones with them to bury them in the promised land as Joseph had requested. The Lord led Moses and the children of Israel as they traveled in the wilderness.

Consider concluding the lesson by sharing your feelings about the Savior and His sacrifice for you.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Exodus 1–13 (Unit 9)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Exodus 1–13 (unit 9) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Exodus 1–4)

Before Moses was born, Hebrew midwives refused to obey the command of Pharaoh to kill the newborn sons of the Hebrews. From this account, students learned that as we revere God by putting His will above that of others, He will deal well with us.

#### Day 2 (Exodus 5–6)

As students studied Pharaoh's response to Moses, they learned that even when we are following the Lord's commands, we may experience opposition. They also learned that the Lord remembers and fulfills His covenants and that He has power to redeem us from our bondage and to lighten or remove our burdens. Even though He has this power, the Lord allows us to experience difficulties so that as we experience His help during our difficulties, we can come to know Him.

#### Day 3 (Exodus 7–11)

While studying about when the Lord commanded Moses to go back to Pharaoh, students learned that if we act in faith and obey the Lord, then He will bless us to be able to do what He asks of us. As students learned about the plagues that God sent upon Egypt, they discovered that the Lord's power is greater than the power of men and their false gods and that the Lord allows us opportunities to soften our hearts and repent, but He will not force us to repent.

#### Day 4 (Exodus 12–13)

Students learned of the Lord's commandment for the Israelites to observe the Passover. As they studied, they discovered that through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ and obedience to His commandments, we can be delivered from physical and spiritual death.

### Introduction

According to prophecy, Moses was called to deliver the Lord's people from their bondage in Egypt. The Lord reassured Moses after Moses expressed his reluctance to accept this call.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Exodus 3:1–10

##### *The Lord speaks to Moses from a burning bush*

Display the picture Moses and the Burning Bush on the board (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 13; see also LDS.org). Write on the board, near the picture: *Who? Where? What? Why?*

Ask students: *Who* is this? *Where* is this happening? *What* is happening? *Why* is this happening?

Invite students to turn to Bible Photographs, no. 2, "Mount Sinai (Horeb) and the Sinai Wilderness," in the LDS edition of the Bible.

Explain that this mountain is called Horeb (see Exodus 3:1) or Mount Sinai (see Exodus 19:20). Explain that as they study Exodus 3 they will learn more about *what* happened on Mount Sinai and *why*.

Invite several students to take turns reading Exodus 3:1–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses saw while on this mountain.

Invite students to look at verse 2, footnote *a*, and notice how the Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase "angel of the Lord."

- Rather than an angel, who was it that appeared to Moses? (The Lord.)
- According to verse 5, why did the Lord stop Moses from coming closer? (He needed to remove his shoes because he was on sacred ground.)
- By asking Moses to remove his shoes, what did the Lord teach Moses before he could receive His message? (Sacred places require us to be reverent; showing reverence to the Lord in sacred places prepares us to draw near to Him.)

Speaking about the importance of reverence, President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

"When we meet to learn the doctrines of the gospel, it should be in a spirit of reverence. . . .

". . . Reverence invites revelation" ("Reverence Invites Revelation," *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 21–22).

Ask students to share some ways they can demonstrate their respect and reverence for God in sacred places (such as the home, a chapel, or the temple).

Invite students to read Exodus 3:7–8 silently, looking for what the Lord planned to do for the children of Israel. Then invite them to read Exodus 3:10 silently, looking for how (or through whom) the Lord planned to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt.

- According to verse 10, how did the Lord plan to answer the prayers of the children of Israel? (By raising up Moses to deliver them.)

Help students understand that the Lord’s prophets are foreordained to perform certain missions on earth. Remind them of the promises that God previously made to raise up a prophet to “deliver my people out of Egypt in the days of thy bondage” (Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:24 [in the Bible appendix]).

Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 50:29, in the Bible appendix. Ask students to follow along, looking for one of the tasks Moses was called to perform.

- According to this verse, what is one of the purposes of Moses’s ministry? (To deliver God’s people out of the land of Egypt.)

Explain that similarities between the life of Moses and the life of Jesus Christ are interesting and instructive. Both escaped a decree of death while in their infancy. Both were called to deliver Israel. Both overcame confrontations with Satan. Both remained in exile until the kings who sought to kill them had died. Both controlled the winds and the sea. Both miraculously provided bread. Both provided lifesaving water. Both were great law-givers. Both were mediators between God and their people.

### Exodus 3:11–4:17

*Moses expresses his concerns about his calling and is reassured by the Lord*

Invite students to imagine they have been called by the Lord to tell an oppressive world leader who opposes the Church to allow Church members in his country to worship God freely.

- How would you feel if you were called to accomplish this mission?
- What would help you have courage to accept this call?

Explain that Moses expressed his concerns to the Lord about his ability to deliver Israel as the Lord had called him to do.

Divide your class into groups of two or three students. Provide a copy of the following chart for each student. (Do not put the italicized answers on the chart.) Instruct students to study the verses listed on the chart as a group and to list each of Moses’s concerns and the Lord’s solutions in the boxes provided for each verse. (To help students understand how to complete this activity, you may want to complete the first two boxes together as a class.)

Moses’s Concerns	The Lord’s Responses
<b>1. Exodus 3:11</b> <i>Who am I to be able to do what you have asked?</i>	<b>1. Exodus 3:12</b> <i>I will be with you.</i>
<b>2. Exodus 3:13</b> <i>Who should I tell them sent me?</i>	<b>2. Exodus 3:14–17</b> <i>Tell them I Am sent you unto them. (You might need to explain that “I Am” is another name for Jehovah.)</i>
<b>3. Exodus 4:1</b> <i>But they will not believe me or listen to me. They will say I am lying.</i>	<b>3. Exodus 4:2–9</b> <i>Perform the three signs that I will give you (turn a rod into a snake, display a hand bearing leprosy, and turn water into blood).</i>

Moses’s Concerns	The Lord’s Responses
<b>4. Exodus 4:10</b> <i>I have never been a good speaker. I am slow of speech.</i>	<b>4. Exodus 4:11–12</b> <i>I made your mouth, and I will be with you and teach you what to say.</i>
<b>5. Exodus 4:13</b> <i>Please, Lord, send someone else.</i>	<b>5. Exodus 4:14–17</b> <i>I will make Aaron a spokesman for you and teach you what to do.</i>

After giving students sufficient time to fill out the chart, ask:

- What did the Lord tell Moses that could help someone who feels inadequate about accepting or performing a difficult calling?
- What are some principles and doctrines we could learn from the Lord’s response to Moses’s concerns? (After students respond, summarize their answers by writing the following truth on the board: **The Lord is with those He calls, and He gives them power to accomplish His work.**)

To help students better understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“Remember that this work is not yours and mine alone. It is the Lord’s work, and when we are on the Lord’s errand, we are entitled to the Lord’s help. Remember that whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies” (“Duty Calls,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 44).

- What experiences in your life have shown you that the Lord gives His servants, including you, power to accomplish His work?

### Exodus 4:18–31

*Moses and Aaron journey to Egypt and speak to the elders of Israel*

Summarize Exodus 4:18–31 by explaining that after his encounter with the Lord, Moses left Midian; met his brother, Aaron; and traveled with him to Egypt. Together they told the elders of Israel all that the Lord had commanded. The children of Israel believed Moses and Aaron and worshipped the Lord.

### Next Unit (Exodus 14–20)

Ask students to consider the following questions: What miracle did God perform to help the Israelites when they were trapped between the Red Sea and the Egyptian army? How did Moses help the armies of Joshua win a battle? What happened when Moses’s raised hands became tired and started to lower? Who helped Moses? Do you know the Ten Commandments by memory and where to find them in the scriptures? Have you ever been tempted to murmur or complain because of something you had been asked to do? Explain that as they study Exodus 14–20, they will learn about the complaints of the children of Israel after they left Egypt and how the Lord taught them to trust in Him.

## LESSON 46

# Exodus 14–15

### Introduction

Following the tenth plague, Pharaoh allowed Moses and Aaron to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. After their departure, Pharaoh hardened his heart and sent his army after the Israelites, who were encamped near the Red Sea. The Lord miraculously allowed the children

of Israel to pass through the Red Sea on dry ground to escape, while the army of Pharaoh was drowned. The people of Israel sang songs of praise and thanks to the Lord. Acting according to inspiration, Moses healed the waters of Marah.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 14:1–14

#### *The Egyptian army pursues the Israelites*

Ask students to imagine they are with the children of Israel as they are trapped by the Red Sea on one side and by Pharaoh’s army on the other side. Then ask:

- Where do you turn when your options are limited?
- What would you do in this situation?

Summarize Exodus 14:1–3 by explaining that after the Israelites left Egypt, the Lord told Moses to take them and camp near the edge of the Red Sea. Pharaoh recognized that the location of the Israelite encampment caused them to be trapped because the sea blocked their retreat.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“The children of Israel [were in a] horrible predicament. . . . There were chariots behind them, sand dunes on every side, and just a lot of water immediately ahead. . . . In this case it was literally a matter of life and death” (“Cast Not Away Therefore Your Confidence” [Brigham Young University devotional, Mar. 2, 1999], 4; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu)).

- How could the children of Israel escape from the situation they were in?
- What are some of the enemies or hardships that surround us today? (Explain that while our enemies could be people who seek to harm or persecute us, our enemies could also be things like temptation, addiction, sin, or doubt.)

Invite students to think about a time when they may have felt like there was no escape from the enemies or hardships in their lives. Encourage them to look for principles that can help them overcome their challenges as they study the plight of the children of Israel recorded in Exodus 14–15.

Invite a student to read Exodus 14:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Egyptians would do if the Israelites camped by the sea. Invite students to report what they find. (You may need to point out the Joseph Smith Translation in Exodus 14:4, footnote *a*, and remind students that the Lord did not harden Pharaoh’s heart. Pharaoh hardened his own heart. [See also verse 8, footnote *a*].)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 14:5–9. Ask students to look for what Pharaoh did as the Israelites were camped by the Red Sea.

- How might you have reacted if you had seen Pharaoh’s army coming after you and your family while you were trapped against the sea?

Invite a student to read Exodus 14:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the children of Israel responded when they saw the army of Pharaoh approaching.

- How would you describe the people’s attitude toward Moses?

Invite a student to read Exodus 14:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Moses’s response to the people of Israel.

- In verse 13, what do you think Moses meant when he said, “Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, . . . for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever”? (You might explain that Moses was telling the Israelites not to be afraid and to stand firm and watch God do His work of salvation for them; they would no longer need to worry about the Egyptians.)
- In verse 14, what do you think it means that “the Lord shall fight for you”? (As students respond, make sure they understand that sometimes the Lord fights for us by solving our problems. Other times He fights for us by giving us the strength or knowledge we need to face the challenges of life.)

Invite students to identify a principle from verses 13–14 that would help them when they feel surrounded by the enemies of our day. Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **as we trust in the Lord, He will fight for us**.

- How might believing this principle help someone who is trying to overcome a particular sin or an addiction? How might it help someone who is being persecuted because he or she believes in God?
- In what ways have you seen the Lord fight for you or someone you know?

Share your testimony that the Lord will fight for us as we put our trust in Him.

### Object lessons

Objects can be effective in helping students visualize, analyze, and understand the scriptures, especially when the objects are used to stimulate a discussion. When using an object lesson, be sure it reinforces the purpose of the lesson and doesn’t detract from it.

### Exodus 14:15–31

#### *The children of Israel pass through the Red Sea, and the Egyptian army is drowned*

Place a long piece of tape on the floor, and tell students that it represents the shore of the Red Sea. Invite several students to bring their scriptures and stand on one side of the tape line. Ask these students to imagine that they are the children of Israel, encamped near the Red Sea.

Invite a student who is standing at the tape line to read Exodus 14:15–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Moses. Invite students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord command Moses to tell the people?
- What did the Lord tell Moses to do?

Invite a student to read Exodus 14:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for an example of how the Lord fought for His people as the enemy approached. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 14:21–29. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional examples of how the Lord fought for His people.

If available, show students a picture of Moses parting the Red Sea, and ask the following questions:

- Even though the Lord fought for His people, what did the Israelites have to do to be saved from the Egyptians?
- What principle can the Israelites’ situation teach us about the relationship between exercising faith and receiving the Lord’s help in overcoming our challenges? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **as we exercise faith by doing what the Lord commands, He will provide a way for us to overcome our challenges.**)
- When have you seen or read about someone exercising faith in the Lord? How did the Lord provide a way for this person to overcome his or her challenge?

Invite a student to read Exodus 14:30–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the children of Israel saw when they found themselves safely on the other side of the Red Sea.

- According to verse 31, what happened to the Israelites because they recognized the works of the Lord?
- Based on this experience, what blessing may we receive as we seek to recognize the works of the Lord in our lives? (Students may use different words, but they should



identify something similar to the following principle: **Recognizing the works of the Lord in our lives can help increase our trust and faith in Him.**)

- When have you recognized the Lord’s power in your life and as a result felt your faith and trust in Him increase?

Invite students to ponder how the Lord has worked in their lives as they study the life of Moses for the next few days. Encourage them to write down their experiences and share them with a family member or friend.

### Exodus 15:1–21

#### *Israel sings songs of praise and thanks to the Lord*

Invite students to discuss the following two questions in pairs. You may want to write the questions on the board.

- When have you felt really grateful for something?
- What did you do to express your gratitude?

Invite a student to read Exodus 15:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses and the children of Israel did to express their gratitude for their deliverance from Egypt. Invite students to share what they find with their partner.

- How can music help us to express gratitude to the Lord?
- What are some other ways we could appropriately express our gratitude to the Lord?
- What can we learn from the response of the children of Israel to being delivered? (Your students may identify many truths, including the following: **It is important to thank the Lord for what He has done for us.**)

Summarize Exodus 15:3–21 by explaining that these verses contain the words of the song Moses and the people sang to tell the story of their deliverance from Egypt and to give thanks to God.

### Exodus 15:22–27

#### *The Lord inspires Moses to heal the waters of Marah*

Ask students to imagine they will soon be traveling in a desert wilderness.

- If you can bring only one resource with you, what will you choose to bring?

Summarize Exodus 15:22–23 by explaining that after the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea, they traveled for three days without finding any water. After the third day they came to a place called Marah. Marah had water, but it was bitter and unfit to drink.

Invite a student to read Exodus 15:24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people of Israel responded in this difficult situation. Ask students to report what they find.

- What could the Israelites have done instead of murmuring?

Invite a student to read Exodus 15:25–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses did because of the Israelites’ need for water.

- What are the differences between how Moses responded to the situation and how the people responded to it?
- What principle can we learn from this account? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **If we seek the Lord’s guidance through prayer when facing difficulties, He can inspire us to know how to proceed.**)
- When has the Lord inspired you as you have sought His guidance in a difficult matter?

Conclude by testifying that the account of Moses healing the waters of Marah can be compared to how the Lord can heal us. As we follow the inspiration the Lord gives us, follow His prophets, and keep His commandments, we invite the healing power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ to remove bitterness from our lives.

# Exodus 16:1–17:7

## Introduction

Following the Israelites' deliverance from bondage, Moses led the children of Israel to Mount Sinai. While on the journey, the Israelites murmured because of a lack of food. The Lord blessed the children of Israel with

manna and instructed them to gather it every morning except on the Sabbath. The children of Israel also murmured because of thirst. The Lord commanded Moses to strike a rock in Horeb so that water would come forth.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 16:1–36

#### *Israel murmurs for bread, and the Lord sends quail and bread from heaven*

Display a loaf or piece of bread. Invite a student who is hungry to come to the front of the class and eat some of the bread. As the student eats, ask him or her the following questions:

- When did you last eat?
- If you recently ate, why are you hungry now? Why do we have to eat regularly?

Explain that the Lord used our need to eat regularly to teach truths about developing spiritual strength. Invite students to look for these truths as they study Exodus 16–17.

Invite a student to read Exodus 16:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the problem the children of Israel encountered as they continued on their journey to the promised land.

- What problem did Israel face in the wilderness?
- Whom did the children of Israel murmur against?
- Even though the children of Israel had just been delivered from bondage, why did they wish they had died back in Egypt?

Invite a student to read Exodus 16:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord helped the Israelites with their lack of food. (You may need to explain that the word *prove* in verse 4 means “to test” [see footnote c].)

- What specific instructions did the Lord give the people about gathering this bread from heaven?
- According to verse 3, the Israelites likely had as much food as they desired while they were in Egypt. In what ways might gathering only a limited amount of bread each day have been a test for the children of Israel?
- According to verse 4, what is one reason the Lord gives us commandments? (Students should identify the following principle: **One reason the Lord gives us commandments is to test our obedience to Him.**)

Explain that after Moses received these instructions from the Lord, Moses and Aaron addressed the people of Israel. Invite a student to read Exodus 16:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses and Aaron told the Israelites concerning their murmuring.

- Based on what Moses and Aaron taught the people, whom are we also murmuring, or complaining, against when we murmur against Church leaders? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **When we murmur against Church leaders, we are also murmuring against the Lord.** You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase that teaches this principle in verse 8.)
- Why is murmuring against Church leaders also murmuring against the Lord?

Summarize Exodus 16:9–13 by explaining that even though the children of Israel had murmured, the Lord sent quail into the camp of the Israelites during the evening.

Invite a student to read Exodus 16:13–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord did the next morning for the Israelites. Invite students to report what they

find. Point out the word *manna* in verse 15, and ask students to look at footnote *a* to find out what it means.

Divide the students into pairs. Ask each partnership to read Exodus 16:16–21, 31 together and discuss the following questions (you may want to write these questions on the board before class or provide students with copies of them):

1. How much manna were the Israelites told to gather?
2. What happened if they tried to save it until the next day?
3. How often did the children of Israel need to gather the manna?
4. According to verse 21, what happened to the manna that wasn't gathered?
5. What spiritual lessons can we learn from the Lord's instructions about manna?

After sufficient time, invite students to share their answers to question 5 with the class. Write their responses on the board. As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following truths: **If we rely on the Lord daily, He will bless us with the spiritual nourishment needed for that day. As we remember the Lord daily, our trust in Him will grow.**

 To help illustrate to students the importance of seeking spiritual nourishment daily, you may want to show the video “Daily Bread: Pattern” (2:52). In this video, Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains that our need for daily physical nourishment reminds us of our need for daily spiritual sustenance. This video can be found on LDS.org.

Instead of showing the video, you could provide students with a copy of the following statement by Elder Christofferson. Ask students to read the statement silently, underlining the Lord's reasons for giving the children of Israel food one day at a time.



“By providing a daily sustenance, one day at a time, Jehovah was trying to teach faith to a nation that over a period of some 400 years had lost much of the faith of their fathers. He was teaching them to trust Him, to ‘look unto [Him] in every thought; doubt not, fear not’ (D&C 6:36). He was providing enough for one day at a time. Except for the sixth day, they could not store manna for use in any succeeding day or days. In essence, the children of Israel had to walk with Him today and trust that He would grant a sufficient amount of food for the next day *on* the next day, and so on. In that way He could never be too far from their minds and hearts” (“Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread” [Church Educational System fireside, Jan. 9, 2011]; broadcast.lds.org).

- According to Elder Christofferson, why did the Lord provide manna one day at a time? Testify that the Lord will bless us as we remember Him daily.

- What are some things we can do to remember the Lord daily? (Write students' responses on the board.)
- Why would remembering and seeking the Lord only one day a week fail to provide adequately for our spiritual needs throughout the rest of the week?

Invite students to consider the difference between times when they have remembered the Lord and sought Him daily and times when they have forgotten Him or not sought His strength and guidance each day.

- What difference does it make in your life when you remember the Lord and seek Him daily?

Invite students to consider what they are doing to remember the Lord. Ask them to review the list on the board and ponder what they need to do every day to remember and seek the Lord. Encourage students to set a goal to remember the Lord and seek Him each day.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 16:22–26. Ask the class to follow along, looking for reasons why the Israelites needed to gather twice the amount of manna on the sixth day.

- Why did the Israelites need to gather twice the amount of manna on the sixth day?

### Identifying implied principles

Many principles are not stated directly in the scriptures but are instead implied. We can discover implied principles by asking what the moral or purpose of an account is or by considering how the events and circumstances recorded in the scriptures might resemble events and situations that occur in our day. Implied principles can become more apparent as we analyze the actions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals in the scriptures and identify the consequences of their actions.

Invite a student to read Exodus 16:27–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how some people responded to the Lord’s command.

- What did some people do even after being instructed to gather double on the sixth day? What do those actions reveal about these people?
- How can resting on the Sabbath help us remember the Lord?

Summarize Exodus 16:32–36 by explaining that Moses commanded Aaron to place some manna in a pot so it could serve as a testimony, or reminder, for future generations of the Lord’s physical deliverance of the children of Israel and the need for Israel to rely on the Lord for spiritual sustenance. Later this pot was put in the ark of the covenant. The Lord continued to bless the children of Israel with manna as they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years.

### Exodus 17:1–7

#### *The Lord provides water for the Israelites*

Invite a student to read Exodus 17:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the additional hardship that the children of Israel faced in the wilderness.

- What additional hardship did the children of Israel encounter?
- Given the Israelites’ experiences with the manna and the quail, in what other way do you think the Israelites could have responded to this trial?

Invite students to read Exodus 17:5–7 silently and look for what the Lord told Moses to do. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that just as the requirement to gather manna can symbolize what the Lord requires of us today, the account of Moses striking the rock also has a symbolic meaning. The scriptures sometimes refer to Jesus Christ as “the rock” (see 1 Corinthians 10:4; Helaman 5:12). Christ also refers to Himself as “the bread of life” (John 6:35) and a provider of “living water” (John 4:10).

- How is Jesus Christ like a rock? How is He like bread? What does Jesus Christ provide that is like living water? What do these symbols teach us about the Savior?
- What principles do you think the children of Israel could have learned about the Savior from their experiences with the manna and water? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **the Lord is the source of all spiritual nourishment**. Write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to share how partaking of the spiritual nourishment that Jesus Christ has offered them has blessed their lives.

Encourage students to set a goal to accept the spiritual nourishment the Savior offers by making a greater effort to seek the Lord and be nourished by God’s word daily, to serve Him, and to obey His commandments.

*Note:* Lesson 49 (Exodus 20, part 1) provides an opportunity for three students to teach. You may want to select three students now and give them copies of the designated portions of lesson 49 so they can prepare to teach them. Encourage them to study the lesson material prayerfully and seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost as they prepare to teach and adapt the lesson for their classmates.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Exodus 16:1–17:7. Being spiritually nourished by God

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“Our spirits also require nourishment. Just as there is food for the body, there is food for the spirit. The

consequences of spiritual malnutrition are just as hurtful to our spiritual lives as physical malnutrition is to our physical bodies. Symptoms of spiritual malnutrition include reduced ability to digest spiritual food, reduced spiritual strength, and impairment of spiritual vision” (“Nourishing the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1998, 7).

## LESSON 48

# Exodus 17:8–19:25

### Introduction

The Israelites miraculously prevailed in battle against the Amalekites. While Moses camped near Mount Sinai, Jethro counseled him to delegate some of his

responsibilities to others. The Lord promised to make Israel a holy nation, and Moses prepared the people to make a covenant with God.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 17:8–16

#### *Aaron and Hur uphold Moses's hands so Israel can prevail against its enemies*

Invite a student to come to the front of the class. Place a Bible in each of the student's hands. Ask the student to extend each arm out to the side with the elbows locked, the palms of the hands turned upward, and the Bibles at eye level. Tell the student that if he or she can hold the Bibles in that position for as long as possible, it will be helpful to the rest of the class.

Ask students to think about this activity as they read about an experience Moses had while the children of Israel were in the wilderness. After Israel made camp in Rephidim and the Lord caused water to come out of a rock, a man named Amalek brought his people to war against Israel.

Invite a student to read Exodus 17:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Moses had to do to ensure the Israelites would win the battle.

- What happened when Moses held up his hands? What happened when Moses let down his hands?
- How might this scenario present a challenge to Moses?

Invite a student to read Exodus 17:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Aaron and Hur did to make sure Moses's hands stayed up. Invite them to report what they find.

Ask the student holding the Bibles if he or she would like help holding them up. Invite two other students to hold up the first student's arms. Ask the first student:

- How long would you be able to hold the Bibles up if someone else supported your arms?

Ask the class:

- Because Aaron and Hur supported the arms of the prophet, what was the outcome of the battle?

Explain that this account can represent what the Lord requires us to do in order to prevail in, or win, our conflict against Satan.

- Based on the actions of Aaron and Hur, what must we do to prevail in our conflict against Satan? (After students have responded, write the following principle on the board: **As we sustain the Lord's prophet and follow his words, we will eventually prevail in our conflict against Satan.**)
- What are some ways we can sustain the prophet? (Answers may include praying for him, reading his messages, and following his direction.)
- How has sustaining the prophet helped you prevail in the conflict against Satan?

Invite the three students to return to their seats. Summarize Exodus 17:15–16 by explaining that Moses built an altar in the place where Israel defeated the Amalekites as a memorial for what God had done for them.

### Exodus 18:1–27

#### *Jethro counsels Moses to delegate some responsibilities to others*

Summarize Exodus 18:1–12 by explaining that after the Israelites established a camp near Mount Sinai, Moses's father-in-law, Jethro, brought Moses's wife and two sons to him.

Remind students that Moses had received the Melchizedek Priesthood from Jethro, who was a righteous priesthood leader and a noble prince and priest of Midian (see Bible Dictionary, “Jethro”).

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 18:13–18. Ask the class to follow along and look for what concerned Jethro.

- What concerned Jethro?
- Why was it a problem for Moses to attempt to judge every matter the people brought before him?

Invite a student to read Exodus 18:19–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Jethro’s solution to Moses’s problem.

- What was Jethro’s solution? How would it help ease Moses’s burdens?
- How does refusing to delegate hurt a leader? How does it hurt the people he or she is called to lead?

Ask students what we could do to better support our Church leaders and reduce their burdens. Encourage them to incorporate one of these suggestions into their lives.

Summarize Exodus 18:23–27 by explaining that Moses followed Jethro’s inspired counsel and called able men to help him.

## Exodus 19

### *The Lord prepares the Israelites to make a covenant with Him*

Provide each student with a copy of the handout shown at the end of this lesson: “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai.” (A completed version of the handout is located in the appendix of this manual.) Explain that students will add details to their diagrams during several lessons as they study Exodus 19–34. To give some context for this lesson, refer to line 1 on the handout and remind students that Moses had previously been on Mount Sinai when the Lord appeared to Him at the burning bush and called him to deliver Israel.

Summarize Exodus 19:1–2 by explaining that Moses brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai, as the Lord had instructed when He first called Moses (see Exodus 3:7–12). For Moses and the children of Israel, Mount Sinai was like a temple. Today we go to temples to make covenants that help us become more like our Heavenly Father and prepare us to return to His presence. The Lord brought the children of Israel to Mount Sinai for this same purpose (see D&C 84:19–23). To prepare the people to enter into a covenant with the Lord, Moses went up Mount Sinai multiple times. There the Lord revealed to him the terms of the covenant—including commandments, laws, and ordinances.

On the board, write the words *if* and *then* (leave space between the words so you can write a principle later). Explain that in the covenant God presented to Israel, the word *if* signifies Israel’s responsibility and the word *then* signifies what God promised in return. Invite a student to read Exodus 19:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Israel’s responsibility in the covenant and God’s promise in return.

- What was Israel’s responsibility in the covenant? (You may want to explain that keeping God’s covenant means living according to *all* the covenants we make with God.)

On line 2 on the handout, invite students to write *God invites Israel to be His covenant people*.

- What did God promise if the Israelites would obey His voice and keep His covenant?
- What do you think it means for the children of Israel to be the Lord’s “peculiar treasure” (verse 5)? (You may want to explain that the Hebrew word for *peculiar* is *segullah*, which means “special possession or property” [see 1 Peter 2:9, footnote *fl*].)
- Using the words *if* and *then*, how would you summarize the covenant in verses 5–6 as a principle that applies to us? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we obey the Lord’s voice and keep our covenants with Him, then we are His treasured possession and His holy people.**)
- Why do you think obeying the Lord’s voice and keeping our covenants with Him make us a treasured possession to the Lord?

 **Exodus 19:5–6** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- When have you felt that the Lord treasured you because you obeyed His voice and chose to live according to the covenants you have made with Him?

Testify that the Lord treasures those who are willing to be different from the world by obeying His voice and keeping their covenants with Him.

Invite students to read Exodus 19:7–8 silently, looking for how the people responded when Moses told them how they could become the Lord’s peculiar treasure. Ask students to report what they find.

On line 3 on the handout, invite students to write *Moses reports Israel’s desire to enter God’s covenant*.

Point out in verse 8 that Moses again ascended Mount Sinai.

Invite a student to read Exodus 19:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord said He would do after the people expressed their willingness to enter a covenant with Him.

- After the people expressed their willingness to enter a covenant with Him, what did the Lord say He would do?

Help students understand that these verses do not indicate that the people would see the Lord on the third day, but they would see a thick cloud symbolizing His presence and would hear His voice speaking from the cloud.

- According to verse 10, what did the people need to do to prepare for this experience?
- What could washing their clothes symbolize? (This could represent repentance or spiritual cleansing.)

Summarize Exodus 19:12–15 by explaining that Moses obeyed the Lord’s commands and worked to sanctify the people. According to the Lord’s directions, Moses also set a boundary around the mountain so the people would not ascend it.

Invite a student to read Exodus 19:16–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened on Mount Sinai on the third day and how the people responded.

- What happened on Mount Sinai on the third day?
- How did the people respond to these events? How do you think you might have felt if you had been at the base of Mount Sinai when this occurred?

Invite students to draw a cloud and lightning at the top of Mount Sinai on their handouts.

Ask a student to read Exodus 19:20–21, 25 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord commanded Moses to do.

- What did the Lord command Moses to do? (Ascend the mountain to speak to the Lord. Then return to the people and ensure that none of them cross the barrier to ascend the mountain.)

On line 4 on the handout, invite students to write *God warns that the people are not yet prepared to enter His presence*.

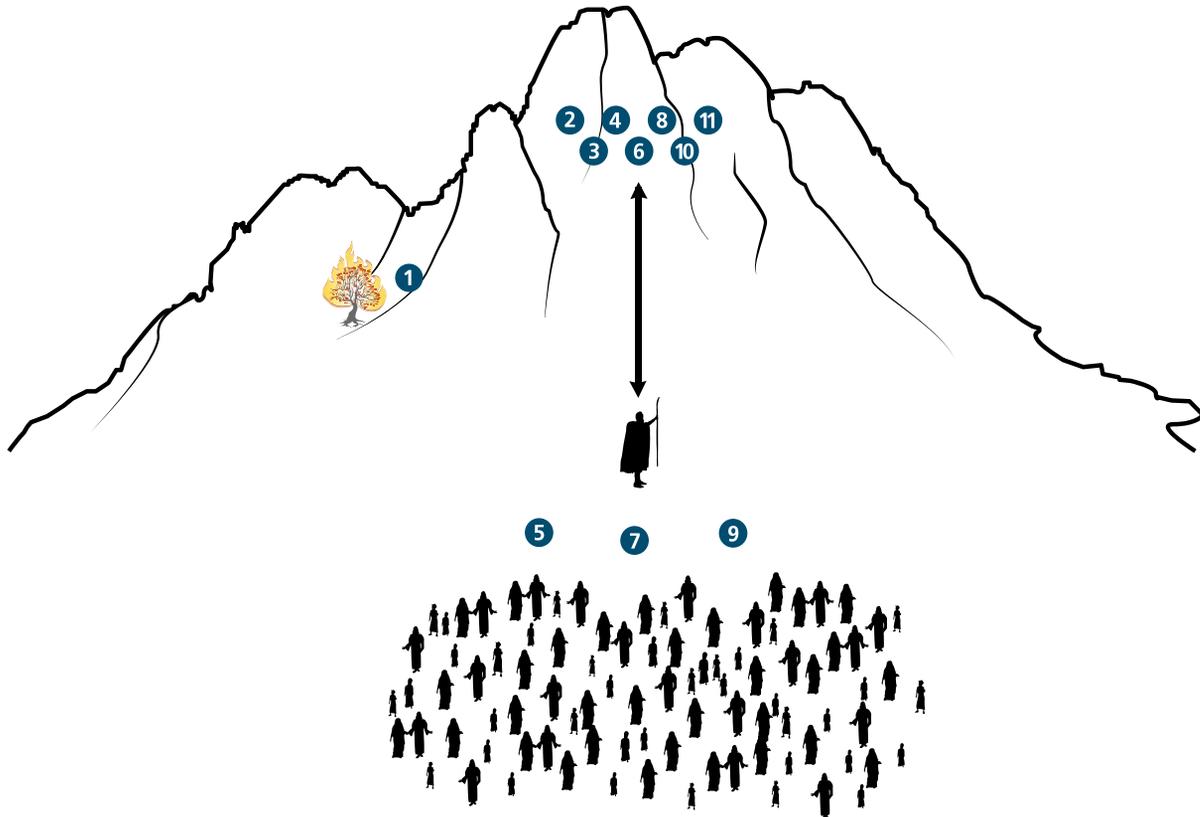
- What do you think may have prevented the people from being ready to ascend the mountain and enter God’s presence at that time?

Explain that **to be prepared to return to God’s presence, we must enter into His covenant and obey His commandments**. Invite students to watch for the illustration of this principle as they continue to learn about Israel’s experiences at Mount Sinai in coming lessons. To conclude, you may want to testify of the truths you have discussed today.

### Scripture Mastery—Exodus 19:5–6

Invite students to carry a copy of Exodus 19:5–6 with them throughout the day. Ask them to review it several times and then decide what they will do to show the Lord that they are His peculiar treasure. Invite them to act on their decision.

## Moses's and Israel's Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19–34)



**1** God calls Moses to deliver Israel  
(see Exodus 3:1–12).

**2** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**8** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**9** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**10** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**11** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 49

# Exodus 20, Part 1

### Introduction

While the children of Israel were camped at Mount Sinai, God gave them the Ten Commandments. This lesson introduces the Ten Commandments and discusses the first five commandments in detail.

**Note:** This lesson provides an opportunity for three students to teach the class. To be sure these students have time to prepare, provide each student with a copy of the section he or she is to teach a day or two in advance. You could also choose to teach these sections yourself.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 20:1–17

#### *God gives the children of Israel the Ten Commandments*

Explain that while the Israelites were gathered at the base of Mount Sinai, they heard the voice of God give the Ten Commandments to them from a cloud at the top of the mountain (see Deuteronomy 4:10–13; Exodus 19:9, 16–17; 20:18–19). Invite students to refer to the handout titled “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai” (see lesson 48). (A completed version of the handout is located in the appendix of this manual.) Invite students to write the following on line 5 on the handout: *God speaks the Ten Commandments to the Israelites.*

To help students become familiar with the Ten Commandments, divide students into teams. List on the board the numbers 1 through 10 in one column for each team. Provide each team with a marker or a piece of chalk. Invite one student from each team to come to the board and write one of the Ten Commandments in their team’s designated column and then pass the marker or chalk to another student on his or her team. This will continue for two minutes with each team member writing an additional commandment or correcting one that is on the board. You may want to suggest that students try to write the commandments in their correct order. Students are not allowed to use their scriptures for this activity.

After the activity, ask the class the following question:

- Where in the scriptures can we read the Ten Commandments? (Exodus 20:1–17; Deuteronomy 5:7–21; Mosiah 13:12–24.)

Ask several students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 20:1–17. Invite the class to follow along and look for each of the Ten Commandments. You may want to suggest that students mark and number each commandment in their scriptures. After the verses are read, invite students to evaluate their lists on the board. Invite them to note how many of the commandments they listed correctly and in the proper order.

Explain that keeping the Ten Commandments would prepare the Israelites to receive greater blessings.

- How would you respond to someone who says that the Ten Commandments were only meant for people in the Bible and do not apply to us today?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

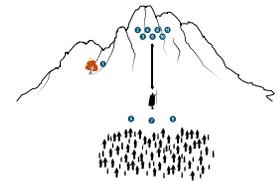


“Although the world has changed, the laws of God remain constant. They have not changed; they will not change. The Ten Commandments are just that—commandments. They are *not* suggestions. They are every bit as requisite today as they were when God gave them to the children of Israel” (“Stand in Holy Places,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 83).

- What stands out to you about President Monson’s statement?

The rest of this lesson is designed for three students to teach. The student teachers may take turns teaching the entire class, or the class could divide into three groups and rotate between teachers. Allow each student teacher about eight minutes to teach.

Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19–24)



### Exodus 20:3–17

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the next lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

**Student Teacher 1—Exodus 20:2–7**

Ask your classmates to ponder how they would respond if someone asked them what their first priority is in life. (Do not ask them to share their responses.)

Ask a classmate to state the first commandment. Then ask the following questions:

- What do you think it means when the Lord said, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3)? (As your classmates respond, you may need to point out that our worship of God should be our highest priority and we should give exclusive devotion to Him.)
- What did God forbid in the second commandment? (Making and worshipping graven images, or idols.)
- How is the Lord described in verse 5? (“A jealous God.”)

To help your classmates understand this use of the word *jealous*, invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The meaning of *jealous* is revealing. Its Hebrew origin means ‘possessing sensitive and deep feelings’ (Exodus 20:5, footnote *b*). Thus we offend God when we ‘serve’ other gods—when we have other first priorities” (“No Other Gods,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 72).

- What priorities may we be tempted to place ahead of worshipping God?
- Why do you think it may be hurtful to the Lord when He sees us placing these other priorities above our worship of Him?

Ask a student to read Exodus 20:6 aloud. Invite your classmates to follow along, looking for what the Lord promises to those who love Him and keep His commandments.

- What principle can we learn from verse 6? (Your classmates may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we love God and keep His commandments, then He will show us mercy.**)

Explain that in verse 6, the word *mercy* does not mean only forgiveness of sin. It includes all of the ways the Lord reaches out to bless us, such as giving us strength, assurance, support, protection, and guidance. Invite students to ponder the following question for a moment before asking them to respond:

- When have you felt the Lord’s mercy as you have shown your love for Him and kept His commandments? (You may also want to share an experience.)

Invite a classmate to read Exodus 20:7 aloud.

- What does it mean to take the name of God in vain? (To use the names of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, including titles such as God and Lord, lightly, irreverently, or disrespectfully, or to violate covenants that have been made in Their names.)
- How does obeying the commandment to not take the name of God in vain show our love for Him?

Encourage your classmates to make worshipping God their highest priority by choosing to love Him and keep His commandments. Explain that as they do this, they will experience His mercy in their lives.

**Student Teacher 2—Exodus 20:8–11**

Ask your classmates the following questions:

- What was a special day in your life that you will always want to remember? Why is that day important to you?

Invite a classmate to read Exodus 20:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for a special day the Lord wants us to remember.

After the verses have been read, ask your classmates the following questions:

- According to Exodus 20:10, whom does the Sabbath day belong to?
- How did the Sabbath become a holy day?

Explain that **the Sabbath is the Lord’s day and is holy**. Because the Sabbath day is already holy, our responsibility is to keep it holy.

- Based on verses 9–10, what must we do to keep the Sabbath a holy day? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **Resting from our labors on the Sabbath can help us keep it a holy day.**)

- How can obeying the instructions in verse 9 help us obey the instructions in verse 10?
- What are some other ways that we can keep the Sabbath a holy day? (If your classmates need help with some ideas, see *Doctrine and Covenants* 59:9–10 and *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 30–31).
- How have you been blessed as you have kept the Sabbath a holy day?

You may want to explain why the Sabbath day is important to you and how you have been blessed by keeping the Sabbath a holy day.

### Student Teacher 3—Exodus 20:12

Remind your classmates of the commandment to honor our fathers and mothers (see Exodus 20:12). Then ask:

- Why do you think the way we treat our parents is important to the Lord?

Ask a classmate to read Exodus 20:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessing the Lord promised to those who obey the commandment to honor their fathers and mothers.

Explain that the land referred to in verse 12 was the land of Canaan, which had been promised to the children of Israel if they kept their covenants with the Lord. However, they learned that if they broke their covenants they would be driven from the land and scattered (see Deuteronomy 4:23–38). We can learn the following principle from verse 12: **As we honor our parents, the Lord will bless us.**

- What do you think it means to honor your father and mother? (If needed, you may want to point out that we honor our parents as we show love and respect for them. We also bring honor to them as we live righteously.)
- How can a person honor a parent who is not living righteously or who teaches his or her children to do things that are contrary to Heavenly Father’s commandments? (As your classmates respond, you may want to point out that the commandment to honor our parents comes after the first commandment to love and serve Heavenly Father above all else [see Exodus 20:3; Matthew 22:35–39]. In addition, we can show love and respect for our earthly parents even when they are not perfect.)
- How have you been blessed as you have honored your parents?

You may want to display a picture of your parents or guardians. You might share an experience you have had when you honored them and were blessed as you did so. Invite your classmates to consider what they might do to more fully honor their parents.

After each of the student teachers has taught, invite a few students to explain to the class what they learned. As part of the discussion of what they learned about the first two commandments, consider reading aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:

“When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities” (“The Great Commandment—Love the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 4).

Invite students to write in their scripture study journals or notebooks what they can do to improve their efforts to keep the commandments they learned about today.

Conclude with your testimony of the principles students discussed.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Exodus 20:12. “Honour thy father and thy mother”

President Ezra Taft Benson spoke of the importance of honoring our parents, whether or not they are active in

the Church (see “A Message to the Rising Generation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 31–32).

# Exodus 20, Part 2

## Introduction

While the children of Israel were gathered at the base of Mount Sinai, God gave them the Ten Commandments. This lesson covers the last five of those commandments. After seeing the manifestations of God's presence

on Mount Sinai, the Israelites were afraid. The Lord, through Moses, gave additional instructions on how they should worship Him.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 20:13–17

*God gives the Israelites commandments pertaining to relationships with others*

Before class, list the Ten Commandments on the board.

Begin the lesson by asking:

- If someone were to ask you what the most important commandment is, what would you say? Why?

Explain that the Savior was asked a similar question during His mortal ministry. Invite a student to read Matthew 22:36–40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded. Ask students to report what they find.

Write *Love God* and *Love Thy Neighbor* on the board. Explain that the Savior summarized all of God's commandments into these two commandments. Ask students to categorize each of the Ten Commandments under one of these two headings. Write the number of the commandment under the heading students select. (For example, they might say that commandments 1 through 4 deal with loving God and commandments 5 through 10 deal with loving your neighbor.)

Write the following principle on the board: **By living the Ten Commandments, we can show love for God and our neighbor.** Invite students to ponder how this principle may relate to them as they continue to study the Ten Commandments.

In the following activity, students will study and then teach each other about one or two of the Ten Commandments. Divide students into four groups. Provide each group with a copy of one of the following four handouts. Explain that the groups will have five minutes to learn about a few of the Ten Commandments and prepare to teach the class using the outline provided. Student teachers from each group will have five minutes to teach the class about the commandment(s) they studied. (This activity was written for four groups with four students per group. You may need to adapt the activity if you do not have enough students. For example, you could create fewer groups and teach about one or more of the commandments yourself.)

If some groups finish their preparations before the allotted time is up, ask them to find a scripture reference that illustrates the importance of keeping the commandment(s) they learned about. They can use this reference when they teach the class.

### Small group assignments

During small group assignments, students can become distracted from the purpose of the activity, visit on personal matters, or become casual in their efforts to learn. To help students stay on task and gain the most from the assignment, remain actively involved by moving from group to group and monitoring the learning activity.

### Group 1—Exodus 20:13

Read aloud Exodus 20:13 and the following two paragraphs:

In Exodus 20:13, the word *kill* was translated from a Hebrew word that means murder. Murder means to intentionally and illegally end another person's life. In the latter days, the Lord has expanded our understanding of this commandment by saying, "Thou shalt not . . . kill, nor do anything like unto it" (D&C 59:6). While Latter-day prophets have not stated that abortion is murder, they have taught that abortion for personal or social convenience fits into the scriptural description of "anything like unto it." Murder does not include police or military action in the line of duty.

Prophets have affirmed that human life is sacred and is to be respected. Entertainment and media that glorifies or presents as acceptable murder and other forms of violence should be avoided. Such entertainment and media influence our attitudes and thoughts and offend the Spirit. (See *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 11–13, 22–23.)

Discuss the following questions:

- How can the plan of salvation help us understand why murder and violence are wrong?
- In what ways do media or various kinds of entertainment promote violence or disrespect for human life? What can we do to avoid these types of media or entertainment?

Choose one or more individuals from your group to do the following in front of the class: (1) Summarize what you learned about the commandment to not kill. (2) Lead a brief discussion using one or two of the preceding questions. (3) Bear testimony of the importance of respecting human life.

### Group 2—Exodus 20:14

Read aloud Exodus 20:14 and the following two paragraphs:

“Physical intimacy between husband and wife is beautiful and sacred. It is ordained of God for the creation of children and for the expression of love between husband and wife. God has commanded that sexual intimacy be reserved for marriage” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 35). Adultery means sexual relations between a married individual and someone other than his or her spouse. Any sexual relations outside the bond of marriage between a man and a woman, including homosexual behavior, violate the Lord’s law of chastity.

To keep the law of chastity before and during marriage, prophets have also taught that we are not to share, view, read, or listen to anything that depicts or describes the physical body or sexual conduct in an immoral or pornographic way. We must keep our thoughts, desires, words, and actions pure.

Discuss the following questions:

- What blessings come from being sexually pure? What negative consequences can result from not being sexually pure?
- What safeguards can young men and young women follow to help them be sexually pure? How can following these safeguards help you prepare to keep your future marriage covenants?
- What if an individual has fallen into sexual transgression? Given that sexual sin is so serious, is there a way to return to the gospel path? (Individuals who have committed sexual sin should speak with their bishop or branch president, who can help them through the process of repentance.)

Choose one or more individuals from your group to do the following in front of the class: (1) Summarize what you learned about the commandment to not commit adultery. (2) Lead a brief discussion using one or two of the preceding questions. (3) Bear testimony of the importance of keeping the law of chastity.

### Group 3—Exodus 20:15–16

Read aloud Exodus 20:15–16 and the following two paragraphs:

Stealing means taking something that rightfully belongs to someone else. Bearing false witness against your neighbor means to give or support an untrue statement about someone else.

“Be honest with yourself, others, and God at all times. Being honest means choosing not to lie, steal, cheat, or deceive in any way. . . .

“Dishonesty harms you and harms others as well. If you lie, steal, shoplift, or cheat, you damage your spirit and your relationships with others. Being honest will enhance your future opportunities and your ability to be guided by the Holy Ghost” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 19).

Discuss the following questions:

- What are some common situations in which people choose to be dishonest? Why do you think people choose to be dishonest in these situations?
- How is cheating a form of stealing?

- What blessings have you received as a result of choosing to be honest?

Choose one or more individuals from your group to do the following for the class: (1) Summarize what you learned about the commandments to not steal or bear false witness. (2) Lead a brief discussion using one or two of the preceding questions. (3) Bear testimony of the importance of being honest.

#### **Group 4—Exodus 20:17**

Read aloud Exodus 20:17 and the following paragraph:

Coveting, in this context, means having a selfish, excessive desire for something that belongs to another person. Coveting can cause feelings of jealousy, envy, pride, and greed. Coveting can lead us to be ungrateful and never satisfied with what we have. We can admire what others have, and we can seek to improve our lives and circumstances, but we must do so with modest, humble desires and honest, appropriate efforts.

- What are some specific examples of how the commandment to not covet is broken in our day?
- How can obeying the commandment to not covet help us be happy?
- What can we do to avoid coveting the possessions of others?

Choose one or more individuals from your group to do the following for the class:

(1) Summarize what you learned about the commandment to not covet. (2) Lead a brief discussion using one or two of the preceding questions. (3) Bear testimony of the importance of not coveting.

---

After students have had time to discuss their assigned commandments in their groups, invite them to list numbers 1 through 4 in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Ask them to write something they learn from each group of their peers.

Invite students from group 1 to come to the front of the classroom and teach as directed for no more than five minutes. Repeat for each additional group. Thank students for their participation.

Ask a few students to share what they wrote about what they learned from their peers' instruction. Then ask the class:

- How does living the commandments we have discussed help us show love for our neighbors?
- How does living these commandments allow us to show love for God?

### **Exodus 20:18–26**

#### *The Lord gives additional instructions for worshipping Him*

Summarize Exodus 20:18–26 by explaining that when the Israelites saw the thunderings and lightnings upon Mount Sinai and heard the Lord's voice declare the Ten Commandments, they were afraid. Moses told them to "fear not" (verse 20). Moses's words were meant to inspire their reverence and awe toward God and to motivate them to resist sin. From Moses's response we learn that **reverence for God helps us to resist sin**. The Lord then gave instructions on how the Israelites were to worship Him.

Conclude by testifying of the truths and commandments students discussed today. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do differently as a result of what they have learned.

#### **Scripture Mastery—Exodus 20:3–17**

To help students memorize Exodus 20:3–17, arrange students in groups of two to four and invite them to create a way to remember the Ten Commandments in the order they are listed in the verses. For example, students might develop memory devices using rhymes, pictures, hand gestures, or stories. After sufficient time, invite each group to demonstrate for the class what they came up with. After each group's turn, invite the class to repeat the Ten Commandments using the method the group developed.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Exodus 14–20 (Unit 10)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Exodus 14–20 (unit 10) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Exodus 14–15)**

In learning about the Lord's deliverance of the Israelites from the Egyptian army at the Red Sea, students discovered important truths about having faith in the Lord and recognizing what He has done for us. From the experience of the healing of the waters of Marah, students learned that if we seek the Lord's guidance when facing difficulties, He can inspire us to know how to proceed.

#### **Day 2 (Exodus 16:1–17:7)**

In their study about the Lord's gifts of manna, quail, and water for the children of Israel, students identified the following principles: One reason the Lord gives us commandments is to test our obedience to Him. When we murmur against Church leaders, we are really murmuring against the Lord. As we remember the Lord daily, our trust in Him will grow. Jesus Christ is the source of all spiritual nourishment.

#### **Day 3 (Exodus 17:8–Exodus 19)**

From the experience of Aaron and Hur holding up Moses's hands so that Israel could prevail against their enemies, students learned that as we sustain the prophet, we will prevail in our conflict against Satan. In studying Israel's preparation to enter into a covenant with the Lord at Mount Sinai, students discovered that if we obey the Lord's voice and keep our covenants with Him, then we will become the Lord's treasured possession and His holy people. Students also learned that to be prepared to return to God's presence, we must enter into His covenant and obey His commandments.

#### **Day 4 (Exodus 20)**

In studying about the Ten Commandments and the Israelites' experience at Mount Sinai, students discovered that if we love God and keep His commandments, then He will show us mercy. They also learned that reverence for God helps us to resist sin.

### Introduction

While the children of Israel were camped at Mount Sinai, God gave them the Ten Commandments. This lesson can help students understand principles related to two of the Ten Commandments: keep the Sabbath day holy and honor your father and mother.

*Note:* This lesson provides an opportunity for two students to teach the class. To be sure these students have time to prepare, provide each student with a copy of the section he or she is to teach a week in advance. You could also choose to teach these sections yourself.

Students studied two scripture mastery passages in this unit. The mastery passage in Exodus 20:3–17 will be reviewed in the beginning of this lesson. You may want to review Exodus 19:5–6 at the end of the lesson by reciting it together with students and perhaps discussing how it relates to what they learned in the lesson today.

As students studied Exodus 19 on day 3 of this unit, they began working on a handout titled "Moses's and Israel's Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai." A completed version of the handout is located in the appendix of this manual.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### **Exodus 20:1–17**

##### *God gives the children of Israel the Ten Commandments*

Invite students to help list the Ten Commandments on the board. Remind them that these commandments are found in the scripture mastery passage Exodus 20:3–17.

- If someone were to ask you what the most important commandment is, what would you say? Why?

Explain that the Savior was asked a similar question during His mortal ministry. Invite a student to read Matthew 22:36–40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior responded. Ask students to report what they find.

Write the headings *Love God* and *Love Thy Neighbor* on the board. Explain that the Savior summarized all of God's commandments into these two commandments.

Remind students that while the Israelites were camped at Mount Sinai, they heard the voice of God give the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20:1; Deuteronomy 4:12–13; 5:22–26). Ask students to categorize each of the Ten Commandments under one of the two headings on the board. Write the number of the commandment under the heading students select. (One way to categorize them is identifying that commandments 1 through 4 deal with loving God and commandments 5 through 10 deal with loving our neighbor.)

Write the following principle on the board: **By living the Ten Commandments, we can show love for God and our neighbor.** Explain that in this lesson students will have the

opportunity to learn more about one commandment that pertains to loving God and one that pertains to loving our neighbor.

The remainder of this lesson is designed for two students to teach.

### Student Teacher 1—Exodus 20:8–11

Ask your classmates:

- What was a special day in your life that you will always want to remember? Why is that day important to you?

Invite a classmate to read Exodus 20:8–11 aloud. Ask the other students to follow along, looking for a special day the Lord wants us to remember.

After the verses have been read, ask your classmates:

- According to Exodus 20:10, who does the Sabbath day belong to?
- How did the Sabbath become a holy day? (After the Creation of the earth and all things upon it, the Lord blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day. This means He set it apart so it would be different from all the other days.)

You may want to invite your classmates to write the following truth in their scriptures: **The Sabbath is the Lord's day and is holy.**

Explain that because the Sabbath is already holy, our responsibility is to keep it holy. Then ask the following questions:

- Based on what we learn in verses 9–10, what must we do to keep the Sabbath a holy day? (Your classmates may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **Resting from our labors on the Sabbath can help us keep it a holy day.**)
- How can obeying the instructions in verse 9 help us obey the instructions in verse 10?
- What are some other ways that we can keep the Sabbath a holy day? (If your classmates need help with some ideas, see D&C 59:9–13. You could also be prepared with information from *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 30–31. Listing things you can and should do on the Sabbath and not just things you should not do will increase your peers' understanding of the value of the Sabbath day.)
- How have you been blessed as you have kept the Sabbath a holy day?

As you conclude, you may want to explain why the Sabbath day is important to you and how you have been blessed by keeping the Sabbath a holy day.

### Student Teacher 2—Exodus 20:12

Remind your classmates of the commandment to honor our fathers and mothers (see Exodus 20:12). Then ask:

- Why do you think the way we treat our parents is important to the Lord?

Invite a classmate to read Exodus 20:12 aloud. Ask the other students to follow along, looking for the blessing the Lord promised those who obey the commandment to honor their father and mother.

Explain that the land referred to in verse 12 was the land of Canaan, which had been promised to the children of Israel if they kept their covenants with the Lord. However, they learned that if they broke their covenants they would be driven from the land and scattered (see Deuteronomy 4:23–38). We can learn the following principle from verse 12: **As we honor our parents, the Lord will bless us.**

Ask the following questions:

- What do you think it means to honor your father and mother? (If needed, you may want to point out that we honor them as we show love and respect for them. We also bring honor to them as we live righteously.)
- How can a person honor a parent who is not living righteously or who teaches his or her children to do things that are contrary to Heavenly Father's commandments? (As your classmates respond, you may want to point out that the commandment to honor your parents comes after the first commandment to love and serve Heavenly Father above all else [see Exodus 20:3; Matthew 22:35–39]. In addition, we can show love and respect for our earthly parents even when they are not perfect.)
- How have you been blessed as you have honored your parents?

As you conclude, you may want to display a picture of your parents or guardians. You might share an experience when you honored them and were blessed as you did so. Invite your classmates to consider what they might do to more fully honor their parents.

### Next Unit (Exodus 21–36)

To help students prepare for their study of the next unit, ask the following questions: Would you bow to a golden calf? Why would the children of Israel make an idol? Invite students to consider times in their lives when they have disobeyed God's commandments. Explain that as they continue their study of Exodus in the coming week, they will learn important truths from the Lord's dealings with the children of Israel after they disobeyed His commandments by making and worshipping a golden calf.

## LESSON 51

# Exodus 21–24

### Introduction

The Lord revealed additional laws to Moses. Israel agreed to obey God’s laws and formally entered into a covenant with Him.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 21–23

#### *The Lord reveals additional laws to Moses*

Invite three students to come to the front of the class to act as a panel of judges. Invite other students to read the scenarios below one at a time. Ask the panel of judges to respond to the questions that follow each scenario.

- Two men became angry at one another and began to fight. One of them was severely injured in the fight and will be confined to bed for several weeks. What responsibility does the other man have toward the injured man?
- A boy borrowed a donkey, and then someone stole the donkey from him. Is the boy financially responsible for the donkey? Does the boy need to compensate the owner of the donkey for the loss?
- A woman has been treated very poorly by her neighbors for several years. They often ridicule her and her family. One day she discovers a cow belonging to one of her neighbors wandering by itself in the road. What should the woman do?

Invite the judges to return to their seats. Explain that Exodus 21–23 includes the Lord’s laws for the children of Israel as they encountered scenarios such as the ones previously discussed. To provide a brief summary of these laws, you may want to ask three students to read aloud the chapter headings for Exodus 21–23. Point out that the laws recorded in these chapters would help the people keep the Ten Commandments and live peaceably with one another.

To help students understand the context in which these laws were given, invite them to refer to the handout “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai” (see lesson 48). (A completed version of the handout is located in the appendix of this manual.) Explain that the Lord revealed these laws to Moses after Moses again ascended Mount Sinai (see Exodus 20:21). Invite students to write *God gives Israel additional laws* on line 6 of the handout.

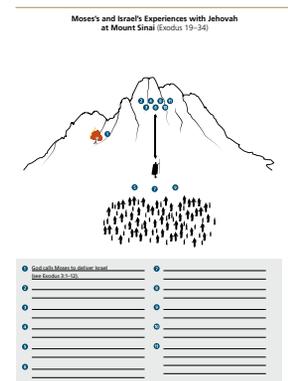
Write the following scripture references on the board: (1) *Exodus 21:18–19*; (2) *Exodus 22:7–12*; (3) *Exodus 23:4–5*. Invite a few students to take turns reading these passages aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord’s instructions address the scenarios and questions you discussed earlier. (It may be helpful to ask students to read the scenarios aloud again.) Invite students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Exodus 21:23–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the punishments the Lord put in place for Israelites who injured one another. Invite students to report what they find.

- How might knowing these punishments have been helpful to the children of Israel?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Exodus 22:1–6. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord required of the children of Israel after they committed one of the sins listed in these verses.

- According to these verses, what did the Lord require the children of Israel to do after they committed one of these sins? (Make restitution.)
- What does it mean to “make restitution” (verse 5)? (To repair the problems caused by your actions.)



- What principle can we learn from these verses about what we need to do when we violate the laws of God? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we violate the laws of God, then He requires us to make restitution.**)
- What are some examples of situations in which it might be difficult to make restitution? What should a person do in these types of situations?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Sometimes you *cannot* give back what you have taken because you don’t have it to give. If you have caused others to suffer unbearably—defiled someone’s virtue, for example—it is not within your power to give it back. . . . Perhaps the damage was so severe that you cannot fix it no matter how desperately you want to. . . . Fixing that which you broke and you cannot fix is the very purpose of the atonement of Christ.

“When your desire is firm and you are willing to pay the ‘utmost farthing’ [Matthew 5:25–26], the law of restitution is suspended. Your obligation is transferred to the Lord. He will settle your accounts” (“The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 19–20).

Invite students to ponder whether there are any situations in their lives in which they feel they need to make restitution. Encourage them to seek the Lord’s help as they do so.

**Help students learn the basic doctrines of the gospel**

As you teach the scriptures sequentially, you will have opportunities to help students identify, understand, believe, explain, and apply basic doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For example, as students study Exodus 24, they will have the opportunity to learn more about ordinances and covenants. Studying basic doctrines of the gospel can help students strengthen their testimonies and be prepared to teach the gospel to others.

## Exodus 24

### *Moses helps his people to enter into a covenant with God*

Divide students into small groups. Invite students to imagine they have a friend who has expressed a desire to be baptized as a member of the Church. Ask students to work with their groups and list on pieces of paper what they think their friend might need to do to prepare to enter into the covenant of baptism.

After sufficient time, ask students to report to the class what they wrote. (Students’ answers may include learning about and developing faith in Jesus Christ and His teachings, repenting of their sins, and making commitments to obey God’s commandments.) Invite students to explain why they think it is important to do these things before entering into the covenant of baptism.

Invite students to refer to the handout “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai.” Explain that at Mount Sinai the Lord gave the Israelites the opportunity to enter into a covenant with Him that would prepare them to return to His presence and receive eternal life.

Ask students to review the handout and consider what they have learned about Israel’s experiences at Mount Sinai.

- What had the Lord done to prepare Israel to enter into a covenant with Him? (He taught them about the covenant, instructed them to sanctify themselves, and provided them with laws and commandments.)
- How was the Israelites’ preparation like the ways in which a person might prepare today to enter into the covenant of baptism?

Summarize Exodus 24:1–5 by explaining that Moses descended Mount Sinai and taught God’s law to the people, and they committed to obey it. Moses then recorded “all the words of the Lord” (Exodus 24:4). Before the people formally entered into the covenant with God, Moses built an altar and instructed some young men to make burnt offerings and sacrifice oxen on it.

Invite a student to read Exodus 24:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Moses did to help the children of Israel formally enter into a covenant with God.

- What did Moses do to help the children of Israel formally enter into a covenant with God?

Remind students that God had commanded His children to participate in the ordinance of animal sacrifice, which taught them about the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- What may the blood sprinkled on the altar represent? (The blood of Jesus Christ, which He shed for us.)

- What do you think the sprinkling of blood upon the people symbolized? (This act symbolized that the people could receive the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ through the covenant they had made.)
- What can we learn from this event about the blessings we receive as we make and keep covenants with the Lord? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize the following truth: **Making and keeping covenants with the Lord helps us qualify to receive the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)
- What are the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite students to listen for how the Atonement can bless us:



“Most of us clearly understand that the Atonement is for sinners. I am not so sure, however, that we know and understand that the Atonement is also for saints—for good men and women who are obedient, worthy, and conscientious and who are striving to become better and serve more faithfully. We may mistakenly believe we must make the journey from good to better and become a saint all by ourselves. . . .

“The gospel of the Savior is not simply about avoiding bad in our lives; it also is essentially about doing and becoming good. And the Atonement provides help for us to overcome and avoid bad and to do and become good. . . .

“The enabling power of the Atonement of Christ strengthens us to do things we could never do on our own” (“The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2012, 42, 46).

- In addition to cleansing us from sin, how can the Atonement bless our lives?
- How can making and keeping covenants with the Lord help us qualify to receive all of the blessings of the Atonement?

Invite students to again work with their groups. Ask them to list on their papers two or three blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ that their friend could receive by making and keeping covenants. (Their lists could include specific ways the Atonement can strengthen us to serve others and become better than we currently are.)

After students have created their lists, invite them to share what they wrote with the class. You might also invite students to share how making and keeping their covenants has given them strength to serve others and become better people. Invite students to write *Israel enters into the covenant* on line 7 of the handout.

Invite a student to read Exodus 24:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened after the children of Israel formally made a covenant with God. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize Exodus 24:12–18 by explaining that Moses then went farther up the mountain to receive the law of the covenant written on stone tables by God. Moses spent 40 days on Mount Sinai receiving additional instruction from the Lord. Students will learn more about this instruction as they study Exodus 25–31 in upcoming lessons.

Consider inviting a few students to share their testimonies about the principles you have discussed today. You may also want to share your testimony of these principles.

# Exodus 25–27; 30

## Introduction

Through the prophet Moses, the Lord commanded the children of Israel to build a tabernacle that would be a sanctuary where the Lord could dwell among His

people. He gave detailed instructions for the building of each item that would furnish the tabernacle (see Bible Dictionary, “Tabernacle”).

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 25:1–9

#### *The Lord instructs the children of Israel to build a sanctuary*

Before class, find the statistical report given during the Saturday afternoon session of the most recent April general conference. You can find this in the most recent May issue of the *Ensign* or *Liahona*.

Display pictures of temples in the front of the class, and ask students some questions about temples, based on the statistical report. For example, you could ask how many temples were in operation at the end of the previous year, if any temples were recently announced, which temples are under construction, and so forth.

Write the following question on the board:

*How are we blessed by building temples?*

Invite students to watch for answers to this question as they study Exodus 25–27; 30. You may want to refer to the handout “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai” (see lesson 48) and explain to students that after Moses and 73 others ascended the mountain, Moses asked them to remain while he ascended farther up the mountain to speak with the Lord.

Invite a student to read Exodus 25:1–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded the children of Israel to do. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that a *sanctuary* is a holy place or a place of safety. The Lord wanted the children of Israel to build a tabernacle (or sanctuary). In our day, a temple is considered a sanctuary.

- According to verse 8, why did the Lord command the Israelites to build a tabernacle? What can we learn about modern temples from this verse? (Students should identify the following truth: **The Lord commands us to build temples so He can dwell among us.**)

Explain that although the tabernacle Moses was commanded to build shared similarities with modern temples (such as priesthood ordinances being performed in both), the tabernacle functioned under the law of Moses and thus differed substantially from modern temples. However, both the ancient tabernacle and modern temples are the house of the Lord, where the Lord’s people can feel close to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

To help students understand the preceding principle about temples, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David E. Sorensen of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for what it means for the Lord to dwell among us because we build temples.



“Temples have always symbolized being in the presence of the Lord. . . . There is a closeness to God that comes through consistent worship in the house of the Lord. We can come to know Him and feel welcome, ‘at home,’ in His house.

“. . . The simple presence of a temple should serve as a reminder of covenants we have made, the need for integrity, and the fact that God is never far away” (“Small Temples—Large Blessings,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 65).

- When have you felt close to God because of the temple? How have you or someone you know been blessed by attending the temple and participating in sacred ordinances?

Ask a student to read Exodus 25:9 aloud. Explain that the tabernacle Moses was instructed to build was a portable temple. Read aloud the following statement by Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“In order that they would have a centerpiece for their worship and activity, the Lord instructed Moses to build a tabernacle. The tabernacle was a forerunner of the temple, made portable so they could easily carry it with them” (“We Believe All That God Has Revealed,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2003, 87).

## Exodus 25:10–22

### *The Lord reveals details for building the ark of the covenant*

Explain that the first tabernacle furnishing that Moses was instructed to build was called an ark. Point out the word *ark* in Exodus 25:10.

Ask students to look at Exodus 25:17, footnote *a*, to learn the meaning of the Hebrew word that was translated as “mercy seat” (“atonement-cover”).

Invite students to read Exodus 25:10–21 silently and draw on a piece of paper what they think the ark may have looked like. You might invite them to work in pairs, with one student reading aloud while the other draws. Before they read, explain that the word *testimony* in this case refers to the covenant and law that Moses would receive from the Lord; the term *mercy seat* refers to the lid of the ark; and the words *cherubim* and *cherub* refer to figures that represent heavenly creatures or beings, in this case with wings. (The word *cherubim* is the plural form meaning more than one heavenly creature. See Bible Dictionary, “Cherubim.”)

After sufficient time, invite students to display their drawings. Then invite a student to read Exodus 25:22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the ark would be important to Israel.

- Why would the ark be important to Moses and the children of Israel?
- Based on what we learn from verse 22, how will the Lord bless us when we worship in the temple? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **When we worship in the temple, the Lord blesses us by communicating His covenants and commandments to us there.**)

Explain that only in temples can we receive some of the ordinances required for our exaltation and learn certain sacred truths about the plan of salvation.

## Exodus 25:23–27:21; 30

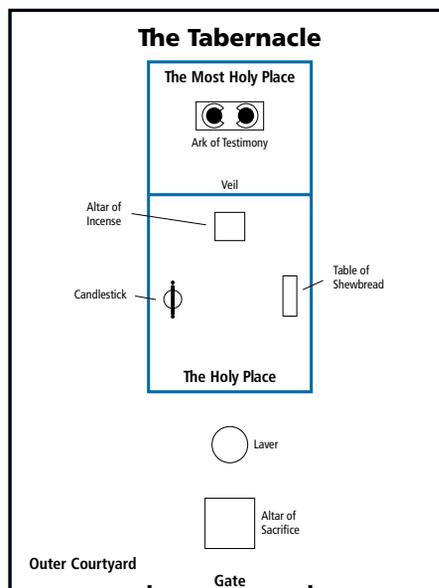
### *The Lord reveals the pattern for building and furnishing the tabernacle*

Show the picture Temple Baptismal Font (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 121; see also LDS.org).

- What do you think the 12 oxen around the baptismal font represent? What do you think is the purpose of the symbols used in the temple?

Invite students to ponder the possible meaning of the symbolism of the tabernacle as they continue to study Exodus 25–27; 30. On the board, draw only the outline of the tabernacle (in blue) as shown in the accompanying diagram.

Explain that in Exodus 26 we read that the Lord commanded Israel to build the tent of the tabernacle with boards and curtains. He also commanded them to make a curtain called a *veil* to divide the tabernacle into two rooms. On the board, draw and label the *Veil* to create two rooms as shown in the diagram. Then invite a student to read Exodus 26:33–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the two rooms were called.



### *Use the board*

Effective use of the board during the lesson can prepare students to learn. It can also invite meaningful participation, especially from those who tend to learn visually. On the board, you can outline the major points or principles of a lesson, diagram a doctrine or event, display maps, draw objects described in the scriptures, develop flowcharts, or do other activities that will enhance learning.



- What were the two rooms called? (Label *The Holy Place* and *The Most Holy Place* as shown in the diagram. Explain that the Most Holy Place is often called the Holy of Holies.)
- Which room was to house the ark? (The most holy place. Choose one of the student pictures of the ark and place it in the area of the board labeled *The Most Holy Place*.)

Explain that the ark (sometimes called the ark of the covenant or ark of the testimony) was the central feature of the tabernacle. It was placed in the Holy of Holies, which represented the presence of the Lord.

Explain that Exodus 27:9–18 contains the Lord’s instructions that linen curtains be placed between pillars to create a courtyard with a gate around the tabernacle. Draw the boundary of the outer courtyard on the board.

Assign students to read about and draw one of the following items found in the tabernacle. (You may want to write this list on the board.) Ask them to notice where each item was to be located. They could work in pairs or small groups.

Candlestick (with seven lamps): Exodus 25:31–32, 37–40; 26:35

Table of shewbread: Exodus 25:23, 29–30; 26:35

Altar of sacrifice: Exodus 27:1–8; 30:18

Altar of incense: Exodus 30:1–8

Laver (basin of water): Exodus 30:17–21

After sufficient time, invite each student or group to report on the item they studied by showing their drawings and explaining anything they found about the item’s purpose and location in the tabernacle. Place one student picture of each item on the diagram on the board in the correct location. You may also want to label each item.

Point out that the sacred items of the tabernacle lead from the gate to the most holy place, where the ark is. Explain that these items and the ordinances performed with them were symbolic and were meant to teach Israel how to journey through life back to God. Invite students to suggest aspects of our journey back to God that each item in the tabernacle might represent. Students might suggest the following possible symbolic meanings. (If students have difficulty thinking of meanings, consider listing some of the following items on the board and letting students suggest matches between the meanings and the items in the tabernacle.)

*Candlestick (with seven lamps): The Light of Christ and the Holy Ghost*

*Table of shewbread: The Savior’s body (similar to the symbolic meaning of the sacrament)*

*Altar of sacrifice: Giving ourselves completely to God, giving up sin, and relying on the great and last sacrifice of the Atonement of Jesus Christ*

*Altar of incense: Prayer (we can approach God through prayer)*

*Laver (basin of water): Cleansing, such as through repentance and baptism*

Explain that although temples today look different and operate differently than the tabernacle, they still contain ordinances and symbols that help us prepare to walk back into the presence of God.

- How would you summarize what the ordinances and symbols of the temple teach us? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The ordinances and symbols of the temple teach us how to proceed faithfully through this life and eventually enter God’s presence.**)

 To help students understand some of the symbolism of the tabernacle, you may want to show the video “The Tabernacle” (7:18), in which a narrator walks viewers through a representation of how the tabernacle may have appeared. You may want to use this video as a review or in place of students discussing the symbolism of the tabernacle. This video can be found on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* or on LDS.org.

Ask students to share how the temple has helped them draw closer to their Father in Heaven and the Savior.

Conclude by encouraging students to think about the symbolism of the ancient tabernacle the next time they attend the temple. You may want to share your testimony of temple worship.

## LESSON 53

# Exodus 28–29; 31

### Introduction

While Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days, the Lord revealed how Aaron and the priests were to be consecrated, clothed, and anointed to serve in the tabernacle. The Lord promised that His presence would be with the

Israelites if they kept His laws and ordinances. He also reiterated the importance of keeping the Sabbath day holy and gave Moses two stone tables containing the law.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 28:1–43

#### *The Lord explains the clothing that Aaron and the priests are to wear for their service*

Ask students if they ever wear clothing that has some type of symbol on it (such as brand or sports team logos). Invite them to examine the exterior of their clothing, looking for symbols. Ask a few students to show the class any symbols they discovered and explain their meanings if they know them.

Remind students that the Lord often uses symbols to teach or remind us of gospel truths. Items of clothing are sometimes used as symbols for this purpose.

Explain that sacred religious clothing has been used symbolically since the Lord made “coats of skins” for Adam and Eve before they were cast out of the Garden of Eden (see Genesis 3:21). When Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days, the Lord revealed to him details concerning the tabernacle as well as the sacred clothing that was to be worn by the priests who would serve in the tabernacle.

Invite a student to read Exodus 28:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a blessing the Lord said would come from Aaron wearing special clothing. (It may be helpful to explain that the word *consecrate* means to dedicate for a holy purpose, such as the service of God.)

- According to verse 3, what was the purpose of Aaron’s garments? (To consecrate him.)

Display the picture *Moses Gives Aaron the Priesthood* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 15; see also LDS.org). Ask a student to read Exodus 28:4 aloud. You may want to suggest that students locate and mark the part of the verse that mentions the different articles of clothing. Ask a few students to see if they can identify the various articles of clothing in the picture. (You may need to point out that the ephod is an apron, depicted by the blue portion of Aaron’s clothing in the picture, and the mitre is the cap in Aaron’s hands.)

Explain that the rest of Exodus 28 describes the details of this clothing and some of the symbolism associated with it. To show an example, point to the breastplate in the picture.

- How many precious stones do you see?
- What do you think the twelve stones represented?

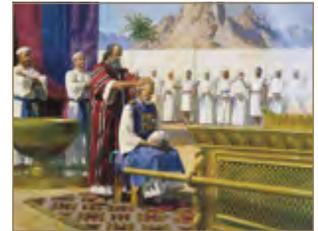
Invite a student to read Exodus 28:21, 29 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the twelve stones represented. Invite students to report what they find. (The twelve stones represented the twelve tribes of Israel.)

Explain that we also wear special symbolic clothing for temple ordinances today. Such clothing, including the garments we receive in the temple, is sacred and should be treated and spoken of with reverence.

### Exodus 29:1–21

#### *Aaron and the priests are to be washed, anointed, and clothed in holy garments*

Bring a dirty spoon or other utensil to class. Show it to the students, and ask who would like to use it to eat their next meal.



### Objects and pictures

Objects and pictures can help students visualize the people, places, events, objects, and symbols in the scriptures. For example, instead of just talking about the priestly clothing of Aaron and his sons, you could display a picture or painting of what that clothing may have looked like. However, be sure to rely on the scriptures as the source for class discussions about details of people, events, and objects in the scriptures. Artistic representations of those things are not always accurate.

- What ought to be done to this utensil before it is used?
- How does the utensil relate to the priests who were to help the Lord in His work? (Help students understand that the processes of becoming physically clean and ceremonially clean were different. While God wanted the priests to be physically clean, their spiritual cleanliness was more important. You might consider inviting students to read the entry “Clean and unclean” in the Bible Dictionary or Guide to the Scriptures [scriptures.lds.org].)

Explain that the Lord described how priests were to be purified, consecrated, and set apart in a special ceremony before they began their service in the tabernacle. Invite students, as they study the Lord’s instructions in Exodus 29, to look for principles concerning how they can be clean and live more fully set apart from sin.

If possible, provide a copy of the following handout to each student. Invite students to read the scripture reference in the first column and, in the space provided, write a brief description of the Lord’s instructions. Then have them write the number of the Lord’s instruction in the second column, next to what they think the symbolic meaning may be. An example has been done for them.

The Lord’s Instruction	Symbolic Meaning
1. <b>Exodus 29:4</b> <u>Aaron and his sons are washed with water.</u>	_____ Symbolic of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ 1 _____ Symbolic of being cleansed
2. <b>Exodus 29:5–6</b> _____	_____ Symbolic of the Holy Ghost (this substance was used as fuel to provide light)
3. <b>Exodus 29:7</b> _____	_____ Symbolic of being set apart from the world and prepared for sacred responsibilities
4. <b>Exodus 29:15–16</b> _____	

After a few minutes, invite students to compare their answers. Then discuss the answers as a class. (The order of answers in the symbolic meaning column is 4, 1, 3, 2.)

Explain that after the ram was sacrificed, the next part of the cleansing ceremony symbolized that the priests could apply or access the cleansing power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Invite a student to read Exodus 29:20–21.

- What did the Lord instruct the priests to do with the ram’s blood after they sacrificed the ram?

To help students understand the symbolism of putting the ram’s blood on the right ear, thumb, and toe as described in verses 20–21, write the words *hearing*, *acting*, and *walking* on the board. Ask students which part of the body mentioned in verses 20–21 may be associated with each of the words on the board (hearing = ear, acting = thumb, walking = toe).

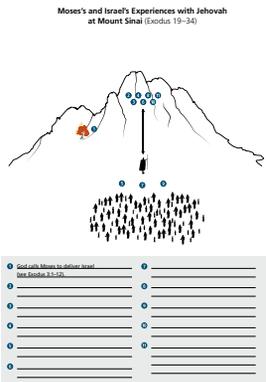
- What might the placement of a symbol of Jesus Christ on a priest’s ear, thumb, and toe show the Lord the priest was willing to do? (The priest would listen to and follow Him.)
- According to verse 21, what effect would this ceremony have on the priests? (They would be “hallowed,” or made holy.)
- What do you think we can learn from this symbolic ceremony? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including something similar to the following: **If we will apply the atoning blood of Jesus Christ by listening to the word of the Lord, acting upon it, and walking in His paths, we will be sanctified.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to ponder how they can show the Lord that they are dedicated and consecrated to following Him.

### Exodus 29:22–46

*The Lord reveals sacrificial rites to prepare and sanctify Israel for His presence*

Summarize Exodus 29:22–42 by explaining that these verses further describe some of the sacrifices and procedures that consecrated and sanctified the tabernacle, the priests, and the children of Israel.



Remind students about the Lord’s instructions to build a tabernacle and its furnishings, which they learned about in their study of Exodus 25–27; 30. Point out that now students have learned that priests were to be set apart to perform their duties in the temple. Invite a student to read Exodus 29:43–46 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would do if the Israelites faithfully followed His instructions in building the tabernacle and performing the ordinances therein.

- According to verses 43–46, what blessings were promised to the Israelites? (God would meet with the children of Israel in the tabernacle, He would sanctify the tabernacle and the priests, He would dwell among the Israelites, He would be their God, and they would know that He is the Lord their God.)
- What can we learn about the purpose of temples and ordinances from these chapters and verses? (Students may identify a variety of doctrines and principles, including the following truth: **The temple and its ordinances prepare us to be in God’s presence.**)
- How can the preparation of Aaron and his sons to work in the tabernacle relate to our own preparation to participate in temple ordinances?

### Exodus 31:1–11

#### *The Lord inspires artisans to create the tabernacle and its furnishings and the priests’ clothing*

Summarize Exodus 31:1–11 by explaining that the Lord had prepared certain individuals to be able to construct the tabernacle and its furnishings and make the priests’ clothing. The Lord told Moses that he had filled these people with the Spirit of God so that they would be able to perform these tasks.

### Exodus 31:12–18

#### *The Lord teaches about the Sabbath and gives Moses the stone tables*

Explain that the Lord often uses signs or symbols to remind His children of what they have promised Him and what He has promised them. Invite a student to read Exodus 31:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a sign God uses to remind us of our relationship to Him and His promise to sanctify us.

- According to verse 13, what is the sign that God is the Lord “that doth sanctify [us]”?
- How does keeping the Sabbath day holy help us stay clean and set apart from worldliness? (If time permits, consider having students review the scriptures listed in the Topical Guide under “Sabbath.”)

Invite a student to read Exodus 31:14–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for an indicator of how strongly the Lord feels about keeping the Sabbath holy. Ask them to report what they find.

Invite students to refer to their copies of the handout “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai” (see lesson 48). (A completed version of the handout is located in the appendix of this manual.) Explain that before the Lord concluded His revelation to Moses at Mount Sinai, He gave him an additional reminder of His law and covenant with Israel. Ask a student to read Exodus 31:18 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord gave to Moses.

- What did God give to Moses? (Two tables of stone containing His law.)

On line 8 of the handout, invite students to write *God writes His law on stone tables*.

You may want to conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths taught in this lesson.

# Exodus 32

## Introduction

While Moses was on Mount Sinai speaking with the Lord, the children of Israel made a golden calf and worshipped it. The Lord told Moses that those who did not repent would be destroyed. Moses descended the mountain and destroyed the stone tables as well as the

golden calf. Three thousand rebellious Israelites were also killed. Moses acted as a mediator between the Lord and the people (see Joseph Smith Translation, Galatians 3:19–20 [in the Bible appendix]).

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 32:1–8

*While Moses is on Mount Sinai, the children of Israel make and worship a golden calf*



Before class, place a picture of Jesus Christ (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 1; see also LDS.org) at the front of the class and a picture of a golden calf at the back of the class (you can draw a simple picture of a golden calf or write the words *Golden Calf* on a piece of paper). Invite the class to stand, and ask students to name events that they think helped the Israelites come closer to Jesus Christ. (Students' answers may include the plagues on the Egyptians, the protective pillar of fire, the parting of the Red Sea, the miracles of manna and quail, and water flowing out of a rock, as well as the Lord giving Moses the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.) After each response, list the event on the board and ask students to take a step closer to the picture of Jesus Christ.

Explain that Moses had spent 40 days and nights on Mount Sinai, and the people began to wonder what had happened to him. Invite a student to read Exodus 32:1–6 aloud. Ask students to look for what the Israelites did in Moses's absence.

- Based on these verses, which direction were the Israelites now facing? (Invite students to turn around and face the drawing of the golden calf.)
- According to verse 6, what type of behavior accompanied their worship of the golden calf? (You may need to explain that the phrase “rose up to play” implies that the Israelites became unruly, riotous, and immoral.)
- Why do you think the Israelites would stop their progression toward Jesus Christ and instead direct their attention and devotion toward a golden calf?

Ask students to return to their seats. Invite a student to read Exodus 32:7–8 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for phrases that describe the direction the Israelites were heading.

- According to verse 7, what had the Israelites done to themselves? What do you think it means that they had “corrupted themselves”? (They had become unworthy.)
- According to verse 8, what had the Israelites done to corrupt themselves?
- What do you think it means that the Israelites had “turned aside quickly out of the way which [the Lord] commanded them”? (verse 8).
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **by turning aside from the Lord and His commandments, we corrupt ourselves.**)

To help students better understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball. Ask students to listen for things that some people choose to worship instead of God:

“Modern idols or false gods can take such forms as clothes, homes, businesses, machines, automobiles, pleasure boats, and numerous other material deflectors from the path to godhood. What difference does it make that the item concerned is not shaped like an idol?” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 40).

- What do people today turn their attention and devotion toward instead of the Savior? (List students' answers on the board.)
- Why do you think we may sometimes choose to worship these things instead of the Savior?

Invite students to think about where they may be directing their attention and devotion. Give students a few minutes to ponder and identify anything that may be causing them to turn aside from the Lord and His commandments. Encourage students to make any necessary changes to return their attention and devotion to Jesus Christ.

### Exodus 32:9–14

#### *The Lord speaks with Moses about the rebellious Israelites*

Invite students to refer to the handout “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai” (see lesson 48). (A completed version of the handout is located in the appendix of this manual.) Ask them to write *Israel breaks the covenant* in the space next to number 9 on the handout.

Explain that Exodus 32:9–14 contains the record of a conversation between the Lord and Moses about the rebellious Israelites. These verses can be confusing because of what they say about the Lord. Invite a student to read Exodus 32:14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for words or phrases that may cause confusion about the Lord. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the Prophet Joseph Smith changed this verse in his translation of the Bible. Invite students to turn to the Joseph Smith Translation of Exodus 32:14 in the appendix of the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. If this passage is not in the edition of the Bible available in your country, you can provide the following text as a handout:

“And the Lord said unto Moses, If they will repent of the evil which they have done, I will spare them, and turn away my fierce wrath; but, behold, thou shalt execute judgment upon all that will not repent of this evil this day. Therefore, see thou do this thing that I have commanded thee, or I will execute all that which I had thought to do unto my people” (Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 32:14 [in the Bible appendix]).

- According to the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse, who actually needed to repent?
- What did Moses need to do?
- What was the consequence for the Israelites if they chose to repent? What was the consequence if they did not choose to repent?

### Exodus 32:15–29

#### *Moses destroys the stone tables and the golden calf, and the Levites kill 3,000 of the rebellious Israelites*

Divide students into pairs. Invite each partnership to read Exodus 32:15–25 aloud, alternating verses. Ask students to look for what Moses did because the Israelites had turned aside from the Lord so quickly and worshipped the golden calf. After sufficient time, ask the following questions:

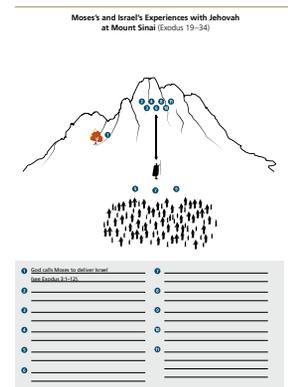
- What happened to the stone tables that Moses had brought down from Mount Sinai?
- What did Moses do with the golden calf?

Invite students to look at Exodus 32:25, footnote *a*, to discover the meaning of the word *naked* in this verse. (In this verse, *naked* means “riotous, let loose.”)

Invite a student to read Exodus 32:26 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Moses said to the people.

- What were those who wanted to be on the Lord’s side supposed to do?
- Who was the first group of people to gather to the side of the prophet Moses? What might standing next to the prophet indicate?

Write the following incomplete sentence on the board: *As we stand with the Lord’s prophet . . .*



#### **Define difficult words and phrases**

As students study the scriptures, they may encounter words or phrases that they are unfamiliar with or do not understand. You can assist students in defining difficult words or phrases by teaching them that dictionaries, student manuals, footnotes, and scripture study helps can often help them understand these challenging words and the content of the scriptures.

- According to verse 26, what do we demonstrate when we stand with the prophet? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we stand with the Lord's prophet, we show that we are on the Lord's side.** Using students' words, complete the principle on the board.)

Invite students to share examples of times when they or someone they know chose to stand with the prophet. As students share their experiences, consider asking the following question:

- How does this experience show that you were choosing the Lord's side?

Invite students to write a goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals concerning how they will stand with the Lord by standing with the Lord's prophet.

Invite students to read Exodus 32:27–29 silently, looking for what happened to those who continued to rebel against the Lord and not stand with Moses. Invite students to report what they find. (You may want to clarify that Moses instructed the Levites to kill everyone who would not repent of worshipping the golden calf.)

### Exodus 32:30–35

#### *Moses acts as a mediator between the Lord and the rebellious Israelites*

Display the pictures Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 56; see also LDS.org) and The Ten Commandments (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 14; see also LDS.org) side by side on the board. Explain that because Moses was a “prophetic symbol of the Christ who was to come” (Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [1997], 137), he would do things that would resemble things the Savior would do. (You may want to write the phrase “prophetic symbol of Christ” above the picture of Moses.)

Invite a student to read Exodus 32:30–32 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words, phrases, or ideas that show similarities between Moses and Jesus Christ. Ask students to report their findings and list them on the board beneath the two pictures. (Students' responses may include the fact that both Moses and Jesus Christ offered to make an atonement for others' sin and were innocent of the sin for which they offered to make an atonement.)

- According to verse 32, what did Moses plead with the Lord to do?
- Why do you think Moses would offer to suffer the same fate as the Israelites, even though he was innocent?
- What doctrine can Moses's words and actions teach us about Jesus Christ? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **Jesus Christ is our Mediator with the Father** and **Jesus Christ took our sins upon Him.**)

Invite a student to read Exodus 32:33 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's response to Moses's offer in behalf of the people.

- What did the Lord tell Moses about those who sinned against Him?

Testify that when we repent, the Savior's Atonement blots out, or erases, our sins. When we choose not to repent, we remain unworthy to dwell with God.

Invite students to write *Moses pleads for the people* in the space next to number 10 on the handout.

Ask a student to read Exodus 32:34–35 aloud. Point out that while many of the people chose to repent and turn back to the Lord after worshipping the golden calf, they still had to endure many of the consequences of their sinful actions.

Invite students to ponder the Savior's willingness to take the punishment for our sins upon Himself. Invite a few students who are willing to do so to share their feelings about what Jesus Christ has done for us.



## LESSON 55

# Exodus 33–34

### Introduction

Because of Israel's sins, the Lord declared that they had lost the privilege of seeing His face. God commanded Moses to make two new tables of stone and to ascend

Mount Sinai. The Lord again gave Moses His law, but He withheld the higher priesthood and its ordinances from the children of Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 33

*Because of Israel's sins, the Lord declares that they cannot see His face*

Read aloud the following scenarios concerning two young men. Ask students to listen for differences in their attitudes and beliefs.

1. A young man transgresses a commandment. He experiences guilt and shame. He believes that Heavenly Father will never forgive him of his sin.
  2. A different young man transgresses the same commandment. He thinks the sin he has committed is not a big deal. He believes that because he is generally a good person, God will not punish him for his sin.
- How would you summarize the differences between the attitudes and beliefs of these two young men?
  - What error do you notice in the belief of each young man? (The first falsely believes that God is not forgiving. The second falsely believes that God will not hold him accountable for his sins.)
  - What problems could arise from these false beliefs?

Remind students that the children of Israel sinned against God by worshipping the golden calf. Invite students, as they study Exodus 33–34, to look for truths that can help them understand how God works with us when we sin.

Ask a student to read Exodus 33:1–4 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for why the children of Israel mourned. You may need to explain that “evil tidings” means bad news.

- Why did the Israelites mourn?

Invite a student to read Exodus 33:7 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Moses did to show that Israel had lost the blessing of the Lord's presence. Invite them to report what they find. Explain that the “tabernacle” spoken of in verse 7 was not the tabernacle they were to construct for the performance of priesthood ordinances (see Exodus 25:8–9). It was a different structure called the “tent of meeting” (see verse 7, footnote *b*).

- What does verse 7 teach us about the effect of sin on our relationship with the Lord? (**Sin separates us from the Lord.**)
- How do we usually experience this separation from the Lord when we sin? (Among other things, we feel a loss of the Holy Spirit.)

Invite students to privately consider times when they have felt the Spirit of the Lord withdraw from them because of their choices.

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite the class to listen for what we can learn from experiences when we feel the Lord's Spirit withdraw from us.



“The promised blessing for honoring [the] covenant [of baptism] is *that we may always have His Spirit to be with us* (see D&C 20:77). . . .

“ . . . Precisely because the promised blessing is *that we may always have His Spirit to be with us*, we should attend to and learn from the choices and influences that separate us from the Holy Spirit.

“The standard is clear. If something we think, see, hear, or do distances us from the Holy Ghost, then we should stop thinking, seeing, hearing, or doing that thing. If that which is intended to entertain, for example, alienates us from the Holy Spirit, then certainly that type of entertainment is not for us. Because the Spirit cannot abide that which is vulgar, crude, or immodest, then clearly such things are not for us. Because we estrange the Spirit of the Lord when we engage in activities we know we should shun, then such things definitely are not for us” (“That We May Always Have His Spirit to Be with Us,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2006, 29–30).

- According to this statement by Elder Bednar, what can we learn from the choices and influences that separate us from the Holy Ghost?

Point out that because Moses had not participated in sin with the children of Israel, he was worthy to be in the Lord’s presence. Invite a student to read Exodus 33:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases that describe the relationship Moses had with the Lord.

- What words or phrases in these verses describe the relationship Moses had with the Lord?
- What do these descriptions imply about Moses’s worthiness and about his relationship with God?

You may want to encourage students to ponder their own relationship with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and consider whether there is anything they could do (or stop doing) to grow closer to Them. Summarize Exodus 33:12–23 by explaining that Moses pleaded with the Lord to be with Israel as they journeyed toward the promised land. Because Moses found favor with the Lord, the Lord promised that He would be with the children of Israel. However, He also indicated that because of their sins, they would not be allowed to see His face at that time. He also added, “Neither shall there be any sinful man at any time, that shall see my face and live” (Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 33:20 [in the Bible appendix]).

## Exodus 34

### *The Lord writes His law on new stone tables*



Display the picture *The Ten Commandments* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 14; see also LDS.org). As a review, ask students to explain what happened to the set of tables Moses brought down from Mount Sinai as recorded in Exodus 32.

Explain that the Lord commanded Moses to create another set of stone tables. Invite a student to read Exodus 34:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord said He would write on the second set. Invite students to report what they find.

Using verse 1, footnote *a*, show students that the Joseph Smith Translation adds an important clarification to Exodus 34:1–2. Explain that it helps us understand that the Lord said He would not write all of the same things on the second set of tables. Invite a student to read aloud Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 34:1–2 (in the Bible appendix). Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would withhold from the writings on the second set of tables.

- What did the Lord say He would withhold from the children of Israel? (The priesthood and its ordinances.)

Explain that Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 34:1–2 (in the Bible appendix) refers to the Melchizedek Priesthood. Point out that although the children of Israel at this time were not given the ordinances and covenants of the Melchizedek Priesthood (which are necessary for us to become like God and dwell in His presence), the Lord allowed the Aaronic Priesthood to continue with them (see D&C 84:25–26).

- According to Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 34:2 (in the Bible appendix), what law did the Lord say He would give to the Israelites? (“The law of a carnal commandment.”)

Explain that “the law of a carnal commandment” refers to what is known as the preparatory gospel, which includes the principles of obedience and sacrifice. This law came to be known as the law of Moses. The preparatory gospel administered through the Aaronic Priesthood—meaning “the gospel of repentance and of baptism” (D&C 84:27)—also continued with the children of Israel.

- Why do you think it was important at this time for the children of Israel to focus on the principles and ordinances of the Aaronic Priesthood, such as repentance and baptism?

(As students respond, help them identify the following principle: **We must be faithful to the ordinances and covenants of the Aaronic Priesthood to be prepared to receive the ordinances and covenants of the Melchizedek Priesthood.**)

Invite students to refer to the handout “Moses’s and Israel’s Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai” (see lesson 48). (A completed version of the handout is located in the appendix of this manual.) In the space next to number 11 on the handout, invite students to write: *God writes His law on new stone tables but withholds the higher priesthood and its ordinances.*

Explain that Exodus 34:3–4 records that Moses made two stone tables and again ascended Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded. Invite a student to read Exodus 34:5–7 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord taught Moses about His attributes. You may need to explain that in this context the word *longsuffering* refers to the Lord’s patience with and mercy for His children, and the phrase “by no means clear the guilty” means the Lord is perfectly just and will hold the rebellious accountable for their actions (see verse 7, footnote e).

- What can we learn about the Lord from His teachings in verses 6–7? (As students respond, write the following truths on the board: **The Lord is merciful and forgiving. He is also perfectly just and will hold us accountable for our sins.**)
- How is it possible for God to be both just and merciful? (Help students understand that because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ [His suffering and death for us], we can repent and experience God’s mercy. However, if we choose not to repent, then we must suffer for our sins [see Alma 42:13–15; D&C 19:16–19].)

Read again the two scenarios discussed at the beginning of class.

- How could the young men in these scenarios benefit from knowing the truths about God that we identified in verses 6–7?

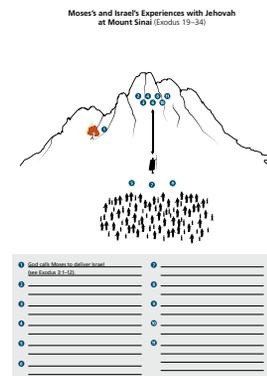
Invite students to ponder how the truths in Exodus 34:6–7 can help them as they seek to repent of the things they have done wrong.

Ask a student to read Exodus 34:8–9 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what Moses asked the Lord on behalf of the children of Israel. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What did Moses ask the Lord? (Explain that when Moses used the phrase “take us for thine inheritance” in verse 9, he was asking that the children of Israel might again be the Lord’s covenant people—His “peculiar treasure” [Exodus 19:5].)

Summarize Exodus 34:10–35 by explaining that the Lord responded to Moses’s request by declaring that Israel would be His people if they would cease from making and worshipping idols and would keep His covenant by obeying the commandments. Moses then descended Mount Sinai and taught the Lord’s words to the people.

Testify of the love God has for the students in your class. You may also want to testify of other principles identified in the lesson. You might ask if students would like to testify of some of the principles they learned.



## Commentary and Background Information

### Exodus 34:6–7. God’s character and attributes

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared:

“I want you all to know [God], and to be familiar with Him. . . .

“ . . . It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God” (in *History of the Church*, 6:305).

In addition, the *Lectures on Faith* state:

“Three things are necessary in order that any rational and intelligent being may exercise faith unto life and salvation.

“First, the idea that [God] actually exists.

“Secondly, a *correct* idea of [God’s] character, perfections, and attributes.

“Thirdly, an actual knowledge that the course of life which [the person] is pursuing is according to [God’s] will” (*Lectures on Faith* [1985], 38).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Exodus 21–34 (Unit 11)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Exodus 21–34 (unit 11) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Exodus 21–24)

Students learned that if we violate the laws of God, then He requires us to make restitution. They also learned that making and keeping covenants with the Lord helps us qualify to receive the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. From Moses's and others' experiences on Mount Sinai, students were reminded that Jesus Christ reveals Himself to His chosen servants.

#### Day 2 (Exodus 25–31)

As students studied about the tabernacle, they learned that the Lord commands us to build temples so He can dwell among us and communicate His covenants and commandments to us in them. They also learned that as we follow Jesus Christ and apply the Atonement, He will cleanse us and make us holy.

#### Day 3 (Exodus 32)

From the account of the Israelites breaking their covenant with the Lord and worshipping a golden calf, students learned that by turning aside from the Lord and His commandments, we corrupt ourselves. Students also considered two fundamental truths: Jesus Christ is our Mediator with the Father, and Jesus Christ took our sins upon Him.

#### Day 4 (Exodus 33–34)

From the consequences of the Israelites breaking their covenant, students learned that sin separates us from the Lord. They learned that the Lord is merciful and forgiving; He is also perfectly just and will hold us accountable for our sins. Students identified that they must be faithful to the ordinances and covenants of the Aaronic Priesthood to be prepared to receive the ordinances and covenants of the Melchizedek Priesthood.

### Introduction

This lesson provides a chance to involve students as they learn more about the tabernacle that God commanded the children of Israel to build.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Exodus 25:10–Exodus 30

*The Lord reveals the pattern for building and furnishing the tabernacle*

If possible, show the picture Temple Baptismal Font (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 121; see also LDS.org).

- What do you think the 12 oxen around the baptismal font represent?
- What do you think the purpose of these symbols used in the temple is?

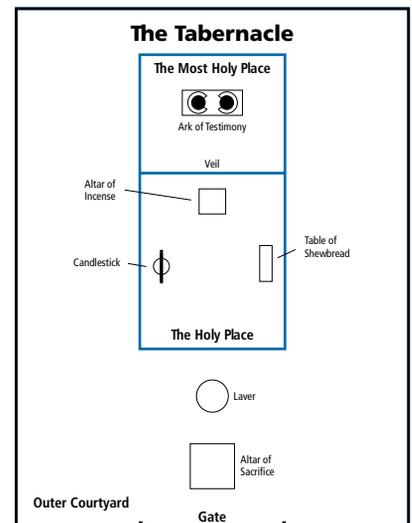
Invite students to ponder the possible meaning of the symbolism of the tabernacle as they continue to study Exodus 25–27; 30.

Invite a student to read Exodus 25:10–22 aloud. Ask the rest of the students to follow along and draw on paper the temple object described in these verses. As the student reads about the mercy seat, explain that it refers to the lid of the ark. You might also need to explain that the word *cherubim* is the plural form of *cherub* and refers to heavenly beings or creatures whose exact forms are unknown. The wings may be symbolic of their movement and power. (See Bible Dictionary, “Cherubim.”)

After students finish drawing, you could invite them to show their work to the class. Explain that the ark (sometimes called the ark of the covenant or ark of the testimony) was the central feature of the tabernacle and represented the presence of the Lord, or the place where God and His children meet.

On the board, draw only the outline of the tabernacle (in blue) as shown in the accompanying diagram:

Explain that in Exodus 26 we read that the Lord commanded the children of Israel to build the tent of the tabernacle with boards and curtains. He also commanded them to make a curtain called a *veil* to divide the



tabernacle into two rooms. (Label the *Veil* dividing the rooms you drew on the board.)

Invite a student to read Exodus 26:33–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the two rooms were called.

- What were the two rooms called? (Label *The Holy Place* and *The Most Holy Place* on the board, as shown in the diagram.)
- Which room was to house the ark? (The most holy place. Choose one of the student pictures of the ark and place it in the area of the board labeled *The Most Holy Place*.)

Draw the boundary of the outer courtyard on the board. Explain that Exodus 27:9–18 contains the Lord’s instructions that Israel place linen curtains between pillars to create an outer courtyard with a gate around the tabernacle.

Assign students to read about and draw one of the following items found in the tabernacle. Ask them to notice where each item was to be located. They could work in pairs or small groups.

Candlestick (with seven lamps): Exodus 25:31–32, 37–40; 26:35

Table of shewbread: Exodus 25:23, 29–30; 26:35

Altar of sacrifice: Exodus 27:1–8; 30:18

Altar of incense: Exodus 30:1–8

Laver (basin of water): Exodus 30:17–21

After sufficient time, invite each student or group to report on the item they studied by showing their drawing and explaining anything they learned about the item’s purpose and location in the tabernacle. Place one student picture of each item on the diagram on the board in the correct location. You may also want to label each item.

Point out that the sacred items of the tabernacle lead from the gate to the most holy place, where the ark is. Explain that these items and the ordinances performed with them were symbolic and were meant to teach the people how to journey through life back to God. Ask students to suggest what these symbols may represent.

They might suggest the following possible symbolic meanings. (If students have difficulty thinking of meanings, consider listing some of the following items on the board and letting them suggest matches between the meanings and the items of the tabernacle.)

*Altar of sacrifice: Giving ourselves completely to God, giving up sin, and relying on the great and last sacrifice of the Atonement of Jesus Christ*

*Laver (basin of water): Cleansing, such as through repentance and baptism*

*Candlestick with seven lamps: The Light of Christ and the Holy Ghost*

*Table of shewbread: The Savior’s body (similar to the symbolic meaning of the sacrament)*

*Altar of incense: Prayer (we can approach God through prayer)*

Explain that although temples look different and operate differently than the tabernacle, they still contain ordinances and symbols that help us prepare to walk back into the presence of God.

- How would you summarize what the ordinances and symbols of the temple teach us? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The ordinances and symbols of the temple teach us how to proceed faithfully through this life and eventually enter God’s presence.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Sister Silvia H. Allred, formerly of the Relief Society general presidency. Ask the class to listen for how we can allow the symbols and blessings of the temple to teach us during our journey back to God.

“The temple is a house of learning. Much of the instruction imparted in the temple is symbolic and learned by the Spirit. This means we are taught from on high. Temple covenants and ordinances are a powerful symbol of Christ and His Atonement. We all receive the same instruction, but our understanding of the meaning of the ordinances and covenants will increase as we return to the temple often with the attitude of learning and contemplating the eternal truths taught” (“Holy Temples, Sacred Covenants,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 113).

- How can we learn from the ordinances and symbols of the temple?

Ask students to share how the temple has helped them draw closer to their Father in Heaven and the Savior.

Encourage students to attend the temple regularly and to be more attentive when they attend the temple in the future. You may want to share your testimony of temples.

## Next Unit (Exodus 35–Leviticus 27)

As students prepare to study Exodus 35–Leviticus 27, encourage them to consider the following questions: What does Leviticus teach about holding grudges? Did the Lord forbid tattoos anciently? Ask them to imagine what it would be like to offer a lamb as a sacrifice at the tabernacle. What if the lamb had a blemish? Why were some animals rejected? What is the symbolism of this sacrifice? Explain that in the coming lessons, students will discover the symbolism behind the ordinances the children of Israel practiced in the wilderness to remind them of the great and last sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

# Exodus 35–40

## Introduction

The Israelites willingly provided the materials necessary to build the tabernacle, and skilled workers built each of its components. After all the items were ready, the Lord commanded Moses to erect and dedicate the tabernacle.

Israel built the tabernacle, and Moses followed the Lord's instructions to anoint and ordain Aaron and his sons. After Moses and Israel obeyed these commands, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Exodus 35–39

#### *The Israelites obey the Lord's command to build the tabernacle*

Ask a student to leave the room for a minute or two. Invite two other students to the front of the room, and explain to them that they will each role-play giving a gift to the student who just left the room. Explain that you would like one student to offer his or her gift willingly and the other student to offer his or her gift grudgingly. Give them a few moments to think about how they could demonstrate these attitudes in an obvious way. Provide small gifts for them to give. (The gifts could be empty boxes or other small objects to symbolize gifts.) Invite the student waiting outside the room to come back in and stand at the front of the room. Ask each of the gift givers to offer his or her gift, one at a time.

Ask the receiver of the gifts the following questions:

- What was the difference between how these two gifts were offered to you?
- How did you feel when you were offered a gift grudgingly? How did you feel when a gift was offered willingly?

Thank the students for participating, and invite them to sit down. Then tell the class that in Exodus 35, we read that the children of Israel offered gifts to the Lord. Explain that in Exodus 35:1–3, Moses gathered the children of Israel together. After telling them to observe the Sabbath day, he asked the people to give of their substance in order to build the tabernacle. Invite a student to read Exodus 35:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord commanded the Israelites regarding the offerings they gave to build the tabernacle.

- What did the Lord command regarding the offerings given to build the tabernacle?

Invite students to read Exodus 35:20–22, 29 silently, looking for how the people responded to the Lord's command. You might want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What can we learn from these verses about how the Lord desires us to give offerings? (Students may use different words, but they should suggest a principle similar to the following: **The Lord desires that we give our offerings to Him with a willing heart.**)
- What are some offerings we can give to the Lord?
- Why do you think the Lord wants us to give these offerings willingly?

To help students think about how willingly they give offerings to the Lord, provide a copy of the following chart on a handout to each student, and invite students to fill it out. You could change any of the scenarios to better meet the needs of students.

**Weighing My Willingness**

	Willingly	Somewhat willingly	Not very willingly
1. I attend and participate in my Church meetings and classes.			
2. I do service for others.			
3. I pay my tithing and fast offerings.			
4. I participate in activities with my family.			
5. I obey my parents.			

After students fill out the chart, ask them to think about whether they give their offerings willingly or grudgingly. Then ask them to write down a specific offering they would like to give to the Lord. Invite them to set a goal to make that offering willingly. Encourage them to put their chart in a place where it will remind them to fulfill their goal.

Summarize Exodus 35:30–35 and 36:1–3 by explaining that a man named Bezaleel and other skilled workers were called to build the tabernacle. The people of Israel brought their offerings to these workers. Invite a student to read Exodus 36:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how much the Israelites offered for the building of the Lord’s house.

- How much did the Israelites offer for the building of the tabernacle?
- What does this tell you about the children of Israel?

Invite students to think of a time when they have seen someone willingly make offerings to the Lord. Ask a few students to share their observations with the class.

Invite three students to take turns reading aloud the chapter summaries at the beginning of Exodus 37, 38, and 39. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Bezaleel and the other skilled workers did with Israel’s offerings. Invite them to report what they find.

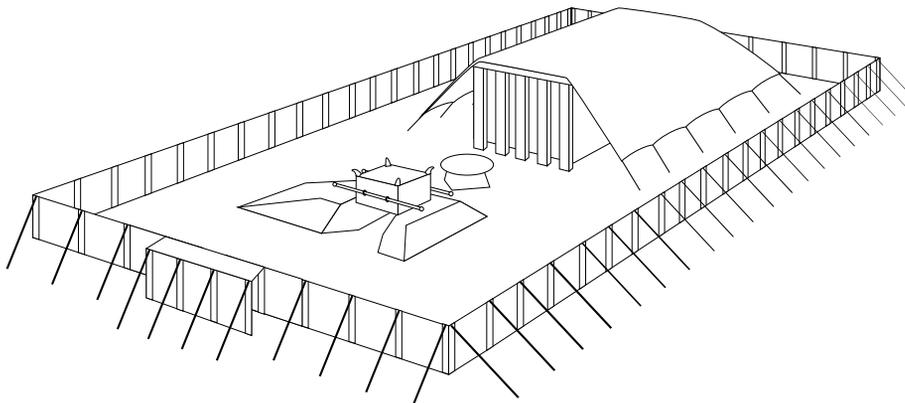
Explain that the workers then brought their completed work to Moses. Invite a student to read Exodus 39:43 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Moses recognized about their work. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What did Moses recognize about the way the parts of the tabernacle and each holy item were made?

**Exodus 40:1–16*****The Lord commands Moses to erect the tabernacle and to wash and anoint Aaron and his sons***

Summarize Exodus 40:1–11 by explaining that the Lord told Moses to set up the tabernacle and place the newly built holy objects within it.

Show or draw the following illustration, and explain that the tabernacle would have looked something like this when set up.



**Marking and annotating the scriptures**

Marking and annotating scripture passages can help students understand and remember them. Underlining, shading, circling, or drawing lines between words can emphasize or connect key words or phrases in the scriptures. In addition, students can write gospel principles, prophetic commentary, or personal insights and impressions in their scriptures. However, always honor students' agency and never require them to write in their scriptures. Instead, make suggestions and allow them to decide what is appropriate.

Invite a student to read Exodus 40:12–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Moses was told to do with Aaron and his sons. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that “instructions were revealed for setting up, equipping, and dedicating the tabernacle for worship services and for washing, anointing, and clothing priests ([Bible Dictionary], ‘Priests’) so that they could properly officiate in the ordinances to be performed in the tabernacle” (Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* [1993], 125). These washing, anointing, and clothing ceremonies helped prepare Aaron and his sons to officiate in the sacred ordinances to be performed in the tabernacle.

Invite students to read Exodus 40:16 silently, looking for how thoroughly Moses followed the Lord’s commands concerning the tabernacle. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What similarity do you notice between verse 16 and Exodus 39:43?

**Exodus 40:17–38**

*The glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle*

Invite students to read Exodus 40:19 silently, looking for wording that is similar to what they read in Exodus 40:16. You may want to suggest that they mark what they find.

- What familiar wording did you find? (The similar phrase is “as the Lord commanded Moses.”)

Invite students to look for the same wording in Exodus 40:21. You might suggest that they mark it. Ask them to continue scanning Exodus 40:22–32 silently, looking for each time the phrase is repeated. You may want to suggest that students mark each instance that this phrase appears in these verses.

- From what you have found (or marked), what might we learn from what Moses and the children of Israel did with the instructions the Lord gave them?

Invite a student to read the first word of Exodus 40:34 aloud. Explain that the word *then* here is a clue that can help students to identify a principle.

You may want to suggest that students draw lines in their scriptures from each occurrence of the phrase “as the Lord commanded Moses” to the word “then” at the beginning of verse 34. Then ask a student to read Exodus 40:34–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened because of Israel’s obedience in building the tabernacle.

- What was the result of the Israelites’ obedience? (Help students understand that the cloud and fire, which symbolized the presence of the Lord, could help the children of Israel to know that their sacrifices were accepted by the Lord and that He would guide them in their journeys. [See Bible Dictionary, “Shechinah.”])

- What principle can we learn from the Israelites’ example about how to invite the Lord to be with us? (Students may express a principle similar to the following: **The Lord will be with us and guide us if we strive to keep His commandments with exactness.** You may want to suggest that students write this principle in their scriptures.)

- What blessings can come to us if the Lord guides our lives?

To help students understand why we want the Lord to guide our lives, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“My brothers and sisters, the Lord is in all of our lives. He loves us. He wants to bless us. He wants us to seek His help. As He guides us and directs us and as He hears and answers our prayers, we will find the happiness here and now that He desires for us” (“Consider the Blessings,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 89).

- According to President Monson, what blessings do we receive from having the Lord guide our lives?

Ask students to think about a time when they or someone they know was guided by the Lord. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Encourage students to obey the commandments of the Lord so that they can be guided by Him and find happiness.



## Scripture Mastery Review

To help students review Exodus 20:3–17, provide ten pieces of paper for the class, each containing one large number (1–10) on it (or divide the board into ten sections and write one large number in each section).

Divide the papers among the students (or assign numbers on the board to them). Depending on the size of your class, you may need to assign students to work in groups or give each student more than one number. Invite students to draw a picture representing the commandment associated with their number, using the number as part of the picture. After sufficient time, ask students to show and explain their pictures to the class. Then quiz the class by asking them to state the commandments in order. You might display the pictures in your classroom for a few weeks and periodically review them to help students remember the Ten Commandments and their order.

## Supplemental Teaching Idea

### Exodus 40:12–15. “An everlasting priesthood”

Invite a student to read Exodus 40:12–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord told Moses to do with Aaron and his sons. Invite students to report what they find.

- Why do you think Moses was chosen to anoint Aaron and his sons and to confer the priesthood on them? (As students respond, point out that Moses held the Melchizedek Priesthood and the keys to confer a lesser priesthood on Aaron and his sons.)

Invite a student to read Hebrews 5:4 aloud. Then ask:

- According to Hebrews 5:4, who decides who can be ordained to the priesthood? (No one takes this honor for themselves. They must be called of God.)
- What can we learn from these verses about how a person receives the priesthood? (Students may

identify a variety of doctrines and principles. After they respond, write the following doctrine on the board: **Those who receive the priesthood must be called of God and ordained by those who have authority.**)

To help students understand more about this doctrine, explain that the Lord instructed Moses to confer the Levitical Priesthood on the men of the tribe of Levi. The Levitical Priesthood authorized them to perform the outward ordinances of the law and the gospel, such as helping with animal sacrifices. Because Aaron was anointed to preside over this priesthood, it is commonly called the Aaronic Priesthood or the Priesthood of Aaron. This priesthood was held by direct descendants of Aaron, who presided over the ordinances performed in the tabernacle. Today, those who hold the Aaronic Priesthood hold “the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion” (D&C 13:1).

# The Book of Leviticus

### Why study this book?

The word *Leviticus* is a Latin word that has reference to the Levites—one of the twelve tribes of Israel. The Levites held the lesser priesthood and were given the responsibility to officiate in the tabernacle and later at the temple in Jerusalem (see Numbers 3:5–10). The book of Leviticus contains instructions on performing priesthood duties, such as animal sacrifice and other rituals that would help teach the children of Israel about Jesus Christ and His Atonement (see Alma 34:13–14). The Lord revealed a primary purpose for the instructions He gave in the book of Leviticus: “Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy” (Leviticus 19:2; see also Leviticus 11:44–45; 20:26; 21:6). As students study this book, they can deepen their understanding and appreciation of the Savior’s Atonement. Students can also learn important truths that will help them to be holy, meaning spiritually clean and set apart for sacred purposes. Living these truths will prepare students to serve Heavenly Father and His children.

### Who wrote this book?

Moses is the author of Leviticus. Moses and his older brother, Aaron, were both members of the tribe of Levi (see Exodus 6:16–20). While Aaron was called to preside over the lesser priesthood (see Exodus 27:21; D&C 107:13), Moses held the authority and keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which “holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things” (D&C 107:8; see also D&C 84:6; 107:91–92). Therefore, Aaron, his sons, and all others in the tribe of Levi who held the lesser priesthood functioned under Moses’s prophetic leadership.

### When and where was it written?

There are varying opinions on when Leviticus and the other books of Moses were written, and we do not know exactly where Moses was when he wrote this book.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Leviticus has been described as a priesthood handbook for Aaron and his sons (who served as priests) and for the Levites generally. However, throughout the book the Lord’s instructions to the Levites alternate with those He gave to all of Israel. Through these instructions, we learn about the laws, rituals, ceremonies, and festivals that would teach Israel how to be clean, holy, and different from the world. For example, one such law includes the Lord’s instructions concerning which foods were clean (acceptable for consumption) and which foods were unclean (to be avoided).

Central to the book of Leviticus is the concept of atonement; the word *atonement* occurs more frequently in this book than in any other book of scripture. Leviticus describes in detail the system of animal sacrifices that served to remind Israel that “it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (Leviticus 17:11). Thus, these sacrifices symbolically pointed Israel forward to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who would shed His blood to atone for the sins of mankind.

### Outline

**Leviticus 1–7** Through Moses, the Lord gives instructions concerning the offering of various sacrifices, including burnt offerings, meat (or meal) offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings.

**Leviticus 8–10** Aaron and his sons are washed, anointed, clothed, and consecrated in preparation to serve Israel in the priest’s office. The Lord sends fire to consume the sacrifice Aaron offers as an atonement for himself and Israel. Nadab and Abihu, two of Aaron’s sons, offer unauthorized sacrifices, and the Lord kills them with fire.

**Leviticus 11–17** The Lord reveals laws establishing which foods are clean and which are unclean. He also gives instructions about purification for those who have experienced childbirth, have suffered diseases, or are ritually unclean for other reasons. Aaron and his brethren receive instructions about blood sacrifice and the Day of Atonement.

**Leviticus 18–22** The Lord commands Israel to be holy. He gives laws that will help the people be sexually clean and avoid unholy practices. He also commands the priests to be holy and gives them specific laws that will help them remain ritually undefiled.

**Leviticus 23–27** The Lord establishes holy days and feasts for Israel to observe. The laws of the camp of Israel are set forth, directing that all people be treated fairly and justly and that proper restitution be given to injured parties. The Lord establishes the Sabbath year and the year of jubilee. The Lord outlines ways in which He will bless the Israelites for their obedience and punish them for their disobedience to His commandments. Laws concerning tithing and the consecration of property are set forth.

## LESSON 57

# Leviticus 1–7

### Introduction

After the Israelites built the tabernacle, the Lord revealed to Moses how they should offer various kinds of sacrifices to Him. These sacrifices pointed the Israelites

toward Jesus Christ and emphasized their need to rely on His atoning sacrifice for redemption.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Leviticus 1–3

#### *The Lord instructs Israel how to offer various offerings*

Begin class by reading the following list of sacrifices we are asked to make as members of the Church, and ask students to ponder if they have sacrificed in that way during their life: pay tithing, give a fast offering, serve in a Church calling, fulfill an assignment.

Write the following question on the board: *Why are we expected to sacrifice so much as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?*

Invite students to ponder the question on the board as they study Leviticus 1–7 today.

Explain that Leviticus 1–7 contains the Lord’s direction concerning the sacrifices He required of His people anciently, including animal sacrifices. The book of Leviticus was like a priesthood handbook for the children of Israel. It set forth instructions for the performance of ordinances, rituals, and other sacred responsibilities.

- When did Heavenly Father first command His children to perform animal sacrifices? (After Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden [see Moses 5:5].)

You may want to display the picture Adam and Eve Kneeling at an Altar (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 4; see also LDS.org).

- What did those sacrifices represent? (The future sacrifice of Jesus Christ [see Moses 5:7].)

Display the following pictures: Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 56; see also LDS.org) and The Crucifixion (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 57; see also LDS.org).

Explain that the sacrifices outlined in Leviticus also teach about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Leviticus 1 provides instructions for performing an animal sacrifice called a burnt offering. This sacrifice was performed at the tabernacle (and later at the temple in Jerusalem) every morning and evening, as well as on special occasions.

Invite a student to read Leviticus 1:2–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for any elements of the burnt offering that could teach about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find. Ask them to report what they find. (Students’ answers could include “a male without blemish” [verse 3], “of his own voluntary will” [verse 3], “blood round about upon the altar” [verse 5], “flay . . . and cut it into his pieces” [verse 6], and “burn all on the altar” [verse 9]. You may want to point out any elements students do not mention.)

To help students understand how elements of the burnt offering can teach about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, write the following scripture references on the board: *Matthew 27:26–31, 35; Luke 22:41–44; John 6:38; John 19:34; 1 Peter 1:18–19; Doctrine and Covenants 19:18–19*. Invite students to choose one or two of these references and read them silently. Ask students to look for connections between these verses and the elements of sacrifice listed on the board. Invite students to explain to the class what they learned.

Explain that as animal sacrifices were burned on the altar, the smoke rising to heaven symbolized prayers of gratitude and supplication and also symbolized that the offering was going up to the Lord. Point out the phrase “burn all on the altar” in verse 9.

- Why do you think the word *all* may be important in this verse? (Help students understand that burning the whole animal on the altar represented total commitment to the Lord.)



### Choose appropriate teaching methods

Sometimes, in an attempt to entertain students or hold their interest, teachers choose teaching methods or use techniques that do not lead to understanding and edification. When selecting teaching methods, consider whether the method enhances or detracts from the message it is intended to help students understand. Ensure that teaching methods are in harmony with the message being taught and conducive to the influence of the Spirit.

- What can the word *all* teach us about Jesus Christ’s sacrifice?

Invite students to ponder how Jesus Christ set an example for us when He chose to sacrifice everything He had, including His will, to Heavenly Father. Point to the question you wrote on the board at the beginning of class.

- Based on what you have learned from Leviticus 1, how would you respond to this question? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **we can become more like our Savior as we choose to give everything in sacrifice to Heavenly Father.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)

Point out the phrase “sweet savour unto the Lord” in Leviticus 1:9.

- What can these words teach us about Heavenly Father’s feelings toward those who sacrifice everything to Him, as did His Only Begotten Son? (Their efforts are sweet or satisfying to Heavenly Father.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a few sentences explaining why they choose to make sacrifices to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and His prophets. You may want to invite a few students to share with the class what they wrote. You may also want to share your thoughts and testimony concerning the importance of sacrifice.

Summarize Leviticus 1:10–17 by explaining that the Lord allowed for other kinds of animals to be used for burnt offerings, enabling the Israelites to offer acceptable sacrifices in conditions of poverty.

Explain that Leviticus 2 contains instructions for giving meat offerings (which can also be translated as meal [or grain] offerings). These offerings consisted of flour and oil or unleavened bread and oil and were given with burnt offerings and another kind of sacrifice called peace offerings. Leviticus 3 contains the Lord’s instructions concerning peace offerings. These were presented as gifts to the Lord and were a means of giving thanks and asking for the Lord’s continued blessings. Unlike burnt offerings, portions of the peace offerings were eaten by those who had made the offerings (and their families), by the priests and their families, and by other Levites. (See Bible Dictionary, “Sacrifices.”)

## Leviticus 4–7

### *The Lord instructs Israel in offering sin and trespass offerings*

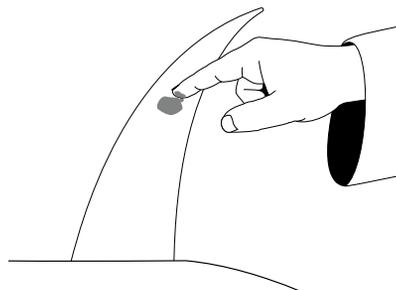
Invite students to imagine they are Israelites living in ancient Israel and have committed a sin. Explain that when the Israelites recognized they had sinned, they needed to sacrifice an animal as a sin offering. Leviticus 4 includes the Lord’s instructions for making a sin offering.

Ask students to imagine bringing an animal to the tabernacle to be sacrificed. Invite a student to read Leviticus 4:4, 27–29. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what they would need to do to make a sin offering. (You may want to explain that a bullock is a young male ox.)

- What do you think might be the significance of placing your hands upon the animal’s head? (The animal becomes your substitute or representative, just as Jesus Christ was our substitute or representative in atoning for our sins.)
- How might you feel about killing the animal? Why?

Invite students to read Leviticus 4:5–7, 30 silently, looking for what the priest would do with the blood of the sin offering.

- What would the priest do with the blood of the sin offering?



Draw a picture of a horn on the board. Explain that the horns on the altars symbolized power. The scriptures refer to the Savior as the “horn of salvation” (Luke 1:69), which

indicates His power to save. The blood of the animal symbolized life or the Savior giving His life (see Leviticus 17:11).

- What do you think the act of putting blood on the horns of the altars may have symbolized? (After students give their insights, you may want to explain that there were four horns on the altar. In the scriptures, the number four can represent the earth. Thus, placing blood on the horns could symbolize that there is power in the Savior's Atonement to save all of God's children who ever have or ever will live on the earth.)

Invite a student to read Leviticus 4:20, 31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the sin offering helped bring to the sinner. Ask students to report what they find.

- What can the ancient practice of making sin offerings teach us about the Savior's atoning sacrifice? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we can be forgiven of our sins.**)

Explain that the act of sacrificing animals did not have the power to cleanse people of their sins, but it directed people's minds and hearts toward Jesus Christ, who is able to forgive and cleanse us.

- What is an ordinance in our day that directs our minds and hearts toward the Savior and helps us to receive His forgiveness?
- How does the ordinance of the sacrament help us to focus on the Savior and receive His forgiveness?

You may want to invite a student to read the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"After the Savior's ultimate sacrifice, . . . the ordinance of the sacrament replaced the ordinance of sacrifice. . . . This change moved the focus of the sacrifice from a person's animal to the person himself. In a sense, the sacrifice changed from the *offering* to the *offerer*. . . .

". . . Instead of the Lord requiring our animals or grain, now He wants us to give up all that is ungodly. . . . Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: 'Real, personal sacrifice never was placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal in us upon the altar and letting it be consumed!' ('Deny Yourselves of All Ungodliness,' *Ensign*, May 1995, 68).

". . . When we overcome our own selfish desires and put God first in our lives and covenant to serve Him regardless of the cost, we are then living the law of sacrifice" ("The Law of Sacrifice," *Ensign*, Oct. 1998, 10).

- According to this statement, what does the Lord want us to offer Him?
- In what ways can we give up "all that is ungodly" or offer "the animal in us" to the Lord?

Summarize Leviticus 5–7 by explaining that the Lord gave additional instructions for the sacrifices the Israelites needed to make.

You may want to conclude by testifying of the Atonement. Invite students to make an offering to the Lord by turning to the Savior, repenting of their sins, and preparing to partake of the sacrament this week.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Leviticus 4. Video presentation—"Sacrifice and Sacrament"

In place of or in addition to the statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard, you could show the video "Sacrifice and Sacrament" (end at time code 11:30, at the end of

the scene at the sacrament table), which explains the connections between ancient sacrifice and the modern sacrament. Invite students to watch for how the ordinances of sacrifice and sacrament help lead individuals to Jesus Christ. This video is available on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on LDS.org.

# Leviticus 8–11

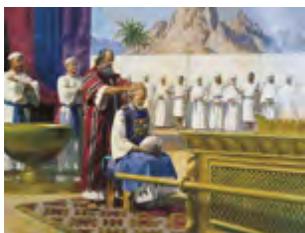
## Introduction

Before they began their priesthood duties, Aaron and his sons were consecrated in front of all of Israel. As Aaron and his sons offered proper sacrifices, “the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people” (Leviticus 9:23). When

two of Aaron’s sons offered improper and unauthorized sacrifices, they were consumed by fire from the Lord. The Lord revealed dietary laws and practices of cleanliness that were considered part of the law of Moses.

### Review doctrines and principles

As you teach the scriptures sequentially, you will likely teach the same doctrines and principles more than once. When you encounter a doctrine or principle similar to one you have taught previously, you can use the current scripture block to briefly revisit these truths or as an additional witness to those truths. Doing so can help reinforce what students have previously learned.



## Suggestions for Teaching

### Leviticus 8–9

#### *Aaron and his sons are consecrated before the people and then offer sacrifices*

Before class, write the following question on the board: *How might the way Aaronic Priesthood holders prepare, administer, and pass the sacrament affect your experience with this ordinance?*

Begin the lesson by inviting students to respond to the question on the board. Consider writing their responses under the question.

Invite students to consider, as they study Leviticus 8–11, how the Lord desires priesthood holders to prepare for and administer His ordinances to His people.

Display the picture *Moses Gives Aaron the Priesthood* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 15; see also LDS.org). Invite students to recall what they learned from Exodus 28–29 and explain what is happening in the picture.

Explain that after the Israelites had built the tabernacle and received the Lord’s instructions concerning sacrifices, the Lord commanded Moses to fulfill His instructions to consecrate Aaron and his sons for their service as priests in the tabernacle (see Exodus 28–29). Leviticus 8 records how Moses obeyed this instruction.

Before class, write each of the following statements on separate strips of paper (you will need to make several sets). Divide the class into pairs or small groups, and provide each group with a set of statements to put in order (they are in the correct order below). Alternatively, you could write these statements on the board before class, purposely putting them out of order. Ask students to use Leviticus 8 to determine the order in which these events occurred. After sufficient time, ask students to report the correct order of these events.

*Moses gathered the children of Israel to the tabernacle.*

*Moses washed Aaron and his sons with water.*

*Moses clothed Aaron in the clothes of the priesthood.*

*Moses anointed the tabernacle and altar with oil and consecrated it to the Lord.*

*Moses anointed Aaron with oil.*

*Moses offered various sacrifices as an atonement for Aaron and his sons.*

*Aaron and his sons remained at the tabernacle for seven days.*

Explain that Leviticus 9 records that Moses instructed Aaron to gather the people and offer sacrifices for himself and all of Israel. Invite a student to read Leviticus 9:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord promised would happen if Aaron performed these ordinances for Israel. Ask students to report what they find. Remind them that they learned from Exodus 29 and Exodus 40 that obedience to the Lord and priesthood ordinances invites the guidance of the Lord and prepares us to be in His presence.

Summarize Leviticus 9:8–22 by explaining that Aaron offered the sacrifices for the people as the Lord had commanded.

Invite a student to read Leviticus 9:23–24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened after the people and their priesthood leaders had been obedient to the Lord in building the tabernacle and performing ordinances properly. Invite students to report what they find. Then ask:

- What is a principle we can learn from verse 23? (Students may give a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize the following: **As those who hold the priesthood properly fulfill their responsibilities, they help people draw nearer to the Lord.**)

## Leviticus 10

### *Two of Aaron’s sons perform unauthorized sacrifices and are consumed by fire*

Invite a student to read Leviticus 10:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when two of the sons of Aaron did something inappropriate in their priesthood duties. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the Lord had previously explained the sacredness of priesthood ordinances and the serious consequences that would follow if priesthood holders did not prepare for and perform them worthily and with exactness (for examples, see Exodus 30:34–38; Leviticus 10:9). Although this passage does not fully explain what Nadab and Abihu did that was so serious, it is clear that they transgressed the Lord’s commandments regarding how sacred ordinances were to be performed.

- Why do you think the Lord desires that priesthood ordinances be done properly?
- How can priesthood holders make sure they prepare for and appropriately administer their priesthood duties?

Invite a student to read Leviticus 10:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how personal worthiness could affect the priests’ performance of their duties. Point out that verse 10, footnote *a*, explains that the phrase “put difference between holy and unholy” means “to distinguish between the holy and the profane, and between the impure and the pure.”

- Why would it be important for a priesthood holder to be able to tell the difference between things that are holy and things that are unholy?

Explain that Leviticus 10:12–20 includes additional instructions that Moses gave to Aaron and Aaron’s two remaining sons about how to properly perform their duties.

## Leviticus 11

### *The Lord reveals His dietary laws for the Israelites*

Invite students to raise their hands if they have purchased something to eat from a food vendor or restaurant recently. You might ask what they ordered to eat.

- Were there items on the menu you might choose not to eat or drink if they were placed in front of you? What are some of these items?
- Which items on the menu would you choose not to eat or drink for religious reasons?

Explain that the law of Moses included commandments concerning which animals were considered clean and fit for the children of Israel to eat and which were unclean and not proper to eat. In our day, people refer to these laws as kosher laws (from a Hebrew word that means “fit” or “proper” [see Bible Dictionary, “Kosher”]).

Invite students to imagine they lived during the time of Moses and planned to eat at an ancient restaurant. Provide students with copies of the following menu:

**Menu**

Appetizers		Main Dishes	
Raven	Stork	Lizard	Ferret
Locust	Pig (Pork, Bacon)	Camel	Mouse
Coney	Octopus	Eagle	Beetles
Tortoise	Tuna	Cow (Beef, Steak)	Snails

Divide students into pairs. Invite each pair to search Leviticus 11:1–43, looking for the characteristics of clean and unclean beasts. They should use what they learn to select one item from each category of the menu that they would be allowed to eat under the law of Moses. If needed, you could provide an example by inviting a student to read Leviticus 11:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify the characteristics of clean and unclean beasts. (From these verses, students could discover that cattle were fit for Israel to eat.) After sufficient time, ask students to report what their menu choices should be according to Leviticus 11. (Answers include locusts, tuna, beef, steak, and beetles.)

Invite a student to read Leviticus 11:24–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what else could make an Israelite unclean.

- Why do you think the Israelites were to avoid even touching the carcasses of unclean animals?
- What principle could we identify from this command to not even touch the carcasses of unclean animals? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we associate with unclean influences, they can cause us to become unclean.** Write this principle on the board.)

Although the Bible does not record detailed reasons for why the Lord gave these dietary laws, faithful Israelites showed their belief in and obedience to the Lord by following them even though they may not have known all the reasons for them.

- What dietary laws has the Lord given us through living prophets in our day? What substances has the Lord commanded us not to take into our bodies? What foods has He encouraged us to use?

Read Leviticus 11:44–45 to the class. Ask students to follow along, looking for one reason the Lord commanded the Israelites not to eat certain animals.

- What was one purpose of the Lord’s dietary laws for the Israelites?
- What does it mean to be holy?
- Based on what we have learned about the purpose of Israel’s law of health, what can happen to us as we obey the Lord’s law of health in our day? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **following the Lord’s health commandments helps us become holy.**)
- How can obedience to the Word of Wisdom help us to become more holy?

To help students answer the previous question, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how obeying the Word of Wisdom allows us to be more sensitive to the delicate feelings of the Holy Ghost and thus helps us become holy.



“Our physical body is the instrument of our spirit. In that marvelous revelation, the Word of Wisdom, we are told how to keep our bodies free from impurities which might dull, even destroy, those delicate physical senses which have to do with spiritual communication. . . .

“. . . [The Word of Wisdom] is [our] armor and will protect [us] from habits which obstruct the channels of personal revelation” (“Revelation in a Changing World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 14).

- How has living the Word of Wisdom helped you to not defile yourself?
- Why is it important for us to become holy?

- In what other ways have you or those you know been blessed by living the Word of Wisdom?

Ask students if they have ever had to explain the Word of Wisdom to someone who is not a member of the Church. Allow two or three students to share their experiences.

Invite two students to come to the front of the class and participate in a role play. Ask one student to act as though he or she does not know about the Word of Wisdom, and ask the other student to explain why Latter-day Saints follow specific dietary rules. Invite the student answering the question to use Leviticus 11 to help explain the law of health the Lord has given in our day.

Invite one or two students to share their feelings about how the Lord’s law of health blesses those who obey it. You may also want to share your testimony and encourage students to strictly obey the Word of Wisdom.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Leviticus 11. Why did the Lord designate “clean” and “unclean” animals?

“Doubtless sanitary and nutritional factors were among the criteria for designating clean and unclean flesh, but all the reasons are not known. Almost all the ‘unclean’ beasts and fowl were carnivores. Some flesh can cause diseases unless it is thoroughly cooked, and that may have been a factor” (Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* [1993], 132).

However, as with the Lord’s laws of health in our day, there are also spiritual implications. In the revelation establishing the Word of Wisdom, the Lord explained that those who obey this law of health “shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures” (D&C 89:19) and that “the destroying angel shall pass by them” (D&C 89:21). Though the Lord does not always explain the exact reasons why He gives laws of health, it is evident that He expects us to follow them and thereby demonstrate our faith in Him.

### Leviticus 11. The Lord will bless those who obey His commandments on health

President Ezra Taft Benson taught:

“The Word of Wisdom is one of the recognized and distinctive practices of members of the Church. Generally,

others not of our faith acknowledge that members in good standing abstain from tobacco, coffee, tea, and all alcoholic beverages. . . .

“One principle of the gospel that all young people of the Church should understand is this: God, our Heavenly Father, governs His children by law. He has instituted laws for our perfection. If we obey His laws, we receive the blessings pertaining to those laws. If we do not obey, we receive the consequences.

“The Word of Wisdom is a law—a principle with promise. If we obey the provisions of the law, we receive the promises. If we do not, there will be both temporal and spiritual consequences” (“A Principle with a Promise,” *Ensign*, May 1983, 53).

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“The Lord gave one dietary direction to ancient Israel. Much later, because of the ‘evils and designs’ that exist in these ‘last days’ (D&C 89:4), He has given us a Word of Wisdom suited to the circumstances of our time, accompanied by the promised blessings we need in our time” (“Timing” [Brigham Young University devotional, Jan. 29, 2002], 3; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu)).

## Supplemental Teaching Idea

### Leviticus 11. Video presentation—“A Brand New Year: Physical Health”

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle about obeying the Lord’s law of health, you may want to show the video “A Brand New Year:

Physical Health” (7:28) as part of this lesson. You could use this video after the discussion of the statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. The video features youth from around the world discussing the blessings of following the Lord’s law of physical health. This video can be found on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org).

# Leviticus 12–18

## Introduction

The Lord gave the children of Israel laws and ordinances that would bless them. If they would follow these laws and ordinances, they would be physically clean and clean from the sins of the world. The Lord also instructed Israel

concerning the Day of Atonement. He further commanded the Israelites not to follow the wicked practices of the Egyptians and the Canaanites.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Leviticus 12–15

*The Lord gives laws and ordinances that pertain to physical cleanliness and sanitation*

Ask students to think of a time when they were physically very dirty. Invite them to ponder that experience as you read the following account by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, in which he and other soldiers during World War II were transported across the United States in boxcars on a freight train:



“We had no change of clothing during the six-day trip. It was very hot. . . . Smoke and cinders from the engine made it very uncomfortable. There was no way to bathe or wash our uniforms. We rolled into Los Angeles one morning. . . .

“We thought first of food. The 10 of us in our crew pooled our money and headed for the best restaurant we could find.

“It was crowded, and so we joined a long line waiting to be seated. I was first, just behind some well-dressed women. Even without turning around, the stately woman in front of me soon became aware that we were there.

“She turned and looked at us. Then she turned and looked me over from head to toe. There I stood in that sweaty, dirty, sooty, wrinkled uniform. She said in a tone of disgust, ‘My, what untidy men!’ All eyes turned to us.

“No doubt she wished we were not there; I shared her wish. I felt as dirty as I was, uncomfortable, and ashamed” (“Washed Clean,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 9).

- How might the feelings we experience when we are spiritually unclean be similar to the feelings we have when we are physically unclean? (You may want to clarify that even though we may feel ashamed by our sins, we can feel hope and know that the power of the Atonement can redeem us.)

Ask students to ponder how they feel about being spiritually clean before the Lord. Invite students to look for truths as they study Leviticus 12–15 that can help us learn how to become clean from our sins.

Invite a student to read Leviticus 13:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another circumstance that caused a person to be pronounced unclean under the law of Moses. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that in the Old Testament, the term *leprosy* refers to a variety of skin diseases and conditions. The instructions in Leviticus 13 provided the priests with ways to diagnose leprosy and guidelines to help them determine when someone was no longer infected and contagious.

Invite a student to read Leviticus 13:45–46 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what was required when someone had leprosy.

- What was required of someone who had leprosy?
- Why might separation from the camp of Israel be required?

Explain that although individuals diagnosed with leprosy were not necessarily spiritually unclean, the laws regarding leprosy can teach about sin symbolically. Write on the board: *For a moment, we will liken leprosy to sin.*

- How do the instructions for a leper in verses 45–46 also relate to committing sin? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Our sins make us unclean and unable to dwell in God’s presence.**)

To help students understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer, in which he likens his experience of being in a nice restaurant while wearing filthy clothes to the experience of feeling the shame of sin:



“When I began a serious study of the scriptures, I noticed references to being spiritually clean. One verse says, ‘Ye would be more miserable to dwell with a holy and just God, under a consciousness of your filthiness before him, than ye would to dwell with the damned souls in hell’ [Mormon 9:4].

“I could understand that. I remembered how I felt that day in Los Angeles. I reasoned that to be spiritually unclean would bring shame and humiliation immeasurably more intense than I felt then” (“Washed Clean,” 9).

- Why do you think that no unclean thing or person can dwell in God’s presence? (As students respond, it may be helpful to refer to 1 Nephi 15:33.)

Explain that many of the skin diseases and conditions described as leprosy in Leviticus 13 would heal with time. However, before a leper could be considered clean under the law of Moses, he or she needed to participate in two rituals outlined in Leviticus 14. One reason these rituals were given was to teach about the Savior’s Atonement and to help them understand principles of repentance.

Invite a student to read Leviticus 14:1–3 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for who lepers went to for help so they could be pronounced clean. Ask students to report what they find.

- Who may the priest represent in our own experiences seeking to be cleansed from our sins?

Write the following on the board: *The priest is like a bishop or branch president.*

Summarize Leviticus 14:4–32 by explaining that the leper was required to bring two birds, three lambs, flour, and oil to the priest as offerings to the Lord. If the leper could not afford to bring lambs, he or she could bring pigeons or turtledoves instead. In one of the rituals required to cleanse a leper, the priest sacrificed a bird. He then dipped another bird in the blood of the sacrificed bird and set it free (see Leviticus 14:4–7).

Ask a student to read Leviticus 14:13–14, 19–20 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what was done with the lambs that the leper brought to the priest.

- What can the rituals with the birds and the lambs teach us about the Savior and what He does for those who repent?

Write the following statement on the board: *The offerings are like our repentance.*

- What can we learn from these rituals about what we must do to be cleansed from our sins? (Help students identify the following principle: **To be forgiven of our sins, we must turn to the Lord and obey the conditions of repentance He has given.**)

Point out that lepers were not allowed to perform these offerings for themselves. It was necessary to go to the priest. Similarly, repentance for some sins may require that we seek help from our bishop or branch president.

- How can a bishop or branch president help an individual to receive the blessing of forgiveness through the Savior’s Atonement? (You might want to explain that if a person has committed serious sin, such as sexual transgression or indulging in pornography, those sins must be confessed to the bishop. The bishop holds priesthood keys and has the authority to receive revelation to help the individual through the process of repentance.)

You may want to briefly testify that repentance is a gift from the Lord that helps us to experience the joy of Heavenly Father’s forgiveness through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. Encourage students to seek this gift as often as they need it.

Summarize Leviticus 14:33–57 by explaining that the Lord set forth additional procedures to cleanse houses that contained mildew and mold that could threaten the health of the individuals living there. Leviticus 15 contains additional laws, rites, and sacrifices that were set forth to help priests know how to cleanse other types of uncleanness.



### Leviticus 16–18

*The Lord instructs Israel concerning the Day of Atonement and commands them not to follow the wicked practices of other nations*

Display the following pictures: Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 56; see also LDS.org) and The Crucifixion (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 57; see also LDS.org). Ask students to imagine they have the opportunity to teach another person who does not know what the Atonement is.

- Which of these pictures would you use to teach this person what the Atonement of Jesus Christ is? Why?

Explain that in Leviticus 16, the Lord gave instruction that helped Israel learn about the Atonement of Jesus Christ. This chapter describes a sacred ceremony the Israelites were commanded to perform on one day each year called the Day of Atonement (also known today as Yom Kippur). On this day the high priest offered sacrifice for all the people.

Invite students to consider as they study Leviticus 16 what this chapter can teach them about the Savior’s Atonement.

Summarize Leviticus 16:1–6 by explaining that Aaron, who served as the high priest, was required to change into simple white linen clothing and offer sacrifice for himself before he could enter the tabernacle and perform the sacrifices the Lord required on the Day of Atonement.

Draw two goats on the board. Write *Leviticus 16:15–16* next to one goat and *Leviticus 16:21–22* next to the other goat. Ask students to read these verses silently, looking for how the rituals involving these two goats could teach the children of Israel about the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

- What can the ritual described in verses 15–16 teach us about the Atonement of Jesus Christ?
- What can the ritual described in verses 21–22 teach us about the Atonement of Jesus Christ?
- How would you summarize what the Atonement of Jesus Christ included? (Students may use different words, but they should identify doctrines similar to the following: **Through the Atonement, Jesus Christ took away the sins of the world by taking them upon Himself. Jesus Christ’s Atonement included His infinite suffering and the shedding of His blood in Gethsemane and on the cross.**)

Point out that the Savior’s Atonement also included His Resurrection, which enables all mankind to be resurrected and overcome physical death. Refer to the pictures you displayed earlier.

- Based on what you have learned, which of these pictures could you use to teach about the Atonement of Jesus Christ? (Both of them.)

To conclude this lesson, invite students to sing “I Stand All Amazed” (*Hymns*, no. 193). Ask them to look for phrases in the song that relate to what they have learned today.

Invite students to testify of the importance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ in their lives based on what they have learned today.

Summarize Leviticus 17–18 by explaining that the Lord commanded the people to avoid idolatrous practices, forbade marriages of close relatives, and identified homosexual behavior and other sexual perversions as an abomination. Israel was to keep God’s ordinances and remain undefiled.



#### Music

Music, such as the hymns of the Church, can play a significant role in helping students feel the Holy Ghost in their gospel learning experience.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Leviticus 18:22; 20:13. God forbids homosexual behavior

From the beginning, and consistently throughout the scriptures, the Lord has condemned violations of the law

of chastity, including homosexual behavior. The Lord clearly stated in Leviticus 18:22 and Leviticus 20:13 that engaging in homosexual behavior is a sin. (For more information, search “same-sex attraction” on LDS.org.)

## LESSON 60

# Leviticus 19–27

### Introduction

The Lord taught Israel how to be holy. He emphasized that the priests were to perform their duties worthily.

He also gave Israel instructions concerning certain feasts, rituals, and laws.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Leviticus 19–20

#### *The Lord commands Israel to be holy*

*Note:* Consider inviting the class to sing “More Holiness Give Me” (*Hymns*, no. 131) as part of the devotional or to conclude this first section of the lesson.

Before class, write the following question on the board: *When have you had the chance to make a difference in another person’s life?*

To begin, you might show an object or a picture that reminds you of a time when you were able to serve someone else. Share your experience and how it felt to be able to help someone in a meaningful way. Invite a couple of students to share about a time when they have had a chance to make a difference in another person’s life.

- What are some blessings we receive when we serve others in a meaningful way?

Explain that being the Lord’s covenant people includes the opportunity and responsibility to serve others and bring them closer to the Savior. In the book of Leviticus, we learn that the Lord explained to Israel how they were to live so they would be able to make a difference in the world.

Invite a student to read Leviticus 19:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord wanted the children of Israel to live. Ask students to report what they find. You might want to suggest that they mark the phrase “Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.”

Write the word *holy* on the board.

- What does it mean to be holy?

Write on the board the following statement by Sister Elaine S. Dalton of the Young Women general presidency. (This statement is found in “Now Is the Time to Arise and Shine!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 124).

*“If you desire to make a difference in the world, you must be different from the world” (Sister Elaine S. Dalton).*

Invite students to consider, as they study Leviticus 19–20, how they can become more holy and thus able to make a difference in the world. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we \_\_\_\_\_, then we can be holy like the Lord is holy.*

Write the following scripture references on the board. Invite students to read two or three of the references and look for ways to become more holy. You may want to suggest that they mark what they find. As they find ways to complete the statement on the board, ask them to write their answers under the blank in the statement on the board.

*Leviticus 19:3–4*

*Leviticus 19:9–12*

*Leviticus 19:13–16*

*Leviticus 19:17–18*

*Leviticus 19:28; 21:5*

*Leviticus 19:33–34, 37*

When students finish listing the commandments on the board, ask:

- Since the Israelites would soon be surrounded by the wicked practices of the world (the Canaanites), which of these commandments do you think would have set Israel apart the most from other nations? Why?

Explain that Leviticus 20:1–6 records the Lord’s warning to parents in Israel to protect their families from superstitions, evils, and irreverence. Invite a student to read Leviticus 20:7–8, 26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord’s summary of what we can do to be holy.

- What can we do to be holy? (After students respond, fill in the blank on the board to emphasize the following truth: **If we obey the Lord’s commandments, then we can be holy like the Lord is holy.**)
- Which of the commandments listed on the board have you heard taught recently? How are these commandments helpful in keeping Latter-day Saints holy and separate from the world?

### Ask follow-up questions

When you ask follow-up questions, it gives students a chance to express what they have learned, deepen their understanding, and think about how gospel truths relate to their lives. Take care not to rush through a long list of follow-up questions. It is usually better to ask a few questions and give students time to respond thoughtfully.

The follow-up questions listed below are designed to help students think more deeply about some of the commandments they discovered in Leviticus 19. Answering these questions will give students an opportunity to understand these commandments and how obeying them can make a difference in others’ lives. Because there are more questions below than you will likely have time to use in class, prayerfully select only a few questions to use in your discussion. You might also consider asking students which of these commandments they would like to discuss further.

- Leviticus 19:3. It pleases the Lord when we respect (“fear”) our parents. How does honoring our parents separate us from the world and make us more holy? Who do you know who stands out because they honor their parents?
- Leviticus 19:11–13. In what ways does a person who chooses not to steal, lie, swear, or gossip stand out among youth today? (You may want to read with students pages 20–21 in *For the Strength of Youth* and ask them to look for ways they can be more holy in their language.) How can obedience to these commandments help you be better able to serve others?
- Leviticus 19:18. Consider whether or not you are holding a grudge against someone. How might holding grudges affect our ability to be influenced by the Holy Ghost? Why is it important to love our neighbors as ourselves before we can serve them in meaningful ways?
- Leviticus 19:28; 21:5. Why is it important not to follow worldly trends related to tattoos? How can respecting our bodies make us holy? (You may want to read pages 6–7 in *For the Strength of Youth* with the class, and ask students to look for reasons the prophets have given for asking Latter-day Saints to refrain from getting tattoos or body piercings.)
- In what ways does our obedience to these commandments enable us to make more of a difference in the world? What experiences have you had or witnessed that help you know that those who are holy can make the most difference in the world?

Invite students to copy Sister Dalton’s statement from the board onto an index card or piece of paper and carry it with them through the day to remind them to be different from the world so they can better make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

## Leviticus 21–25

*The Lord describes the role of the priest, sacrifices, the tabernacle, and holy days and years*

Ask the following questions:

- What should Aaronic Priesthood holders do with their hands before they administer the sacrament? (Wash their hands. If needed, you may want to read the following statement from the *Church Handbook of Instructions*: “Priesthood holders should wash their hands thoroughly with soap, a disposable towelette, or another cleanser before preparing, blessing, or passing the sacrament” [*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 20.4.1].)
- Why should Aaronic Priesthood holders wash their hands? What could having clean hands before administering the sacrament symbolize? (If students have been introduced to the scripture mastery passage Psalm 24:3–4, you could use it to help them answer this question.)

Explain that Leviticus 21–22 contains instructions from the Lord for the priests of ancient Israel. Invite a student to read Leviticus 21:6, 8 and Leviticus 22:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord’s requirement for the priesthood holders to be able to participate in priesthood ordinances.

- According to these verses, what does the Lord require of priesthood holders before they can participate in priesthood ordinances? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Priesthood holders must be worthy to officiate in priesthood ordinances.**)
- Why is it important for priesthood holders to be worthy to officiate in their duties?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what priesthood holders should do if they are not worthy to participate in priesthood ordinances:



“If someone officiating in this sacred ordinance [the sacrament] is unworthy to participate, and this is known to anyone present, their participation is a serious distraction to that person. Young men, if any of you is unworthy, talk to your bishop without delay. Obtain his direction on what you should do to qualify yourself to participate in your priesthood duties worthily and appropriately” (“The Aaronic Priesthood and the Sacrament,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 40).

Remind students that not only do priesthood holders need to be worthy to officiate in gospel ordinances, but Church members should also be worthy to participate in the ordinances.

Summarize Leviticus 23–25 by explaining that the Lord gave the children of Israel more instructions about how to be separate and holy. Israel was instructed to observe certain feasts, rituals, and laws that would remind them of their covenant with the Lord.

## Leviticus 26

### *The Lord promises Israel blessings if they obey and punishment if they disobey*

Explain to students that a common part of covenant making in ancient times was listing the consequences for obeying or disobeying the covenant. Divide students into pairs. Provide a copy of the following handout to each pair. Instruct them to divide the verses, read them, and list the blessings and consequences for the Israelites’ obedience and disobedience to the Lord’s commandments.

<p>If the Israelites obeyed the Lord’s commandments, then . . .</p> <p>Leviticus 26:3–4, 6, 9, 11–12</p>	<p>If the Israelites disobeyed the Lord’s commandments, then . . .</p> <p>Leviticus 26:14–19, 21, 24, 30–33</p>
--	---

After sufficient time, invite students to indicate which blessings on their papers were spiritual blessings and which were physical or temporal blessings.

- Based on what you have learned about how the Lord blessed the Israelites for their obedience, how will the Lord bless us if we are obedient? (After students respond you may want to suggest that they write the following principle in their scriptures: **If we obey the Lord, we will be blessed both temporally and spiritually.**)
- Which of the blessings listed would you be most interested in receiving in your life right now? Why?

Invite students to report some of the consequences the Israelites would experience if they disobeyed the Lord.

You may want to share some of the temporal or spiritual blessings you have received because of your obedience to the Lord.

## Leviticus 27

### *The Lord gives instructions on consecrating material goods to Him*

Summarize Leviticus 27 by explaining that the Lord gave instructions about properties that are consecrated to Him. You may want to suggest that students mark Leviticus 27:30, 32, which contains the Lord’s instructions to Israel about tithing.

You may want to invite a few students to share what they have learned today.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Exodus 35–40; Leviticus (Unit 12)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Exodus 35–Leviticus 27 (unit 12) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Exodus 35–40)

As the students studied how the children of Israel obeyed the Lord's commandment to build the tabernacle, they learned that the Lord desires that we give our offerings to Him with a willing heart. They also learned that the Lord will be with us and guide us if we strive to keep His commandments with exactness.

#### Day 2 (Leviticus 1–11)

From their study of the offerings made by the ancient Israelites, students discovered that through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we can be forgiven of our sins. They also identified that as those who hold the priesthood properly fulfill their responsibilities, they bring blessings into others' lives. By studying the dietary laws given to the Israelites, students learned that obedience to the Lord's health commandments helps us become holy.

#### Day 3 (Leviticus 12–18)

In studying the symbolism of ancient Israel's laws on leprosy (skin diseases), students discovered that our sins make us unclean and unable to dwell in God's presence and that to be forgiven of our sins, we must turn to the Lord and obey the conditions of repentance He has given. Studying about the Day of Atonement in ancient Israel helped students learn that ancient Israelite tabernacle ceremonies foreshadowed the Atonement of Jesus Christ. The Savior's Atonement included His infinite suffering as He took the sins of the world upon Himself by the shedding of His blood in Gethsemane and on the cross.

#### Day 4 (Leviticus 19–27)

In reviewing laws and commandments given to Moses, students learned that if we obey the Lord's commandments, then we can be holy like the Lord is holy and that we will be blessed both temporally and spiritually. In reading about the priests' duties in the tabernacle, students learned the importance of priesthood holders being worthy to officiate in priesthood ordinances.

### Introduction

After the children of Israel built the tabernacle, the Lord revealed to Moses how they should offer various kinds of sacrifices to Him. These sacrifices pointed the Israelites toward Jesus Christ and emphasized their need to rely on His atoning sacrifice for redemption.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Leviticus 1–7

*The Lord gives instructions concerning sacrifices the Israelites are to offer*

Read the following list of sacrifices we are asked to make as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and ask the students to ponder if they have sacrificed in that way during their life: pay tithing, give a fast offering, serve in a Church calling, fulfill an assignment.

Next, write the following question on the board: *Why are we asked to sacrifice so much as members of the Church?*

Explain that Leviticus 1–7 contains the Lord's direction concerning the sacrifices He required of His people anciently, including animal sacrifices. The book of Leviticus was like a priesthood handbook for the children of Israel and gave instructions for performing ordinances, rituals, and other sacred responsibilities. Invite students to ponder the question on the board as they study Leviticus 1–7 during today's lesson.

- When did Heavenly Father first command His children to perform animal sacrifices? (After Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden [see Moses 5:5].)

You may want to display the picture Adam and Eve Kneeling at an Altar (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 4; see also LDS.org).

- What did those sacrifices represent? (The future sacrifice of Jesus Christ [see Moses 5:7].)

Display the following pictures: Christ in Gethsemane (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 56; see also LDS.org) and The Crucifixion (*Gospel Art Book*, no. 57; see also LDS.org).

Explain that the sacrifices outlined in Leviticus were given to foreshadow the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (see Alma 34:14) and to teach about the coming Atonement of the Savior. Leviticus 1 provides instructions for performing an animal sacrifice called a burnt offering. This sacrifice was performed at the tabernacle (and later at the temple in Jerusalem) every morning and evening, as well as on special occasions.

Invite a student to read Leviticus 1:3–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for elements of the burnt offering that could teach about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You may want to invite students to mark what they find and share it with the class. (Students' answers could include "a male without blemish" [verse 3], "of his own voluntary will" [verse 3], "blood round about upon the altar" [verse 5], and "burn all on the

altar” [verse 9]. You may want to point out any elements students do not mention.)

To help students understand how these elements can teach about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, write the following scripture references on the board: *Matthew 27:26–31, 35; Luke 22:41–44; John 6:38; John 19:34; 1 Peter 1:18–19; D&C 19:18–19*. Invite students to choose one or two of these references and read them silently. Ask students to look for connections between these verses and the elements of sacrifice listed on the board. Invite students to explain what they learned.

You may want to explain that the Lord has not revealed all of the symbolic meaning involved in burnt offerings. Also, although Jesus’s body was not separated into pieces, it was cut when He was scourged, or whipped, and when He received the crown of thorns. It was also pierced by the nails in His hands and feet and by the spear that was thrust into His side.

Further explain that as animal sacrifices were burned on the altar, the smoke rising to heaven symbolized prayers and symbolized that the offering was going up to the Lord. Point out the phrase “burn all on the altar” in verse 9.

- What can the word *all* teach us about Jesus Christ’s sacrifice?

Invite students to ponder how Jesus Christ set an example for us when He chose to sacrifice everything He had, including His will, to Heavenly Father. Point to the question you wrote on the board at the beginning of class.

- Based on what you have learned from Leviticus 1, how would you answer this question? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **We can become more like our Savior as we choose to give everything in**

**sacrifice to Heavenly Father.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)

Point out the phrase “sweet savour unto the Lord” in Leviticus 1:9.

- What can these words teach us about Heavenly Father’s feelings toward those who sacrifice everything to Him? (Their efforts become sweet or satisfying to Heavenly Father.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a few sentences explaining why they choose to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and His prophets rather than give in to worldly temptations that surround us. You may want to invite a few students to share with the class what they wrote. You may also want to share your thoughts and testimony concerning the importance of sacrifice.

### Next Unit (Numbers 1–21)

Ask students to think about the following questions: Why would the Lord send down fire to consume some of the Israelites? If you had been a spy sent to search the land of Canaan, what kind of a report would you have given to Moses when you returned? Would you have exaggerated what you saw? Ask the students if they have ever struggled because of the attitudes or actions of others. Invite students, as they study about the Israelites’ journey in the wilderness, to look for how the Israelites’ choices to murmur and rebel affected them and Moses. Ask students: If you were dying and someone told you that all you needed to do to be cured was to look at a certain object, how would you react?

# The Book of Numbers

### Why study this book?

The book of Numbers is named for the Lord's instruction to Moses to number, or count, all the Israelite males "from twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war" (Numbers 1:3). Moses counted the Israelite males twice, once at Mount Sinai and later in the plains of Moab near Jericho (see Numbers 26). This book also records the Israelites' faithful experiences and rebellions as they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. As students study the book of Numbers, they will learn the importance of trusting and obeying the Lord and sustaining His chosen leaders.

### Who wrote this book?

Moses is the author of Numbers. He was called by the Lord to lead the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt, through the wilderness, and to the promised land of Canaan. Moses witnessed most of the events recorded in the book of Numbers. He may have relied on other witnesses, written sources, or revelation for information concerning events he did not see, such as the interactions between Balaam and Balak (see Numbers 22–24). In addition, subsequent editors and scribes may have altered the text of this book, as illustrated by the parenthetical observation that "Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:3; see also Moses 1:41).

### When and where was it written?

There are varying opinions regarding when Numbers and the other books of Moses were written, and we do not know exactly where Moses was when he wrote this book. However, the text provides information concerning the settings of events recorded in the book. For example, Numbers 1:1–10:10 records events that occurred before Moses and the children of Israel departed from Mount Sinai. Israel's experiences in the wilderness are found in Numbers 10:11–21:35. Finally, Numbers 22–36 relates events that occurred on the plains of Moab (on the eastern border of Canaan) as Israel prepared to enter the promised land.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Numbers provides census information that helps us understand the size of the population of Israel at the beginning and near the end of their wanderings in the wilderness. It also

outlines the organization of the camp of Israel, discusses the responsibilities of the Levites, and explains the purposes and conditions of the Nazarite vow.

In addition, this book records many incidents in which the children of Israel rebelled against the Lord and Moses and brought adverse consequences upon themselves (see Numbers 12:1–2; 13:26–14:4; 14:40–45; 16:1–3, 31–35, 41; 20:1–5; 21:4–5; 25:1–3). Besides illustrating the effects of divine justice, the book testifies of Jehovah's merciful and long-suffering nature. For example, in commanding Moses to raise a brass serpent upon a pole, the Lord prepared a way for His people to overcome the effects of their rebellion (see Numbers 21:4–8). This experience became an important means of teaching the Israelites about the redemptive mission and Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Helaman 8:13–16; John 3:14–15).

### Outline

**Numbers 1–9** Moses and other leaders record the number of military-aged males in the tribes, which totaled 603,500. This number does not include males from the tribe of Levi (who are designated for service at the tabernacle). The Lord designates how tribes will camp in the wilderness. The Lord describes the Nazarite vow. The second Passover is held to commemorate the Lord's deliverance of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt.

**Numbers 10–21** The Israelites leave their encampment near Mount Sinai. They continue their journey toward the promised land, marching north into the wilderness of Paran. Moses sends 12 spies into the land of Canaan. Two of these spies, Joshua and Caleb, return with an encouraging report. The remaining 10 bring a discouraging report. The Israelites are afraid to enter Canaan. As a consequence, the

Lord declares that Israel will not yet enter the promised land of Canaan but will return to the wilderness to wander. They face many challenges and continue to murmur. Poisonous serpents bite many of the Israelites. Moses raises up a brass serpent on a pole, and the Israelites who look at the serpent are healed.

**Numbers 22–36** The Israelites pitch their tents on the plains of Moab. King Balak of Moab fears their presence. Balak asks the prophet Balaam to curse them. Balaam refuses and instead offers a blessing on Israel, prophesying of the coming of Jesus Christ. However, some of the Israelites bring the Lord's wrath upon themselves by having sexual relations with the daughters of Moab and worshipping Baal. The offenders perish. The rebellious older generation passes away, and the new generation is ready to enter the promised land. The Lord gives instructions on lands, boundaries, and cities in the promised land.

## LESSON 61

# Numbers 1–10

### Introduction

The Lord revealed to Moses how to organize the children of Israel. The Lord also gave additional laws to the children of Israel to guide them while in the wilderness.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Numbers 1–4

#### *The Lord organizes the camp of Israel*

Before class, draw the following diagram on the board under the title *Camp of Israel*. Do not write the Tabernacle label or the names of the tribes in the boxes.

Invite students to imagine they are attending a major sporting event in a large arena or stadium. Tell them that there are no assigned seating arrangements, no limitations on those who can attend, no ticket agents, no parking restrictions, no security, and no officials or referees.

- Would you be interested in attending this sporting event? Why or why not?
- Why do you think those responsible for organizing sporting events do it with order?

Explain that the book of Numbers begins with the Lord directing Moses to number the children of Israel (see Numbers 1). The Lord then directed Moses to use this information to organize the camp of Israel. Encourage students to consider during today's lesson what the Lord's commands to Moses teach us about the blessings that can come from organization and order.

Point to the diagram on the board, and explain that the Lord taught Moses how to organize the Israelites. To help students discover how the camp of Israel was organized, invite a student to read Numbers 2:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify what was to be at the center of their encampment (you may want to point out verse 2, footnote *b*). As students report what they find, you may need to explain that "tent of meeting" refers to the tabernacle. Write *Tabernacle* in the center rectangle of the diagram.

- Why do you think it is significant that the tabernacle was to be in the center of the camp? (As students respond, you may want to remind them that the tabernacle represented the presence of the Lord.)

Write the following compass directions and scripture references on the board. Assign students to groups, and assign each group one of the passages. Invite students to read their verses silently and determine which tribes were to be camped on their assigned side of the tabernacle.

*East: Numbers 2:3–8*

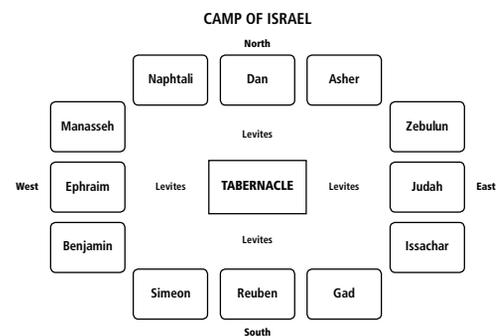
*South: Numbers 2:10–15*

*West: Numbers 2:18–23*

*North: Numbers 2:25–30*

After sufficient time, invite students from each group to come to the board and list in the appropriate place on the diagram the names of the tribes found in their assigned scripture passages. Invite the group members who are still seated to help the students at the board list the names accurately. After the four sides of the diagram have been labeled correctly, ask the following questions:

- What did each tribe have? (An appointed captain.)
- According to the verses you read and the chapter heading of Numbers 2, how was each camp organized? (According to their armies. See Numbers 2:3, 9–10, 16, 18, 24–25.)
- How would having the camp organized with an army on all sides be a blessing to the Israelites?



Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *The Lord organizes His people in order to . . .*

Ask students how they might complete this statement based on the example of the camp of Israel. One way students might respond is **the Lord organizes His people in order to protect and guide them.**

- The Israelites were surrounded by hostile nations. What are some threats we face today that jeopardize our spiritual safety and morality?
- What are some examples of how the Lord has organized His people today in order to provide guidance and protection in the face of spiritual challenges? (Students might mention families, wards and stakes, quorums and classes, prophets, and other leaders.)
- In what ways have you felt guidance or protection because of how the Lord has organized His people?

Invite a student to read Numbers 1:50–53 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for where the Levites camped and what they were to do.

- According to verses 50–53, what responsibility did the Lord give the tribe of Levi? Where were they placed in the camp?

Write on the board *Sons of Levi* near the tabernacle in the diagram. Explain that the Levites' responsibilities to care for the tabernacle are described in Numbers 3–4. Write the following scripture references on the board. Keeping students assigned to the same groups, assign each group one of the passages. Invite students to read their passages silently and identify the specific duties different families in the tribe of Levi were assigned.

*Numbers 3:25–26*

*Numbers 3:29, 31*

*Numbers 3:36–37*

*Numbers 3:38*

Invite one student from each group to report what they discovered.

Ask a student to read Numbers 4:49 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for phrases that indicate that each person had different responsibilities in the camp of Israel. Point out that the Lord organized some of the Israelites to serve in the armies and some to serve in the tabernacle. The Levites were asked to bear the priesthood in the service of others according to the Lord's will.

- Using the Levites as an example, what can we learn about how the Lord organizes His children to fulfill responsibilities in His Church today? (Summarize students' responses by writing the following truth on the board: **The Lord assigns specific responsibilities to individuals in His kingdom.**)
- What are some examples of responsibilities the Lord assigns to individuals in His Church today?

To help students better understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Ask students to listen for why the Lord assigns us different responsibilities at different times:



"The Lord organized the Church in a way that offers each member an opportunity for service, which, in turn, leads to personal spiritual growth. . . .

"You may feel that there are others who are more capable or more experienced who could fulfill your callings and assignments better than you can, but the Lord gave you your responsibilities for a reason. There may be people and hearts only you can reach and touch. Perhaps no one else could do it in quite the same way" ("Lift Where You Stand," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 56).

- When have you grown or observed someone else grow as a result of serving in a calling or assignment?

### Numbers 5–8

#### *The Lord gives specific laws to the children of Israel*

Summarize Numbers 5 by explaining that the Lord gave additional instructions to the children of Israel concerning disease, repentance and forgiveness, and cases of immorality and infidelity.

#### **Summarize large blocks of scripture**

Summarizing large scripture blocks rather than omitting them can help students keep the story line and context clear in their minds. Summaries provide a foundation for discovering and understanding doctrines and principles that will arise in the scripture block. Summarizing also helps preserve the integrity and flow of the scripture messages.

Invite students to describe some of the differences between the lifestyle of a full-time missionary and their own current lifestyles. (These might include guidelines regarding dress and grooming, companionships, entertainment, relationships with the opposite sex, and daily schedules.)

- How might many people throughout the world view the standards and expectations that missionaries are asked to meet?
- What are some reasons why full-time missionaries are asked to meet these standards and expectations?

Explain that, in a similar way, a group of Israelites known as Nazarites made vows to dedicate themselves to God for indefinite periods of time. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Numbers 6:1–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for living standards associated with the vow of a Nazarite. You might suggest that they mark what they discover.

- What Nazarite living standards did you find?

Point out that in these verses the word *separation* is used in relation to those following the Nazarite vows.

- What word is used in verse 8 to describe the Israelites who chose to follow the Nazarite vows?

Explain that a *vow* is a promise or covenant. Those who entered into the Nazarite vow did so to dedicate themselves to the Lord and His work. These vows were most often for a designated time (much like missionaries setting aside one and a half to two years to serve the Lord).

- What can we learn about showing dedication to God from the Nazarite vow? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize something similar to the following: **We show our commitment to God when we strictly observe His standards.**)
- Besides serving as full-time missionaries, what can we do to separate ourselves from the world and dedicate ourselves to the Lord? (Help students understand that separating ourselves from the world does not mean refusing to interact with others. Rather, we are to separate ourselves from practices and beliefs that are contrary to the Lord’s commandments and standards.)
- How can we stay separate from the world but still work to make it better?

Summarize Numbers 7–8 by explaining that these chapters contain the example of an additional group of people who separated themselves from the world and dedicated themselves to God. This group, the Levites, prepared themselves to do the Lord’s work in the tabernacle by following certain rules and practices.

- What examples have you seen of others dedicating themselves to God?

Write the following incomplete statements on the board, and invite students to complete them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

*I will separate myself from the world by . . .*

*I will dedicate myself to God by . . .*

## Numbers 9–10

### *The Lord leads Israel in the wilderness*

Explain that Numbers 9 marks the beginning of the second year of the Israelites’ journey from Egypt to the promised land. In this chapter we read that the Lord revealed what the children of Israel should do to stay committed to the Lord and how they could know He was with them. Invite a student to read Numbers 9:15–16 aloud, and invite the class to listen for one indicator that the Lord’s presence was with the children of Israel.

- According to verses 15–16, how did the Lord show the children of Israel He was with them?
- What evidence have you seen that the Lord is with you? with His people?

Invite a student to summarize Numbers 10 by reading the chapter heading aloud for the class. Point out that as the camp of Israel went forward according to the way the Lord had organized them, the Lord was with them. The cloud going before them was a constant reminder that He was in their midst and guiding them.

You may want to conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths taught today.

# Numbers 11–12

## Introduction

As the Israelites traveled in the wilderness, Moses grew weary of their murmuring and sought help from the Lord. As a result, the Lord chose 70 leaders to help Moses govern Israel. Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses, and the Lord chastised them for speaking against His chosen servant.

*Note:* This lesson provides an opportunity for two students to teach the class. To help prepare these students to teach, provide them with a copy of the section they are to teach a few days in advance. Or you could choose to teach the section yourself.

### *Give students opportunities to explain, share, and testify*

Allowing students to teach each other gives them opportunities to explain doctrines and principles, share insights and experiences, and testify of divine truths. Doing so can help students improve their understanding of gospel doctrines and principles and their ability to teach the gospel. As students explain, share, and testify, the Holy Ghost can bless them with deeper testimonies of the truths they are teaching.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Numbers 11

*The Israelites complain, and Moses asks the Lord for help in governing the people*

#### Student Teacher 1—Numbers 11:1–10

Invite your classmates to ponder how they usually respond when they experience challenges and frustrations. You may want to invite two or three students to share their thoughts with the class if they feel comfortable doing so.

Explain that Numbers 11 describes some of the challenges and frustrations Moses and the Israelites experienced as they journeyed in the wilderness toward the promised land. Invite the class to look for principles as they study Numbers 11 that can help them know how to deal with the challenges and frustrations they may experience.

Invite a student to read Numbers 11:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Israelites did when they experienced challenges and frustrations. Ask students to report what they find.

- What did the Lord do after some people complained?
- Why do you think the Lord was so displeased with the Israelites for complaining? (Their complaining showed ingratitude for all the Lord had done for the them.)

Summarize Numbers 11:2–3 by explaining that the people cried unto Moses. Moses then prayed to the Lord, and the fire ceased.

Invite a student to read Numbers 11:4–9 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for words or phrases indicating that some Israelites were ungrateful despite the Lord's blessings. (You may want to explain that the phrase "flesh to eat" in verse 4 means the people desired meat or fish to eat.)

- What words or phrases indicate that some of the children of Israel were ungrateful despite the Lord's blessings? (As students give their answers, you may want to ask them how the word or phrase they found might show ingratitude.)

Summarize Numbers 11:10 by explaining that Moses heard the people continue to weep or complain about their circumstances. The Lord and Moses were displeased because of these continued complaints.

- What principle can we learn from the Israelites' poor example? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **Failing to recognize our blessings can lead us to be ungrateful to the Lord.**)
- What can we do to better recognize our blessings? How has doing this in the past helped you?

To conclude, consider sharing your testimony of the principle you have taught. As part of this testimony, you may want to share an experience you have had when your gratitude to the Lord increased as you recognized His blessings in your life.

**Student Teacher 2—Numbers 11:11–20**

Invite a student to read Numbers 11:11–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for two challenges Moses presented to the Lord.

- What two challenges did Moses present to the Lord?

As students respond, write the two challenges on the board:

*Moses felt overwhelmed trying to lead a large number of people who were selfish and ungrateful.*

*There was no meat for the people to eat.*

Divide the class in half. Invite one half to read Numbers 11:16–17 and the other half to read Numbers 11:18–20. Invite them to look for the solutions the Lord provided to Moses’s challenges.

- What solution did the Lord provide to help ease Moses’s burden of leadership?
- What solution did the Lord provide to help with the lack of meat?

Point out that instead of merely complaining like many of his people, Moses brought his challenges and frustrations to the Lord in prayer.

- From this account, what principle can we learn concerning what the Lord will do for us if we express our challenges and frustrations to Him? (Students may identify a principle similar to the following: **If we express our challenges and frustrations to the Lord, then He can help us obtain solutions.** You may want to explain that our prayers are not always answered immediately and that the Lord can strengthen us to endure as we patiently seek His help to obtain solutions.)
- When have you felt blessed because you expressed your challenges and frustrations to the Lord, rather than just complaining about them?

To conclude, consider sharing your testimony of the principle you have taught. As part of this testimony, you may want to share an experience you have had when you felt blessed after you expressed your challenges and frustrations to the Lord.

After the student teachers conclude, thank them for teaching.

Invite a student to read Numbers 11:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the Lord relieved Moses’s burden of leadership.

- How did the Lord relieve Moses’s burden?

Explain that verse 25 teaches that these 70 elders were blessed to receive revelation and speak as inspired by the Holy Ghost. Summarize Numbers 11:26–28 by explaining that Joshua (Moses’s servant and successor) suggested to Moses that he stop two of the elders from prophesying.

Ask a student to read Numbers 11:29 aloud, and invite the class to look for how Moses responded to Joshua’s concern.

- What do you think Moses meant when he said that he would like it if all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Spirit rested upon them? (Moses was not saying that he wanted everyone to be a prophet to lead and receive revelation for the Church. Rather, he likely meant that he would like it if all people lived worthy to receive revelation for their own lives, callings, and responsibilities.)
- What truth is implied in Moses’s desire “that all the Lord’s people were prophets”? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle such as the following: **If we are spiritually prepared and worthy, we can receive revelation.** You may want to write this principle on the board.)

You may want to briefly share an experience you have had when you were blessed by receiving revelation for your own life. Consider inviting students to also share if they feel comfortable doing so.

Summarize Numbers 11:30–35 by explaining that in response to Moses’s prayer, the Lord also provided an abundance of quail for the Israelites to eat. As the people gathered the quail, many overindulged and gathered more than was needed. The Lord was again angry with them (apparently because they lusted after or hoarded the quail—again showing ingratitude). The Lord then sent a plague, and many Israelites died.

## Numbers 12

### *Aaron and Miriam speak against Moses*

Ask a student to read aloud the following situations when people criticized the Savior or the Lord's prophets:

The Savior was criticized for eating with sinners (see Luke 15:2) and was accused of being in league with Beelzebub (see Luke 11:14–15). Abinadi and Paul were both judged to be insane (see Mosiah 13:1; Acts 26:24). Nephi's brothers mocked him when he followed the Lord's instruction to build a ship (see 1 Nephi 17:17–18). Samuel was cast out of the land of Zarahemla because he was a Lamanite and because his prophecies offended the wicked (see Helaman 13:2; 14:10). Joseph Smith was accused of deserting the Saints when, in June 1844, he crossed the river into Iowa to avoid being taken to Carthage (see *History of the Church*, 6:549).

Invite students to look for truths as they study Numbers 12 that can help them when they hear or read about criticisms directed against the Lord or Church leaders.

Ask a student to read Numbers 12:1–3 aloud, and invite the class to look for why Miriam and Aaron (Moses's sister and brother) criticized Moses.

- Why did Miriam and Aaron criticize Moses?

Explain that the Lord authorized Moses's marriage to the Ethiopian woman (see D&C 132:1, 38). Therefore, Miriam and Aaron had no basis to criticize Moses for the marriage.

- In addition to criticizing Moses because of the marriage, what else might Miriam and Aaron's words in verse 2 suggest? (Their words might suggest that because the Lord had also spoken by them, or given them revelation, they thought they were equal in status to the prophet Moses.)

Point out the phrase "and the Lord heard it" at the end of verse 2. Then invite a student to read Numbers 12:3–9 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for the Lord's response to Aaron and Miriam's criticism of Moses.

- According to verses 6–8, how was Moses different from others who may receive revelation? (The Lord appeared to Moses and spoke directly to him.)
- What truths can we learn from the Lord's words in verses 6–8? (Students may use different words, but they should identify truths similar to the following: **The Lord speaks to His prophets. The Lord reveals His will to the leaders He has chosen.** You may want to write these truths on the board.)

To help students further understand these truths, consider asking a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"The Lord's house is a house of order. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that 'it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one [else], to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves' [*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 21].

"You may receive revelation individually, as a parent for your family, or for those for whom you are responsible as a leader or teacher, having been properly called and set apart.

"If one becomes critical and harbors negative feelings, the Spirit will withdraw. Only when they repent will the Spirit return. My experience is that the channels of inspiration always follow that order. You are safe following your leaders" ("Personal Revelation: The Gift, the Test, and the Promise," *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 61).

Ask students to consider how the truths they have learned from Numbers 12 can help them when they encounter someone who is criticizing the Lord or Church leaders. Summarize Numbers 12:10–16 by explaining that because she criticized the Lord's chosen servant, Miriam was struck with leprosy and was shut out of the camp for seven days. The Lord then healed her, and she returned to the camp.

Conclude by inviting one or two students to testify of the truths they have learned from Numbers 12.

## LESSON 63

# Numbers 13–14

### Introduction

As directed by the Lord, Moses sent 12 spies to explore the land of Canaan and report what they found. After 10 of the spies gave “an evil report” (Numbers 13:32), the Israelites feared that the people in the land were

too strong to conquer and lacked the faith they needed to enter the promised land. As a consequence, the Lord declared that they would wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Numbers 13–14

#### *Moses sends a member of each tribe to investigate the land of Canaan and report their findings*

Before class, write on the board the following words recited by President Thomas S. Monson. (This rhyme is found in “Dare to Stand Alone,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 61.)

*Dare to be a Mormon;*

*Dare to stand alone.*

*Dare to have a purpose firm;*

*Dare to make it known.*

To begin the lesson, invite students to come to the board and list a few circumstances in which they might need to decide whether to defend their faith or standards. If appropriate, you may want to ask students to explain the challenges of the circumstances they listed.

Invite students to look for important lessons as they study Numbers 13–14 that they can learn from Israelites who defended their faith and from Israelites who did not.

To help students understand the context of Numbers 13, explain that the Lord had brought the children of Israel through the wilderness, a land of vast nothingness, near the goodly land that He promised to give them if they were faithful to Him. After they had been in the wilderness for two years, they found the promised land (the land of Canaan) and discovered that it was inhabited by other people. (You may want to invite students to refer to Bible Map no. 2, “Israel’s Exodus from Egypt and Entry into Canaan,” and trace the journey from Rameses to Kadesh-barnea near the land of Canaan.)

Summarize Numbers 13:1–16 by explaining that the Lord instructed Moses to select one member from each of the 12 tribes to carry out an important task. Invite a student to read Numbers 13:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses commanded these men to do according to the Lord’s instruction.

- What did Moses ask the men to find out about the land and the people?

Summarize Numbers 13:21–26 by explaining that the 12 spies spent 40 days investigating the land and then returned with their reports and the fruit they brought from the land. To prepare students to learn about these reports and the response of the Israelites, write the following on the board:

*The 10 spies’ report of the land and the people (Numbers 13:27–29, 31–33)*

*The Israelites’ response to the 10 spies’ report (Numbers 14:1–4)*

*Joshua and Caleb’s report of the land and people (Numbers 13:30; 14:6–9)*

Divide the class into thirds. Invite one group to study Numbers 13:27–29, 31–33 to find the 10 spies’ report concerning the land and the people. Ask another group to study Numbers 14:1–4 to find the Israelites’ response to the 10 spies’ report. Invite the final group to study Numbers 13:30; 14:6–9 to find Joshua and Caleb’s report of the land and the people. As students read, invite them to imagine they are in the positions of the people they are reading about and to ponder the thoughts or feelings those people may have had that

### **Understand the context of the scriptures**

Understanding the context of the scriptures prepares students to recognize the messages of the inspired authors. When students understand the context of the scriptures, they can mentally step into the author’s world as much as possible and see things as the writer saw them.

prompted them to respond in the ways they did. Explain that after students have read their assigned verses, they will explain what they learned from the viewpoint of the people they read about.

After students have finished studying their assigned verses, use the following activity to ask them to report what they found as if they were one of the people they just read about. Ask one student to come to the front of the class to interview each of the three groups. Invite one group at a time to come to the front of the class. Invite the student who is acting as interviewer to ask the following questions:

#### Questions for the 10 Spies

- How would you describe the land you saw?
- How would you describe the people in the land of Canaan?
- What feelings did you have when you saw the people? Why?

#### Questions for the Israelites

- What feelings did you have when you listened to the 10 spies' report? Why?
- What did you suggest the people do rather than follow Moses into the promised land? Why?

#### Questions for Joshua and Caleb

- How would you describe the land you saw?
- How would you describe the people there?
- The other spies are convinced that Israel cannot overcome the people in Canaan. Why are you so sure that Israel can?

Thank the students for their participation, and ask them to be seated.

Invite the class to silently read Numbers 14:9, looking for a phrase that indicates why Joshua and Caleb believed that Israel could overcome the people in Canaan.

- What phrase did you find? ("The Lord is with us: fear them not.")
- What principles can we learn from Joshua and Caleb's words and example? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we know the Lord is with us, we can overcome fear and more courageously stand for righteousness.**)

Ask students to ponder times when they have chosen to defend their faith or righteous standards like Joshua and Caleb did. As students ponder their experiences, you may want to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:



"We may at times find ourselves surrounded by others and yet standing in the minority or even standing alone concerning what is acceptable and what is not. Do we have the moral courage to stand firm for our beliefs, even if by so doing we must stand alone? . . .

". . . May we ever be courageous and prepared to stand for what we believe, and if we must stand alone in the process, may we do so courageously, strengthened by the knowledge that in reality we are never alone when we stand with our Father in Heaven" ("Dare to Stand Alone," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 60, 67).

- When have you felt that God was with you as you stood for righteousness?
- How did it help you to know that God was with you?

You may also want to share an experience from your own life.

Ask a student to read Numbers 14:10 aloud. Invite the class to look for the Israelites' response to Joshua and Caleb's words in verse 9.

- How did the Israelites respond to Joshua and Caleb?
- How would you compare the Israelites' response to circumstances we might face today when we stand for what is right?

Summarize Numbers 14:11–39 by explaining that the Lord told Moses that there would be consequences for the Israelites' lack of faith and their choice not to follow the Lord and His servants.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Numbers 14:21–23, 29–33. Ask the class to follow along, looking for consequences the Israelites would receive.

- What consequences would the Israelites receive?
- Of all the Israelites 20 years or older, who were the only ones that would be blessed to enter the promised land? (Joshua and Caleb.)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *To receive all of the Lord's blessings, we must . . .*

Ask a student to read Numbers 14:24 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for why Caleb would enter the promised land.

- Why was Caleb able to enter the promised land?
- What do you think it means that Caleb “had another spirit with him”? (As students respond, you may want to point out that Caleb was filled with faith and courage rather than doubt and complaints.)
- What do you think it means that Caleb followed the Lord fully?

Invite students to complete the statement on the board based on what they learned from verse 24. Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **To receive all of the Lord's blessings, we must choose to follow Him fully.**

Explain that this principle is illustrated in Numbers 14:40–45. You may want to summarize these verses by explaining that after the Lord declared that the Israelites would not enter the promised land at that time, some of them ignored His words. These Israelites set aside their earlier fears of the people who occupied the land of Canaan and went to battle against them. However, because the Lord was not with these rebellious Israelites, they were defeated.

- How can we show the Lord that we will follow Him fully?

As you discuss the preceding question, you may want to invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“[You] will encounter people who pick which commandments they will keep and ignore others that they choose to break. I call this the cafeteria approach to obedience. This practice of picking and choosing will not work. It will lead to misery. To prepare to meet God, one keeps *all* of His commandments. It takes faith to obey them, and keeping His commandments will strengthen that faith” (“Face the Future with Faith,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 34).

You may want to briefly review the principles students have identified during this lesson and invite a few students to testify of these principles. Consider adding your testimony to theirs. Encourage students to act on the principles they have learned by standing for what is right and obeying all of God's commandments.

### Scripture Mastery Review

Because many of the Old Testament scripture mastery passages are introduced in context later in the course, you may want to introduce some of them to students earlier in the year. You could do this by periodically introducing a few new scripture mastery passages, inviting students to mark them, helping them understand the meanings of the passages, and finding a way to help them remember the references to the passages. Use the activities in the appendix to help students review and deepen their understanding of scripture mastery passages. With regular review, students will be better able to master key passages of scripture by the end of the course.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Numbers 14:24. “Caleb . . . followed me fully”

President Spencer W. Kimball said the following regarding Caleb's faithfulness:

“From Caleb's example we learn very important lessons. Just as Caleb had to struggle and remain true and

faithful to gain his inheritance, so we must remember that, while the Lord has promised us a place in his kingdom, we must ever strive constantly and faithfully so as to be worthy to receive the reward” (“Give Me This Mountain,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 79).

# Numbers 15–19

## Introduction

After the children of Israel refused to enter the promised land, the Lord reminded them of sacrificial ordinances that would help them receive forgiveness if they repented. He provided further instructions for offering sacrifices and keeping covenants, with provisions for redemption if the people sinned in ignorance. The Lord

also said, however, that if people sinned defiantly, their iniquities were upon them and they would be cut off from the Lord's people. A group of Israelites rebelled against the Lord and were destroyed. Through a miracle, the Lord showed the people whom He had chosen to lead them.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Numbers 15

#### *The Lord explains the consequences for ignorant sins and willful rebellion*

Read the following scenarios to the class:

1. A young man who is a recent convert to the Church is driving his car. He becomes upset at another driver and swears. Although he does not take the name of the Lord in vain, he feels an immediate withdrawal of the Spirit.
2. Just before a young woman begins her application for missionary service, she decides to spend time with friends who are not making good choices. When they offer her an alcoholic drink, she willfully drinks it, believing she can always repent later if she wants to so she can still serve a mission.

- Do you think the consequences for these two people should be the same or different? Why?

Write the headings *Ignorant (Unintentional)* and *Willful* on the board. Explain that Numbers 15 distinguishes between two different attitudes of a transgressor—one who defiantly and willfully sins versus one who sins ignorantly or makes a mistake unintentionally and feels guilty about offending God.

Summarize Numbers 15:1–26 by explaining that the Lord taught the Israelites about repentance and the sacrifices they needed to perform after choosing not to follow Him and refusing to enter the promised land.

The Lord continued to teach the Israelites about those who sinned ignorantly or unintentionally and those who sinned willfully. Invite a student to read Numbers 15:27–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the priest did for someone who sinned ignorantly.

- How might the priest's actions be symbolic of what the Savior does for us when we do wrong unintentionally or out of ignorance?
- What can we learn about the Atonement of Jesus Christ based on the Lord's instructions in these verses? (Students may identify a variety of principles and doctrines, but be sure to emphasize the following doctrine: **If we repent, we can be forgiven of our sins, including those we commit in ignorance, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.** Write this doctrine on the board under the heading "Ignorant [Unintentional].")

Ask students to consider how this truth might comfort someone who has ignorantly sinned. Invite a few students to explain their thoughts to the class.

Invite a student to read Numbers 15:30–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said would happen to those who willfully break God's commandments. To help students understand these verses, explain that the word *presumptuously* implies willfully and knowingly breaking God's commandments.

- What do you think it means that the person "despised the word of the Lord"?
- What did the Lord say would happen to those who willfully broke His commandments?
- What may the phrase "his iniquity shall be upon him" in verse 31 mean? (He will be accountable for his sins.)

### Compare and contrast

A doctrine or principle sometimes becomes clearer when we compare or contrast it with something else. Noting the similarities and differences between teachings can bring gospel truths into sharper focus. In this instance, comparing ignorant (unintentional) sins and willful sins can prepare students to identify the principles in Numbers 15.

Under the heading “Willful” on the board, write: *If we willfully break God’s commandments and do not repent, then . . .*

Invite students to summarize the Lord’s teaching in these verses by completing the statement on the board. They might express this principle the following way: **If we willfully break God’s commandments and do not repent, then we must stand accountable before God for those sins.** Using students’ words, complete the principle on the board.

- What do you think it means to be accountable before God?

Invite a student to read aloud the following excerpt from *For the Strength of Youth*:

“Some people knowingly break God’s commandments, planning to repent later, such as before they go to the temple or serve a mission. Such deliberate sin mocks the Savior’s Atonement” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 29).

- According to this statement, why is willfully sinning so serious?

Testify that even though we are accountable for our sins, if we repent we can be cleansed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Encourage students to repent of their sins so they can receive forgiveness.

Summarize Numbers 15:37–41 by explaining that the Lord told the people to make fringes on the borders of their clothing to remind them to follow the commandments in order to remain holy.

## Numbers 16–17

### *The Lord destroys rebellious Israelites and shows Israel whom He has chosen to lead them*

Invite students to write a list of popular television shows, movies, songs, and games. After sufficient time, ask them to consider how Satan could use media to influence them.

- Because media can either uplift us or tear us down spiritually, how can we detect the influences that would weaken us spiritually?
- How can we avoid such influences when they are embraced by those around us?

Explain that Numbers 16 contains an account of a group of Israelites who willfully sinned by rebelling against Moses and Aaron. This account teaches principles that can help us avoid the influence of those who would seek to entice us to rebel against God. It also teaches principles that can help us know whom the Lord has called to lead His people. Invite students to look for these principles as they study Numbers 16.

Invite a student to read Numbers 16:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who rebelled against Moses and Aaron.

- What does the phrase “famous in the congregation, men of renown” tell you about those who rebelled against Moses?
- What did these leaders accuse Moses and Aaron of doing? (Placing themselves above the rest of the Israelites.)

Invite a student to read Numbers 16:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Moses’s response to the rebellious group.

- What did Moses tell Korah and his followers?

Explain that a censer was a container for burning incense that the priests carried as they performed certain religious ceremonies in the tabernacle. Moses told Korah and his followers, who were Levites and were not authorized to administer in the high (Melchizedek) priesthood, to bring their censers to the tabernacle the following day. He also told them that the Lord would then show whom He had chosen to be His authorized servant.

Divide the class into small groups and give each group a piece of paper. Ask students to fold the paper into fourths and write each of the following references in a different quadrant: Numbers 16:8–11; Numbers 16:12–15; Numbers 16:16–19; and Numbers 16:20–27.

Invite students to read each reference as a group, looking for what happened next in the story. Ask them to write a summary in each quadrant of what happened in the story. After sufficient time, discuss the following questions as a class:

- According to verse 10, what did Korah and his people seek? (Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation in footnote *a* clarifies that the word *priesthood* in this verse is the “high priesthood,” or Melchizedek Priesthood.)
- What does Dathan and Abiram’s response to Moses in verses 12–14 reveal about them?
- According to verse 26, why did the Lord tell the people to leave the tents of the wicked and not touch any of their things?

Point out the phrase “depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men” in verse 26.

- Why is it important for people today to separate themselves from the wicked?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Numbers 16:27–35. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to those who rebelled against Moses.

- What can we learn from this account about separating ourselves from evil influences? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we separate ourselves from evil influences, then we show the Lord whose side we are on.**)

To help students better understand this principle, discuss the following questions:

- What are some evil influences in our day that we need to separate ourselves from?
- How can separating ourselves from evil influences help us to not be enticed to rebel against God?

Ask students to refer to the list of popular media they made earlier. Invite them to review their list and consider whether any of those items invite negative influences. Encourage students to make a plan to separate themselves from these influences and any other evil or negative influence they may encounter.

Summarize Numbers 16:36–50 by explaining that after these wicked men had been destroyed, the Israelites murmured against Moses and Aaron. The Lord sent a plague upon them, and many of them were destroyed.

In Numbers 17:1–4, we see that in order to further show the children of Israel who was called to lead His people, the Lord told Moses to gather a rod (a staff or stick) from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Draw 12 lines on the board to represent the 12 rods. Explain that Moses placed each rod in the tabernacle overnight.

Invite a student to read Numbers 17:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said would happen to the rod of the person God had chosen. Invite students to report what they find.

Ask a student to read Numbers 17:6–10 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Aaron’s staff. Ask a student to draw what happened to the staff on one of the lines on the board.

- What do you think is significant or symbolic about Aaron’s staff growing leaves and producing fruit?
- What can we learn from this miracle? (Students may identify a variety of doctrines and principles, but make sure to help them identify the following truth: **The Lord will help us know whom He has called to lead His people.**)
- How have you personally experienced a confirming witness that the Lord’s chosen leaders are called by Him?

Encourage students to seek confirming witnesses from the Lord of those whom He has called to lead His Church.

### Numbers 18–19

#### *The Lord establishes the duties of the priests and the Levites and gives directions for sacrifice*

Summarize Numbers 18–19 by explaining that the Lord again established the duties of the priests and the Levites and gave them additional directions regarding sacrifices to help them be sanctified or cleansed.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths discussed in the lesson and inviting students to act on impressions they received.

## LESSON 65

# Numbers 20–21

### Introduction

After almost 40 years since leaving Egypt, the Israelites rebelled against Moses and Aaron because of a lack of water. The Lord directed Moses to bring forth water out of a rock. The children of Israel rebelled again when they were not allowed to pass through the land of Edom on their way to the promised land and instead had to travel

a great distance to go around it. In response to their rebellion, the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people. He then instructed Moses to set a brass serpent upon a pole and promised that those who looked upon it would be healed.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Numbers 20:1–13

#### *Moses smites a rock and brings forth water to quench Israel's thirst*

Invite two students to read the following scenarios aloud to the class. Ask the class to listen and ponder how they might respond in each situation.

1. While preparing a talk for sacrament meeting, you receive impressions about what you should say. After you give the talk, a member of your ward approaches you and says, "Thank you so much for what you said today. You are an amazing speaker, and your words were exactly what I needed to hear. I am so grateful for you."
  2. A friend who accepted the gospel because of your example says, "You changed my life. Because of you, I am happy and have direction and peace in my life."
- Besides thanking these individuals for their kindness, what are some possible ways you could respond to their praise?

Point out to students that in both scenarios their actions brought blessings to another person. Encourage them to ponder how they could respond in a way that could bring additional blessings to that person. Invite students to look for doctrines and principles as they study Numbers 20 that can help them bless others' lives in circumstances like these.

Summarize Numbers 20:1–3 by explaining that after nearly 40 years since leaving Egypt, the Israelites camped in the desert of Zin. While there, Miriam died and the Israelites once again rebelled against Moses and Aaron.

Invite a student to read Numbers 20:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Israelites rebelled. Invite them to report what they find.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Numbers 20:6–11. As they read, ask two other students to portray Moses in these verses. Invite one student to act out what the Lord instructed Moses to do in verse 8, and ask the other to act out what Moses actually did in verses 9–11.

- In what ways were Moses's actions different from the Lord's instructions?
- What phrase in verse 10 shows that Moses and Aaron took credit for providing water for the Israelites?

Invite a student to read Numbers 20:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's response after Moses smote the rock.

- What did the Lord say to Moses and Aaron? (Help students understand that the phrase "to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel" meant that the Lord wanted the children of Israel to know that it was He, not Moses and Aaron, who provided the water for them.)
- What did the Lord say the consequence would be for Moses's and Aaron's actions?
- Why do you think the Israelites needed to understand that it was God who provided the water?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a truth they learned from this account. Ask a few students to share with the class the truth they identified. (Students' responses may vary, but they should identify the following truth: **The Lord desires that we help others see His power and influence in their lives.**)

- Why is it important to direct others' attention to the Lord's power instead of to ourselves?
- In addition to the two scenarios we discussed earlier, what are situations in which we might be able to help others focus on the Lord's power and goodness instead of on ourselves?

Encourage students to look for how Moses directed the Israelites' attention to the Lord and His power as they study the rest of Numbers 20 and 21.

### Numbers 20:14–29

*Israel is not allowed to pass through Edom, and Eleazar is made high priest when Aaron dies*

Summarize Numbers 20:14–29 by explaining that Moses sent messengers to ask the king of Edom if the Israelites could pass through his kingdom on their way to Canaan. The king of Edom refused to let the Israelites pass through his land, and he sent an army to ensure that they did not.

Invite students to read verses 28–29 silently to discover who died at this point in their journey and who was called to take his place.

- Who died at this time?
- Who became the high priest in Aaron's place?

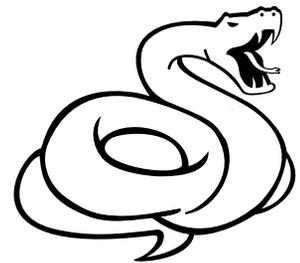
### Numbers 21

*Moses raises a brass serpent on a pole to heal those bitten by poisonous serpents*

For a dramatic effect, quickly pull a toy snake from a bag, or display a picture of a poisonous snake.

- What would you do if you were bitten by a poisonous snake?
- What are possible cures for poisonous snakebites?

Before class, put a picture of Jesus Christ into a box and label the box *Snakebite Kit*. Show students the box and tell them that inside it there is a cure for snakebites. Explain that as they study Numbers 21, they will learn how the cure for snakebites relates to us spiritually.



Explain that because the Israelites were not allowed to travel through the land of Edom, their journey was more difficult. Invite a student to read Numbers 21:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Israelites felt and responded because of the difficulty of the way they had to travel.

- How did the children of Israel respond to the difficulty of journeying around the land of Edom?

Invite a student to read Numbers 21:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened because the children of Israel spoke against Moses and the Lord. Direct students to verse 6, footnote *a*, to help them understand that the word *fiery* means poisonous.

Invite a student to read Numbers 21:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the children of Israel did after they had been bitten.

- Whom did the Israelites first turn to for help?
- What did the Lord tell Moses to do to help the people who had been bitten?
- What did the people need to do to be healed?

Write the following on the board: *Poisonous serpents = sin and its consequences.*

- How do you think sin is similar to being bitten by a poisonous snake?
- What could the venom of sin do to us if we do not get help?

Ask students to guess what is in your snakebite kit. Open the box and show the picture of Jesus Christ.

Display the picture *Moses and the Brass Serpent* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 16; see also LDS.org).

- Whom and what was the serpent on the pole meant to point the people to? (The Savior’s suffering and His Atonement.)
- According to verses 8–9, what did the children of Israel need to do to be healed?
- Based on this account, what must we do to be healed from the poisonous effects of sin? (Students’ responses may vary, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we look to Christ, He will heal us of our sins, pains, and sicknesses.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, discuss the following question:

- What are some ways we can look to Jesus Christ so that we can be healed of our sins, pains, and sicknesses?

Write the following scripture references on the board: *John 3:14–15*; *Alma 33:19–22*; *Helaman 8:14–15*. Explain that these scripture passages help us better understand the account of the brazen serpent in Numbers 21:1–9. Consider inviting students to write these cross-references in their scriptures near these verses.

Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group to read one of the scripture passages on the board, looking for what it teaches about the account of the brazen serpent. After sufficient time, invite one student from each group to teach the class what they learned. Then discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think some people refused to look at the brazen serpent? Why do you think others chose to look?
- What is required for us to look to the Savior to be healed of our sins, pains, and sicknesses?

Invite a student from each group to share his or her feelings about Jesus Christ’s power to heal us of our sins, pains, and sicknesses.

To help students understand one way we can apply this principle and look to Christ for healing of our sins, pains, and sicknesses, invite them to look again at the picture of Moses and the brass serpent.

- What did Moses do to help the children of Israel to be healed?
- How does the pole with the brazen serpent relate to the principle on the board?

Invite a student read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Jesus Christ has prescribed a very clear method for us to repent and find healing in our lives. The cure for most mistakes can be found by seeking forgiveness through personal prayer. However, there are certain spiritual illnesses, particularly those dealing with violations of the moral law, which absolutely require the assistance and treatment of a qualified spiritual physician. . . .

“If you . . . wish to return to full spiritual health, see your bishop. He holds the keys and can help you along the pathway of repentance” (“The Key to Spiritual Protection,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 28).

- Why is it sometimes necessary to get the help of a bishop or branch president as we look to Christ for healing of our sins, pains, and sicknesses?

Invite students to consider what they need to do in order to look to Christ and be healed from the venom of sin. Encourage them to make a commitment to look to the Savior so they can be healed from the effects of sin.

Summarize Numbers 21:10–35 by explaining that after the children of Israel were healed by looking to Christ, they defeated the Amorites and the people of Bashan who fought against them. Testify that if we will look to Christ as the children of Israel did, we will be given the strength to overcome sin and face the challenges before us.



### Using cross-references

A cross-reference is a scripture reference that can provide additional information about and insight into a passage being studied. Cross-referencing means connecting scripture references that help explain a doctrine or principle or some other element of a scripture passage. The cross-references you use as part of your lesson should enhance students’ understanding of a scripture passage and not merely restate truths that students have already identified.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Numbers 1–21 (Unit 13)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Numbers 1–21 (unit 13) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Numbers 1–10)**

As students studied about how the camp of Israel was organized, they learned the following truths: The Lord organizes His people in order to protect and guide them. The Lord assigns specific responsibilities to individuals in His kingdom. As students learned about the laws the Lord gave the Israelites, they discovered that we show our commitment to God when we strictly observe His standards.

#### **Day 2 (Numbers 11–12)**

In this lesson students learned about a time when the Israelites complained and Moses asked for help in governing the people. From this lesson students learned that failing to recognize our blessings can lead us to be ungrateful to the Lord. They also learned that if we express our challenges and frustrations to the Lord, then He can help us obtain solutions. Students also discovered that if we are spiritually prepared and worthy, we can receive revelation for our own lives, callings, and responsibilities.

#### **Day 3 (Numbers 13–14)**

As students read about Moses sending 12 men to investigate the land of Canaan, they learned the following principles: If we know the Lord is with us, we can overcome fear and more courageously stand for righteousness. To receive all of the Lord's blessings, we must choose to follow Him fully.

#### **Day 4 (Numbers 15–21)**

In this lesson about the rebellion of some of the Israelites, students learned the following truths: If we repent, we can be forgiven of our sins, including those we commit in ignorance, through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. If we willfully break God's commandments and do not repent, then we must stand accountable before God for those sins. If we remove ourselves from evil influences, then we can avoid the Lord's judgments that come upon the wicked. The Lord will help us know whom He has called to lead His people.

### Introduction

This lesson can help students understand that even though we have all sinned, if we look to Christ, He will heal us of our sins, pains, and sicknesses.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### **Numbers 21:1–9**

*Moses raises a brass serpent on a pole to heal those bitten by poisonous serpents*

For a dramatic effect, quickly pull a toy snake from a bag, or display a picture of a poisonous snake. Then ask:

- What would you do if you were bitten by a poisonous snake?
- What are possible cures for poisonous snakebites?

Show a box labeled "Snakebite Kit" into which you have put a picture of Jesus Christ. Without opening the box, tell students that there is a cure for snakebites inside the box. Explain that as they study Numbers 21, they will learn how some Israelites were cured from the snakebites and how the story relates to us spiritually.

Explain that because the Israelites were not allowed to travel through the land of Edom, their journey was more difficult. Invite a student to read Numbers 21:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Israelites felt and reacted because of the difficulty of the way they had to travel.

- How did the children of Israel react to the difficulty of journeying around the land of Edom?

Invite a student to read Numbers 21:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened because the children of Israel spoke against Moses and the Lord. Direct students to verse 6, footnote *a*, to help them understand that the word *fiery* means poisonous.

Invite a student to read Numbers 21:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the children of Israel did after they had been bitten.

- Who did the Israelites first turn to for help?
- What did the Lord tell Moses to do to help the people who had been bitten?
- What did the people need to do to be healed?

Write on the board: *poisonous serpent bites = sin and its consequences.*

- How do you think sin is similar to being bitten by a poisonous snake?
- What could the venom of sin do to us if we do not get help?

Ask students to guess what is in your snakebite kit. Open the box and show the picture of Jesus Christ.

Display the picture Moses and the Brass Serpent (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 16; see also LDS.org).

- What did the serpent on the pole point the Israelites' thoughts to? (The Savior's suffering and His Atonement.)
- According to verses 8–9, what did the children of Israel need to do to be healed?
- Based on this account, what must we do to be healed from the poisonous effects of sin? (Students responses may vary, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we look to Christ, He will heal us of our sins, pains, and sicknesses.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, discuss the following question:

- What are some ways we can look to Jesus Christ so that we can be healed of our sins?

Write the following scripture references on the board: *John 3:14–15*; *Alma 33:19–22*; *Helaman 8:14–15*. Explain that these scripture passages help us better understand the account of the brazen serpent in Numbers 21:1–9. Consider inviting students to write these cross-references in their scriptures near these verses.

Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group to read one of the scripture references. Invite them to read their assigned scripture, looking for what it teaches about the account of the brazen serpent. After sufficient time, invite one student from each group to teach what they learned to the class. Then discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think some people refused to look at the brazen serpent? Why do you think others choose to look?
- What is required for us to look to the Savior to be healed from the effects of sins, pains, and sicknesses?

Invite a student from each group to share his or her feelings for Jesus Christ's power to heal us from our sins, pains, and sicknesses.

To help students understand one way we can apply this principle and look to Christ for healing from our sins, pains, and sicknesses, invite them to look again at the picture of Moses and the brass serpent.

- What role did Moses play in helping the children of Israel to be healed?
- How do Moses's actions relate to the principle written on the board?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"Jesus Christ has prescribed a very clear method for us to repent and find healing in our lives. The cure for most mistakes can be found by seeking forgiveness through personal prayer. However, there are certain spiritual illnesses, particularly those dealing with violations of the moral law, which absolutely require the assistance and treatment of a qualified spiritual physician. . . .

"If you . . . wish to return to full spiritual health, see your bishop. He holds the keys and can help you along the pathway of repentance" ("The Key to Spiritual Protection," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 28).

- Why is it necessary to get help from a bishop or branch president as we look to Christ so He can heal us of our sins, pains, and sicknesses?

Invite students to consider what they need to do in order to look to Christ to be healed from the venom of sin. Encourage them to make a commitment to look to the Savior so they can be healed from the effects of sin.

Summarize Numbers 21:10–35 by explaining that after the children of Israel were healed by looking to Christ, they defeated the Amorites and the people of Bashan, who fought against them. Testify that like the children of Israel, if we will look to Christ, we will be given the strength to overcome sin and face the challenges before us.

### Next Unit (Numbers 22–36; Deuteronomy 1–26)

Invite students to imagine how they would react if they heard an animal speak to them. Explain that as they study Numbers 22–36, they will learn how the Lord warned Balaam through his donkey. Tell them that in Deuteronomy 1–26 they will learn about how to become the Lord's peculiar people.

# Numbers 22–29

## Introduction

After the Israelites defeated the Amorites, the king of Moab (Balak) was afraid the Israelites would destroy his nation as well. Balak asked a prophet named Balaam to curse the Israelites. However, the Lord directed Balaam not to curse the Israelites, so Balaam blessed them

instead. Later, Balaam disobeyed the Lord and taught Balak that he could weaken the Israelites by enticing them to commit sin. The Israelites who committed serious sin and turned from the Lord were slain. The Lord then instructed Moses to set Joshua apart to lead Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Numbers 22

#### *Balak offers riches and popularity to Balaam if he will curse the Israelites*

Before class, place a picture of the Savior at the front of the room. Then position two long pieces of tape about three feet apart and parallel to each other on the floor (so they look like a path that leads to the picture of the Savior).

Begin class by pointing out the picture and the pieces of tape. Explain that the space between the pieces of tape represents the path back to God. Invite a student to stand on the path. Explain that this student represents all of us as we seek to return to God. Then ask the following questions (you may want to write these questions on the board before class):

- What tactics does Satan use to entice us to *get off* the path that leads back to God?
- What are some practices that would help us *stay on* the path back to God?

Ask the student to return to his or her seat. Invite the class to look for principles that will help them answer these questions as they study Numbers 22–25.

Summarize Numbers 22:1–6 by explaining that after the Israelites defeated the Amorites, the king of Moab (Balak) was afraid of the Israelites. Balak decided to ask a prophet named Balaam to curse the Israelites. Invite students to read Numbers 22:6 silently and look for why Balak asked Balaam to curse the Israelites. Invite them to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Numbers 22:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Balak tried to convince Balaam to curse the Israelites. (You may need to explain that “the rewards of divination” refers to at least a portion of the payment the king had prepared for Balaam.)

Summarize Numbers 22:8–11 by explaining that after the leaders of Moab and Midian had delivered Balak’s message, the Lord came to Balaam and spoke to him.

Invite students to read Numbers 22:12–13 silently, looking for what God told Balaam not to do.

- What did God tell Balaam not to do?
- According to verse 13, how did Balaam respond to the leaders Balak had sent?

Invite a student to read Numbers 22:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what King Balak did after Balaam refused his offer.

- According to verse 15, whom did King Balak send to deliver his message to Balaam?
- What did King Balak offer Balaam?
- What truths about how the adversary entices us to sin can we learn from the methods Balak used to entice Balaam to disobey the Lord? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **the adversary sometimes uses promises of riches, popularity, and worldly status to entice us to commit sin.**)

To help students understand this truth, ask them what unrighteous actions they have seen people do or heard of people doing to gain riches, popularity, or other things that may lead to pleasure. You may want to list their comments on the board.

- How might the adversary use riches or popularity to distract youth from missionary service? How might riches or popularity distract someone from getting married or having children? (Consider asking additional questions that may be relevant.)

Invite a student to read Numbers 22:18–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Balaam responded to Balak’s second offer.

- How did Balaam respond?
- Why do you think Balaam sought the Lord’s counsel a second time after having already received instruction not to go with Balak’s men?

Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase “rise up, and go with them” in Numbers 22:20 to “rise up, *if thou wilt* go with them” (italics added). In other words, God was making Balaam responsible for the decision whether to follow God or to go with the princes of Moab.

Point out the phrase “God’s anger was kindled because he went” in verse 22.

- Why do you think God was angry when Balaam went with the princes of Moab?

Divide students into small groups. Ask them to read Numbers 22:22–34 together, looking for what happened to Balaam because he ignored God’s instructions and warnings and went with King Balak’s men. After sufficient time, ask students to explain what happened to Balaam.

- What can we learn from Balaam’s experience about what can happen to us when we ignore the Lord’s instructions and warnings? (As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following truth: **We put ourselves in danger when we ignore the Lord’s instructions and warnings.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)

Remind students of the tape on the floor representing the straight and narrow path that we must follow to return to Heavenly Father. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a few ways they can avoid danger and have the spiritual strength to stay on the straight path that leads back to Heavenly Father. Invite a few students who are willing to share what they wrote.

- How do you think Balaam put himself in danger by ignoring the Lord’s warning? What possible danger could come to others because of Balaam’s disobedience?

Ask students to think about situations when the Lord gave a warning to them or someone they know. Invite them to ponder what happened when they or the person they know either ignored the warning or obeyed it. You might consider sharing an experience or inviting a few students to share one.

Encourage students to exercise their faith to obey instructions and warnings from the Lord so they can avoid putting themselves in danger.

Summarize Numbers 22:35–41 by explaining that the angel told Balaam he could continue his journey to see Balak but was to speak only the words the Lord told him to speak. When Balaam arrived in Balak’s kingdom, the king again promised Balaam wealth and popularity if he would curse Israel. The next day Balak took Balaam to see the encampment of the children of Israel.

## Numbers 23–24

### *Balaam blesses Israel and prophesies of the coming of the Savior*

Summarize Numbers 23 by explaining that King Balak asked Balaam to curse the Israelites, but Balaam blessed them instead.

Invite a student to read Numbers 24:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how King Balak responded after Balaam blessed the children of Israel.

- What did King Balak say Balaam had lost because he had chosen to obey the Lord?
- How is King Balak’s response similar to what Satan does to tempt us?
- According to verses 12–13, how did Balaam respond to King Balak?

Summarize Numbers 24:14–25 by explaining that before Balaam left King Balak, Balaam prophesied that the children of Israel would eventually rule over the Moabites. He also prophesied that the Savior would one day come from the house of Israel.

### *Consider students’ needs as you teach*

Adjusting teaching methods can help students successfully fulfill their role as learners. For example, if students appear tired, consider inviting them to work with partners to help keep them engaged in learning. If students are very energetic, you might ask them to study individually to help them stay on task.

## Numbers 25

### *Israelites who commit serious sins are slain*

Ask students if they have ever read a story that had a surprise ending. Invite a few students to share examples with the class. Explain that the account of Balaam and King Balak has an unanticipated ending. Ask students to explain how they think the account might end.

Invite a student to read Numbers 25:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened when the children of Israel came to Moab, Balak’s kingdom. (To help students understand verse 3, point out footnote *a* and explain that Israel gathered with the people of Moab at a place called Peor to worship a false god.)

- What did some of the Israelites do when they came to Moab?

Invite a student to read Revelation 2:14 aloud. Explain that this verse adds detail about Balaam’s interactions with King Balak. Ask the class to follow along and look for an insight into what happened to bring about the events described in Numbers 25:1–3.

- According to this passage in Revelation, what did Balaam teach Balak to do? Is this how you expected this account to end? Why or why not?
- Why would worshipping false gods and committing sexual sin be a stumbling block for the Israelites?
- What principles can we learn from this account about how sin affects us? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Sin stops us from progressing spiritually and causes us to lose God’s protection and power.** Write this truth on the board.)

Explain that King Balak enticed the Israelites to commit sin because he knew that without the Lord’s power they would not be able to successfully conquer his kingdom.

- How is this similar to Satan’s tactics?

Ask students to ponder what behaviors or attitudes may be stumbling blocks in their lives right now. Testify that if they have left the straight and narrow path and stumbled over sin, they can repent and return to the path. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how the truth written on the board can help them stay on the path that leads back to their Heavenly Father.

Summarize Numbers 25:4–18 by explaining that the Lord instructed Moses that the children of Israel who had turned to idol worship were to be slain.

## Numbers 26–29

### *The children of Israel are numbered again, and Moses sets Joshua apart to lead Israel*

Summarize Numbers 26–29 by explaining that the men of Israel who were at least 20 years old were numbered again. Only Caleb and Joshua remained from the group of men who had been numbered at Sinai. Moses was told that he would not enter the promised land (see Numbers 27:12–14; see also Deuteronomy 3:26–29; 4:21; 32:48–52; D&C 84:23–25). The Lord directed Moses to call Joshua and set him apart to lead Israel. You may want to suggest that students mark Numbers 27:18–20, which describes how Moses set Joshua apart.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths taught in today’s lesson. Encourage students to apply what they have learned so they can remain on the path that will lead them back to their Heavenly Father.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Numbers 22:5–6. Who was Balaam?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles commented on the account of Balaam in the article “The Story of a Prophet’s Madness” (*New Era*, Apr. 1972, 4–7). Elder McConkie discussed how, in this

true account, a righteous man tried to serve both the God of heaven and his lust for wealth and the honors of men. In the end, the prophet Balaam lost his soul because he set his heart on the things of this world rather than the riches of eternity.

## LESSON 67

# Numbers 30–36

### Introduction

Moses taught Israelite leaders concerning vows. The Lord commanded the Israelites to go to war against the Midianites, and none of the Israelite soldiers were lost.

After this war, Moses instructed the Israelites concerning land inheritances and cities of refuge.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Numbers 30–31

#### *Moses instructs Israelite leaders about vows, and an Israelite army destroys the Midianites*

Before class, write the following question on the board:

*What blessings have you received that are so great, you feel you could never repay Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?*

Ask students to write their answers to this question on the board. (Answers might include the earth, their bodies, their families, the plan of salvation, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ.) You may want to invite a few students to explain their answers to the class.

Invite students, as they study Numbers 30–31, to look for truths that can help them know how they can better express gratitude for their blessings.

Summarize Numbers 30 by explaining that Moses taught Israelite leaders the Lord's standard for keeping promises, vows, and oaths. He also taught how an individual could be released from a vow or have the vow cancelled.

To provide context for Numbers 31, remind students that by acting on the counsel of Balaam (see Revelation 2:14), the Moabites and Midianites led many Israelites to worship false gods and engage in sexual immorality. The Israelites who did these things were slain (see Numbers 25).

Invite a student to read Numbers 31:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord directed the Israelites to do to the Midianites.

- What did the Lord direct the Israelites to do?

You may want to explain that the phrase “avenge the Lord of Midian” in verse 3 means that the Israelites were commanded to carry out the Lord's judgment on the Midianites for their wickedness in influencing the Israelites to sin.

Summarize Numbers 31:6–47 by explaining that the Israelites succeeded in this war and took the Midianites' possessions. Balaam, who was living among the Midianites, was killed in a battle.

Ask students to read Numbers 31:48–49 silently, looking for how many Israelite soldiers died in this war.

- How many Israelite soldiers died in this war with the Midianites? (You may need to point out that “there lacketh not one man of us” means that no one was killed.)

Point out that having one's life spared is a blessing that fits with those that students wrote on the board. It was beyond the Israelites' ability to repay the Lord for this blessing, and yet they still wanted to express their gratitude.

Invite a student to read Numbers 31:50 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the officers of the army of Israel brought to Moses to show their gratitude.

- What did the officers of the army of Israel bring to Moses?

You may need to explain that an oblation is something given as an offering or gift to the Lord.

Explain that the phrase “to make an atonement for our souls” (Numbers 31:50) means that by making their offering, the officers were trying to reconcile the debt they felt they owed

### Call on students by name

Calling on students by name to respond to questions or make comments helps foster a learning environment of love and respect. Take care not to embarrass students by calling on them when you know they are not prepared to answer.

the Lord for sparing their lives. Although no payment could adequately repay the Lord, their offering showed that they acknowledged and were grateful for His blessings of protection.

- What can we learn from the example of these Israelites about showing gratitude to the Lord for His blessings? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **We can show our gratitude for the Lord's blessings by making offerings to Him.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)
- What are some offerings or gifts we can give to the Lord to show our gratitude for His blessings in our lives?
- When have you sought to show your gratitude to the Lord through your actions? What feelings did you have as you gave that offering to the Lord?

Invite students to record in their class notebooks or scripture study journals an offering they feel they can give the Lord to show their gratitude for blessings He has given them. Encourage them to act on what they have written.

Summarize Numbers 31:51–54 by explaining that Moses and Eleazar the priest brought the officers' offerings into the tabernacle as "a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord" (Numbers 31:54).

### **Capture and maintain students' interest**

Because many students have a limited attention span, look for ways to rekindle their interest and enthusiasm several times during the lesson. This should be done in a way that focuses the students' attention on the scriptures to be studied.

## **Numbers 32**

### *Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh receive their inheritance east of the Jordan River*

To prepare students to study Numbers 32, spread a blanket or tarp on the floor. Invite several students to stand on the blanket. (Do not invite more students to participate than can fit comfortably on one half of the blanket.) Tell the students that their task is to work together to turn the blanket all the way over onto its other side. As they perform this task they must remain on the blanket and cannot step off of it onto the floor. After students have completed the activity, ask the class the following questions:

- What are some things we can learn from this activity about working together and helping one another?
- What are some situations in which Heavenly Father asks us to work together or help one another?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Numbers 32 that can guide them as they work with others to accomplish what Heavenly Father has asked them to do.

To help students understand the context of Numbers 32, explain that the tribes of Israel were camped in the plains of Moab on the east side of the Jordan River and were preparing to enter the promised land. (You may want to invite students to locate the plains of Moab on Bible Map no. 1, "Physical Map of the Holy Land.")

Invite a student to read Numbers 32:1, 5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the tribes of Reuben and Gad asked Moses.

- What did the tribes of Reuben and Gad ask Moses?

You may want to invite students to locate the land of Gilead on Bible Map no. 1. Explain that Jazer was near Gilead, just south of the Jabbok River.

- Why did they want to possess the lands of Gilead and Jazer?

Point out that in addition to being good grazing lands, the lands of Gilead and Jazer had already been conquered by the Israelites (see Numbers 21:31–35). In contrast, the lands west of the Jordan River still needed to be conquered and claimed from people who were hostile to the Israelites.

Invite a student to read Numbers 32:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Moses responded to the request from the tribes of Reuben and Gad.

- What was Moses's concern? (If the tribes of Reuben and Gad were given their inheritances at that time, they might not go to battle to help the rest of the tribes obtain their lands. Moses worried that the rest of the tribes might be discouraged from entering the promised land if they had to battle for their inheritances with a smaller army.)

Summarize Numbers 32:8–13 by explaining that Moses reminded the tribes of Reuben and Gad of the previous time when Israel failed to enter the promised land and the people had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

Invite a student to read Numbers 32:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses warned would happen if the tribes of Reuben and Gad discouraged the other tribes from entering the promised land on this occasion.

- What did Moses warn?
- Why do you think it would be a sin for the tribes of Reuben and Gad not to help the other tribes inherit their portions of the promised land? (You may want to remind students that the other tribes had helped conquer the lands that the tribes of Reuben and Gad sought to inherit.)

Point out that Israel’s efforts to inherit the promised land can be compared to our efforts to receive the Lord’s blessings.

- What can we learn from Moses’s warning in verses 14–15 about our responsibility to help others? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord holds us responsible to help others receive His blessings.**)

Invite a student to read Numbers 32:16–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the tribes of Reuben and Gad offered to do.

- What did the tribes of Reuben and Gad offer?
- How might the pledge of support from Reuben and Gad have helped to strengthen Israel? (A united Israel would be stronger against its enemies than a divided Israel.)

Invite a student to read Numbers 32:20–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Moses responded to this suggestion. (You may want to suggest that students mark the words *if* and *then* in this passage.)

- What did Moses say would be the result if the tribes of Reuben and Gad helped the other tribes conquer their lands?
- What does this teach us about choosing to help others obtain the Lord’s blessings? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we help others obtain the Lord’s blessings, then we are blessed as well.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)
- What are some of the Lord’s blessings that we are responsible to help others obtain?

To help students further understand and feel the truth and importance of the truths they have identified, assign them to work in small groups. Give each group a copy of one of the handouts below. Ask them to discuss their answers and be prepared to report to the class.

### Handout 1

- In what ways are we responsible for helping others obtain the Lord’s blessings?
- Why do you think the Lord holds us responsible for helping others obtain the blessings He desires to give them?

### Handout 2

- When have you tried to help others obtain the Lord’s blessings?
- How did you feel you were blessed as a result of your efforts?

After sufficient time, ask each group (or a spokesperson from each group) to report their answers and other insights they may have gained.

Explain that Numbers 32 concludes with Moses designating the inheritances for the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh.

## Numbers 33–36

### *Moses reviews Israel's journeys and instructs them concerning land inheritances and cities of refuge*

Summarize Numbers 33–36 by explaining that Moses reviewed Israel's journeys from Egypt to Canaan and that the Lord instructed Israel to drive out all of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. In addition, Moses instructed the Israelites about land inheritances and about the establishment of cities in which individuals accused of manslaughter could receive refuge until a fair trial was held.

Conclude by testifying of the principles identified in this lesson. Invite students to act on any promptings they may have received as they studied the scriptures.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Numbers 32:16–25. Helping others receive the blessings of the Lord

Just as the tribes of Reuben and Gad needed to help the other tribes of Israel receive their promised blessings before receiving blessings for themselves, we must help others obtain the Lord's blessings so we can receive all of His blessings as well. One way we can do this is through family history and temple work. Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

"Ordinances of the temple relate to *personal* progress and to the redemption of departed *ancestors* as well. 'For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, . . . they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect' [D&C 128:15]. Service in their behalf provides repeated opportunities for temple worship. And that service deserves commitment to a planned schedule. By doing for others what they cannot do for themselves, we emulate the pattern of the Savior, who wrought the Atonement to bless the lives of other people" ("Personal Preparation for Temple Blessings," *Ensign*, May 2001, 34).

### Numbers 35. Cities of refuge

Numbers 35 contains the Lord's commandment that special cities be established throughout Canaan for the Levites. This would allow the Levites to be among all the tribes and perform ordinances for them.

"Six of the forty-eight Levitical cities were appointed to be 'cities of refuge,' places where those who had taken human life could find protection until they had been tried and either convicted of murder or released (v. 11). These cities were to be located on both sides of the Jordan (see v. 14). Note the distinction that Moses made between murdering and slaying a human being (see vv. 15–25). Differentiation was made among what is called today premeditated murder, murder of passion, manslaughter, and self-defense.

"'Cities of refuge among the Hebrews were necessary, because the old patriarchal law still remained in force, viz., that the *nearest akin* had a right to avenge the death of his relation by slaying the murderer; for the original law enacted that *whosoever shed man's blood, by man should his blood be shed*, Genesis 9:6, and none was judged so proper to execute this law as the man who was nearest akin to the deceased. As many rash executions of this law might take place, from the very nature of the thing, it was deemed necessary to qualify its claims, and prevent injustice; and the cities of refuge were judged proper for this purpose. Nor do we ever read that they were ever found inefficient, or that they were ever abused.' (Clarke, *Bible Commentary*, 1:730.)" (*Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 211).

# The Book of Deuteronomy

## Why study this book?

The book of Deuteronomy contains Moses's final words to the children of Israel before they entered the land of Canaan with Joshua as their leader. The book's title means "second law" or "repetition of the law" (see Bible Dictionary, "Deuteronomy"), for in these final sermons, Moses repeated to the Israelites many of the laws and commandments that were part of their covenant with the Lord. Moses also exhorted the Israelites to remember and keep their covenant as he taught them the consequences of either obeying or disobeying the Lord's laws and commandments. As students study Deuteronomy, they will learn the importance of looking to past spiritual experiences and remembering to keep the laws, covenants, and commandments of the Lord so that they can have the same promises of prosperity and protection as ancient Israel.

## Who wrote this book?

Moses is the author of Deuteronomy. Throughout the book we see Moses fulfilling his divinely appointed role as "the great law-giver of Israel" (D&C 138:41). Moses was also a prototype of the Messiah, Jesus Christ (see Deuteronomy 18:15–19). The final chapter of Deuteronomy recounts Moses's death; however, other scriptures clarify that Moses did not die but was translated. Moses "came to the Mount of Transfiguration and bestowed keys of the priesthood upon Peter, James, and John (Matt. 17:3–4; Mark 9:4–9; Luke 9:30; D&C 63:21; HC 3:387). From this event, which occurred before the Resurrection of Jesus, we understand that Moses was a translated being and had not died as reported in Deut. 34 (Alma 45:19)" (Bible Dictionary, "Moses"). In this dispensation, Moses also appeared as a resurrected being (followed by Elias and then Elijah) in the Kirtland Temple and conferred priesthood keys upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery (see D&C 110:11–16). The explanation of Moses's supposed death and the ensuing eulogy (see Deuteronomy 34:10) were added after Moses was translated.

## When and where was it written?

Moses delivered the sermons recorded in Deuteronomy about 40 years after the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. When Moses delivered these

sermons, he and the children of Israel were encamped on the east side of the Jordan River, just outside the promised land (see Deuteronomy 1:1–5). There are varying opinions on when Deuteronomy and the other books of Moses were compiled.

## What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Deuteronomy contains Moses's three great final sermons to the children of Israel. "The first discourse is found in Deut. 1–4 and is introductory. The second discourse (Deut. 5–26) consists of two parts: (1) 5–11, the Ten Commandments and a practical exposition of them, (2) 12–26, a code of laws, which forms the nucleus of the whole book. . . . The third discourse (Deut. 27–30) contains a solemn renewal of the covenant [between God and Israel] and an announcement of the blessings of

obedience and the curses upon disobedience" (Bible Dictionary, "Deuteronomy"). These sermons contain Moses's heartfelt pleas for the Israelites to remember the Lord and live His laws in the promised land. The instructions recorded in Deuteronomy were specifically directed to a new generation whose parents had died in the wilderness following their rebellion (see Numbers 14:26–33; 26:63–65).

One of the most notable features of the book of Deuteronomy is the frequency with which it is quoted in other scripture. Of the five books of Moses, Deuteronomy is the one most often quoted by the Old Testament prophets. It is also quoted or alluded to almost 100 times in the New Testament. Jesus used verses from Deuteronomy to dismiss the temptations of Satan (see Deuteronomy 6:13, 16; 8:3; Matthew 4:1–11) and to explain which commandment was greatest in the law (see Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:36–38).

## Outline

**Deuteronomy 1–4** Moses recounts significant events from the Israelites' previous 40 years, including the covenant the Lord made with them at Horeb, or Mount Sinai.

**Deuteronomy 5–11** Moses exhorts the Israelites to teach their children to love the Lord, keep the commandments, and marry in the covenant. He reminds them that they are to be a holy and chosen people of the Lord. Moses also tells the Israelites of the lessons they need to remember from their wanderings in the wilderness and warns them of what will happen if they forget. He recounts times when the Israelites rebelled and how he mediated between them and the Lord. He teaches the Israelites that if they love and serve the Lord, they will be blessed in the promised land; if they do not, they will be cursed.

**Deuteronomy 12–17** Moses instructs the people to destroy the false gods of the Canaanites and to remain a separate people, free from worldly practices and influences. He reminds the Israelites of the Lord's commandments. He warns Israel against having kings but then provides instructions

for them in case they decide to have a king despite his counsel.

**Deuteronomy 18** Moses instructs Israel to avoid the superstitions and occult practices of other nations. He prophesies of Jesus Christ and tells the Israelites how they can identify a true prophet.

**Deuteronomy 19–28** Moses gives specific laws and commandments regarding judicial actions and warfare, as well as instructions for daily life. He encourages the Israelites to remember their debt to the Lord by offering the firstfruits of the land of Canaan, paying tithing, and keeping their covenants.

**Deuteronomy 29–30** Israel makes a covenant with the Lord. Moses warns that those who disobey the Lord will be cursed and prophesies that those who obey the Lord will be blessed temporally and spiritually.

**Deuteronomy 31–34** Moses tells Joshua and the Israelites to be strong and have courage. He teaches the Israelites a song that will help Israel remember the Lord and the commandments. He blesses each of the tribes of Israel and sees all of the land that Israel will inherit.

# Deuteronomy 1–13

## Introduction

Moses prepared the Israelites to enter the promised land by teaching them the importance of remembering and obeying the Lord. He also repeated the instructions

to remove the Canaanites from the promised land and to destroy all items associated with their worship of false gods.

### Teaching large blocks of scripture

When teaching large blocks of scripture, it may be helpful to summarize the story line or content of chapters and verses that will not be emphasized in class. Doing so helps students understand the context of the verses in the scripture block that they will study. Summarizing also helps students recognize themes or main ideas that are repeated throughout large blocks of scripture.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Deuteronomy 1–6

#### *Moses teaches Israel about the importance of remembering and obeying the Lord*

Before class, write each of the following statements on a separate slip of paper:

The Lord miraculously delivers the Israelites from Egypt (see Deuteronomy 4:34; 6:21–23; 7:17–19).

Israel hears the Lord declare the Ten Commandments from Mount Horeb (Sinai) (see Deuteronomy 4:10–13, 33; 5:4–22).

Israel is fed manna in the wilderness (see Deuteronomy 8:3, 16).

Israel rebels against the Lord by making and worshipping a golden calf (Deuteronomy 9:11–12, 16, 21).

Before class begins, give the four slips of paper to four different students. Inform these students that at the beginning of the lesson they will be asked to draw on the board a simple depiction of the experience described on their slip of paper.

To begin the lesson, invite the four students to come to the board one at a time and quickly draw the experience they were assigned. Ask the class to guess what scriptural account each drawing represents.

Following this activity, explain that although the events represented on the board were recorded in the books of Exodus or Numbers, they are also mentioned multiple times in the book of Deuteronomy. The book of Deuteronomy contains Moses’s teachings to the Israelites as they camped on the plains of Moab, just east of the Jordan River and the promised land. When Moses gave these teachings, it had been 40 years since the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt.

Explain that the word *Deuteronomy* means “repetition of the law.” Invite students to search Deuteronomy 6:12–15; 8:2–3, 11–18; 9:7–8 for reasons why Moses repeatedly mentioned the events represented on the board as he taught the Israelites. (You may want to assign each scripture passage to a different group of students.)

- What reasons did you find for why Moses repeatedly mentioned the Israelites’ experiences in the wilderness?

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 4:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Israelites needed to do so they would not forget the Lord’s influence in their lives. Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think it means to “take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen” (Deuteronomy 4:9)? (Be careful and diligent in doing what the Lord asks so you do not forget what you have seen Him do for you.)
- What principle can we learn from Moses’s instruction to the Israelites? (Students may use different words, but be sure they identify the following principle: **If we are not diligent, then we may forget times when we have seen the Lord’s influence in our lives.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle and feel its truth and importance, ask them to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- When have you seen the Lord’s influence in your life or in the life of someone you know?
- How can always remembering this experience help you remain faithful to the Lord?

After sufficient time, invite a few students who are willing to share what they wrote to do so. Encourage students to always remember sacred experiences in which they have seen the Lord’s influence in their lives.

Erase the board. To prepare students to study Deuteronomy 5–6, invite students to silently ponder the following question:

- Have you ever known someone who felt that the Lord’s commandments and standards limited their freedom or their ability to have fun?

Invite students to come to the board and list commandments or standards that some may claim limit their freedom or their ability to have fun. (Students might list the Word of Wisdom, law of chastity, wearing modest clothing, keeping the Sabbath day holy, or avoiding violent or immoral media and entertainment.)

Invite students, as they continue to study Deuteronomy, to look for reasons why God has given us commandments and standards.

Summarize Deuteronomy 5 by explaining that Moses repeated the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel. Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 6:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another commandment Moses declared to the Israelites.

- According to these verses, what commandment did Moses declare to the Israelites? (You may want to point out that Jesus Christ referred to this as “the first and great commandment” [Matthew 22:38]).
- According to verse 3, what would be the result if the Israelites obeyed this commandment?

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 6:6–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses taught the Israelites to do with God’s commandments.

- What did Moses say the Israelites should do with God’s commandments?



**A man wearing the traditional tefillin (or a phylactery).**



**Hebrew scriptures from the Shema are written on parchment that is rolled up and placed inside a mezuzah.**

Display a picture of a phylactery and a picture of a mezuzah or draw them on the board. (You might consider making some before class and displaying them). Explain that based on Moses’s instructions in verses 8–9, the Jews developed customs involving the Shema, the mezuzah, and tefillin (or phylacteries). The *Shema* refers to several scripture passages, including Deuteronomy 6:4–9, that are recited daily by devout Jews. Many Jews write these

same passages on a small piece of parchment and place the parchment in a small container called a *mezuzah* (the Hebrew word for doorpost), which is then placed on the right side of the doorframe of their homes. *Tefillin* are small, square leather boxes worn over the forehead and on the inside of the biceps of the non-dominant arm. These boxes contain pieces of parchment with scriptures from the Shema.

Point out the phrase “these words . . . shall be in thine heart” (Deuteronomy 6:6).

- Why do you think this instruction in verse 6 is important?
- While we do not wear tefillin or place mezuzahs on the doorframes of our homes, what can we do to remind ourselves of the Lord’s commandments and to have them in our hearts (see Deuteronomy 6:6)?

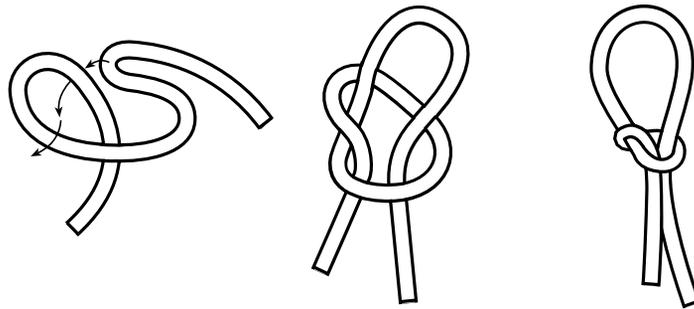
Ask students to read Deuteronomy 6:24 and 10:12–13 silently, looking for what Moses said about the purpose of God’s commandments.

- Based on these verses, how would you summarize the purpose of God’s commandments? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board above the list students created earlier: **The commandments God gives us are always for our good.**)

Invite students to choose one of the commandments listed on the board and consider how that commandment is for our good. You may want to invite students to explain and share their testimonies of how the commandments they chose to consider are for our good.

### Deuteronomy 7–13

*Moses instructs Israel to remove the Canaanites and their items of worship from the land and to keep the Lord’s commandments*



Display a snare or draw one on the board. (A snare is created by making a noose out of rope or other line and positioning it so animals will be caught as they step into it.) Explain that a snare can include some form of bait to entice an animal to step into the trap.

- What makes a snare an effective way to catch animals?
- In what ways is the bait in a snare trap like temptations we experience?

Explain that in Deuteronomy 7, Moses taught the Israelites what they must do to overcome snares, or sources of temptation that could lead to being trapped in sin, that existed in the promised land. The people who were already living in the promised land participated in terrible wickedness and idolatry and even sacrificed their innocent children to their false gods (see Deuteronomy 12:30–31). Invite students to look for truths, as they study Deuteronomy 7, that can help them overcome the temptations they face.

Invite a few students to take turns reading Deuteronomy 7:1–6, 16, 25–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded the Israelites to do with the people in the land of Canaan and the items associated with their worship of false gods.

- What did the Lord command the Israelites to do with the people in the land of Canaan and the items associated with their worship of false gods?
- What did the Lord say would happen if the Israelites disobeyed this command? (They would turn away from the covenant they had made to serve only the Lord and would be destroyed.)
- How might Moses’s words in verse 6 have helped the Israelites understand the importance of removing all the evil influences from the promised land?

You may want to remind students that one meaning of the word *holy* is to be set aside for sacred purposes. The term *holy people* refers to those who are set aside or chosen to serve God in accomplishing His purposes for the salvation of His children.

- To be the Lord’s holy people, what must we do with influences that could lead us to sin? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **To be the Lord’s people, we must remove and avoid influences that can lead us to sin.** You may want to suggest that students write this principle in the margin of their scriptures next to Deuteronomy 7:6).

Explain that although we may not be able to remove every source of temptation from our lives, the Lord will bless us as we seek to remove whatever evil we can from our immediate surroundings and develop self-discipline to avoid other influences that can lead us to sin.

Assign students to work in groups of two or three. Give each group a handout with the following questions. Ask students to discuss the questions and write down their answers.

- What are three worldly snares that, if left in our lives, can lead us to being trapped in sin?
- To be the Lord’s people, why is it important that we remove or avoid the influence of those snares?
- What advice can you give on how to remove or avoid the influence of those snares? What can you do to protect yourself when those snares cannot be avoided?

After students have had sufficient time to discuss the questions, invite several to explain to the class what they learned.

Summarize Deuteronomy 8–13 by explaining that Moses continued to remind the Israelites about their experiences in the wilderness, repeated the importance of obeying God’s commandments, and warned the people again about the consequences they would experience if they did not completely drive out the other nations from the promised land and destroy the items associated with their worship of false gods.

Encourage students to remove from their lives any influences that can lead them to sin.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Deuteronomy 6:13,16; 8:3. Jesus Christ cited Deuteronomy to thwart temptation

President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency taught:

“[Jesus’s] thorough knowledge of the scriptures is evidenced by the fact that He repeatedly cited them. When the devil tempted Him to turn the stones into bread, He countered by quoting from Deuteronomy:

“‘. . . It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.’ (Matthew 4:4; see Deuteronomy 8:3.)

“When the tempter challenged Him to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, He responded by quoting from the same book:

“‘It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.’ (Matthew 4:7; see Deuteronomy 6:16.)

“For the third time He quoted from Deuteronomy (6:13) when Satan offered Him the kingdoms of the world, saying:

“‘Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.’ (Matthew 4:10.)” (“Jesus Christ, Man’s Great Exemplar” [address to Brigham Young University student body, May 9, 1967], 9).

# Deuteronomy 14–19

## Introduction

Moses reminded the children of Israel that they were to be a “peculiar” and “holy” people (Deuteronomy 14:2). They could do so by observing the Lord’s laws and feasts, refraining from evil, and caring for the poor. Moses also warned the Israelites about the consequences for

worshipping false gods and instructed them regarding how their future kings should be chosen and how they should rule. He prophesied about the coming of Jesus Christ and set forth judicial procedures for those who had committed murder or manslaughter.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Deuteronomy 14–16

*The Lord commands His people to be holy, to care for the poor, and to remember His blessings*



Show students a few objects that are all the same except one. (For example, you might display a bouquet of the same type of flowers with one different type of flower in the middle. Alternatively, you could display or draw on the board a picture of several identical objects and one different object, such as the example shown in the accompanying Mormonad.)

Ask students to ponder a time when they either felt approval and joy or felt alone, uncomfortable, or embarrassed because their beliefs made them different from others. Invite a few students who feel comfortable doing so to tell about a time when they felt this way. You might also consider sharing an experience.

- Why do you think it might be a good thing to stand out because of your beliefs?

Explain that the book of Deuteronomy contains a number of reminders for the Israelites before they entered the promised land. Invite students to look for doctrines and principles as they study Deuteronomy 14–19 that can help them have the courage to live what they believe so they can distinguish themselves as members of a holy people.

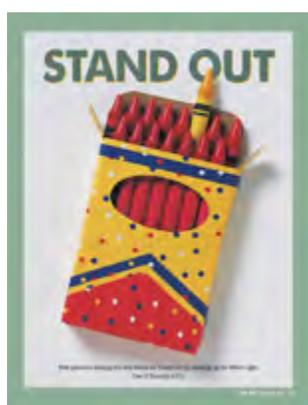
Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 14:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for words or phrases that explain who the Israelites were and why they should stand out from other nations.

- What words or phrases describe the Lord’s people? (Remind students that in this context the term *peculiar* means “exclusive, or special” and can refer to a special possession or property [see Bible Dictionary, “Peculiar”]. *Holy* means sacred and devoted to God.)
- Which Old Testament scripture mastery passage does verse 2 sound like? (You may want to invite students to recite Exodus 19:5–6 from memory, if possible, or read the verses aloud in unison.)
- Why do you think Moses would repeat this message to Israel?

Summarize Deuteronomy 14:3–29 by explaining that Moses reminded the Israelites of what they had been commanded to eat and not eat. He also taught them about tithing. These practices would separate the Lord’s people from other nations. Point out that Deuteronomy 14:26 mentions the use of strong drink, such as wine or other alcoholic drinks. In ancient times, the Lord allowed the use of these drinks in moderation and in ceremonial rituals.

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 14:28–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for some of the reasons the Israelites were to pay tithing.

- What were some of the reasons the Israelites were to pay tithing? (To care for the Levite priests, strangers, the fatherless, and widows. Tithing also allowed the Lord to bless the tithing payer’s life.)
- According to verse 29, what blessing was promised to those who paid tithing? (The Lord would bless the Israelites “in all the work” of their lives.)
- How can obeying the law of tithing help us stand out from the world?



Explain that Deuteronomy 15 describes another way in which the Israelites were to care for the needy among them. Ask students to read Deuteronomy 15:1–2 silently, looking for what the Israelites were to do every seven years. Invite students to look at verse 1, footnote *b*, to discover what the term *release* means (the “pardoning or cancellation of debts”).

- What were the Israelites to do every seven years?
- What do you think of this arrangement? What kind of attitude would the Israelites need to develop in order to live this commandment?

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 15:4–6 aloud. (You might also ask him or her to read aloud verse 4, footnote *a*.) Ask students to follow along, with half of the class looking for the reason Israelite creditors were to forgive debts every seven years. Ask the other half of the class to look for the ways in which the Lord would bless the Israelites if they would obey this and the other commandments.

- What was the purpose of forgiving debts every seven years? In what ways would the Lord bless the Israelites as they obeyed this commandment?

Invite a student to come to the front of the classroom to represent an ancient Israelite. Give him or her some food or money. (You could give the student some fake money or ask students to imagine these items.) Write *Year 1* on the board. Ask another student to represent someone in need during the first year of a seven-year cycle. Invite the second student to ask the first student to lend him or her some food or money. Ask the class:

- What would you do if you were in this Israelite’s position and someone asked you for a loan?

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 15:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord wants His people to treat the poor.

- What words or phrases in these verses describe how we should provide for those in need?

Invite the student with the food or money to demonstrate the actions and attitudes that students identified as he or she gives food or money to the second student.

Write *Year 7* on the board. Invite a third student to represent another Israelite in need during the seventh year and ask the first student for help.

- How is this scenario different from the first?
- Why might it have been harder for an Israelite to lend to a neighbor in the seventh year?

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 15:9–11 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for Moses’s warning and counsel for lending in the seventh year.

- What was Moses’s warning in this situation? What can we learn from verse 9 about refusing to help the poor? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **We sin by refusing to help others in need when we are able to give.**)

Collect the objects used in the scenario, and ask the participating students to return to their seats.

- Why do you think it is a sin to refuse to help those in need?
- What are some reasons why it is sometimes hard for us to help those in need? (You may need to explain that even if we are not always able to meet others’ needs, we should be able to say in our hearts that we would help if we could [see Mosiah 4:24–25].)
- What did Moses say we should do with our hands when we give to the poor? What should our attitude about giving to the poor be?
- According to verse 10, what will we experience if we willingly help those in need? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we willingly help those in need, then we will be blessed in all our works.**)
- What kinds of opportunities has the Lord given us to help provide for those in need?

Ask students to share a time when they have felt blessed after helping someone in need.

Encourage students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they will do in the coming week to help someone in need. You may want to testify of the importance of helping others in need. Remind students that helping those in need is a way to show that we are the Lord’s “peculiar people” (Deuteronomy 14:2).

Summarize the remainder of Deuteronomy 15 by explaining that the Lord commanded the Israelites to release Hebrew servants in their seventh year of service. He also emphasized the sanctity of the firstlings of the Israelites’ herds and flocks.

### **Invite students to participate**

Teachers should strive to find a variety of appropriate ways for students to participate in class discussions. Activities that involve student participation should enhance students’ ability to understand and apply the scriptures. For example, you could invite students to the front of the classroom to represent individuals or situations from the scriptures. Take care not to embarrass students as they participate in such activities.

Explain that Deuteronomy 16 contains the Lord's instructions pertaining to the Passover and two other annual feasts: the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles (see Bible Dictionary, "Feasts"). These feasts would remind the Israelites of the blessings they had received and would receive from the Lord.

### Deuteronomy 17–19

#### *The Lord instructs His people regarding His commandments and explains the consequences for disobedience*

Summarize Deuteronomy 17:1–13 by explaining that this passage describes the consequences for Israelites who chose to worship false gods.

Invite a student to come to the front of the class and sit in a chair. Place a crown (which could be made out of paper) on his or her head and then ask:

- If you were the king or queen of a nation, what would you choose to do with your time?

Invite students to consider, or list, kings or queens from history or from the scriptures who became prideful and failed to follow the commandments of God.

Explain to the class that Moses, knowing that Israel at a future time would demand a king in order to be like neighboring nations, instructed Israel regarding what a good king should do. Invite the student wearing the crown to read Deuteronomy 17:14–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's instructions concerning the king. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What warnings and counsel did the Lord give concerning Israel's future king?
- According to Deuteronomy 17:18–19, what was Israel's king to do when sitting on the throne? How might the king be blessed by studying the laws of God daily?
- What principle can we learn from this instruction about studying the scriptures daily? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we study the scriptures daily, they will help us to be humble and live according to God's commandments.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)

Invite the student wearing the crown to return to his or her seat. Consider asking students how their study of the Old Testament has influenced their lives so far this year. Encourage them to continue to study the scriptures daily. You may want to remind them that studying the scriptures is one more way they can be distinct from the world.

Summarize Deuteronomy 18–19 by explaining that Moses reviewed how to sustain the Levite priests and warned the Israelites to stay away from sorcery. He prophesied of the coming of Jesus Christ and described the legal processes for those who had killed another person, either accidentally or intentionally.

You may want to conclude by testifying of one or more of the truths identified today.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Deuteronomy 18:15–19. Who is the "Prophet . . . like unto [Moses]"?

"At least four other scriptures refer to the prophet like unto Moses (see Acts 3:22–23; 1 Nephi 22:21; 3 Nephi 20:23; JS—H 1:40). In each instance these scriptures make it clear that the prophet like unto Moses was the Savior, Jesus Christ. When Jesus visited the Nephites, as recorded in the Book of Mormon, He identified Himself in this way:

"Behold, I am he of whom Moses spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people.' (3 Nephi 20:23.)" (*Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 226).

## LESSON 70

# Deuteronomy 20–26

### Introduction

Deuteronomy 20–26 shows that Moses addressed the Lord’s commands concerning war and the punishment of the wicked. He also reviewed various laws and commandments given to the Israelites.

*Note:* This lesson includes an activity that will require advance preparation.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Deuteronomy 20

#### *The Lord declares punishments on the wicked*

If possible, display a plate of food or ask students to visualize a delicious plate of food. Ask students to imagine preparing to eat this food. Then, ask them to envision someone who has a serious contagious disease coughing all over the food.

- Would you still want to eat the food? Why or why not?
- What might happen if you chose to eat the food?
- What are some ways to keep infectious diseases from spreading?

Explain that as the Israelites prepared to enter the promised land, God wanted to prevent from spreading among them a kind of spiritual sickness that would have had eternal consequences. The Lord had designated the promised land as holy, but it had been occupied for hundreds of years by people who refused to obey God’s commandments. The Lord did not want those people’s wickedness to infect the Israelites and spread among them.

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 20:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the counsel the Lord gave to the Israelites for the times when they would need to go to battle against these people.

- What phrases in these verses do you think reassured those Israelites who had to go into battle? (You may want to suggest that students mark these phrases.)

Summarize Deuteronomy 20:5–8 by explaining that these verses describe situations in which Israelite men were excused from going into battle.

Ask a student to read Deuteronomy 20:10–11 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord wanted the army of Israel to do when they came to the cities inhabited by the Canaanites.

- What did the Lord instruct the armies to do first when they came to a city? (Proclaim peace.)

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 20:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Israelites were commanded to do if the cities rejected their offer of peace.

- What did the Lord instruct the armies to do if the people rejected the offer of peace?

To help students understand the reason for the Lord’s instruction recorded in Deuteronomy 20:12–14, invite a student to read 1 Nephi 17:33–35 aloud. (You may want to suggest that students write this cross-reference near Deuteronomy 20:12.) Ask students to follow along, looking for phrases that describe the condition of the people who lived in the promised land.

- What phrases describe the condition of the people who lived in the promised land?
- What do you think it means that they were “ripe in iniquity”?

Explain that the people who inhabited the promised land had become spiritually and morally corrupt—like the people in the days of Noah. They participated in acts of perversion, immorality, and even human sacrifice as part of their social and religious practices.

**Write doctrines and principles on the board**

When identifying doctrines and principles, state them clearly and simply. Writing truths on the board, or inviting students to write or mark them in their scriptures, can help students understand and remember the importance of these truths. Doing so also reminds students of the focus of the scripture block they are studying.

- What does the phrase “this people had rejected every word of God” suggest? (The people had received more than one warning to repent of their sins and had refused to do so.)

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 20:16–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God commanded the Israelite armies to do with the people who occupied cities in the heart of the promised land.

- What were the armies to do with those nations who inhabited the heart of the promised land?
- What word in verse 18 describes behavior that could be seen as a spiritual disease that God did not want to spread among the Israelites?
- What do we learn from verse 18 about why the wicked are destroyed? (Support students’ answers by writing the following truth on the board: **God may destroy the wicked to prevent their sins from spreading to others.**)

You may want to remind students that the Lord had warned that if the Israelites associated with the people in the promised land and adopted their wicked practices, the Israelites would be destroyed (see Deuteronomy 7:1–4).

- How did the Lord’s instructions to the Israelites to utterly destroy the wicked nations inhabiting the heart of the promised land show His love and concern for the Israelites?

**Deuteronomy 21–26*****Moses again declares the Lord’s laws to Israel***

Invite students to ponder what motivates them to be obedient. You might ask them to think about why they might choose to obey a police officer, a parent, or a priesthood leader. Ask them to give a few reasons why they would obey a particular person. Write their responses on the board. (They may suggest motivations such as fear, duty, reward, or love.)

Invite students to ponder which of the motivations on the board is most often the reason why they obey the commandments.

- How might our motivation for obeying the Lord affect the blessings that come as a result of our obedience? (To help students answer this question, you may want to suggest that they read Moroni 7:8–9.)

Invite students to look for principles in Deuteronomy 21–26 that can help them improve their motivation for being obedient. Remind students that when the Israelites were preparing to enter the promised land, Moses reminded them that living God’s laws would help them stay clean and separate from practices that could be spiritually damaging or have severe eternal consequences.

Assign each student to read silently one or two of the following passages, looking for some of the laws Moses reiterated to the people. (You may want to write these references on the board before class. Consider waiting until after students have read and reported on their assigned verses to write the laws associated with each reference [included in parentheses].)

*Deuteronomy 22:1–4 (Laws about returning others’ property)*

*Deuteronomy 22:5 (A law about dress and appearance)*

*Deuteronomy 22:25–27 (Laws protecting the victims of sexual assault)*

*Deuteronomy 24:19–22 (Laws about caring for those in need)*

*Deuteronomy 26:12–13 (Law of tithing)*

After sufficient time, ask students to explain to the class what laws were taught in their assigned verses. (It may be helpful to ask students to come to the front of the class to explain what they found.) Explain that these are only a few of the laws Moses reviewed with the Israelites.

- Why do you think Moses repeated these laws to the Israelites?

Invite two students to take turns reading aloud from Deuteronomy 26:16–19. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Israel was to keep the Lord’s commandments. As students read, you might invite them to pause and use the footnotes to understand words that may be difficult. For example, by studying the footnotes we learn that the word *judgments* in verse 16 means ordinances; *avouched* in verse 17 means declared or testified; and *peculiar* in verse 18 means treasured.

- What phrases in Deuteronomy 26:16 describe how Israel was to keep God’s commandments? (“With all thine heart” and “with all thy soul.”)

- According to verses 18–19, what blessings did the Lord declare Israel would receive if they obeyed in this way? (Israel would be the Lord’s “peculiar people,” and He would make them “high above all nations” and “an holy people.”)
- What can we learn about obedience from this passage? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **We can be the Lord’s peculiar and holy people if we obey His commandments with all our heart and soul.** Write this principle on the board.)

Circle the words *heart* and *soul* in the statement on the board.

- What does it mean to obey the Lord’s commandments with all your heart and soul?

To help students better understand the principle on the board, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“It is not enough for anyone just to go through the motions. The commandments, ordinances, and covenants of the gospel are not a list of deposits required to be made in some heavenly account. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a plan that shows us how to become what our Heavenly Father desires us to become” (“The Challenge to Become,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 32).

- What do you think is the difference between “going through the motions” and becoming “what our Heavenly Father desires us to become”? (As students respond, make sure they understand that to be a holy people, we must live the gospel sincerely and want to become like our Heavenly Father.)

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle on the board, use the following activity. You may want to prepare the activity before class.

Write a different commandment on several small pieces of paper. Examples might include fasting, paying tithing, serving others, studying the scriptures, honoring parents, and any other commandments you feel may be helpful for the students to discuss. Place the pieces of paper in a container.

Invite a student to come to the front of the room. Ask him or her to take a piece of paper from the container and read it to the class. Then ask the class to do one or both of the following:

1. Suggest ways that we could keep the law with all of our heart and soul.
2. Share how they have felt blessed when they have kept that law or commandment with all their heart and soul.

Repeat this activity with the other pieces of paper as time allows. (You might also ask students to identify other commandments they want to better keep with all their heart and soul.)

To conclude, consider sharing an experience you have had when you felt blessed for keeping one or more of God’s laws with all your heart and soul. Encourage students to consider and act on ways they can better keep God’s commandments with all their heart and soul.

### Scripture Mastery Review

As you near the midpoint in this course, you may want to check students’ knowledge of scripture mastery passages and the associated Basic Doctrines. Consider creating a short exercise to review one of the elements of mastery. For example, you could ask questions that test their progress with locating, understanding, memorizing, and applying the scripture mastery verses they have studied:

#### **Locating:**

“Where can I find the Ten Commandments?”

#### **Understanding:**

“Which scripture mastery passages in the Old Testament can help someone understand the doctrine of the Creation? Explain.”

#### **Memorizing:**

“Complete the following sentence: “Therefore shall a man leave his . . .” (See Genesis 2:24.)

#### **Applying:**

“In what ways are you qualifying to be called one of the Lord’s peculiar people?” (See Exodus 19:5–6.)

Before you begin the review, give students a few minutes to study together so they can be more prepared.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Numbers 22–36; Deuteronomy 1–26 (Unit 14)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Numbers 22–36; Deuteronomy 1–26 (unit 14) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Numbers 22–36)**

From Balaam's experiences with Balak, students learned that we put ourselves in danger when we ignore the Lord's instructions and warnings. They also learned that sin stops us from progressing spiritually and causes us to lose God's protection and power. Students also learned that we can show our gratitude for the Lord's blessings by making offerings to Him.

#### **Day 2 (Deuteronomy 1–13)**

From Moses's instruction to the Israelites, students learned the following truths: If we are not diligent, then we may forget times when we have seen the Lord's influence in our lives. The commandments God gives us are always for our good. To be the Lord's people, we must remove and avoid influences in our immediate surroundings that can lead us to sin.

#### **Day 3 (Deuteronomy 14–19)**

From Moses's continued instruction to the Israelites, students discovered truths about helping others in need. They also learned that if we study the Lord's law each day, it will help us to be humble and to live His commandments.

#### **Day 4 (Deuteronomy 20–26)**

From the Lord's command to destroy certain inhabitants of the land of Canaan, students learned that God may destroy the wicked to prevent their sins from spreading to others and that everyone is accountable for their sins. Students also learned that we can be the Lord's peculiar and holy people if we obey His commandments with all of our heart and soul.

### Introduction

After the Israelites defeated the Amorites, Balak (the king of Moab) was afraid the Israelites would destroy his nation as well. Balak offered a man named Balaam riches, popularity, and worldly status if he would curse the Israelites. However, the Lord directed Balaam not to curse the Israelites, so Balaam blessed them instead.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### **Numbers 22–24**

*Balak offers riches and popularity to Balaam if he will curse the Israelites*

Before class, place a picture of the Savior at the front of the room. Place two long pieces of tape about three feet apart and parallel to each other on the floor so they look like a path that leads to the picture of the Savior.

As you begin the lesson, explain that the space in between the tape represents the path back to God. Invite a student to stand on the path. Explain that the student represents all of us as we seek to return to God. Then ask the following questions (you may want to write them on the board before class):

- What tactics does Satan use to entice us to *get off* the path that leads back to God?
- What are some practices that would help us *stay on* the path back to God?

Ask the student to return to his or her seat. Invite the class to look for principles that will help them answer the questions as they study Numbers 22–24.

Summarize Numbers 22:1–6 by explaining that after the Israelites defeated the Amorites, Balak (the king of Moab) was afraid the Israelites would destroy his nation as well. To avoid being destroyed, Balak asked a man named Balaam to curse the Israelites.

Invite a student to read Numbers 22:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Balak asked Balaam to curse the Israelites. Invite them to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Numbers 22:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Balak tried to convince Balaam to curse the Israelites. (You may need to explain that “the rewards of divination” refers to at least a portion of the payment the king had prepared for Balaam.)

Summarize Numbers 22:8–11 by explaining that after the leaders of Moab and Midian had delivered Balak's message, “God came unto Balaam” and spoke to him (Numbers 22:9).

Invite a student to read Numbers 22:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God told Balaam not to do.

- What did God tell Balaam not to do?
- According to verse 13, how did Balaam respond to the leaders Balak had sent?

Invite a student to read Numbers 22:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what King Balak did after Balaam refused his offer.

- According to verse 15, whom did King Balak send to deliver his message to Balaam?
- What did King Balak offer Balaam this time?
- What truths about how the adversary entices us to sin can we learn from the methods Balak used to entice Balaam to disobey the Lord? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **the adversary sometimes uses promises of riches, popularity, and worldly status to entice us to commit sin.**)

To help students understand this truth, ask them what unrighteous actions they have seen people do or heard of people doing to gain riches, worldly status, or other things that may lead to pleasure. You may want to list their comments on the board.

- How might the adversary use riches, popularity, or worldly status to distract youth from missionary service?
- How might these things distract someone from getting married or having children? (Consider asking additional questions that may be relevant.)

Ask students to recall from their home-study lesson how Balaam responded to Balak's second offer. (He chose to go with Balak's men [see Numbers 22:18–21]. The Joseph Smith Translation of Numbers 22:21 adds the phrase "if thou wilt," implying the use of agency on Balaam's part.) Ask students to describe what happened to Balaam because he ignored God's instructions and warnings and went with Balak's men. (He was rebuked and warned by an angel [see Numbers 22:22–34].)

In their study at home, one principle students identified from Balaam's experience is that **we put ourselves in danger when we ignore the Lord's instructions and warnings.**

Remind students of the path on the floor, representing the straight and narrow path that we must follow to return to Heavenly Father. Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a few ways they can avoid danger and have the spiritual strength to stay on the straight path that leads

back to their Heavenly Father. Invite a few willing students to share what they wrote.

- How do you think Balaam put himself in danger by ignoring the Lord's warning?
- What possible danger could come to others because of Balaam's disobedience?

Summarize Numbers 22:36–24:9 by explaining that when Balaam arrived in Balak's kingdom, the king again promised Balaam wealth, popularity, and worldly status if he would curse Israel. However, instead of cursing the Israelites, Balaam blessed them. Balak asked Balaam to curse Israel two more times, but both times Balaam blessed them instead.

Invite a student to read Numbers 24:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Balak responded after the third time Balaam blessed the children of Israel.

- What did King Balak say Balaam had lost because he had chosen to obey the Lord?
- How is King Balak's response similar to what Satan does to tempt us?
- According to verses 12–13, how did Balaam respond to King Balak?
- How do you think we can develop the strength to resist temptations to sin when the adversary promises riches, popularity, and worldly status?

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths taught in today's lesson. Encourage students to apply what they have learned so they can remain on the path that will lead them back to their Heavenly Father.

### Next Unit (Deuteronomy 27–34; Joshua 1–24)

Ask students to consider the following questions: What miracle did Joshua perform that was like a miracle Moses performed? What caused the walls of Jericho to come tumbling down? Ask them to think of times when they have faced daunting tasks. Explain that as they study the experiences of Joshua and the Israelites as they entered the promised land, they will learn important truths about how the Lord can help them do challenging things.

# Deuteronomy 27–34

## Introduction

Before the Israelites entered the promised land, Moses explained to them the consequences of obedience and disobedience to God’s laws. Moses counseled the

Israelites to be strong and courageous, and he left a blessing upon each of the tribes of Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Deuteronomy 27–28

#### *Moses explains the consequences of obedience and disobedience to God’s laws*

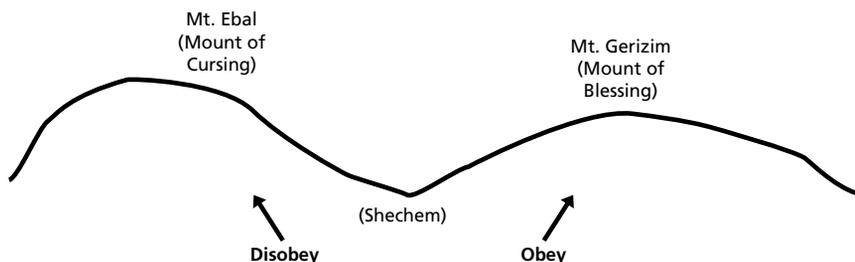
Place two paper bags on a table at the front of the classroom, and invite a student to come to the table. Explain that one bag contains a treat or prize and the other bag contains a rock. Ask the student which bag they think has the treat in it. Explain that you really want him or her to have the treat and ask:

- What could I do to help you choose the bag with the treat in it? (If the student does not suggest letting him or her look in the bags, offer him or her the opportunity to look in both bags.)

After the student looks in both bags and selects what he or she wants, ask:

- How did knowing what was in both bags influence your ability to choose?

Draw the following diagram on the board:



Explain that as Moses was nearing the end of his mortal life, he wanted the Israelites to be able to choose to be blessed instead of cursed, just as the student was able to choose the treat instead of the rock. To help the Israelites choose to be blessed, he instructed Joshua to set up a learning experience for Israel.

Summarize Deuteronomy 27 by explaining that the Lord gave instructions about what was to happen once the children of Israel entered the promised land. They were to go to Shechem, which was located in a valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. Moses instructed that half of the tribes of Israel should stand on Mount Gerizim and the other half should stand on Mount Ebal. The Levites were to stand in the valley between the two mountains and recite the actions that would result in blessings and those that would result in curses as designated by God. When actions resulting in curses were recited, as described in Deuteronomy 27:14–26, the tribes on Mount Ebal were to say “amen.” (See Joshua 8:33–35.) Although not specifically stated in the scriptures, it may have been that when the actions resulting in blessings were recited, the tribes on Mount Gerizim responded with “amen” as well.

Explain that Deuteronomy 28 further clarifies what the Lord wanted the Israelites to learn from this experience. Invite one student to read Deuteronomy 28:1 aloud and another

student to read Deuteronomy 28:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said would bring either blessings or curses upon the people.

- What did the Lord command the people to do to obtain the blessings and avoid the curses? (As students respond, emphasize that the Lord said to keep all of His commandments.)

Write the word *If* between the words *Disobey* and *Obey* on the diagram on the board. Divide the class in half. Assign one half to read Deuteronomy 28:2–14 silently, looking for the blessings the Israelites would receive if they obeyed God’s commandments. Ask the other half to read Deuteronomy 28:15–25 silently, looking for the consequences the Israelites would experience if they disobeyed God’s commandments. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find. After two to three minutes, invite students to come to the board and write under Mount Gerizim the consequences for obeying God’s commandments and under Mount Ebal the consequences for disobeying them.

- How would you summarize what we can learn from the Israelites’ experience about obeying the Lord’s commandments? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **If we choose to obey all of God’s commandments, He will bless us in all areas of our lives. If we choose not to obey all of God’s commandments, we lose the blessings He desires to give us.** Consider writing these principles on the board.)

To help students understand the importance of obeying all of God’s commandments, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (You may want to provide a copy for each student.)



“[Have] faith to keep *all* the commandments of God, knowing that they are given to bless His children and bring them joy [see 2 Nephi 2:25]. [You] will encounter people who pick which commandments they will keep and ignore others that they choose to break. I call this the cafeteria approach to obedience. This practice of picking and choosing will not work. It will lead to misery. To prepare to meet God, one keeps *all* of His commandments” (“Face the Future with Faith,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 34).

- Why do you think that in order to be prepared to meet God, we need to keep all of His commandments?

Explain that although keeping all of God’s commandments may seem overwhelming, President Harold B. Lee offered counsel that can help. Invite a student to read the following statement aloud:



“The most important of all the commandments of God is that one that you are having the most difficulty keeping today. If it is one of dishonesty, if it is one of unchastity, if it is one of falsifying, not telling the truth, today is the day for you to work on that until you have been able to conquer that weakness. . . . Then you start on the next one that is most difficult for you to keep” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee* [2000], 30).

Invite students to ponder which commandment they are struggling with the most and how they can work on more fully keeping that commandment.

Summarize Deuteronomy 28:26–68 by explaining that these verses further detail the negative consequences the Israelites would experience if they failed to keep all of God’s commandments.

## Deuteronomy 29–30

### *Moses warns the people of the consequences of breaking their covenants with God*

Display the picture Jesus Carrying a Lost Lamb (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 64; see also LDS.org), and ask students what this painting depicts the Savior doing.

- How can the lost lamb in this painting represent each of us?
- What qualities or attributes of the Savior come to mind as you contemplate this picture?

After a brief discussion, explain that Moses prophesied that Israel would become lost if the people sinned. Invite students to look as they study Deuteronomy 29–30 for what this prophecy teaches about the Savior and what we must do when we are spiritually lost because of sin.

### *Listen carefully*

Teachers are sometimes so concerned about what to say or do next that they do not pay attention to what students are saying. By observing and listening carefully to students, you can discern their needs and guide the discussion under the direction of the Holy Ghost. Asking follow-up questions like “Can you help me understand what you mean by that?” will often invite a student to share more of what he or she is thinking and feeling.



Summarize Deuteronomy 29:1–24 by explaining that the Israelites covenanted with God to keep His commandments. Moses promised that if they kept this covenant they would be blessed and prospered (see Deuteronomy 29:9–13).

Invite a student to read Deuteronomy 29:25–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses warned would happen if the Israelites broke their covenant with the Lord.

- According to verse 28, what would happen if the Israelites broke their covenant?

Explain that as students continue to study the Old Testament, they will discover that the Israelites did break this covenant and then were scattered throughout the world (see also Deuteronomy 28:64–65; 31:16–17, 27–29).

Explain that the scattering and captivity of the ancient Israelites resulted from their disobedience. Similarly, if we disobey God’s commandments, we become further separated from God and are captive to sin.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Deuteronomy 30:1–6. Invite the class to follow along, with half of the class looking for what the Lord promised He would do for scattered Israel and the other half looking for what Israel needed to do for these promises to be fulfilled.

- According to verse 2, what does scattered Israel need to do in order to be gathered? What are the promised results recorded in verse 3?
- What can these verses teach us about deliverance from the captivity of sin? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **As we return to the Lord with all our hearts and souls, He will deliver us from the captivity of sin.** Write this principle on the board and suggest that students write it in their scriptures.)
- What does it mean to return to the Lord with all our hearts and souls?

Invite students to silently scan Deuteronomy 30:6–8, 15–16, 19–20, looking for additional words and phrases that help them understand this principle. Invite a few students to read aloud a phrase that is meaningful to them and explain why.

Invite students to testify of the blessings they have experienced as they have turned their hearts to the Lord.

## Deuteronomy 31–34

### *Moses gives his final counsel to Israel and is translated*

Summarize Deuteronomy 31–34 by explaining that Moses gave his final counsel to the Israelites and blessed each tribe. He counseled them to be strong and courageous as they entered the land of Canaan. The Lord told Moses that Israel would eventually turn away from God and worship other gods (see Deuteronomy 31:16–18).

Explain that Deuteronomy is the last of the books of Moses. Invite students to read Deuteronomy 34:5–6 silently and look for what this account says happened to Moses.

- What do these verses say happened to Moses?

To help students understand what happened to Moses and why verse 6 declares that “no man knoweth of his [grave],” invite a student to read aloud the following explanation by President Joseph Fielding Smith:

“Moses was likewise taken up [like Elijah], though the scriptures say that the Lord buried him upon the mountain. Of course, the writer of that wrote according to his understanding; but *Moses, like Elijah, was taken up without tasting death, because he had a mission to perform*” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:107).

Explain that one reason why Moses was translated was so he could bestow priesthood keys upon Peter, James, and John during the Savior’s earthly ministry. In order to do so, he needed a body and was therefore taken up to God without experiencing physical death (see Bible Dictionary, “Moses”). Conclude by inviting a student to read Deuteronomy 34:9–12 aloud. Ask students to follow along and find phrases that describe why Moses is held in such high esteem. Share your testimony and invite students to act on impressions they have received.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Joshua

### Why study this book?

The book of Joshua recounts the Israelites' entrance into the promised land under the leadership of the prophet Joshua. As students study this book, they will learn principles that can help them to have courage and be strong in the midst of opposition. Students can also learn important lessons from the successes the Israelites experienced because of their obedience to the Lord and from the failures they experienced because of their disobedience.

### Who wrote this book?

We do not know for certain who wrote the book of Joshua. The book is named for Joshua—its principal figure and Moses's successor as the Lord's prophet to Israel (see Numbers 27:18–23). Near the end of Joshua's ministry, after the Israelites had entered into a covenant to not serve false gods in the promised land, the book's narrator reports that "Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God" (Joshua 24:26). This passage may indicate that Joshua wrote at least a portion of the book that is named for him.

Like many of the Lord's prophets in the Old Testament, Joshua's ministry symbolically foreshadowed that of the Son of God: "Just as Moses, in his role as prophet, law-giver, mediator, and deliverer, was a type of Jesus Christ, so Joshua, who led Israel into the promised land, was also a type of Jesus, who leads all the faithful into the ultimate land of promise, the celestial kingdom [see Alma 37:45]" (*Old Testament Student Manual: Genesis–2 Samuel*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 236).

### When and where was it written?

There are varying opinions on when the book of Joshua was written. Some details within the book of Joshua suggest the book may have been written during or shortly after Joshua's lifetime (which some scholars date to sometime between the 15th and 13th centuries B.C.). For example, Joshua 6:25 states that Rahab, who was saved from Jericho, "dwelleth in Israel even unto this day"—indicating that Rahab and other contemporaries of Joshua were still alive when this book was written. The book was likely written in the land of Canaan.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Joshua is a continuation of the five books of Moses (Genesis–Deuteronomy) and describes how the Lord helped the Israelites obtain the promised land. The account of the conquest shows that as the Israelites strictly obeyed the Lord's commandments, the Lord made them victorious over their enemies. The book's final two chapters (Joshua 23–24) emphasize the importance of serving the Lord rather than the false gods in the land of Canaan, foreshadowing an important problem the Israelites would struggle with in the future, as recorded in the book of Judges and many other books of the Old Testament.

### Outline

**Joshua 1–6** The children of Israel miraculously cross the Jordan River and enter the promised land. They begin their conquest of the land by destroying the city of Jericho.

**Joshua 7–12** Israel loses a battle against the people of Ai because of disobedience. After repenting of their disobedience, the Israelites prosper in battle as the Lord fights for them. They gain control of the promised land.

**Joshua 13–21** The promised land is divided among the tribes of Israel. However, not all of the wicked inhabitants are driven out of the land. The Israelites set up the tabernacle in a place called Shiloh. Certain cities are designated as cities of refuge.

**Joshua 22–24** Prior to his death, Joshua exhorts the people to have courage, keep the Lord's commandments, and love the Lord. He and the people covenant to choose the Lord and serve only Him. Joshua and Eleazar, the third son of Aaron, die.

# Joshua 1–2

## Introduction

After Moses was translated, the Lord directed Joshua to lead Israel into the promised land. The Lord assured Joshua that He would be with him and commanded him to be strong and courageous, keep the law of Moses, divide the land among the people, and study and meditate the word of God continually. Joshua prepared

the Israelites to cross the Jordan River and organized their departure. He sent two spies to Jericho. There, Rahab saved the spies from capture, and in exchange they promised to preserve her and her family from the forthcoming destruction.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Joshua 1:1–9

*The Lord directs Joshua to bring Israel into the promised land and promises to be with him*

Ask students to imagine that when they get home today, they will receive a phone call from the bishop asking them to speak in sacrament meeting this Sunday. Invite a few students to share the feelings they might have about such an invitation. (Some students may express feelings of nervousness or fear about speaking in front of others.)

- What are some other tasks or assignments the Lord asks us to do that some Church members might fear? (Answers might include sharing the gospel, living according to the Lord’s standards, defending the truth, and reaching out to serve and fellowship others.)

Invite students to look for truths as they study Joshua 1–2 that can help them whenever they feel fearful about doing what God asks of them.

Invite a student to read Joshua 1:1–4, 6 aloud. (Note that Moses did not die but was translated; see Bible Dictionary, “Moses.”) Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Joshua to do.

- What did the Lord command Joshua to do? (Lead the Israelites into the promised land and begin to establish the boundaries as promised to Abraham and his righteous posterity.)

Invite a student to read Joshua 1:5–7, 9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for promises or instruction from the Lord that might have helped Joshua at this time.

- What instruction do you see repeated in these verses?
- What promise from the Lord might have helped Joshua “be strong and of a good courage”? (The promise that God would be with him.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **When the Lord is with us, we can be strong and of a good courage.** You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases in these verses that teach this truth.)

To help students understand this principle, consider asking the following questions:

- Why can we “be strong and of a good courage” when the Lord is with us?
- What can we do to invite the Lord to be with us?

Invite students to reflect on times when they felt that the Lord was with them and gave them strength or courage to do something difficult. You may want to ask them to write about this experience in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. After a few minutes, ask for volunteers to share with the class what they wrote. Remind students that they should not share experiences that are too sacred or private. You may also want to share an experience of your own.

To prepare students to identify another truth from Joshua 1, invite two to three students to come to the front of the class and act out a word that you will show them. Show the

participating students a piece of paper with the word *meditate* written on it. After the class guesses the word being acted out, ask one of the students to read Joshua 1:8 aloud. Invite students to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Joshua to meditate about.

- What is “the book of the law”? (This likely referred to the five books of Moses, the version of Genesis through Deuteronomy that was available to Joshua.)

Write the phrase *Meditate on the scriptures* on the board, and invite the same students to act out that phrase for the class. After they act out this phrase, invite them to take their seats. Ask the class what synonyms they can think of for the word *meditate* as used in Joshua 1:8. (Answers might include *contemplate, ponder, reflect, consider, think, and study*.)

- Along with meditating on the scriptures, what else did the Lord command Joshua to do according to verse 8? (“Observe to do according to all that is written therein.”)
- What did the Lord promise if Joshua meditated on the scriptures and lived according to the teachings therein?
- How would you summarize the Lord’s words recorded in verse 8 as a principle? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we meditate on the scriptures daily and live according to the teachings therein, then we will prosper and have success.**)
- What do you think it would have meant for Joshua to prosper and have success in his situation? What might it mean for you to have success?

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson. Ask the class to listen for the kind of success that comes from meditating upon the scriptures daily.

“The Lord was not promising Joshua material wealth and fame, but that his life would prosper in righteousness and that he would have success in that which matters most in life, namely the quest to find true joy. (See 2 Nephi 2:25.)” (“The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 81).

- How has meditating on the scriptures helped you prosper in righteousness and have success in finding true joy?

Remind students of the goal they set at the beginning of this seminary course to study the scriptures daily. Invite them to share what they have done to keep this goal.

Encourage students to continue their daily scripture study, and invite them to meditate on, or ponder, what they read.

## Joshua 1:10–18

### *Joshua prepares the Israelites to cross the Jordan River*

Ask students the following question:

- If the prophet asked you to leave your family for a certain amount of time and expose yourself to hardship and maybe even danger, would you go? (You may want to invite those who say yes to explain why they would go.)

Remind students that the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh were granted their land inheritances on the east of the Jordan River on the condition that the men would assist the remaining tribes of Israel in fighting for and obtaining their land inheritances on the west side of the river (see Numbers 32). Summarize Joshua 1:10–15 by explaining that Joshua reminded the men of these tribes of this agreement.

Invite a student to read Joshua 1:16–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the men of these tribes responded to Joshua.

- What does the response of these men say about their character?
- Why do you think these men were willing to follow Joshua’s counsel and direction?

#### **Encourage daily scripture study**

One way to encourage students to study their scriptures daily is to provide regular opportunities for them to share in class what they are learning and feeling during their personal scripture study. Consider appropriate ways that you can encourage and remind them to study the scriptures, but take care not to embarrass or discourage students who struggle to study the scriptures on their own.

## Joshua 2

### *Joshua sends spies to Jericho, where Rahab gives them a place to hide; they promise to preserve her family*

Explain that before the children of Israel entered the promised land, Joshua sent two spies across the Jordan River to the city of Jericho. Jericho was the first city on the west side of the Jordan River that the Israelites were commanded to conquer.

Summarize Joshua 2:1–8 by explaining that the king of Jericho heard about the spies and sent men to capture them. A harlot named Rahab saved the spies from being captured by hiding them on the roof of her house.

Invite a student to read Joshua 2:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Rahab told the two Israelite spies.

- Who did Rahab testify of?

Summarize Joshua 2:12–16 by explaining that Rahab asked the two spies to make an oath that the Israelite army would spare her life and the lives of her family members in return for her having saved the spies' lives.

Invite a student to read Joshua 2:17–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the spies' response.

- How would the invading Israelite army know not to destroy Rahab's family? (Explain that the "line of scarlet thread" is likely referring to a piece of cloth or cord made of red thread. This would help the army identify Rahab's home.)

Explain that after making this oath with Rahab, the two spies were let down out of the city from Rahab's window, and they escaped back across the Jordan River to Joshua.

Write the following on the board: *Joshua, Reubenites-Gadites-Manassehites, Spies, Rahab.*

- How did each of these people or groups of people show their faith in the Lord? (You may want to explain that in spite of Rahab's past as a harlot, two New Testament writers described her as a woman who showed faith in the Lord and was blessed because she provided safety for the Israelite spies [see Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25; see also Joshua 6:25].)
- What can we learn about faith from the examples of these people? (Students' responses may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **We can show our faith in the Lord through our actions.**)

Invite students to show their faith in the Lord by acting on the truths they have discussed in this lesson.

### Scripture Mastery Review

If time permits, you may want to use the following activity to review the scripture mastery passages you have taught so far this school year:

Give students a few minutes to review the scripture mastery passages they have learned. Invite a student to come to the front of the classroom with his or her scriptures. Ask the student to turn to one of the scripture mastery passages without showing it to anyone else. (If scripture mastery cards are available, you might consider providing one to the student.) Invite the student to write one word from the scripture mastery passage on the board. (Encourage him or her to choose key words from the passage rather than less-distinguishing words such as *and* or *the*.) Invite the class to search their scriptures for the scripture mastery passage they think the word comes from. If no one can find the correct passage using one word, ask the student to write another word from the passage on the board. Repeat this process until at least one student has located the correct passage. Invite the rest of the class to turn to the passage, and ask students to recite it together. Then repeat the activity with another student and a different scripture mastery passage.

## LESSON 73

# Joshua 3–5

### Introduction

Joshua's calling as a prophet was confirmed to the Israelites when God parted the Jordan River and allowed them to cross into the promised land. The Lord told Joshua to commemorate this miracle by having one man from each of the 12 tribes of Israel pick up a stone from

the riverbed and construct a memorial with the stones. Once they had entered the promised land, the Lord stopped sending manna, and the Israelites ate from the fruit of the land.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Joshua 3

#### *Joshua miraculously leads the Israelites across the Jordan River*

If possible, bring 12 stones or rocks to class and stack them in a place where students will see them as they enter. If students comment on or ask questions about the stones, do not respond. To begin the lesson, invite students to read Joshua 4:21 silently, looking for the question it contains.

Write the following question on the board: *What mean these stones?* Ask students to raise their hands if they had a similar question as they entered the room. Invite students to look for the meaning of the stones stacked in the classroom as they continue their study of the book of Joshua today.

Explain that Joshua and the Israelites moved their camp so they were near the Jordan River (see Joshua 3:1). They knew they were supposed to cross the river and settle other portions of the promised land, but the river was flooding, which made it difficult to cross (see Joshua 3:15).

- What would you have done in these circumstances?

Invite a student to read Joshua 3:1–6 aloud. Before the student reads, divide the class into three groups. Assign each group one of the following questions and ask them to look for the answer as these verses are read:

- What did the officers tell the people to do?
- What did Joshua tell the people to do?
- What did Joshua tell the priests to do?

After the passage has been read, repeat the three questions and ask students to report what they found. Then ask:

- Why do you think the people were instructed to sanctify themselves before they crossed the Jordan River? What difference would their preparation make in their response to the Lord's miracles? (You may want to read Joshua 3:5, footnote *a*, to help with this discussion.)

Read Joshua 3:7 aloud, and ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Joshua after the priests started to carry the ark toward the river.

- How do you think the Lord's words recorded in verse 7 may have affected Joshua?

On the floor of the classroom, place two parallel tape lines about six feet (two meters) apart. (You may want to do this before class.) Explain that the space between the two lines represents the Jordan River that the Israelites needed to cross to enter the promised land. Invite a student to come to the edge of one tape line. You may want to give this student a heavy backpack or a large pile of books to hold. Explain that the student will be acting out the part of one of the Levite priests who was carrying the ark of the covenant.

Ask a student to read Joshua 3:8–11, 13 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would do to help the Israelites cross the river. Explain that the phrase "stand upon an heap" in verse 13 means the water would stop flowing downstream.

#### *Invite students to search for information*

Students can build their basic understanding of the scriptures by identifying important details within a scripture block. Because search questions encourage students to look for information within the scriptures, it is helpful to ask such questions before reading the verses where the answers are found. This helps students focus their attention and allows them to discover answers within the scriptural account.

After Joshua 3:13 is read, ask the following questions to the student representing the priests who carried the ark:

- What would those who were carrying the ark have to do before the river stopped?
- Would you be willing to step into the water? (Invite the student to step into the space between the two lines.)
- What quality did the priests demonstrate by stepping into the water before the water stopped flowing downstream?

Invite two students to take turns reading aloud from Joshua 3:14–17. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when the priests stepped into the water.

- What principle can we learn from the priests' actions that can help us when we are faced with obstacles and challenges? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **Moving forward in faith invites God to perform miracles on our behalf.** Write this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



“Recall how the Israelites came to the river Jordan and were promised the waters would part, and they would be able to cross over on dry ground. Interestingly, the waters did not part as the children of Israel stood on the banks of the river waiting for something to happen; rather, the soles of their feet were wet before the water parted. The faith of the Israelites was manifested in the fact that they walked into the water *before* it parted. They walked into the river Jordan with a future-facing assurance of things hoped for” (“Seek Learning by Faith,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2007, 63).

- What do you think it means to move forward in faith?

Point out that although we may not have flooded rivers to cross in our lives, we will have obstacles and challenges that we may not know how to overcome. Read the following scenario aloud and ask students to respond with ways they could move forward with the faith that God will help them:

You feel that you should share the gospel with a friend but are nervous that you may do it incorrectly and that it will negatively affect your friendship.

- What are some other challenges or life events that may require us to move forward before we can understand how things will turn out?
- When have you or someone you know experienced miracles or blessings after moving forward in faith?

Consider sharing your testimony of this principle or inviting students to share their testimonies of moving forward in faith.

## Joshua 4

### *The Israelites commemorate the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River*

Ask students to name any memorials, such as monuments or statues, within their community or country. You might consider showing a picture of one, if possible.

- What is the purpose of a memorial?
- What is the memorial you named intended to remind you of? How can you benefit from remembering these things?

Draw students' attention to the pile of stones in the classroom, and explain that as the Israelites crossed through the Jordan River, they were commanded to gather stones. Invite students to scan Joshua 4:1–5 looking for how many stones they needed to gather and where they needed to get them. Ask students to report what they find.

Point out the question on the board (“What mean these stones?”), and invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Joshua 4:6–7, 20–24. Ask students to follow along, looking for answers to this question.

- What answers did you find to the question “What mean these stones?”
- According to verse 24, what effect should remembering this miraculous event have had on the Israelites?

Write the following on the board: *As we remember what the Lord has done for us . . .* Ask students how they would complete this statement. The following is one possible response: **As we remember what the Lord has done for us, our reverence for Him increases and our testimonies are strengthened.** (Write this principle on the board.)

- How can remembering previous miracles and spiritual experiences increase our reverence for God and strengthen our testimonies?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy: “Remembering enables us to see God’s hand in our past, just as prophecy and faith assure us of God’s hand in our future” (“Remember and Perish Not,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2007, 38).

Invite students to consider how the two principles they have identified relate to each other. Help them see that the first principle they identified focuses on moving forward in faith, while the second one teaches us to look back and remember what God has done for us.

- How can these principles help you as you face challenges in your life?

Encourage students to look for God’s hand in their lives. Invite students to draw a picture of a 12-stone memorial in their scripture study journals. Encourage them to create their own memorials in writing by recording an experience they have had when the Lord helped them or when they felt God’s hand in their lives (see Henry B. Eyring, “O Remember, Remember,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 66–69).

Summarize Joshua 4:8–19 by explaining that these verses describe some of the details of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River. Invite students to read Joshua 4:14 silently, looking for how this experience affected the Israelites’ view of their new prophet, Joshua. (You may want to explain that in this verse, the word *fear* refers to feelings of reverence or awe; see Bible Dictionary, “Fear.”) Ask students to report what they find.

## Joshua 5

### *The Israelites cease to eat manna and begin to partake of the good of the promised land*

Summarize Joshua 5:1–11 by explaining that once the Israelites were in the promised land, the Lord instructed Joshua to have all the men circumcised. Remind students that circumcision was a token of the covenant that the Lord had made with Abraham and his seed. For some reason this practice had ceased during their 40 years in the wilderness, and the Lord wanted it reinstated (see Joshua 5:4–5).

Ask students to recall how the Lord had provided food for the Israelites during their 40 years in the wilderness. After students respond, invite them to read Joshua 5:12 silently, looking for what happened to the manna after they arrived in the promised land.

- Why do you think the Lord stopped providing manna to the Israelites once they arrived in the promised land? (If needed, explain that once the Israelites were in the promised land—a fertile land where they could grow and raise their own food—the Lord expected them to provide for themselves.)

Invite a student to read Joshua 5:13–15 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for the sacred experience Joshua had that was similar to Moses’s experience with the burning bush. Ask students to report.

Explain that the messenger who announces himself as the “captain of the host of the Lord” was the Savior. (You might point out that the messenger allowed Joshua’s worship. This suggests that the messenger was Jesus Christ.)

Conclude by inviting a few students to summarize what they have learned in this lesson. Encourage students to act on the truths they have learned.

# Joshua 6–10

## Introduction

After the Israelites crossed the Jordan River into the promised land, the Lord instructed them to destroy the city of Jericho and everything in it. An Israelite named Achan took items from Jericho that were forbidden. As

a result, the Israelites were defeated when they tried to destroy the city of Ai. After Achan was held accountable, the Lord again assisted Israel in battle.

### Establish relevancy and purpose

Beginning a lesson with a relevant question, situation, or problem can lead students to search the scriptures for gospel principles and doctrines that give them guidance and direction. If needed, you can make this lesson more meaningful by using other standards from *For the Strength of Youth* that may be more relevant to students' needs.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Joshua 6

#### *Israel destroys the city of Jericho according to the Lord's commands*

Before class, list on the board a few standards or commandments that some youth may find difficult to obey, such as the following (these phrases come from *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 4, 7, 30–31):

*"You should not date until you are at least 16 years old. . . . Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person."*

*"Do not disfigure yourself with tattoos or body piercings. Young women, if you desire to have your ears pierced, wear only one pair of earrings."*

*"Honoring the Sabbath day includes attending all your Church meetings. . . . Sunday is not a day for shopping, recreation, or athletic events."*

As class begins, invite students to read the statements on the board. Ask the class if they or someone they know has ever questioned why these standards are important to obey.

- What other commandments or standards has the Lord given that some may question the importance of? (As students respond, you may want to list their answers on the board.)

Explain that as the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, the Lord gave them unusual commandments or instructions for how they were to attack the well-fortified city of Jericho. To some of the Israelites, these commandments may have seemed strange or unreasonable. Invite students to look for truths as they study Joshua 6 that can guide them when they or others may not understand the purposes for the Lord's commandments.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Joshua 6:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord instructed the Israelites to attack the city of Jericho. (You may need to explain that to compass the city means to go around it.)

- What did the Lord instruct the Israelites to do?

Explain that Joshua 6:6–11 shows that Joshua relayed the Lord's instructions to the Israelites.

- If you had been in the position of an Israelite soldier, what might seem strange to you about these instructions?
- What do you imagine the soldiers' conversations were like that first night as they finished walking around Jericho and then returned to camp?

Invite a student to read Joshua 6:12–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Israelites showed their faith in the Lord and His prophet.

- How did the Israelites show faith? (The Israelites obeyed the Lord when His instructions may not have made sense to them, and they did so with exactness.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Joshua 6:16, 20–21, 27. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened because Joshua and the Israelites obeyed the Lord with exactness. (You may want to remind the class that the Lord had previously commanded Israel to "utterly destroy" the inhabitants of the promised land to prevent their sins from spreading to the children of Israel [see Deuteronomy 20:15–18].)

- What happened because Joshua and the Israelites obeyed with exactness?

Invite students to imagine themselves as Israelite soldiers who perhaps did not understand the purpose of the Lord's instructions for how to attack Jericho. However, they chose to obey with exactness and then witnessed the walls of Jericho fall. Ask students to respond to the following question by writing in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What principles would you have learned from this experience of following the Lord's commands?

Invite a few students to report what they wrote. As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following: **We can show faith in the Lord by choosing to obey His commandments, even when we do not understand the purposes for them, and as we act in faith to obey the Lord with exactness, He will be with us and help us do things we could not do by ourselves.**

To help students understand and feel the truth and importance of these principles, you may want to discuss some or all of the following questions:

- When have you shown faith in the Lord by choosing to obey His commandments even when you did not understand the purposes for them?
- What are some examples of how people might only partially obey the standards and commandments described on the board?
- How have you felt blessed as you have sought to obey the Lord with exactness?

You may want to testify that students will be blessed as they faithfully obey with exactness.

Invite students to look through the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet (if available) for standards they feel they could obey with greater faith or exactness. Invite them to write on a piece of paper how they will obey that commandment or standard with greater faith or exactness. Encourage them to place this paper where they can be reminded daily of their goal.

Explain that in addition to the instructions the Lord gave for how Israel was to attack Jericho, Joshua instructed Israel regarding what they should do once they had taken the city. Invite a student to read Joshua 6:17–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joshua instructed the Israelites to do with all that was in Jericho.

- What did Joshua instruct the Israelites to do with all that was in Jericho?

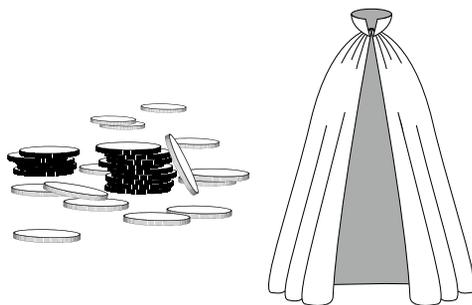
Explain that the word *accursed* in these verses refers to all things associated with wickedness and disobedience. All the people (except for Rahab and her kindred [see verses 17, 22–23, 25]) and all the objects in Jericho were considered accursed. The Israelites were not to keep anything in the city for themselves but were to turn the wealth of the city over to Joshua to be consecrated to the Lord.

- According to verse 18, what would be the consequence if an Israelite took something that was accursed?

## Joshua 7

### *Achan's disobedience leads to Israel's defeat by the people of Ai*

Display a piece of clothing and a few coins (or draw them on the board).



- If you had been in the position of an Israelite soldier, what might you have wanted to do if you saw some valuable items in Jericho?

Invite students to read Joshua 7:1 silently, looking for what an Israelite named Achan did that was contrary to the Lord's commandments.

- What choice did Achan make? What was wrong with his choice?

Invite students to watch for the effects of Achan’s choice as they study Joshua 7.

Invite a student to read Joshua 7:2–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Israel when they went to destroy the city of Ai.

- Why did the Israelites send fewer soldiers against the city of Ai than they sent against Jericho? (Ai was small and seemed easy to conquer.)
- How many Israelites died in the battle against the men of Ai?

Summarize Joshua 7:6–9 by explaining that Joshua grieved after hearing the news of Israel’s defeat. Joshua asked the Lord to reveal to him why Israel had suffered this defeat.

Invite a student to read Joshua 7:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the reason the Lord gave for Israel’s defeat.

- Why could Israel not stand before their enemies?
- How did Achan’s choice affect the rest of the children of Israel?
- What principle can we learn from this story about the consequences of choosing to disobey the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we choose to disobey the commandments, it can bring negative consequences upon ourselves and others.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)

Invite a student to read Joshua 7:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded the Israelites to do so they could prevail against their enemies.

- What did the Lord command the Israelites to do?

You may need to explain that one meaning of the word *sanctify* is to become free from sin.

Summarize Joshua 7:14–18 by explaining that the Lord instructed Joshua to gather Israel according to their tribes and that the Lord would reveal to Joshua the person who was guilty of harboring the accursed thing. When called upon, Achan stood before Joshua.

Invite a student to read Joshua 7:19–21 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for what happened when Joshua confronted Achan.

- What truth can we learn from Joshua’s words to Achan that apply to us today? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **we cannot hide our sins from the Lord.**)

To help students understand why we cannot hide our sins from the Lord, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Do not take comfort in the fact that your transgressions are not known by others. That is like an ostrich with his head buried in the sand. He sees only darkness and feels comfortably hidden. In reality he is ridiculously conspicuous. Likewise our every act is seen by our Father in Heaven and His Beloved Son” (“Finding Forgiveness,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 77).

- How can understanding that we cannot hide our sins from the Lord affect our choices?

Explain that in Joshua 7:22–26, we read that Achan was held accountable for his sins. Achan and his children were put to death, and the accursed things he took were destroyed as the Lord commanded. Joshua would have been aware of the law that children were not to be punished for the acts of their parents (see Deuteronomy 24:16). Thus, the deaths of Achan’s children suggest that they were guilty of the same sin as their father; otherwise they would have been spared.

## Joshua 8–10

### *The Lord helps Israel defeat the people of Ai and the Amorites*

Summarize Joshua 8–10 by explaining that after Israel punished Achan and removed the “accursed thing” from among them, the Lord helped them to defeat the people of Ai, the Amorites, and many of the cities in Canaan. Invite students to read Joshua 10:42 silently and look for why the armies of Israel were so successful in battle. Ask students to report what they find.

You may want to conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed today. Invite students to act on these truths by choosing to faithfully obey the Lord’s commandments and repent rather than hide any sins they may have committed.

## LESSON 75

# Joshua 11–24

### Introduction

After fulfilling the Lord's command to conquer the promised land and to destroy the wicked nations that were there, Joshua divided the land among the tribes of Israel. Joshua called the Israelites together and warned them against cleaving to other nations and worshipping other gods. He invited them to cleave to the Lord.

*Note:* In the next lesson (lesson 76) you may decide to ask several students to be prepared to summarize an assigned scripture account for the class. You may want to give those students their assignment the day you teach this lesson.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Joshua 11–22

#### *The promised land is divided among the tribes of Israel*

Write the following questions on the board for students to see as they come into class:

*How many years do you have until it is time for you to leave home?*

*What are some of your concerns about leaving your home and living somewhere new?*

As class begins, invite a few students to respond to these questions. You might list some of their answers to the second question on the board. You may want to explain that even if students are not leaving home soon, they may have to face a similar circumstance, such as living in a new place, that could be challenging for them. Explain that near the end of his life, Joshua gave the Israelites counsel concerning what to do after he was gone. Invite students to look for principles, as they study Joshua 11–24, that can help them make the right choices as they become more independent.

Explain that the Israelites' obtaining the promised land could be compared to when a young adult is preparing to leave home or live somewhere new. The Lord had brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, taken care of them in the wilderness, and prepared them to make and keep covenants. In Joshua 11 we read how the Israelites were able, with the Lord's help, to possess the promised land.

Invite a student to read Joshua 11:23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joshua did with the land Israel had conquered. Invite students to report what they find.

Ask students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 3, "The Division of the 12 Tribes" (in the Bible appendix) and look for how the promised land was divided among the tribes of Israel. Summarize Joshua 12–21 by explaining that Joshua gave each tribe an inheritance in the promised land and that the tabernacle was set up at a place called Shiloh (see Joshua 18:1). Explain that the Levites were not given a specific piece of land but were given 48 cities among each of the other tribes' inheritances. This would allow the Levites to continue their priesthood service among the Israelites.

Invite a student to read Joshua 21:43–45 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for how the Lord had blessed the Israelites so far.

- How had the Lord blessed the Israelites?

Explain that in Joshua 22, Joshua gave some parting advice to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. Invite a student to read Joshua 22:4–5 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Joshua told these tribes to do as they went to make their homes on the east side of the Jordan River.

- What did Joshua counsel them to do?

Summarize Joshua 22:7–34 by explaining that when the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh traveled to their own lands, they built an altar to witness that Jehovah was their God.

### Joshua 23

#### *Joshua calls Israel together and warns them to not worship other gods but to cleave to the Lord*

Write *God* and *Israelites* as column headings on the board. Summarize Joshua 23:1–2 by explaining that after several years of peace, Joshua had grown old, and so he gathered all of the Israelites together to counsel them.

Divide the class in half. Assign one half to read Joshua 23:3–11, looking for what Joshua said God had done and would continue to do for the Israelites. Assign the other half to read the same verses but to look for what Joshua counseled the Israelites to do. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find. (*Note:* You might want to explain that there were still remnants of the conquered nations in and around the promised land [see Joshua 23:5, 7].)

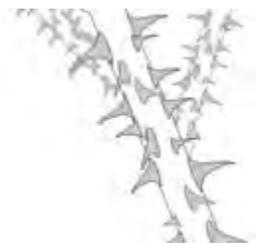
After two or three minutes, invite a few students to come to the board and write under the corresponding heading what they found in their verses. Their lists might be similar to the following:

God	Israelites
He fought and will continue to fight for Israel (verses 3, 5, 10). He gave Israel land for an inheritance (verse 4). He will expel the other nations from the land (verse 5). He has kept and will continue to keep His promises to Israel (verses 5, 10).	Be very courageous (verse 6). Keep the law of Moses (verse 6). Don't serve or worship other gods (verse 7). Cleave unto the Lord (verse 8). Love the Lord (verse 11).

Underline the word *cleave* in the list on the board. Explain that as it is used in verse 8, the word *cleave* means to cling, adhere, or be loyal to something or someone.

- What behaviors or actions might you see in a person who is trying to cleave unto the Lord?
- Whom do you know who is a good example of someone cleaving unto the Lord? How have you seen the Lord bless that person for being devoted to Him?
- From what we have learned from Joshua 23:3–11, what can we do to have the Lord with us and strengthen us? (Students may identify a principle similar to the following: **If we cleave unto the Lord and obey Him, then He will be with us and strengthen us.**)
- How can this principle be helpful to you as you prepare to leave home?

If possible, bring some thorns to class (or you could show a picture of thorns or draw one on the board).



Ask students if they have ever “cleaved” to any thorns before. You might invite a couple of students to share an experience they have had with thorns. Then invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Joshua 23:12–16. Ask students to follow along, looking for who had the potential to be like thorns to the Israelites. Invite students to report what they find.

- What consequences did Joshua say Israel would experience if they chose to serve or cleave unto other nations or gods?
- From what we learn in these verses, what could happen to us if we cleave to other gods? (After students respond, consider writing the following principle on the board: **If we cleave to other gods, we will bring negative consequences upon ourselves and lose the blessings of the Lord.**)
- How could this principle be a helpful warning to someone preparing to make important life choices?
- What are some things people might cleave unto instead of the Lord? What could be some negative consequences or lost blessings for doing so?

## Joshua 24

### *Before Joshua dies, he encourages Israel to serve the Lord*

Ask students to think of someone in their lives who has done a lot for them and to write the person's name in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Invite students to take 30 seconds and record a few things that person has done for them.

- After doing this activity, how do you feel about that person?

Explain that we read in Joshua 24 that Joshua related to Israel the things God said He had done for them and their ancestors. Invite students to scan Joshua 24:2–13 silently, looking for things God had done for the Israelites. You might want to suggest that they mark each time the Lord used the word *I*. Invite a few students to report one way the Lord had helped Israel.

- If you had been an ancient Israelite, what feelings might you have had toward God after being reminded of what He had done for you?

Invite a student to read Joshua 24:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Joshua's invitation to Israel. Ask them to report what they find.

- How do you think remembering what the Lord had done for them might have affected the Israelites' determination to accept Joshua's invitation?
- How will remembering what the Lord has done for us affect our determination to love and serve Him? (Students may share a principle similar to the following: **Remembering what God has done for us strengthens our resolve to love and serve Him.**) Invite students to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals some of the things the Lord has done for them.

Invite students to reread aloud, in unison, Joshua 24:15.

- What might the phrase "this day" indicate about when we should choose to be devoted to the Lord? How would it bless you to make that choice earlier rather than later in life?
- What phrase in this verse indicates that Joshua chose this path for himself, regardless of what others might choose? ("But as for me and my house.")
- What principle about agency can we learn from this verse? (Students' responses may be similar to the following: **We can choose to serve the Lord regardless of what others choose.**)
- What are some examples of situations in which it could be helpful to follow this principle?
- When have you or someone you know chosen to follow the Lord regardless of what others chose to do?

Summarize Joshua 24:17–33 by explaining that the Israelites covenanted to serve the Lord. Joshua designated a great stone as a reminder of this covenant. The people served the Lord throughout the rest of Joshua's life and for many years after.

Conclude today's lesson by inviting students to share what they learned about how to show the Lord that they love Him and choose to follow Him.

### Scripture Mastery—Joshua 24:15

You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases "choose you this day whom ye will serve" and "but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" in Joshua 24:15. Invite students to stand and repeat these phrases several times until they have them memorized.

- Why is it important to make the decision to serve God *today*, instead of waiting until some future date?

Give each student a piece of paper. Then allow them a few minutes to create a poster that illustrates these phrases. Invite students to put their poster where they can see it daily to remind them to choose to serve God every day.



#### Joshua 24:15

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Deuteronomy 27–34; Joshua (Unit 15)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Student Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Deuteronomy 27–Joshua 24 (unit 15) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Deuteronomy 27–34)**

Prior to their entry into the promised land, Moses explained to the Israelites the consequences of obeying and disobeying God's laws. Students learned that if we choose to obey all of God's commandments, He will bless us in all areas of our lives. Moses prophesied that the Israelites would be scattered throughout the world but also that God would remember them and gather them in mercy.

#### **Day 2 (Joshua 1–2)**

Joshua succeeded Moses as the prophet and leader of the Israelites, and he prepared them to cross the Jordan River and enter the promised land. Students learned that when the Lord is with us, we can be strong and of a good courage. Students also learned that if we meditate on the scriptures daily and live according to the teachings therein, then we will prosper and have success and that we can show our faith in the Lord through our actions.

#### **Day 3 (Joshua 3–10)**

Joshua miraculously led the Israelites across the Jordan River, and they set up a memorial to remind them of this event. From this event, students learned that moving forward in faith invites God to perform miracles in our behalf. Students read how the Israelites conquered the city of Jericho, and from the disobedience of Achan, they learned that if we choose to disobey the commandments, we can bring negative consequences upon ourselves and others.

#### **Day 4 (Joshua 11–24)**

Joshua divided the promised land into inheritances for each tribe and exhorted them to cleave unto the Lord and remain faithful. Among other truths, students learned that if we cleave unto the Lord and obey Him, then He will be with us and strengthen us, but if we cleave to other gods, we will bring negative consequences upon ourselves and lose the blessings of the Lord.

### Introduction

Joshua miraculously led the Israelites across the Jordan River. There they set up a monument to memorialize this event. The Lord then directed the Israelites to conquer the city of Jericho.

### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* Students studied the scripture mastery passage in Joshua 24:15 this week. You may want to have them recite this verse together as a class. You might also ask them to list a few ways they have chosen to serve the Lord today.

#### **Joshua 4–5**

##### *The Israelites commemorate the miraculous crossing of the Jordan River*

If possible, bring 12 stones or rocks to class, and stack them in a place where the students will see them as they enter. If students comment on or ask questions about the stones, do not respond. After the devotional invite students to read Joshua 4:21 silently, looking for the question it contains.

Write the following question on the board: *What mean these stones?* Ask students to raise their hands if they had a similar question as they entered the room. Invite students to look for the meaning of the stones stacked in the classroom as they continue their study of the book of Joshua today.

Ask for a volunteer to remind the class how the Israelites were able to cross the Jordan River. Then invite students to read Joshua 4:2–3, looking for what the Lord commanded Joshua to do after the Israelites crossed through the Jordan River. Have students report what they found.

Point out the question on the board (“What mean these stones?”), and invite a few students to take turns reading aloud Joshua 4:6–7, 20–24. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the answers to this question.

- What did the Lord want the children of Israel to remember when they saw the memorial made of 12 stones brought from the bed of the Jordan River?
- According to verse 24, what effect should remembering this miraculous event have had on the Israelites? (You may want to explain that the word *fear* in verse 24 means reverence or respect for God.)

Write the following principle on the board: **As we remember what the Lord has done for us, our reverence for Him increases and our testimonies are strengthened.** Invite students to write this principle in the margin of their scriptures.

- How can remembering previous miracles, spiritual experiences, and other things the Lord has done for us increase our reverence for God and strengthen our testimonies?

Encourage students to look for God's hand in their lives. Invite them to draw a picture of a 12-stone memorial in their scripture study journal. Encourage them to create their own memorials in writing by recording an experience they have had when the Lord helped them or when they felt God's hand in their lives (see Henry B. Eyring, "O Remember, Remember," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 66–69).

Explain that Joshua 4:8–19 describes some of the details of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River. One of the results of this miraculous crossing was that the children of Israel received a witness that the Lord was with their new prophet, Joshua (see Joshua 4:14).

Invite students to read the chapter heading to Joshua 5 silently. Explain that once the Israelites were in the promised land—a fertile land where they could grow and raise their own food—the Lord stopped providing manna and expected them to provide for themselves.

## Joshua 6

*Israel destroys the city of Jericho according to the Lord's commands*

Before class, list on the board a few standards or commandments that some youth may find difficult to obey, such as the following (these phrases come from *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 4, 7, 30–31):

*"You should not date until you are at least 16 years old. . . . Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person."*

*"Do not disfigure yourself with tattoos or body piercings. Young women, if you desire to have your ears pierced, wear only one pair of earrings."*

*"Honoring the Sabbath day includes attending all your Church meetings. . . . Sunday is not a day for shopping, recreation, or athletic events."*

Invite students to read the statements. Ask the class if they or someone they know has ever questioned why these standards are important to obey.

- What other commandments or standards has the Lord given that some may question the importance of? (As students respond, you may want to list their answers on the board.)

Explain that as the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, the Lord gave them unusual commandments or instructions for how to attack the well-fortified city of Jericho. To some of the Israelites, these commandments may have seemed strange or unreasonable. Invite students to look for truths as they study Joshua 6 that can guide them when they or others may not understand the purposes for the Lord's commandments.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud Joshua 6:2–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord instructed the Israelites to attack the city of Jericho. Before they read, you may need to explain that to compass the city means to go around it. Have students report what they find.

Explain that in Joshua 6:6–11, Joshua gave the Lord's instructions to the Israelites.

- If you had been an Israelite soldier, what might have seemed strange about these instructions?

Summarize Joshua 6:12–15 by explaining that the Israelites showed their faith by obeying the Lord's instructions with exactness.

Invite a student to read Joshua 6:16, 20–21, 27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened because Joshua and the Israelites obeyed the Lord with exactness. Have students report what they find.

- Imagine that you were one of the soldiers who witnessed the walls of Jericho fall. What principles would you have learned from this experience of following the Lord's commands?

As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following principles: **We can show faith in the Lord by choosing to obey His commandments, even when we do not understand the purposes for them. As we act in faith to obey the Lord with exactness, He will be with us and help us do things we could not do by ourselves.**

To help students understand and feel the truth and importance of these principles, discuss the following questions:

- When have you shown faith in the Lord by choosing to obey His commandments even when you did not understand the purposes for them?
- What are some examples of how people might only partially obey the standards and commandments written on the board?
- How have you felt blessed as you sought to obey the Lord with exactness?

You may want to testify that the students will be blessed as they faithfully obey the commandments of the Lord with exactness.

If available, invite students to look through the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet (if available) for instructions they feel they could obey with greater faith or exactness. Invite them to write on a piece of paper how they will obey that commandment or standard with greater faith or exactness. Encourage them to place this paper where they can be reminded daily of their goal.

## Next Unit (Judges 1–Ruth 4)

Ask students to ponder the following question: If you were instructed to conquer an army with a bugle and a lantern, how confident would you be in the outcome? Explain that as they study the book of Judges in the next unit, they will see another example of the Lord fighting the Israelites' battles. Ask students to also consider the following questions: What was the secret of Samson's strength? What was he able to do with his physical strength? What was Samson's downfall? Why is Ruth considered a woman of remarkable faith and action? What noble qualities did she possess?

# The Book of Judges

### Why study this book?

The book of Judges is named for the various rulers, called “judges” (Judges 2:16–19), who are the book’s central figures. These judges were generally military leaders and fighters more than preachers of righteousness (see Bible Dictionary, “Judges, the”). The book describes the deeds of many of these leaders, some of whom helped deliver the Israelites from the effects of their sinful behavior. As students study the book of Judges, they can learn that the Lord allows His people to suffer the consequences of being unfaithful to Him. Students will also see that the Lord is willing to deliver His people as often as they repent of their sins.

### Who wrote this book?

We do not know who wrote the book of Judges. One Jewish tradition states that Samuel wrote or compiled the book. However, the book reflects the perspective of a much later time, after the northern tribes of Israel had been conquered by Assyria around 721 B.C. (see Judges 18:30). This perspective suggests that the author or authors lived long after the time of Samuel.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know when the book of Judges was written, but most Bible scholars believe that Judges, along with other historical books in the Old Testament, was compiled in its current form sometime in the late seventh or early sixth century B.C. We also do not know where this book was written.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Judges recounts the history of the children of Israel from the time they settled in the land of Canaan after Joshua’s death to the birth of Samuel (approximately 1400–1000 B.C.). Besides the short narrative of the book of Ruth, Judges provides the only biblical account of this time period.

The book of Judges describes a cycle that repeated itself multiple times during the reign of the judges. Because the Israelites failed to remove wicked influences from the promised land, they became entangled in sin and were conquered and afflicted by their enemies. After the Israelites cried unto the Lord for help, He sent judges to deliver them from their enemies. However, the Israelites soon returned to their sins, and this cycle was repeated. (See Judges 2:11–19.)

The book mentions the names of 12 judges who ruled with various degrees of effectiveness. The account of Deborah as a judge of Israel is unique considering the patriarchal society in which she served (see Judges 4–5). Gideon, like many who are called and chosen by the Lord, felt he was an unlikely leader (see Judges 6:15), but because the Israelites trusted in the Lord, he and 300 soldiers achieved victory over an immense Midianite army (see Judges 7–8).

Samson is another notable figure in the book of Judges (see Judges 13–16). The distinctive story of the events leading up to his birth “parallels the accounts of other important figures in the Bible (e.g., Moses, Samuel, John, Jesus), whose births are reported to emphasize divine involvement in and the significance of their life’s mission” (Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Dana M. Pike, and David Rolph Seely, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament* [2009], 179). Despite this promising beginning and the great physical strength the Lord had given him, Samson ultimately failed to help the Israelites turn to the Lord and forsake their sins, which they needed to do before the Lord would deliver them from their enemies.

In Judges 17–21, we read about the lawlessness and disorder among the tribes of Israel under the judges as they placed their trust in the wisdom of men and chose to disobey the commandments of the Lord. In the closing sentence of the book, the writer says, “In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25).

### Outline

**Judges 1–2** Many of the tribes of Israel fail to remove all the inhabitants of Canaan from their lands. The Israelites forget the Lord, and they worship false gods. The Lord removes His protection and blessings from the Israelites. They are oppressed by their enemies and cry to the Lord for deliverance. The Lord raises up judges to deliver the Israelites.

**Judges 3–16** The Lord calls 12 judges to help deliver the Israelite tribes from the consequences of their unfaithfulness to the Lord. Among them are Deborah, who delivers Israel from Canaanite oppression, and Gideon, who destroys the altar of Baal and delivers Israel from the Midianites. One of the judges, Samson, fights the Philistines but is captured as a result of his poor choices. He dies by causing a building to collapse on himself and many Philistines.

**Judges 17–21** Micah and the Danites create sanctuaries dedicated to idol worship, and a Levite concubine is abused and killed. Eleven Israelite tribes unite to fight against the tribe of Benjamin and almost completely destroy them.

## LESSON 76

# Judges 1–5

### Introduction

After Joshua died, the tribes of Israel continued their conquest of Canaan. Some of the tribes failed to drive out all of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan as they had been commanded. The Israelites forsook the Lord by worshipping the false gods of the Canaanites, and the Lord removed His blessing of protection from them. Despite the Israelites' disobedience, the Lord raised up judges to deliver them from their enemies.

*Note:* Before the lesson, assign one of the following scripture passages to each of three students: Judges 3:5–11; Judges 3:12–30; and Judges 4:1–9, 15–24. Ask the students to be prepared to summarize their assigned passage for the class.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Judges 1–2

#### *The Israelites settle in the promised land and begin to worship false gods*

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:



“One man who had been a slave to alcohol most of his adult life became convinced . . . that he must give up the habit and prepare himself for the temple. . . . With great effort he quit drinking. He moved many miles away from the area where his drinking friends lived and, though his body craved and ached and gnawed for [alcohol], he finally conquered. He was at all his Church meetings, and was paying his tithing. His new friends in the Church seemed to fortify him. He felt good in the new activity, and life was glorious. His wife was beaming, because now the whole family were always together. This is what she had dreamed about all their married life.

“They got their temple recommends and the happy day arrived and they drove to the temple city for this great event. They arrived early and each had some errands to do. As it happened, the husband ran into some old friends. They urged him to go with them to the tavern [where alcohol was served]. No, he would not, he said, he had other important things to do. Well, he could just take a soft drink [soda], they urged” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness* [1969], 170–71).

- Do you think it would be all right for this man to go to the tavern to have a soft drink? Why or why not?

Ask students to ponder situations in which unrighteous influences (such as unrighteous friends, music, movies, social media, and Internet sites) may tempt them to break the commandments. Invite students to look for truths as they study Judges 1–5 that explain what can happen if we place ourselves in situations in which we may be tempted by unrighteous influences.

Summarize Judges 1 by explaining that after Joshua’s death, when Israel was strong and united, they put the Canaanites under tribute instead of driving them out of the land (see Judges 1:28).

- What had the Lord commanded the Israelites to do to the wicked people who lived in the land of Canaan? (See Exodus 23:31.)

Point out that important points or messages in the scriptures are often emphasized by the repetition of certain words or phrases. Invite students to scan Judges 1:21, 27–33 and look for words or phrases that are repeated in these verses.

- Based on the words and phrases repeated in these verses, what message can we learn from Judges 1:27–33? (The Israelites had failed to obey the Lord’s instructions to drive out the wicked people from the promised land.)
- Where did these wicked people dwell after the Israelites moved into the promised land?

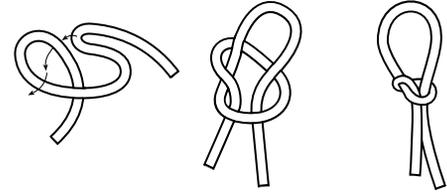
### **Understand the context of the scriptures**

Understanding the context of events recorded in the scriptures prepares students to recognize the messages of the authors. Context includes the circumstances that surround or provide background for a particular passage or account in the scriptures. This information can clarify and help students better understand the accounts, teachings, doctrines, and principles in the scriptures.

Explain that the Lord sent an angel to the Israelites to teach them about the consequences of their disobedience. Invite a student to read Judges 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the consequences the Israelites would experience.

- What do you think it means that the wicked people in the promised land would be “as thorns in [the Israelites’] sides”?

Remind students that a *snare* is a type of trap used to catch animals. Display a snare or trap (or draw a picture of one on the board).



- What do you think it means that the false gods in the promised land would be like a snare to the Israelites?

After students respond, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we choose to associate with evil influences and temptations, then . . .*

Invite students to consider as they continue to study the events recorded in the book of Judges how they might complete this statement.

Summarize Judges 2:4–10 by explaining that the Israelites mourned after learning of the consequences of their disobedience. Eventually all the Israelites who had entered the promised land with Joshua died, and a new generation of Israelites arose who “knew not the Lord, nor . . . the works which he had done for Israel” (Judges 2:10).

Invite a student to read Judges 2:11–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what this new generation began to do.

- What did the new generation of Israelites do?

Explain that *Baalim* is the plural form of the word *Baal*. Baal and Ashtaroth were false gods of the Canaanites. Those who worshipped these false gods did so in corrupt and immoral ways, which included sacrificing children and breaking the law of chastity.

- Based on the Israelites’ actions, how would you complete the principle on the board? (After students respond, complete the principle on the board so it conveys the following truth: **If we choose to associate with evil influences and temptations, then they may lead us to sin.**)

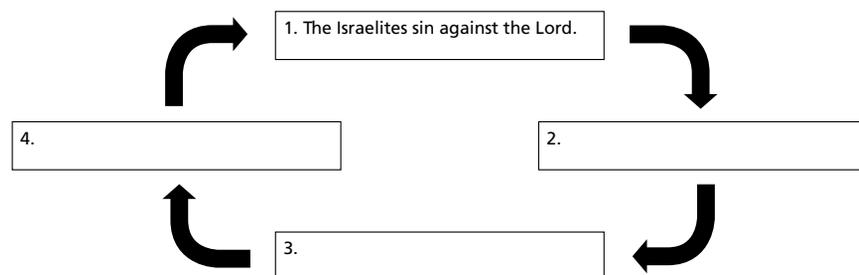
To help students understand this principle, remind them of the account of the man who quit drinking alcohol and prepared himself to be sealed to his family in the temple. Ask a student to read aloud what happened after the man was invited to go to the tavern on the day of the sealing:

“With the best of intentions he finally relented [and went to the tavern with his old friends]. But by the time he was to meet his wife at the temple he was so incapacitated [or drunk with alcohol] that the family went home in disgrace and sorrow and disappointment” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, 171).

- How can this man’s experience help us understand the danger of choosing to linger in situations where unrighteous influences may tempt us?
- What are some situations in which members of the Church might have to choose whether or not to be in situations with unrighteous influences?

Draw the following diagram on the board, and invite students to copy it in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Explain that the events recorded in the book of Judges show that the Israelites went through a repeated cycle of sin and deliverance.

### Cycle of Sin and Deliverance in the Book of Judges



Invite a student to read Judges 2:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened after the Israelites sinned by worshipping false gods.

- What happened after the Israelites worshipped false gods?

Write *The Israelites are afflicted by their enemies* in box 2 on the board, and invite students to copy it on their diagrams.

Invite a student to read Judges 2:16–18 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord did for the Israelites after they were afflicted by their enemies.

- What did the Lord do for His people after they were afflicted?

Explain that these judges were civic and military leaders. None of them were prophets like Moses and Joshua.

- According to verse 18, why did the Lord raise up judges to deliver the Israelites? (Point out that footnote *a* explains that the phrase “for it repented the Lord” means that the Lord had compassion on Israel. The word *groanings* in verse 18 refers to the prayers they offered while enduring oppression. The Joseph Smith Translation for this verse indicates that the Lord hearkened to these groanings.)
- What do these verses teach about the Lord’s feelings toward us when we are suffering, even when that suffering is a result of our own sins? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **The Lord has compassion on us in our suffering, even when our suffering is a result of our own sins.**)

Write *The Israelites cry unto the Lord for deliverance* in box 3 on the board, and write *The Lord raises up judges who deliver the Israelites from their enemies* in box 4. Invite students to copy these statements on their diagrams.

Invite a student to read Judges 2:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after the Lord delivered the Israelites from their enemies. Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think happened after the Israelites began to sin again?

### Judges 3–5

#### *The Lord repeatedly raises up judges to deliver the Israelites from their enemies*

If you invited students to study Judges 3:5–11; Judges 3:12–30; and Judges 4:1–9, 15–24 before class, invite them to come to the front of the class and summarize the accounts they read. Ask the class to listen for how the cycle of sin and deliverance is repeated in each account. If you did not ask students to study these accounts before class, you could ask students to read the accounts aloud, or you could summarize them. You might also summarize Judges 5 by explaining that after Deborah helped deliver Israel from the Canaanites, she and Barak sang a song of praise to the Lord.

- Why do you think the Israelites continued to return to their previous sins after being delivered?

Refer to the principle you wrote on the board earlier. Point out that the Israelites returned to their previous sins as they continued to linger among unrighteous influences. Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball:

“In abandoning sin one cannot merely wish for better conditions. He must make them. . . . He must be certain not only that he has abandoned the sin but that he has changed the situations surrounding the sin. He should avoid the places and conditions and circumstances where the sin occurred, for these could most readily breed it again” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, 171).

Invite students to ponder what circumstances or influences they might need to abandon so they can avoid sin.

To conclude, testify of the truths you have discussed, and invite students to act on any promptings they may have received to apply these truths in their lives.

# Judges 6–9

## Introduction

Israel enjoyed a period of relative peace for 40 years but eventually again did evil in the sight of the Lord. Because of the Israelites' disobedience, the Lord allowed them to

be oppressed by the Midianites. Through an angel, the Lord called upon Gideon to deliver Israel. Gideon and his army of 300 men defeated a vast army of Midianites.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Judges 6:1–10

#### *Because of disobedience, the Israelites are oppressed by the Midianites*

Invite a student to perform a task that is difficult or impossible to do alone but that can be done easily with another person's help. For example, invite the student to neatly fold a large blanket or sheet without allowing any of it to touch the floor. Once the student has attempted to complete the task alone, invite a second student to help.

- What was the difference between trying to do this alone and having help?

Ask students to silently ponder a trial or challenge they are facing. Point out that many challenges we face can be difficult or impossible to overcome by ourselves. However, the Lord is ready to help and strengthen us if we come to Him. Explain that in the book of Judges, a man named Gideon helped Israel gain the Lord's help and overcome seemingly impossible adversity. Invite students to look for doctrines and principles demonstrated in Gideon's life that show us how to gain the Lord's help when we face our own challenges.

Invite a student to read Judges 6:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Israelites did that caused them to lose the Lord's blessings. (You may want to remind students that in Judges 1–5, the "evil" the Israelites did was worshipping the false gods of the other inhabitants in the promised land and marrying those who were not of the covenant.)

- According to Judges 6:1, what blessing did Israel lose as a result of their evil choices? (They lost the Lord's protection.)
- Whom did the Lord allow to oppress the Israelites?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Judges 6:2–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Midianites and others did to oppress the Israelites.

- According to verse 4, what did the Midianites do? (They destroyed Israel's crops.)
- What did the Israelites do because of their oppression?

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from Judges 6:7–10. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the Lord responded to the Israelites' cries.

- How did the Lord answer Israel's cries? How was this prophet and his message found in verses 8–10 an answer to Israel's prayers?
- How could this message from the prophet help the children of Israel?
- What can we learn from the Lord's response to Israel's prayers about one way He might answer our prayers? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **The Lord can answer our prayers through the words of the prophets.**)

### Judges 6:11–24

#### *An angel of the Lord calls Gideon to deliver Israel*

Summarize Judges 6:11–13 by explaining that after sending a prophet to deliver a message to the children of Israel (see Judges 6:8–10), the Lord also called, by an angel, a judge named Gideon to deliver Israel from the Midianites. Invite a student to read Judges 6:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Gideon responded to his call to serve.

- According to verse 15, what were Gideon’s concerns about his call to deliver Israel?
- According to verse 16, what did the Lord say that might have comforted Gideon?

Invite students to look for how the Lord fulfilled His promise to Gideon as they study the remainder of Judges 6–8.

Summarize Judges 6:17–24 by explaining that the Lord showed Gideon a sign to assure him that this call came from God.

## Judges 6:25–40

### *In obedience to the Lord, Gideon removes false idols and prepares for battle*

Ask a student to read Judges 6:25–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord told Gideon to do before he delivered Israel from the Midianites.

- What did the Lord command Gideon to do? (Invite students to look at Judges 6:25, footnote *b*, to discover that the word *grove* refers to “a pole or tree representing a fertility goddess,” or an idol.)
- Why do you think it was important for Gideon to destroy the altar of the false god Baal, which the Israelites had made, before he gathered an army to drive out the Midianites?
- What principle can we learn from the Lord’s instruction to Gideon? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **if we desire to have the Lord’s help and strength, we must remove spiritually unclean and evil practices from our lives.**)

Invite students to ponder what unclean practices or sins they might need to “throw down” (verse 25) so they can more fully qualify for the Lord’s help in the challenges they face.

Summarize Judges 6:27–40 by explaining that Gideon did as he was commanded. The next day, the men of the city wanted to kill Gideon because he destroyed their false idols. Gideon’s father spoke in his defense, and the men of the city did not kill him. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he gathered an army of Israelites together. The Lord then showed Gideon another sign to assure him that the Lord had chosen him to deliver Israel.

#### *Use scripture study aids*

The Church has prepared a number of scripture study aids, which are included in the standard works for some languages. These include such things as footnotes, topical indexes, pictures, and maps. They are some of the most valuable resources for studying the scriptures. Encourage students to use available study aids in their personal scripture study.

## Judges 7

### *The Lord delivers the Midianites into the hands of the Israelites*

Ask the students to imagine that they, like Gideon, have been commanded to conquer and drive out the Midianite army. Invite students to look ahead at Judges 7:12 and find the size of the Midianite army.

- Considering the size of the Midianite army, how many soldiers would you want to take with you?

Invite a student to read Judges 7:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord said about the size of Gideon’s army. Invite students to report what they find.

- If you had been in Gideon’s position, what might you have thought when the Lord said you had too many soldiers in your army?
- According to verse 2, why did the Lord want to reduce the size of Israel’s army? (You may need to explain that the word *vaunt* means to boast.)
- How do you think vaunting (or boasting) of our own strength and efforts prevents us from recognizing the Lord’s hand in our lives?

Invite a student to read Judges 7:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said Gideon needed to do to reduce the size of the army. Invite a student to describe the Lord’s instructions in his or her own words.

- How many were in the army originally? (32,000.) How many remained? (10,000.)

Invite students to scan Judges 7:4 silently, looking for how the Lord felt about the reduced size of Gideon’s army. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Judges 7:4–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord instructed Gideon to do to further reduce the size of the army.

- How did Gideon learn who was to remain in the army?

- How many soldiers put their hand to their mouth to drink? (300.)
- If you had been in Gideon's position, what might you think about the Lord reducing your army from 32,000 to 300?

Summarize Judges 7:9–14 by explaining that Gideon went to where the Midianite army was camped. While Gideon was near their camp, he overheard a man share a dream related to the destruction of the Midianite army. This dream gave Gideon courage.

Display the following items or show pictures of them: a trumpet, a lamp, and a pitcher. Ask a student to come to the front of the room and demonstrate how he or she thinks these items could be used to fight in a battle. Ask the student how effective he or she thinks these items would be in a battle against an opponent using swords and shields.



Invite a student to read Judges 7:15–18 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for Gideon's instructions to his army.

- What instructions did Gideon give?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Judges 7:19–23. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened next. You may need to explain that the phrase "the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow" (verse 22) means that the Midianites began to attack each other in the chaos created by Gideon's army.

- What principle can we learn from this account about what happens when we faithfully follow the Lord's commands? (Although they may use different words, students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we follow the Lord's commands with exactness and always acknowledge our dependence on Him, then He will help us overcome our challenges.**)

To help students understand how this principle can relate to their lives, invite them to name a variety of sources through which the Lord's commandments come to us, such as promptings from the Holy Ghost, scriptures, words of the prophets, and righteous counsel from parents and leaders.

Ask students to ponder times when they overcame challenges with the Lord's help because they followed His counsel. Invite a few students to share, if their experiences are not too personal. You may want to share a personal experience illustrating this principle as well.

## Judges 8

### *Israel enjoys peace for many years but returns to idolatry after Gideon dies*

Summarize Judges 8:1–31 by explaining that after the Midianites fled, Gideon's army pursued them and destroyed some of them. After the victory, the Israelites wanted Gideon to be their king, but he refused and said the Lord should be their king. For the space of about 40 years, there were no more major battles.

Invite a student to read Judges 8:33–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Israel did after Gideon's death.

- What can we learn about the spiritual condition of the children of Israel from Judges 8:33–35?

## Judges 9

### *Gideon's son Abimelech is made king and is slain by the Shechemites*

Summarize Judges 9 by explaining that Gideon's son Abimelech wanted to rule Israel, so he killed 70 of his brothers and was made king. He was eventually killed by the Shechemites, one of Israel's enemies.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths taught in this lesson. Invite students to write down how they will act on promptings they have received and truths they have learned.

## LESSON 78

# Judges 10–21

### Introduction

Despite Israel's mistakes and sins, the Lord raised up judges to deliver the Israelites from their oppressors. One of these judges, Samson, was blessed with

tremendous physical strength but failed to fulfill his divine calling because of selfish choices.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Judges 10–21

*The Lord calls other judges, including Samson, to deliver the Israelites from their enemies*

Before class, write the following question on the board: *What are some things you feel Heavenly Father would like you to accomplish in your life?*

As students enter the classroom, invite them to write their responses to this question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

After sufficient time, invite several of them to read their responses aloud to the class. Their answers may mention serving the Lord and others; receiving essential ordinances and covenants; creating an eternal family; receiving an education; developing skills, talents, and divine attributes; or living worthily to return to Heavenly Father's presence.

You may want to testify of students' divine potential. Invite students to look for truths as they study Judges 10–21 that will help them understand what could prevent them from accomplishing the things Heavenly Father desires for them.

Consider displaying the diagram titled "Cycle of Sin and Deliverance in the Book of Judges" from lesson 76. Summarize Judges 10–12 by explaining that after the Israelites again began to worship false gods, they were afflicted by their enemies, the Ammonites. When the Israelites turned to the Lord, He raised up a judge named Jephthah to deliver the Israelites from their enemies.

Invite a student to read Judges 13:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Israelites did after they were delivered from their enemies.

- What kind of leader did the Israelites need to help them be permanently freed from their enemies? (A righteous spiritual leader who could help them forsake their sins.)

Invite a student to read Judges 13:2–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for special characteristics of the new leader whom the Lord would send to help the Israelites.

- What special characteristics did this new leader have?
- What does it mean that the child would be a Nazarite?

Remind students that Nazarites were those who vowed or covenanted to dedicate themselves to God for a period of time. During the period of their vow, Nazarites promised not to drink wine, touch any dead thing, or cut their hair.

Refer again to the diagram "Cycle of Sin and Deliverance in the Book of Judges."

- How might the Israelites be blessed by a leader whose life would be dedicated to God? (This new leader would have the potential to help the Israelites break their cycle of sin so they could be delivered from their enemies.)

Summarize Judges 13:6–23 by explaining that the angel reappeared to the woman and her husband and repeated the message about their son. Invite students to look in Judges 13:24 for the name of their son, the new Israelite leader.

Invite a student to read Judges 14:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Samson desired once he had become an adult.

- What did Samson desire?

### **Don't be afraid of silence**

When waiting for responses or providing students a moment to ponder, don't be afraid of silence. At times students need an opportunity to reflect on what they have been asked and how they might respond to a question. Such reflection can facilitate instruction by the Holy Ghost, and students can feel encouraged and strengthened in their resolve to live according to the laws of God.

- What was wrong with this desire? (The Lord had commanded the Israelites not to marry those who were not part of God’s covenant people, for such marriages would result in sin and destruction [see Deuteronomy 7:3–4].)
- What do we learn about Samson from verses 1–3? (Samson placed his own desires ahead of the Lord’s will.)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we place our own desires ahead of the Lord’s will, then . . .*

Invite students to consider how they might complete this statement as they learn about Samson’s choices.

Ask a student to read Judges 14:5–6 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Samson did as he traveled to marry the Philistine woman.

- What do these verses teach us about Samson’s physical strength?
- According to verse 6, what was the source of Samson’s physical strength?

Explain that today when we speak of someone having the Spirit of the Lord, we are usually referring to someone who is faithful and obedient and therefore close to God. However, as used here, referring to Samson (see Judges 14:6, 19; 15:14), the phrase seems to acknowledge Samson’s remarkable physical strength, which came as a gift from God. The scriptures give credit to the Lord, the true source of Samson’s gift, by saying “the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him,” but this does not necessarily mean that the Lord prompted or approved of Samson’s actions. Sometimes Samson used his gift of strength properly, and sometimes he did not.

Summarize Judges 14:7–15 by explaining that when Samson returned from Timnath, he found that bees had formed a hive within the carcass of the lion he had killed. Samson used this experience to create a riddle to challenge the Philistines. When the Philistines could not discover the answer to the riddle, they threatened Samson’s wife and convinced her to obtain the answer from Samson. This led to a series of conflicts between Samson and the Philistines.

Provide copies of the following handout to students. Ask them to write next to each summary the desires or emotions they think motivated Samson. Students may work alone, with partners, or in small groups.

#### What Motivated Samson?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ After Samson’s wife reveals the riddle’s answer to the Philistines, Samson separates himself from her (see Judges 14:16–20; 15:1–2).
2. \_\_\_\_\_ When Samson learns that his father-in-law, a Philistine, gave Samson’s wife to another man, Samson burns the Philistines’ crops (see Judges 15:1–5).
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The Philistines seek revenge against Samson by burning his wife and father-in-law. Samson responds by smiting the Philistines “with a great slaughter” (see Judges 15:6–8).
4. \_\_\_\_\_ The Philistines come against Samson to bind him and “do to him as he hath done to us.” Samson responds, “As they did unto me, so have I done unto them.” He slays one thousand more Philistines (see Judges 15:10–16).

- What desires or emotions do you think motivated Samson’s actions? (You may want to point out the words *anger* in Judges 14:19 and *avenged* in Judges 15:7.)
- How did Samson’s choices to act in anger and seek revenge affect him and his family? (The cycle of revenge resulted in the deaths of Samson’s wife and father-in-law.)
- What principle can we learn from Samson’s actions about the consequences of choices that are based on anger or vengeance? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **Anger and vengeance can lead us to make choices that hurt others and ourselves.**)

Invite a student to read Judges 16:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for evidence that Samson continued to place his selfish desires ahead of the Lord’s will.

- How did Samson continue to place his selfish desires above the Lord’s will?

Summarize Judges 16:2–14 by explaining that the pattern of conflict and revenge between Samson and the Philistines continued. The Philistines decided to bribe a Philistine woman named Delilah to discover the source of Samson’s physical strength. They hoped to use this information to defeat Samson. On three different occasions, Delilah tried to persuade Samson to reveal his source of strength, but each time he lied to her.

Ask several students to take turns reading aloud from Judges 16:15–20. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened when Delilah spoke to Samson a fourth time about the source of his strength.

- According to verse 20, why did Samson lose his strength? (“The Lord was departed from him.” You might want to suggest that students read Doctrine and Covenants 3:4, which gives some insight into Samson’s case.)

Point out that Samson’s hair was not the source of his strength. Rather, it was the symbol of his covenant relationship with God, who was the source of Samson’s strength.

- In what ways had Samson broken his covenants with the Lord?
- From Samson’s experience, what principle can we learn about the results of breaking our covenants? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we break our covenants with the Lord, then He will withdraw His Spirit from us.**)
- When the Lord withdrew His Spirit from Samson, Samson lost his gift of physical strength. What blessings or abilities might we lose when the Lord’s Spirit is not with us?

Summarize Judges 16:21–27 by explaining that the Philistines captured Samson, put out his eyes, and made him a slave. In time, they held a celebration claiming that their god had delivered Samson into their hands. During the celebration, Samson asked a boy to lead him to the pillars of the building so that he could lean on them.

Ask a student to read Judges 16:28–30 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Samson’s motive as he prayed to the Lord.

- According to verse 28, why did Samson want to kill the Philistines in the building?

Remind students that the Lord had called Samson to dedicate his life to Him so the Lord could deliver the Israelites from the Philistines. Refer again to the diagram “Cycle of Sin and Deliverance in the Book of Judges.” Summarize Judges 17–21 by explaining that after Samson’s death, the Israelites continued to sin against the Lord and suffer afflictions from their enemies (see Judges 17:6; 21:25).

- How well do you think Samson accomplished the Lord’s will in his life?

Help students understand that although Samson killed many Philistines, he did not help the Israelites turn to the Lord and forsake their sins, which was necessary for them to be truly delivered from their enemies (see D&C 3:4).

Refer to the incomplete statement you wrote on the board earlier.

- Based on what you’ve learned from Samson’s example, how would you complete this statement? (Using students’ words, complete the statement on the board. It may read like the following principle: **If we place our own desires ahead of the Lord’s will, then we will not reach our divine potential.**)
- How could Samson’s life have been different if he had sought to do the Lord’s will rather than his own?

Conclude by testifying of the blessings of seeking the Lord’s will. Invite students to refer back to what they wrote in their scripture study journals. Ask them to write on a piece of paper one thing they will do today that will help them fulfill their divine potential and accomplish what Heavenly Father would want them to do. Invite them to carry this piece of paper with them throughout the day as a reminder of their goal.

# The Book of Ruth

## Why study this book?

In the book of Ruth we read a tender story of conversion, courage, determination, loyalty, and faithfulness. The compassion and love shared by Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth can inspire those who study this book to consider their relationships with others both inside and outside of their families. The book of Ruth can also teach students how the Lord watches over and blesses those who follow Him and obey His teachings.

President Thomas S. Monson said:



“A model of ideal womanhood is Ruth. Sensing the grief-stricken heart of her mother-in-law Naomi—who suffered the loss of each of her two fine sons—feeling

perhaps the pangs of despair and loneliness that plagued the very soul of Naomi, Ruth uttered what has become that classic statement of loyalty: ‘Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.’ [Ruth 1:16.] Ruth’s actions demonstrated the sincerity of her words.

“Through Ruth’s undeviating loyalty to Naomi, she was to marry Boaz, by which she—the foreigner and Moabite convert—became a great-grandmother of David and, therefore, an ancestor of our Savior Jesus Christ” (“Models to Follow,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 61).

## Who wrote this book?

The author of the book of Ruth is unknown.

## When and where was it written?

Since the author of the book is unknown, it is difficult to determine when it was written. However, there are a few clues that help narrow it to a general time period. The book of Ruth tells the history of the family of Elimelech, who lived during the time of the judges (see Ruth 1:1–2). But because the genealogy of David is included (see Ruth 4:17–22), the book of Ruth may have been written after David’s or Solomon’s time, likely following the Babylonian exile. The book addresses key issues of the

postexilic period, including intermarriage with people of other nations, such as Ammon and Moab. The book also addresses the belief held by some Jews of this era that Jews should separate themselves entirely from those who were not of Israelite descent (see Ezra 9–10; Nehemiah 10:29–31; 13:1–3, 23–27). The book of Ruth seems to provide valuable balance by reminding its readers that the great-grandmother of the revered King David was a faithful woman from Moab who converted to Israel’s religion and married within the covenant. Ruth demonstrated kindness to others and loyalty to the Lord. One of the main messages of the book of Ruth is that such faithfulness is more important than ethnicity.

## What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Ruth is one of only two books in the Old Testament named after a woman and presents an example of a woman of faith, strength, and kindness. The book is characterized by hope and optimism, describing Ruth and Naomi’s journey from sadness to happiness and from emptiness to fullness.

One prominent theme in the book of Ruth is that of redemption, which applies to all of us. Ruth was a foreigner, childless, and a widow, which left her in complete poverty with no source of support. Nevertheless, Ruth faithfully accepted the gospel and joined the Lord’s covenant people. Though she could not deliver herself from her destitute condition, she was ultimately “redeemed” by her kinsman Boaz, a man of Bethlehem. Because of Ruth’s faith-driven actions and the kindness of her redeemer, Ruth married again, was fully accepted as an Israelite, became a woman of some wealth, and was blessed with children. Like Ruth, we cannot save ourselves but must rely on a Redeemer from Bethlehem, one who is able to lift us from our fallen state and secure our happiness as part of His family. Given this theme of redemption, it is interesting to note that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of Israel and of all mankind, was one of Ruth’s descendants (see Matthew 1:5–16).

## Outline

**Ruth 1** Naomi and her family move to Moab, where her husband dies and her sons marry Moabite women. After Naomi’s sons die, Naomi moves back to Bethlehem. One of Naomi’s daughters-in-law, Ruth, chooses to go with her.

**Ruth 2** Ruth works to support Naomi and herself by gleaning in the fields of Boaz. Boaz is generous to Ruth.

**Ruth 3** Ruth lies at the feet of Boaz, who then promises to take responsibility for her and Naomi if their nearest kinsman will not.

**Ruth 4** The nearest kinsman of Naomi and Ruth allows Boaz to take responsibility for caring for them. Boaz marries Ruth, and they have a son.

## LESSON 79

# Ruth 1–2

### Introduction

Naomi, her husband, and their two sons moved from Bethlehem to the land of Moab because of a famine. There Naomi's husband died and each of her sons married a Moabite woman. After the deaths of both of her sons, Naomi encouraged her daughters-in-law to return

to live with their families so they could be cared for. One daughter-in-law, Ruth, chose to stay with Naomi. The two returned to Bethlehem, where a man named Boaz, who was related to Naomi's husband, married Ruth and provided for their needs.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ruth 1

#### *Ruth travels with Naomi back to Bethlehem after the deaths of their husbands*

Invite a student to read aloud the following scenario:

A young woman has had a close group of friends for a long time, and she cares about each of them. Recently she has noticed her friends begin to change. They have begun to use inappropriate language. Some of them are experimenting with alcohol and participating in activities that are against the law of chastity. The young woman has felt the Holy Ghost prompt her not to go with these friends to parties and other activities, but she has hesitated to obey these promptings.

Invite students to consider whether they have ever been in a situation similar to this.

- In what ways might this situation test a person's courage, faith, and trust in the Lord?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Ruth 1–2 that can help them in situations when they must decide whether they will have faith and trust in the Lord.

Write the following words on the board: *Famine, Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, Chilion, Bethlehem, Moab, Orpah, Ruth*

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ruth 1:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how each of the words on the board relates to the account of Ruth. After the students have finished reading, point to each word on the board and ask the class to briefly explain how it relates to the story.

Point out that in ancient Israel a widow's sons were typically responsible for providing her with protection, food, and care. If a widow had no living sons or male relatives, she had to provide for herself. This could be very difficult if she did not own land or have other resources. It appears that Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth were in this situation.

- What concerns might you have had if you had been in the position of Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth?

Invite students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 1, "Physical Map of the Holy Land," in the appendix of the Bible. Ask students to locate the city of Bethlehem and the land of Moab. Explain that Naomi had relatives living in Bethlehem, and Orpah and Ruth had family members living in Moab.

Invite a student to read Ruth 1:6–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Naomi decided to do and what she told her daughters-in-law to do.

- Why did Naomi decide to return to Bethlehem? (She heard that food was again available there.)
- What did Naomi instruct her daughters-in-law to do?

To help students consider the possible advantages and disadvantages of the decision Orpah and Ruth faced, copy the following chart on the board, and invite students to copy it in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

**Orpah’s and Ruth’s Decisions**

	Stay in Moab	Go to Bethlehem
Advantages		
Disadvantages		

- What might have been some of the advantages of staying in Moab for Orpah and Ruth? Write students’ answers in the “Advantages” section under “Stay in Moab.” (Possible answers include returning to live with their families and marrying new husbands who would provide for them.)

Invite a student to read Ruth 1:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Orpah and Ruth said they would do.

- What did Orpah and Ruth say they would do?
- Based on Orpah and Ruth’s response, what type of feelings do you suppose they had for Naomi?

Point out the phrase “thy people” in verse 10. Explain that the Israelites’ religion and culture differed significantly from those of the people who lived in Moab, who worshipped idols. Although Orpah and Ruth were Moabites, it appears that they had forsaken the worship of idols and instead worshipped the Lord with their husbands and Naomi (see Ruth 1:15).

- What might have been some of the advantages of choosing to go with Naomi to Bethlehem?

Write students’ answers in the “Advantages” section under “Go to Bethlehem.” (Possible answers include caring for Naomi and worshipping the Lord with others who believed in Him.)

Invite a student to read Ruth 1:11–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Naomi’s response to Orpah and Ruth.

- Why did Naomi discourage Orpah and Ruth from going to Bethlehem with her?

Write students’ answers in the “Disadvantages” section under “Go to Bethlehem.”

- What other disadvantages might Orpah and Ruth have experienced as a result of going to Bethlehem?

Add students’ answers to the “Disadvantages” section under “Go to Bethlehem.” (Possible answers include needing to provide for themselves and being strangers in a land distant from their homes and families.)

- What disadvantages would Orpah and Ruth have experienced as a result of staying in Moab?

Add students’ answers to the “Disadvantages” section under “Stay in Moab.” (They would not be with Naomi, whom they loved, and they may not be able to worship the Lord with others who shared their faith.)

- What would you have done if you had been in Orpah and Ruth’s position? Why?

Invite a student to read Ruth 1:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Orpah decided to do. Ask students to report what they find.

- What could the words “gone back unto her people, and unto her gods” (Ruth 1:15) suggest about Orpah’s relationship with the Lord? (Orpah may have chosen to return to her old gods and ways.)

Invite a student to read Ruth 1:16–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ruth decided to do.

- What do you think about Ruth’s response?
- How do Ruth’s words show that she trusted in the Lord?

After students respond, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we choose to trust in the Lord, then . . .*

Invite students to look for what happened as a result of Ruth’s decision to trust in the Lord as they continue to study the book of Ruth.

Summarize Ruth 1:18–22 by explaining that Naomi and Ruth traveled to Bethlehem. Since they were extremely poor, they desperately needed to find a way to support themselves.

## Ruth 2

### *Ruth gleanes in the field of Boaz*

Invite a student to read Ruth 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Ruth and Naomi obtained food in Bethlehem.

- How did Ruth and Naomi obtain food? (You may need to explain that to *glean* means to pick up grain that remains in the field after the crop has been harvested.)

Explain that the law of Moses instructed those who owned fields not to harvest the crops in the edges of their fields. The law allowed the poor to harvest these crops, ensuring that they would have something to eat. After the harvest was gathered in, the poor were also allowed to go into the field and glean the crops that had been missed by the harvesters (see Deuteronomy 24:19–22).

Invite a student to read Ruth 2:5–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Boaz did when he saw Ruth gleaning in his field.

- What did Boaz want to know?

Invite a student to read Ruth 2:8–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Boaz decided to do for Ruth.

- How did Boaz show kindness to Ruth?

Invite a student to read Ruth 2:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two reasons why Ruth had been blessed.

- According to the first part of verse 11, why did Boaz show such great kindness to Ruth? (Because of the love and kindness she had shown to Naomi.)
- What principle can we learn from Ruth’s experience about what can happen as we show love and kindness to others? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **When we show love and kindness to others, we invite the Lord’s blessings into our lives.**)
- When have you or someone you know received the Lord’s blessings after showing love and kindness for others?

Consider inviting students to ponder ways in which they can show love and kindness to others. Encourage them to find ways to do so during the next few days.

- According to verse 12, what was another reason why Ruth had been blessed? (Because she trusted in the Lord.)
- How would you use Boaz’s words in verse 12 to complete the statement on the board? (Complete the statement on the board so it conveys the following truth: **If we choose to trust in the Lord, then He will reward us for our faith.**)

To help students understand how this principle further applied in Ruth’s life, summarize Ruth 2:13–23 by explaining that Boaz showed additional kindness to Ruth by inviting her to eat with him and the reapers, the people he hired to harvest his fields. Boaz also told the reapers to leave extra portions of grain for Ruth to harvest. Ruth returned to Naomi and told her what had happened. Together they rejoiced in the Lord’s blessings and kindness to them.

Invite a student to read again the scenario discussed at the beginning of class.

- How could the principle we identified about choosing to trust in the Lord help the young woman in this scenario?

After students respond, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“At times you may feel lonely and misunderstood . . . because you don’t fit in with the crowd. Be grateful that your righteous life molds you so that you don’t fit where you don’t belong. This is a temporary period of personal testing and growth. It will be replaced in time with true friends and greater happiness” (“The Power of Righteousness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 70).

- When have you felt that the Lord rewarded your faith because you chose to trust in Him?

Conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed. Invite students to act on these truths by trusting in the Lord and showing love and kindness to others.

# Ruth 3–4

## Introduction

Following the instruction of Naomi, Ruth asked Boaz, a near kinsman, to marry her. Boaz followed the procedures of the law of Moses by first inviting a nearer kinsman to fulfill his duty to marry Ruth. When that

kinsman declined, Boaz married Ruth. They had a son named Obed, who would become the grandfather of King David.

### Determine pacing

Avoid taking too much time on the first part of the lesson and then having to rush through the last part. As you prepare, estimate how much time it will take to cover each section of the lesson using the methods you have chosen. Because you will almost always have more to teach than there is time to teach it, you will need to determine which portions of the block to emphasize and which to summarize.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ruth 3

#### *Ruth proposes marriage to Boaz, but he is unable to accept*

Invite students to share a favorite story about a couple becoming engaged to marry. Examples might include the engagements of their parents, older siblings, or even characters in books they have read or in movies they have seen.

- What qualities are you looking for in the person you want to marry someday?

You may want to write a few of these qualities on the board. As students list these qualities, ask follow-up questions to help them explain why they think these qualities are important.

Invite students as they study Ruth 3–4 to look for qualities that they hope to have in a future spouse, as well as qualities they would like to cultivate in themselves.

Remind students that Ruth was a widow who was taking care of her mother-in-law, Naomi. They had moved to Bethlehem, Naomi’s former home, and were struggling to gather enough food to live when they were assisted by Boaz, a relative of Ruth’s deceased husband.

Invite a student to read Ruth 3:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Naomi wanted for Ruth. (To help students find what Naomi was proposing, suggest that they look at verse 1, footnote *a*, to discover that the word *rest* implies marriage.)

- What did Naomi want for Ruth? What quality did Naomi demonstrate through her concern for her daughter-in-law?

Explain that under the customs and cultural laws of the Israelites, if a husband died childless, it was the duty of the husband’s brother or nearest male relative to marry the widow and raise up children to the dead man’s name (see Deuteronomy 25:5–10; see also Bible Dictionary, “Levirate marriage”). Naomi was suggesting that Ruth marry Boaz.

Invite a student to read Ruth 3:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Ruth was to let Boaz know she was interested in marriage. (You may need to explain that the threshing floor was where the workers separated the grain from the rest of the stem and the chaff after the harvest.)

- How was Ruth to let Boaz know she was interested in marriage? How might you have felt if you had been in Ruth’s situation?

Summarize Ruth 3:6–8 by explaining that Ruth did as Naomi suggested. While Boaz slept next to the grain, Ruth lay down at his feet.

Explain that Ruth’s uncovering of Boaz’s feet was a sign of submission and an action signaling that she wanted him to be her protector and husband.

Invite a young man and a young woman to come to the front of the class and read aloud the dialogue spoken by Ruth and Boaz in Ruth 3:9–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Boaz reacted to Ruth’s request for marriage. (After they read verse 9, you might want to explain that the phrase “spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid” means that Ruth was asking him to take her under his protection and provide for her and was Ruth’s way of proposing marriage to Boaz.)

- How did Boaz react to Ruth’s proposal?

- What admirable characteristic did Boaz and the people notice in Ruth? (Ruth was virtuous.)
- How will others view us if we live virtuously, as Ruth did?
- What blessings did Ruth receive because she chose to live virtuously? What principle can we learn from Ruth’s example of living virtuously? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we live virtuously, then we can have faith that the Lord will bless us.**)

Write the word *virtuous* on the board.

- What do you think it means to be virtuous?

To help students understand what it means to live virtuously, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Sister Elaine S. Dalton, who served as the Young Women general president. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Sister Dalton defined and described virtue.



“Virtue ‘is a pattern of thought and behavior based on high moral standards’ [*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service* (2004), 118]. It encompasses chastity and moral purity. Virtue begins in the heart and in the mind. It is nurtured in the home. It is the accumulation of thousands of small decisions and actions. *Virtue* is a word we don’t hear often in today’s society, but the Latin root word *virtus* means strength. Virtuous women and men possess a quiet dignity and inner strength” (“A Return to Virtue,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 79).

- What does it mean to live virtuously?
- What are some “small decisions” you can make that can help you be virtuous?
- Why is it important to look for virtue in the people you date and may one day marry?

Invite a student to read Ruth 3:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Boaz could not immediately promise to marry Ruth.

- What did Boaz need to do before he could marry Ruth? (According to the law of Moses, Boaz needed to give the nearest kinsman the option of marrying Ruth.)
- What did he promise to do if the nearest kinsman declined? (Marry her himself.)

Explain that in Ruth 3:14–18, we read that Ruth stayed near Boaz until the early morning. Then Boaz sent her home with a gift of grain for herself and Naomi.

## Ruth 4

### *After the kinsman refuses, Boaz marries Ruth*

Summarize Ruth 4:1–2 by explaining that Boaz met the nearest kinsman at the gate of the city, where legal agreements were made. He employed 10 elders of the city as witnesses. Boaz knew that according to the custom and levirate marriage rules of their day, the nearest male relative of a deceased man could marry his widow and receive all of his property. The kinsman mentioned in Ruth 4 was the nearest living relative to Mahlon, Ruth’s deceased husband.

Invite a student to read Ruth 4:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the kinsman responded to Boaz’s offer.

- According to verse 4, how did the kinsman first respond to the opportunity to acquire or redeem some land from Naomi? Was the kinsman willing to redeem it?
- According to verse 5, what did he learn that changed his mind? (He discovered that if he inherited the land he would also need to raise up children with Ruth.)

In Ruth 4:7–8 we learn that the kinsman gave his shoe to Boaz, signifying that he would not or could not fulfill his obligation to raise up children to his relative (see Deuteronomy 25:8–10). Invite a student to read Ruth 4:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what qualities Boaz demonstrated in relation to his obligation to Ruth.

- What quality do you see in Boaz?
- How did Ruth’s actions bless both her and Naomi?

Explain that one of the prominent themes of the account of Ruth is that of redemption, which relates to all of us. Ruth was a foreigner and a poor and childless widow, which left

her in complete poverty with no source of support. Nevertheless, Ruth faithfully accepted the gospel and joined the Lord's covenant people. Though she could not deliver herself from her destitute condition, she was ultimately "redeemed" by her kinsman Boaz. Because of Ruth's faith-driven actions and the kindness of her redeemer, Ruth married again, received an inheritance, and was blessed with children. Like Ruth, we cannot save ourselves but must rely on a Redeemer from Bethlehem, one who is able to lift us from our fallen state and secure our happiness as part of His family. Given this theme of redemption, it is interesting to note that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of Israel and of all mankind, was one of Ruth's descendants (see Matthew 1:5–16).

- In what ways is Ruth's redemption symbolic of our redemption?

Invite a student to read Ruth 4:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the two women the Israelite elders prayed for Ruth to become like. Remind the students that Rachel and Leah were prominent ancestors of the house of Israel.

Invite a student to read Ruth 4:13–14, 17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Ruth's son would play a role in building the house of Israel.

- Which of Ruth's descendants would play a large role in building the house of Israel? (King David would be her great-grandson.)

Review with students what we know about Ruth's background before she was married to Boaz: Ruth was a non-Israelite (Ruth 1:4), a widow (Ruth 1:5), and a convert to the worship of Jehovah (Ruth 1:16). Point out that although Ruth was neither an Israelite by birth nor a person of any wealth, from her came the royal line of the house of Israel.

- What is more important—our family background or our current willingness to follow Jesus Christ? What truths can we learn from the account of Ruth? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **how we live is more important than where we come from**. Consider writing this truth on the board.)
- Who are some people who exemplify this truth?

You may want to suggest that students write Matthew 1:1–16 as a cross-reference in their scriptures next to Ruth 4:17. Ask students to quickly scan through the ancestors listed in Matthew 1:1–16 and call out names that they recognize.

- Who else was Ruth the ancestor of? (Jesus Christ.)

Ask the students to take a few moments and record in their class notebooks or scripture study journals the answer to one or more of the following questions (you may want to write the questions on the board):

- How did Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi bless Israel in their day and in the future because of their faithful obedience to the covenants of God?
- How will the strength of your commitment to keep your covenants bless your family and your ward or branch?
- What qualities exemplified by Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi would you like to live better in order to help build and strengthen the house of Israel? What specific efforts will you make to live this way?

After sufficient time, consider inviting one or two students to share what they wrote with the class.

You may want to conclude by sharing your feelings about the truths taught in today's lesson.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Ruth 3:1–9. Levirate marriage

"A kinsman had the right to purchase (redeem) the land of a deceased relative, marry his widow, and produce offspring—the first of whom would be the heir of the man who had died [see Bible Dictionary, "Levirate marriage"]. Thus a 'redeemer' could restore to a widow

a degree of security and status she could not of herself attain and even provide for continuation of the seed. Understanding this deepens our appreciation for the prophets' use of the word *redeemer* to characterize our Savior (TG, "Jesus Christ, Redeemer")" (Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* [1993], 227).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Judges; Ruth (Unit 16)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Judges 1–Ruth 4 (unit 16) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson to the students. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Judges 1–5)**

As students studied the time of the judges, they learned that as the Israelites settled in the promised land they became ensnared with idolatry and other sins. From this, students learned that if we choose to associate with evil influences and temptations, then they may lead us to sin. As they studied the cycles of sin and deliverance, they learned that the Lord has compassion on us in our suffering, even when our suffering is a result of our own sins. In his mercy, the Lord continually raised up judges to deliver the Israelites from their enemies.

#### **Day 2 (Judges 6–9)**

As they studied Judges 6–9, students learned of the Israelites' gradual slide into sin again and the Lord's mercy in answering their prayers after they were oppressed by the Midianites. From the leadership of Gideon, students learned that if we desire to have the Lord's help and strength, we must remove spiritually unclean and evil practices from our lives. As the story of Gideon's triumph illustrated, if we follow the Lord's commands, then He will help us overcome our challenges.

#### **Day 3 (Judges 10–21)**

While studying the life of Samson, students learned the danger of placing our own selfish desires ahead of the Lord's will. They also learned that anger and vengeance can lead us to make choices that hurt others and ourselves. The tragic example of Samson taught the students that if we break our covenants with the Lord, then He will withdraw His Spirit from us. Samson's life is a tragic example of missed opportunities.

#### **Day 4 (Ruth)**

The account of Ruth taught the students that if we choose to trust in the Lord, then He will reward us for our faith. Students also learned that when we show love and kindness to others, we invite the Lord's blessings into our lives.

### Introduction

The story of how Ruth and Boaz came to be married shows the power of living a virtuous life. Ruth's love and care for Naomi impressed Boaz and the people of Bethlehem and showed her qualities of compassion and virtue. Boaz showed compassion on Ruth by taking her as his wife and creating a covenant family.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### **Ruth 3**

*Ruth proposes marriage to Boaz, but he is unable to accept*

Ask the students:

- What qualities will you look for in the person you want to marry someday?

You may want to ask students to write these qualities on the board. Ask follow-up questions to students to help them explain why they think these qualities are important.

Invite students, as they study Ruth 3–4, to look for qualities that they hope to find in a future spouse, as well as qualities they would like to cultivate in themselves.

Remind students that Ruth was a widow who chose to travel to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law, Naomi. There, Ruth and Naomi were struggling to gather enough food to live when they were assisted by Boaz, a relative of Ruth's deceased husband.

Invite a student to read Ruth 3:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Naomi wanted for Ruth.

- What did Naomi want for Ruth?
- What quality did Naomi demonstrate through her concern for her daughter-in-law?

Explain that under the custom and cultural laws of the Israelites, if a husband died childless, it was the duty of the husband's brother or nearest male relative to marry the widow and raise up children to the dead man's name (see Deuteronomy 25:5–10; see also Bible Dictionary, "Levirate marriage"). Naomi was suggesting that Ruth marry Boaz.

Invite a student to read Ruth 3:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Ruth was to let Boaz know she was interested in marrying him. (You may need to explain that the threshing floor was where the grain was separated from the rest of the stem and the chaff after the harvest.)

- How might you have felt if you had been in Ruth's situation?

Summarize Ruth 3:6–8 by explaining that Ruth did as Naomi suggested. While Boaz slept next to the grain, Ruth lay down at his feet.

Invite a young man and a young woman to come to the front of the class and read aloud the conversation between Ruth and Boaz in Ruth 3:9–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for

how Boaz reacted to Ruth's request for marriage. (After they read verse 9, you might want to explain that the phrase "spread thy skirt over thine handmaid" means that Ruth was asking him to take her under his protection and provide for her. It was Ruth's way of proposing marriage to Boaz.)

- What admirable characteristic did Boaz and the people notice in Ruth? (Ruth was virtuous.)

Have the two students at the front of the class return to their seats. Write the word *virtuous* on the board.

- What do you think it means to be virtuous?
- How will others view us if we live virtuously, as Ruth did?
- What blessings did Ruth receive because she chose to live virtuously?
- What principle can we learn from Ruth's example of living virtuously? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we live virtuously, then we can have faith the Lord will bless us.**)
- What are some decisions you can make and actions you can take that can help you be virtuous?
- Why is it important to look for virtue in the people you date and may one day marry?

Invite a student to read Ruth 3:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why Boaz could not immediately promise to marry Ruth.

- What did Boaz need to do before he could marry Ruth? (According to the law of Moses, Boaz needed to give the nearest kinsman the option of marrying Ruth.)

## Ruth 4

### *After the kinsman declines, Boaz marries Ruth*

Summarize Ruth 4:1–10 by explaining that when the kinsman, the nearest living relative of Ruth's deceased husband, arrived the next day, he told Boaz that he did not want to marry Ruth because he was not willing to raise up children with her and "mar [his] own inheritance" (Ruth 4:6). After the kinsman declined, Boaz agreed to marry Ruth.

- What qualities do you see in Boaz?

Summarize Ruth 4:11–16 by explaining that Ruth and Boaz married and had a child named Obed, who was the grandfather of King David.

Explain that one of the prominent themes of the account of Ruth is that of redemption, which relates to all of us. Ruth was a foreigner and a poor and childless widow, which left her in poverty with no source of support. Nevertheless, Ruth faithfully accepted the gospel and joined the Lord's covenant people. Though she could not deliver herself from her destitute condition, she was ultimately "redeemed" by her kinsman Boaz. Because of Ruth's faith-driven actions and the kindness of her redeemer, Ruth married again, received an inheritance, and was blessed with children. Given this theme of redemption, it is interesting to note that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of Israel and of all mankind, was one of Ruth's descendants (see Matthew 1:5–16).

- In what ways is Ruth's redemption symbolic of our redemption? (Ruth faced complete poverty and had no source of support. Nevertheless, she faithfully accepted the gospel. Though she could not deliver herself, she was ultimately "redeemed" by her kinsman Boaz. Like Ruth, we cannot save ourselves but must rely on a Redeemer who is able to lift us from our fallen state.)

You may want to conclude by sharing your feelings about the power of redemption and the good that comes from living a virtuous and unselfish life.

## Next Unit (1 Samuel 1–15)

Ask students if they have ever wondered why the Lord does not always immediately answer our prayers. Explain that in 1 Samuel, students will learn about Hannah, a righteous woman whose diligent prayers to the Lord led her to become the mother of one of the most influential prophets of the Old Testament. Ask students if they can discern when God is speaking to them. (His "voice" often comes to us as a feeling.) Explain that Samuel, at the young age of 10, heard a voice and was unsure of its origin. He then learned to recognize and obey the Lord's voice, and he became a mighty prophet in Israel.

# The Book of 1 Samuel

## Why study this book?

The book of 1 Samuel recounts the ministry of the prophet Samuel, who “restored law and order and regular religious worship in the land” (Bible Dictionary, “Samuel”) after the Israelites had forgotten the Lord and worshipped idols many times throughout the reign of the judges. One of the major themes of 1 Samuel is the importance of honoring the Lord. In 1 Samuel 2:30 we read, “Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed” (see also 1 Samuel 2:9). In other words, the Lord will bless those who honor Him and keep His commandments, and those who do not will not receive His blessings.

Several accounts in 1 Samuel reflect this theme. Hannah honored the Lord and requested a child, and the Lord blessed Hannah with a son. Samuel, Hannah’s son, also was blessed because he listened to the Spirit and obeyed the Lord. Saul did not continue to honor the Lord, so the Lord appointed David to replace him as king. As a youth, David exercised faith in the Lord, who blessed him to be able to slay Goliath. As students study the book of 1 Samuel, they can increase their faith that they will also be blessed as they honor and obey the Lord.

## Who wrote this book?

“It is uncertain who the author was or when he wrote [the book of 1 Samuel]. In order to compile his narrative, he no doubt used various writings that he found already in existence, including the state chronicles (among which were writings by Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, [see] 1 Sam. 10:25; 1 Chr. 29:29)” (Bible Dictionary, “Samuel, books of”).

## When and where was it written?

It is unclear when and where the books of Samuel were written. “Originally, 1 and 2 Samuel were one book in the Hebrew Bible. The division into two separate books probably occurred when this book of Samuel was translated into Greek,

which necessitated putting the book on two scrolls instead of one” (Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, Dana M. Pike, and David Rolph Seely, *Jehovah and the World of the Old Testament* [2009], 190).

## What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of 1 Samuel can be divided into three main sections, each of which focuses on a different person. Chapters 1–7 recount the actions of Samuel, the righteous priest, prophet, and judge. Chapters 8–15 focus on Saul, the first king of Israel. Chapters 16–31 describe the rise of David.

The first section begins with the account of Samuel’s mother, Hannah. Her dedication to God helped prepare her son to fulfill his role as a mighty prophet to an apostate people. This account is one of the significant few in the scriptures that portray a woman of remarkable faith in the Lord, and it highlights the influential role of women in fulfilling His purposes (see 1 Samuel 1–2).

Another distinctive feature of the book is its account of the transition from one form of government to another. After many years of a tribal confederation governed loosely and sporadically by judges, the children of Israel desired to have a king “like all the nations” (1 Samuel 8:5). Under the direction of the Lord, Samuel anointed Saul as the first king of Israel. However, Samuel warned the Israelites about what would befall them if they chose to be governed by a king (see 1 Samuel 8:11–22).

## Outline

**1 Samuel 1–7** Hannah pleads with the Lord to have a son. The Lord grants her request, and she bears Samuel. Early in his childhood she presents Samuel at the tabernacle to serve under Eli. The Lord appears to Samuel and blesses him. The Philistines smite Israel and capture the ark of the covenant. Samuel preaches to the Israelites and exhorts them to stop worshipping idols and begin serving the Lord. The Israelites return to the Lord, and the Lord subdues the Philistines.

**1 Samuel 8–15** The children of Israel desire to have a king. Samuel is displeased with their request and warns them of the oppression a king would bring upon them. The Lord consents to give them a king and directs Samuel to anoint Saul. Saul was called by the Lord and sustained by the people to be king. He reigns in righteousness for a time, but he eventually disobeys the Lord and is rejected by Him.

**1 Samuel 16–31** The Lord directs Samuel to anoint a young man named David to be king. David defeats Goliath and is greatly honored by the people. King Saul becomes jealous of David and tries to kill him multiple times. David gains many supporters, including Saul’s son Jonathan. Saul is defeated and killed by the Philistines.

# 1 Samuel 1–2

## Introduction

While worshipping at the tabernacle, Hannah wept and prayed to the Lord for a child. She covenanted with the Lord that if she were given a son, she would give him to the Lord. After witnessing Hannah’s sorrow and grief, and finding out its cause, Eli, the high priest, revealed to Hannah that God would grant her desire. Because of

Hannah’s great faith, she was blessed with a son, whom she named Samuel. To keep the promise she made to the Lord, Hannah brought Samuel to Eli to serve the Lord. As Samuel grew in favor with the Lord and the people, Eli and his household were chastened for not honoring God.

### *Cultivate an environment of love and respect*

Look for ways to cultivate a learning environment of love, respect, and purpose. Help students feel comfortable with each other and with you by learning each other’s names and by learning about one another’s interests, talents, challenges, and abilities. One way to cultivate this type of environment is to invite students to share with each other experiences and insights from their personal scripture study.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 1:1–28

#### *Hannah covenants with the Lord as she prays for a son*

Begin by listing some of the following adversities on the board (or invite students to name adversities that might be more relevant to them): *an accident or illness; the premature death of a friend or family member; physical or learning disabilities; experiencing cruelty from others.*

Write the following questions on the board:

*Why is this happening to me?*

*What can I learn from these adversities?*

- If something challenging happens in your life, which of these two questions are you more likely to ask? Why?

Explain that many adversities and challenges are natural conditions of mortality and do not occur because the person experiencing them is at fault. Explain that as students study 1 Samuel 1, they will learn about Hannah, a faithful woman who faced adversity. Invite them to look for what we can learn from her example that can help us when we face adversity.

Copy the following chart on the board, and invite students to copy it in their class notebooks or scripture study journals or on a piece of paper:

Hannah’s Adversity	My Adversity
1.	1.
2.	2.

Ask students to read 1 Samuel 1:1–2 silently, looking for one of the adversities Hannah experienced.

- According to verse 2, what was Hannah’s adversity? (She was unable to have children.)

Invite students to write *Unable to bear children* on line 1 under the column titled “Hannah’s Adversity.” In every age, there have been women who were unable to bear children despite their righteous desire to do so. In the culture in which Hannah lived, women experienced social shame if they were barren (or unable to bear children). It may also be helpful to remind students that at times in ancient Israel, righteous men and women practiced plural marriage (see Genesis 16:1–3; Jacob 2:30; D&C 132:1). Peninnah, the other wife of Hannah’s husband, Elkanah, was able to bear children. Peninnah’s ability to have children may have made Hannah’s inability to do so feel more devastating.

Explain that Elkanah and his family would travel to Shiloh yearly in order to worship and offer sacrifice. Shiloh was the site where the tabernacle, or “the house of the Lord” (1 Samuel 1:7), was located.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 1:3–8. Ask students to follow along, looking for the other adversity Hannah experienced during these times. Help students understand that the phrase “her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret” meant that someone was striving to upset Hannah because of her inability to have children.

- How might Peninnah’s ability to have children have caused conflict between the two women?
- How would you describe the adversity Hannah experienced? (After students respond, invite them to write *Suffering unkindness from others* on line 2 under “Hannah’s Adversity” on their charts.)
- How might you be tempted to react if you were to experience unkindness from others?
- What can you do if you or someone you know is being bullied, either in person or on the Internet?

Assign students to work in pairs and read 1 Samuel 1:9–18, looking for what caused Hannah’s sorrow to be replaced with peace. Invite students to refer to verse 16, footnote *b*, to learn what the word *Belial* means (“worthlessness; good-for-nothing, base wickedness”).

- Which statements indicate that Hannah’s sorrow was replaced with peace?
- What did Hannah do to receive this peace?
- What else happened to allow Hannah to have her sorrow replaced with peace?

Help students identify a principle by asking the following questions:

- If Hannah were here today, what principle do you think she would testify of? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we turn to the Lord in our adversity, He can provide help, hope, comfort, and peace.**)
- Does the Lord always remove our adversity when we pray for peace? What are some other ways He can give us peace?

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principle they identified, ask the following question:

- When has the Lord blessed you with peace for turning to Him when you were experiencing adversity?

Invite students to ponder the adversities they may be facing and write them down under the column titled “My Adversity” on their charts. After sufficient time, invite them to ponder how they can turn to the Lord to receive His peace during their adversities.

Remind students that Hannah promised the Lord that if He would give her a son, she would give her son to His service. Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 1:20–28. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how she kept her promise.

To help emphasize another truth we can learn from this account, write the following incomplete statement on the board: *When we ask the Lord to bless us, we must be willing to . . .*

- How might you complete this statement based on verses 27–28? (Students may use different words, but they may complete the statement so it reads like the following principle: **When we ask the Lord to bless us, we must be willing to use those blessings to serve Him.**)

Invite students to think about how they have asked the Lord to bless them. Ask them to consider how they would use those blessings to serve the Lord. You might want to invite a few students to share some of their experiences.

## 1 Samuel 2:1–10

### *Hannah praises the Lord*

Summarize 1 Samuel 2:1–10 by explaining that in these verses we read a prayer in which Hannah praised the Lord for all He had done for her. She also testified of Jehovah’s (Jesus Christ’s) power and mercy. Hannah’s prayer displays her great faith, knowledge of the gospel, and love for God. Point out that the Lord is pleased when we express gratitude for our blessings.

## 1 Samuel 2:11–36

### *Eli is chastened for not honoring God above others*

Ask students what things members of the Church could do that would set a poor example of living the gospel and could affect the way others view the Church. Caution students against mentioning specific names or people.

After students respond, write the names *Hophni* and *Phinehas* on the board. Explain that these were two sons of Eli the priest. Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 2:12 aloud while the class follows along to learn about these two sons.

- How do you think Hophni and Phinehas's unrighteous behavior might have affected the people who came to the tabernacle to worship?

Explain that 1 Samuel 2:13–16 describes how these two sons brought disrespect to the tabernacle. Eli's sons sinned by taking meat from the animal sacrifices that did not belong to them. By doing so, they were essentially robbing God of offerings and cheating the people.

Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 2:17 aloud. Ask the class to look for how the behavior of Eli's sons affected those who came to worship at the tabernacle. Ask them to report what they find. You may want to explain that the word *abhorred* means to hate or strongly dislike.

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 2:22–25. Ask the class to follow along, looking for other behaviors that were a poor example for the people.

- What other sins were the sons guilty of? (They engaged in immoral acts [see verse 22].)
- According to verse 24, what did Eli say about how his sons' behavior was affecting the people?

Point out that according to verse 25, Hophni and Phinehas were disobedient to their father's counsel. Under the law of Moses, willful disobedience to parents was punishable by death, and the parents were obliged to see that the punishment was carried out (see Deuteronomy 21:18–21).

Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 2:27–29 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for why the Lord was upset with Eli.

- Why was the Lord displeased with Eli? (He honored his sons over God.)

Explain that because Eli did not carry out the punishment that the law of Moses required for his sons' actions, he was failing to do his duty. Help students understand that Eli failed in his parental responsibility and in his office as the presiding priest. Although he rebuked his sons, he took no action to see that the abomination in his family and at the tabernacle was corrected.

Summarize 1 Samuel 2:31–36 by explaining that a "man of God" (1 Samuel 2:27) came to Eli and pronounced the Lord's curse upon Eli and his house. Eli's household would be destroyed, and his posterity would not live to old age. His sons would die on the same day, and the Lord would give the priests' duties of the tabernacle to a more faithful man.

Invite the students to read 1 Samuel 2:30 silently, looking for what will happen if we honor the Lord above all others. (Explain that *despise* means to view with contempt or as worthless. *Esteemed* means respected or honored. If we view God with contempt, He will not respect or honor us.)

- According to verse 30, what will happen if we honor the Lord? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we honor the Lord by keeping His commandments, He will honor us.**)

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 2:18–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Elkanah and Hannah honored God. Ask another student to read 1 Samuel 2:20–21 while the class looks for how the Lord honored Elkanah and Hannah. Ask students to report what they find.

Point out that Eli lost his right to preside and his blessings of posterity because he did not respect God enough to punish his unrepentant sons for their sins. Conversely, Hannah received blessings for serving God.

- What are the consequences of dishonoring or disrespecting the Lord?
- When have you seen the Lord honor someone who honors Him?

Invite students to ponder how they can more fully honor God, and encourage them to follow any impressions they receive from the Spirit.

## LESSON 82

# 1 Samuel 3

### Introduction

As a child, Samuel served in the tabernacle under the high priest, Eli. One night Samuel received a revelation from the Lord in which he was told of the judgments that would befall Eli and his household for their wickedness.

Samuel told Eli of his vision, and Eli recognized that the Lord had spoken through Samuel. As Samuel grew, the Lord continued to speak through him, and the people recognized him as a prophet.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 3:1–14

#### *The Lord calls Samuel*

Before class, make preparations to produce several different sounds. (For example, you could bring items such as a bell, a whistle, or blocks of wood to hit together.) Select some sounds that students may recognize and others they may not recognize. (Instead of preparing to make sounds, you could record the voices of six individuals, choosing some people whose voices students may recognize and others whose voices they may not recognize.)

Invite students to close their eyes before each sound is made (or before each voice recording is played). After each sound, invite them to try to identify what (or whose voice) they think they heard.

Afterward, ask students why they recognized some sounds (or voices) and may not have recognized others. Encourage students to look for principles as they study 1 Samuel 3 that can help them understand the importance of recognizing the voice of the Lord.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 3:1 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for the spiritual condition of the people during Samuel's youth.

- What do you think it means that “the word of the Lord was precious in those days”? (Revelations from the Lord were rare.)
- What might this tell us about the spiritual condition of the people at this time?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 3:2–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened in the tabernacle one night.

- Why do you think Samuel didn't recognize the voice?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 3:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what helped Samuel recognize the Lord's voice.

- According to verse 7, why did Samuel initially not recognize the voice?
- What did Eli counsel Samuel to do if he heard the voice again?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 3:11–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Samuel after Samuel recognized His voice. Invite them to report what they find.

- Why do you think the Lord spoke to Samuel and not to Eli?

Explain that the Lord was displeased with Eli for allowing the iniquity in his household to continue without correction. The Lord was also giving Samuel guidance and instruction in preparation for his calling as a prophet.

Invite students to ponder what Samuel's experience teaches about learning to recognize the Lord's voice. Ask them to write down a principle they have learned. After sufficient time, ask several students to share a principle they identified. Students' responses might include the following:

**If we are willing and receptive, we can grow in our ability to recognize the voice of the Lord.**

**Trusted leaders and parents can help us learn to recognize the voice of the Lord.**

### *Adapt lessons to meet students' needs*

Teaching by the Spirit involves diligent, thoughtful lesson preparation, including using the curriculum that has been provided. However, teaching by the Spirit also requires prayer, thought, and possible adaptation of lessons to ensure that the Spirit can meet students' individual needs and help students apply principles to their individual situations. As you prepare to teach, seek for inspiration from the Holy Ghost concerning how to adapt a lesson to meet students' needs.

**As we increase our ability to receive and understand personal revelation, we will be able to recognize the voice of the Lord more easily and receive His guidance and instruction.**

You may want to write these principles on the board using the students' own words.

To help students understand the principles on the board, ask each student to silently read one of the following references and look for the answer to the corresponding question. (You may want to write the references and questions on the board or provide each student with a strip of paper with one of the references and the associated question written on it.)

*1 Nephi 17:45 (What can prevent me from recognizing the Lord's voice?)*

*Alma 5:57 (What is one thing I need to do if I want to learn to recognize the Lord's voice?)*

*Doctrine and Covenants 1:38 (Who may speak for the Lord?)*

*Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3; 11:12–13 (How can I recognize when the Lord speaks to me through the Spirit?)*

*Doctrine and Covenants 18:34–36 (What is one way I can hear the voice of the Lord daily?)*

After sufficient time, invite five students to each read aloud a different set of verses and the associated question and then answer the question in their own words.

Ask the class to list on the board different ways the Lord can speak to us. (After they identify several ways, make sure they understand that the Lord can communicate with us through visions, speech, dreams, and sometimes appearances. Most often we hear His voice through His prophets, the scriptures, and the Holy Ghost as impressions, thoughts, and ideas (see John 16:13–15).

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who described one way the Lord communicates with us through His Spirit:



“The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all. . . .

“Occasionally it will press just firmly enough for us to pay heed. But most of the time, if we do not heed the gentle feeling, the Spirit will withdraw and wait until we come seeking and listening” (“The Candle of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 53).

- What are some preoccupations that may deter us from hearing and recognizing the gentle whisper of the Lord's voice?

Explain that quiet spiritual promptings may not seem as spectacular as visions or angelic visitations, but they can be just as powerful and life-changing. The witness of the Holy Ghost can make an impression on the soul that is more meaningful than anything we can see or hear.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Allan F. Packer of the Seventy:



“When I was a young man in high school, one of my passions was American football. I played middle linebacker. The coach worked the team hard, teaching us the basics. We practiced until the skills became natural and automatic. During one play against our biggest rival, I had an experience that has helped me over the years. We were on defense. I knew my assigned opponent, and as the play unfolded, he moved to my right into the line of scrimmage. There was a lot of noise from players and fans. I reacted as the coach had taught us and followed my man into the line, not knowing if he had the ball. To my surprise, I felt the ball partially in my hands. I gave it a tug, but my opponent didn't let go. As we tugged back and forth, amid all the noise I heard a voice yelling, ‘Packer, tackle him!’ That was enough to bring me to my senses, so I dropped him on the spot.

“I have wondered how I heard that voice above all the other noise. I had become acquainted with the voice of the coach during the practices, and I had learned to trust it. I knew that what he taught worked.

“We need to be acquainted with the promptings of the Holy Ghost, and we need to practice and apply gospel teachings until they become natural and automatic. These promptings become the foundation of our testimonies” (“Finding Strength in Challenging Times!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2009, 17).

- How was Elder Packer able to know that he needed to tackle the player?
- What can we learn from Elder Packer’s experience about learning to recognize the Lord’s voice?

Ask students to ponder an experience they have had when they recognized the Lord’s voice and followed His guidance. Consider inviting one or two students to share their experiences with the class. (Caution them about sharing experiences that are too personal or sacred.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they feel they need to do to become more familiar with the Lord’s voice.

You may want to share an experience you have had when you recognized the voice of the Lord.

## 1 Samuel 3:15–18

### *Samuel tells Eli of his experience*

Ask students if they have ever had to deliver difficult or painful news to another person.

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 3:15–18 silently, looking for what Samuel told Eli. Explain that Eli wanted Samuel to tell him everything the Lord had said.

- Why do you think it might have been difficult for Samuel to tell Eli what the Lord had said? (If necessary, invite students to review verses 12–14.)
- What can Samuel’s decision to tell Eli teach us about Samuel?

## 1 Samuel 3:19–21

### *The people recognize Samuel as a prophet*

(*Caution:* If you use the following activity, explain to a few students before class what you plan to do and ask for their assistance.) Ask a few students to let you borrow nonbreakable objects that have some value or worth to them, such as wallets, schoolbooks, or other personal items. When each of these students hands an object to you, throw it on the ground as if you don’t care about it and it has no value to you.

- What message does it send if I throw something you value on the ground?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 3:18–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for phrases that indicate that the Lord was supporting Samuel as a prophet. (You may need to explain that Dan was a location at the northern extreme of Israel’s boundaries, and Beersheba was located at the furthest south. Thus, the phrase “from Dan even to Beer-sheba” was a way of saying “the whole country.”)

- What do you think it means that “the Lord . . . did let none of [Samuel’s] words fall to the ground” (verse 19)? (All of Samuel’s prophecies were fulfilled, which showed the people that his words came from the Lord.)

The Lord also sustains the words of modern prophets (see D&C 1:37–38) and the words of local priesthood leaders and parents. Invite students to consider how they treat the words of the Lord’s servants.

Conclude by inviting students to make a greater effort to study and follow the words of the Lord’s prophets.

## Supplemental Teaching Idea

### 1 Samuel 3:4–10. Video presentation—“Samuel and Eli”

As part of your discussion of 1 Samuel 3:4–10, you may want to show the video “Samuel and Eli” (1:58), which

depicts the events described in these verses. This video is available on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org).

## LESSON 83

# 1 Samuel 4–8

### Introduction

The Philistines defeated the Israelites in war and took the ark of the covenant of God. Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas were slain during the battle. After being tormented by various plagues, the Philistines returned

the ark. Samuel exhorted the Israelites to return to the Lord. After a brief period of repentance, the Israelites rejected the Lord and asked Samuel to give them a king to rule over them.

### Focus on helping students

As you prepare to teach, focus on your students and not just on what you will do or teach. As you prepare the next few lessons, ask yourself, "What will my students do in class today?" and "How will I help my students discover what they need to know?"



A depiction of the ark of the covenant

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 4

#### *The Philistines defeat the Israelites and take the ark of God*

Write the following question on the board: *When will you need the Lord's help today?*

Ask students to ponder this question. You might invite a few to share their answers if they feel comfortable doing so.

Encourage students to look for what 1 Samuel 4 teaches about what they can do to receive the Lord's help.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 4:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for troubles the Israelites were experiencing.

- If you had a chance to speak to Israel's army after their defeat, what would you tell them to help them after that difficult experience?

Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 4:3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the elders of Israel said to the army. (You may want to explain that in this case, the term *elders* refers to the leaders of the people, not necessarily the priesthood office.)

- What did the leaders of Israel say the Israelites should do?

Remind students that the ark of the covenant represented God's presence. It contained the stone tablets Moses received from the Lord on Mount Sinai.

You may want to suggest that students mark the word *it*, which refers to the ark, at the end of verse 3.

- According to verse 3, what did the elders of Israel believe the ark could do?
- What does their statement that "it may save us" show about their faith in the Lord? (They were placing their faith in an object [the ark] rather than in the Lord.)

Summarize 1 Samuel 4:4–9 by explaining that the Israelites requested that Hophni and Phinehas bring the ark from Shiloh to the battle.

Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 4:10–11 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what happened when the Israelites brought the ark to the battle.

- What happened to the Israelite army?
- Why do you think the Israelites were defeated even though they had the ark of the covenant with them? (They did not place their faith in Jehovah.)
- What principles about receiving the Lord's help can we learn from the Israelites' mistakes? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **In order to receive the Lord's help, we must place our faith in Him and obey His commandments.**)
- What are some things we can do to show the Lord that our faith is placed in Him?

Invite students to share experiences when they felt the Lord helped them as they put their faith in Him and kept His commandments. You may want to share an experience as well.

Summarize 1 Samuel 4:12–22 by explaining that when Eli learned that his two sons had been killed and the ark had been captured, he fell backward from his seat, broke his neck,

and died. Eli's daughter-in-law also died shortly after giving birth to a son. Thus were the words of the Lord fulfilled concerning the house of Eli.

## 1 Samuel 5–7

### *The Philistines return the ark, and the Israelites repent*

Draw the accompanying illustration on the board. Explain that this illustration depicts one of the gods of the Philistines—Dagon, the fish god. The Philistines believed that Dagon had given them victory over Israel. After capturing the ark, they brought it to Dagon's temple as a war trophy and set it before an image (or statue) of Dagon.



**Dagon, a god of the Philistines**

Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 5:3–5 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened to the image of Dagon when the ark of the Lord was set by it.

- What happened to the image of Dagon?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 5:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to the Philistines while the ark was with them. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that we do not know exactly what emerods were, but we do know they were a very destructive disease like tumors or boils (see verse 6, footnote *a*). The plague among the Philistines appears to have included an outbreak of mice as well (see 1 Samuel 6:5).

Summarize 1 Samuel 5:7–12 and 1 Samuel 6 by explaining that the plagues spread among other Philistine cities and some Philistines died. As the plagues worsened, the Philistines returned the ark to the Israelites in an attempt to pacify the Lord's wrath.

Explain that although the Philistines returned the ark, they continued to be a threat to the Israelites. Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 7:3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Samuel said the Israelites needed to do to be delivered from the Philistines. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What do you think it means to “return unto the Lord with all your hearts” (1 Samuel 7:3)? (As students respond, you may want to point out that it means to sincerely repent.)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *To sincerely repent, we must . . .*

- What did Samuel teach the Israelites they must do to sincerely repent?
- What can this teach us about repentance? (As students respond, you may want to point out that just as the Israelites needed to put away their false gods, we must forsake our sins.)

Add to the statement on the board so it reads as follows: *To sincerely repent, we must forsake our sins . . .*

Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 7:4–6 aloud, and invite the class to follow along and look for what else the Israelites did to repent.

- What else did the Israelites do to repent? (They confessed their sins to the Lord.)
- Based on the Israelites' actions recorded in verse 6, how would you complete the statement on the board? (After students respond, complete the statement so it conveys the following principle: **To sincerely repent, we must forsake our sins and confess them to the Lord.**)

To help students better understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Confessing and forsaking are powerful concepts. They are much more than a casual ‘I admit it; I’m sorry.’ Confession is a deep, sometimes agonizing acknowledgment of error and offense to God and man” (“The Divine Gift of Repentance,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 40).

- How does confessing our sins help us turn away from sin and turn to God for forgiveness?

As part of this discussion, students may ask what sins need to be confessed and to whom. Explain that we need to confess all of our sins to Heavenly Father. Serious sins should also be confessed to a bishop or branch president. If students have questions

about what constitutes a serious sin, invite them to talk with their parents or their bishop or branch president.

Summarize 1 Samuel 7:7–8 by explaining that the Philistines came again to battle against the Israelites. Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 7:9–13 aloud, and invite the class to follow along and look for what happened in this battle.

- How was this battle different from the previous battles the Israelites fought against the Philistines?
- How do you think the Israelites' repentance affected the outcome of this battle?

Testify of the principle you have discussed regarding repentance. Invite students to ponder whether there are sins they need to repent of, and encourage them to repent as needed by confessing and forsaking their sins.

Summarize 1 Samuel 7:14–17 by explaining that throughout the rest of Samuel's life the Lord continued to help the Israelites succeed against the Philistines.

## 1 Samuel 8

### *The Israelites reject the Lord and ask for a king*

Divide the class into small groups. Appoint a discussion leader in each group, and give him or her a copy of the following lesson material. Invite students to follow the instructions as they study 1 Samuel 8.

Discuss the following question:

- What are some ways we might be tempted to follow the world instead of the Lord?

Read aloud the following incomplete statement, and as you study 1 Samuel 8 together, consider how you might complete it: **If we choose to follow the world instead of the Lord, then \_\_\_\_\_.**

Ask someone in your group to read 1 Samuel 8:1–5 aloud. Invite the rest of the group to follow along and look for what the Israelites asked for as Samuel neared the end of his life.

- What did the people want Samuel to do?

Ask someone to read 1 Samuel 8:6–8 aloud. Discuss the following question:

- How was asking for a king a rejection of the Lord as their leader?

The Israelites' desire to have a king "like all the nations" shows that they placed their trust in man rather than in the Lord, who was their true King. Take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 8:10–18, and look for what would happen if the Israelites appointed a king to rule over them.

Discuss the following question:

- Which of the consequences of having a king do you think would be most difficult? Why?

Work together to complete the principle above based on what you have learned from 1 Samuel 8:10–18.

- When have you seen someone choose to follow the world instead of the Lord and experience sorrow and regret as a result?

Ask someone to read 1 Samuel 8:19–20 aloud. Invite the rest of the group to follow along and look for the Israelites' response to Samuel's warning.

Discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think the people rejected the prophet's warning?
- What are some ways we might make similar mistakes?

Invite group members to share their testimonies concerning the importance of choosing to follow the Lord instead of the world.

To conclude the lesson, you may want to invite several students to summarize what they learned in their group discussions of 1 Samuel 8. Encourage students to act on the truths they have learned today.

## LESSON 84

# 1 Samuel 9–11

### Introduction

After the Israelites insisted upon having a king to rule them, the Lord led Saul to Samuel and revealed to him that Saul was to be king. Samuel anointed Saul as the earthly leader of Israel, the Spirit of the Lord came upon

Saul, and he was later publicly proclaimed as the king of Israel. After Saul led Israel to victory in battle against the Ammonites, the Israelites gathered together and confirmed him as king.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 9

#### *The Lord leads Saul to Samuel*

Ask students whom they would seek direction from in each of the following scenarios and why they would choose that person (or create scenarios that might be more relevant to the lives of your students):

You are traveling and cannot find your desired destination.

You are approaching graduation and wondering what to do next in life.

You are asked a challenging question about the Church, and you don't know the answer.

Ask students to ponder situations in their lives in which they could benefit from seeking and receiving the Lord's direction. Invite students as they study 1 Samuel 9 to look for truths that can help them when they need direction.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 9:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for characteristics of a man named Saul.

- What were some of Saul's characteristics?

Summarize 1 Samuel 9:3–5 by explaining that the donkeys belonging to Saul's father were lost, and he sent Saul and a servant to look for them. After they searched without success, Saul suggested they return home to his father. Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 9:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the servant responded to Saul's suggestion.

- What did Saul's servant suggest?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 9:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the titles by which this man of God was known in the time of Saul.

- How did the people refer to this man of God?

Explain that the word *seer* means a person who sees. A seer is a man of God who can see or know of things in the past, present, or future that others may not perceive (see Mosiah 8:13–17).

To prepare students to identify principles in 1 Samuel 9, you may want to invite them to review verse 6 and suggest that they mark the qualities of a seer: "he is an honourable man"; "all that he saith cometh surely to pass"; and "he can shew us our way that we should go."

Summarize 1 Samuel 9:7–14 by explaining that Saul and his servant decided to visit the man of God. Upon their arrival in the city, the man of God came toward them as he was going to bless a sacrifice on behalf of the people. Ask students to scan 1 Samuel 9:14 and find the name of the man of God.

Remind students that despite Samuel's warnings of the dangers of having a king, the Israelites had demanded that they be given a king to rule over them so they could be like other nations (see 1 Samuel 8:4–22).

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 9:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord helped Samuel find the person whom the Lord had chosen to be Israel's earthly leader.

### Encourage daily scripture study

Encourage students to set aside time every day for personal study of the Old Testament. You can help them account for their daily study by providing an appropriate tracking system (see the reading charts in the appendix of this manual). Give students regular opportunities to share what they are learning and feeling during their personal scripture study. Take care not to embarrass or discourage students who struggle to study the scriptures on their own.

- How did Samuel know whom he was to anoint as Israel's earthly leader?
- What can we learn from this experience about how the Lord calls people to serve in His kingdom? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **The Lord calls people to serve in His kingdom through inspiration to His authorized servants.**)
- Why is it important to understand that callings to serve in the Lord's kingdom come from the Lord?

Remind students that Saul and his servant had come to Samuel to ask for direction in finding the lost donkeys. However, Saul had not yet spoken to Samuel about the donkeys.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 9:18–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Samuel told Saul.

- What did Samuel tell Saul about his father's donkeys? What can Samuel's instruction teach us about the power of seers? (You may want to point out that Samuel's instruction regarding the donkeys was likely given to strengthen Saul's faith in preparation for the call to be king.)
- What did Samuel tell Saul about the will of the Lord for him? (You may need to explain that when Samuel said all the desire of Israel was on Saul [1 Samuel 9:20], he was saying that Saul was the man the Lord had chosen to fulfill Israel's desire to have a king.)
- How do Samuel's words to Saul about the will of the Lord for him relate to the words of Saul's servant when he said the man of God might be able to show them the "way that [they] should go" (1 Samuel 9:6)? (Samuel had taught Saul the way his life should go.)
- Based on Saul's experience, what principle can we learn about seeking the Lord's direction through His prophets and seers? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we seek the Lord's direction through His prophets and seers, they will show us the way we should go.**)

Help students understand this principle by asking the following questions:

- Whom do we sustain as prophets and seers in our day? (Members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.)
- What are some ways we can seek direction from the Lord through His prophets and seers in our day?

Divide students into groups of three. Ask them to identify several situations in which youth need direction regarding what they should do or what the will of the Lord is for them. Ask students also to identify direction from the Lord's prophets and seers that can help youth in these situations. (You might consider providing each group with a copy of *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011] to help them in their efforts.) Invite each group to share the examples they discussed.

Invite students to share experiences they have had when they received direction from the Lord through His prophets and seers and to explain how that direction helped them. You may also want to share an experience. Invite students to seek the will of the Lord through His prophets.

Summarize 1 Samuel 9:22–26 by explaining that Samuel brought Saul and his servant to a feast where Samuel honored Saul. The next morning Samuel instructed that Saul's servant go ahead of them while he revealed to Saul "the word of God" (see 1 Samuel 9:27).

## 1 Samuel 10

### *Samuel anoints Saul, and he is later publicly proclaimed the king of Israel*

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 10:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Samuel did for Saul.

- According to Samuel, who was responsible for Saul's calling and anointing? (The Lord.)
- If you were Saul, how might you have felt after receiving this calling?

Summarize 1 Samuel 10:2–5 by explaining that after Samuel anointed Saul, he prophesied that Saul would have three experiences as he traveled. One of these would involve meeting a group of prophets who would prophesy, or speak inspired words.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 10:6–10. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Samuel taught Saul and how Samuel’s words were fulfilled.

- How were Samuel’s words fulfilled?
- According to verse 7, who was with Saul? (God.) How might experiencing these signs have helped Saul to know God was with him?
- What truth can we learn about those who are called to serve God? (One truth students may identify is that **God will be with those He calls to serve Him as they act in righteousness.**)
- Why might this truth comfort you when you receive a calling to serve God?

Summarize 1 Samuel 10:11–23 by explaining that people who knew Saul were surprised to see him prophesy with the group of prophets. After this event, Samuel gathered the Israelites together and reminded them that they had rejected the Lord by seeking to have a king. He then announced that Saul was the man whom the Lord had chosen to be the earthly leader of Israel.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 10:24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people responded to Saul being selected.

Explain that not everyone supported Saul’s selection as king. One group of people questioned Saul’s abilities and despised him, but Saul did not retaliate against them (see 1 Samuel 10:26–27).

## 1 Samuel 11

### *Saul leads Israel to victory over the Ammonites, and his kingship is confirmed*

- What are some different ways you have seen people respond when they experience success?
- Do you think the way in which we respond to success matters? Why?

Invite students as they study 1 Samuel 11 to think about how they respond when they experience success and why the way in which they respond is important.

Summarize 1 Samuel 11:1–3 by informing students that sometime after Saul’s appointment as king of Israel, the Ammonites threatened to attack some Israelites living east of the Jordan River.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 11:4–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Saul responded when he heard about the threatened attack.

- What did Saul do to rally the Israelites?

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 11:11 silently, looking for the outcome of the battle. Ask them to report what they find.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 11:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for Saul’s response to the Israelites’ success in this battle.

- To whom did Saul give credit for the Israelites’ success?
- What principle can we learn from Saul’s example? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **when we experience success, we should acknowledge the hand of the Lord.**)
- What attributes do we show when we acknowledge the hand of the Lord in our successes? Why might it have been important for Saul to have possessed these attributes?
- How might we be blessed as we acknowledge the hand of the Lord in our successes?

Summarize 1 Samuel 11:14–15 by explaining that Samuel gathered the people together, and they confirmed Saul as their king before the Lord.

Conclude the lesson by sharing your testimony of the truths discussed in today’s lesson and inviting students to act on these truths.

## LESSON 85

# 1 Samuel 12–15

### Introduction

While the Israelites were gathered to confirm Saul as their king, Samuel reproved them for ingratitude and exhorted them to follow the Lord. When threatened by a Philistine attack, Saul disobeyed the Lord by offering a sacrifice instead of waiting for Samuel to do it. Jonathan

and Saul led the Israelites to victory in battle against the Philistines. Saul again disobeyed the Lord by not fulfilling His command to destroy the Amalekites and all of their animals, and the Lord rejected Saul as the king of Israel.

### Encourage students to read the text for the course

Encourage students to read the book of scripture that corresponds with the course of study. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “Reading a book of scripture from beginning to end . . . [introduces] us to important stories, gospel doctrines, and timeless principles. This approach also enables us to learn about major characters in the scriptures and the sequence, timing, and context of events and teachings” (“A Reservoir of Living Water” [Brigham Young University devotional, Feb. 4, 2007], 3; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu)).

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 12

#### *Samuel exhorts the Israelites to follow the Lord*

Before class, write the following question on the board: *What are some reasons people might use to try to justify their disobedience to the Lord’s commandments?*

Begin the lesson by inviting students to respond to the question on the board. (You may need to explain that in this context, *justify* means to rationalize or excuse.) Ask a student to write the class’s responses on the board.

Invite students as they study 1 Samuel 12–15 to look for principles that can help them overcome the temptation to try to justify disobeying the Lord’s commandments.

Summarize 1 Samuel 12 by explaining that while the Israelites were gathered to confirm Saul as their king, the prophet Samuel spoke of his ministry among them and testified that the Lord was the true leader of Israel.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 12:14–15, 25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the warning Samuel gave as he spoke to the Israelites.

- What warning did Samuel give?

Explain that students will see the importance of this warning as they read about Saul’s choices in the chapters that follow.

### 1 Samuel 13

#### *Saul disobeys the Lord and offers a burnt offering*

Summarize 1 Samuel 13:1–4 by explaining that a group of Israelite soldiers under the command of Saul’s son Jonathan attacked a group of Philistine soldiers stationed in Israelite territory. Knowing this attack would lead to war with the Philistines, Saul gathered additional soldiers.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 13:5–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how some Israelites responded when the Philistine army advanced.

- How did some Israelites respond when they recognized the dangerous situation they were in?
- Based on the description of the Philistine army in verse 5, why do you think the Israelites were so afraid?

Help students understand 1 Samuel 13:8 by explaining that the prophet Samuel had previously told Saul that he was to go to Gilgal and wait seven days for Samuel to come and offer sacrifices to the Lord (see 1 Samuel 10:8). This sacrifice would be a way to seek the Lord’s blessings before the Israelite army went into battle. It would also help the soldiers dedicate themselves to the Lord and strengthen their faith. It was important for Saul to wait for Samuel because Saul was not authorized to perform the sacrifice.

- If you had been in Saul’s situation, would you have performed the sacrifice or would you have waited for the prophet Samuel as instructed?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 13:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Saul did in these critical circumstances.

- What did Saul do?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 13:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened soon after Saul performed the sacrifice.

- What happened soon after Saul performed the sacrifice?
- What reasons did Saul give to justify his disobedience to the Lord’s commandments?

Write the following phrase on the board: *Even though we may try to justify our disobedience to the Lord’s commandments . . .*

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 13:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a consequence of Saul’s disobedience.

- What was the consequence of Saul’s disobedience? (He would lose the honor of having the kingship continue through his posterity.)
- Based on what we learn from Saul’s experience, how would you complete the statement on the board? (Write students’ responses on the board. The following is one way to complete the statement: **Even though we may try to justify our disobedience to the Lord’s commandments, He will hold us accountable.**)
- How might understanding this truth help someone overcome the temptation to try to justify disobeying the Lord’s commandments?

Summarize 1 Samuel 13:15–23 by explaining that Samuel left Saul, and the Philistines sent raiding troops to destroy the land and torment the Israelites.

## 1 Samuel 14

### *Jonathan and Saul lead the Israelites in battle against the Philistines*

Invite a student to read the following summary of 1 Samuel 14:

Trusting in the Lord, Jonathan and his servant courageously attacked a group of Philistine soldiers. This act, combined with an earthquake that followed, caused confusion and panic in the Philistine army. Saul’s army then attacked the panicked Philistines and defeated them.

During this battle, Saul demanded a fast and forbade his soldiers from eating in a misguided effort to get help from the Lord and prevail over his enemies. Jonathan was unaware of this command and ate some honey while pursuing the Philistines. Later in the day, when Saul sought revelation from the Lord about whether to attack the Philistines during the night, no answer came. Saul concluded that the Lord did not answer because someone in the army had sinned. He gathered the people together and swore an oath that whoever had eaten earlier in the day would be put to death, even if it had been his own son Jonathan. When he learned that Jonathan had eaten some honey, Saul said Jonathan must die.

- Do you think Jonathan should have been put to death? Why?
- What are some things this account teaches us about Saul’s character during this time?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 14:45 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people responded to Jonathan’s death sentence.

- What reason did the people give for preserving Jonathan’s life?

## 1 Samuel 15

### *The Lord rejects Saul as king because of his disobedience*

Write the following statement on the board: *Because I (keep this commandment), it is okay if I (do not keep this commandment).*

Explain that sometimes we might be tempted to try to justify our disobedience to some commandments because we are obedient to others. Invite students to give examples of how someone might fill in the blanks of the statement on the board. (It may help to give students an example such as “Because I pray and read my scriptures daily, it is okay if I do not attend my church meetings.”)

Invite students to look for truths in 1 Samuel 15 that can help them overcome the temptation to try to justify disobedience in this way.

Explain that 1 Samuel 15 records that the Lord gave Saul a second chance to prove his obedience. He commanded Saul to destroy all the Amalekites and their livestock. The Amalekites were a murderous people and were enemies of the Lord (see Deuteronomy 25:17–19).

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 15:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whether Saul obeyed the Lord.

- How would you describe Saul’s obedience to the Lord’s command to destroy all the Amalekites and their livestock?

Summarize 1 Samuel 15:10–12 by explaining that the Lord told Samuel that Saul had turned back from following Him and had disobeyed His commandments. Samuel was grieved and visited Saul.

Invite three students to come to the front of the class. Assign one student to read Saul’s statements recorded in 1 Samuel 15:13–23, another student to read Samuel’s statements, and the third student to perform the role of narrator. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Saul said about what he had done and what Samuel taught him. Interrupt the reading at appropriate places to ask the following questions.

After verse 13 ask:

- What did Saul say he had done?

After verse 15 ask:

- How did Saul try to justify the fact that he and his soldiers had been only partially obedient to the Lord’s commandment? How is his situation like the examples we discussed earlier of obeying some commandments while disobeying others?

After verse 17 ask:

- How had Saul changed since he was anointed as king? How can a lack of humility influence an individual’s obedience to the Lord?

After verse 21 ask:

- Even after being rebuked by Samuel, what did Saul do? (He would not acknowledge his fault and continued to try to justify his disobedience.)

After verse 23 is read, instruct the students who helped with the reading to return to their seats. Then ask:

- In verse 22, what did Samuel teach was more important than making animal sacrifices? (Obeying the Lord.)
- Based on this, how would you state a principle concerning the greatest offering we can give to the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **The greatest offering we can give to the Lord is our complete obedience to Him.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)
- How can understanding this truth help us if we are tempted to try to justify our disobedience to some commandments because of our obedience to other commandments?
- What experiences have you had that have helped you see the importance of striving to obey the Lord completely?

Ask students to review 1 Samuel 15:24 and look for the explanation Saul gave for disobeying the Lord.

- Why did Saul say he had disobeyed the Lord?
- What principle can we learn from Saul’s mistake? (One principle students may identify is **seeking to please others rather than the Lord can lead us to disobey His commandments.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)
- What are some examples of this principle in our day?

Summarize the remainder of 1 Samuel 15 by explaining that Samuel told Saul that the kingdom would be taken from him and given to someone else. Samuel also followed the commandment to kill the king of the Amalekites.

Briefly review and testify of the truths students have identified throughout the lesson.

Invite students to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What is a specific way I will apply what I have learned today?

Encourage students to apply what they wrote.

# Home-Study Lesson

## 1 Samuel 1–15 (Unit 17)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied 1 Samuel 1–15 (unit 17) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (1 Samuel 1–3)**

Studying the faith of Hannah, students discovered that as we turn to the Lord in our adversity, He can provide hope and peace. Students also saw the following principles illustrated in her life: When we ask the Lord to bless us, we must be willing to use those blessings to serve Him. If we honor the Lord, He honors us.

#### **Day 2 (1 Samuel 4–8)**

Students learned about the Israelites putting their trust in the ark of God rather than in God Himself. They identified that in order to receive the Lord's help, we must place our faith in Him and keep His commandments. From the Israelites' repentance, students learned that to sincerely repent, we must forsake our sins and confess them to the Lord. Based on the account of Eli and his family, students also learned that if we choose to follow the world instead of the Lord, then eventually we will experience sorrow and regret.

#### **Day 3 (1 Samuel 9–11)**

In their study of the call of Saul as king of Israel, the following truths were identified: the Lord calls people to serve in His kingdom through inspiration to His authorized servants. If we seek the Lord's direction through His prophets and seers, they will show us the way we should go. Students were given ideas about how to seek the Lord's direction through His prophets and seers. God can be with those He calls to serve Him. When we experience success, we should acknowledge the hand of the Lord.

#### **Day 4 (1 Samuel 12–15)**

From choices Saul made as king, students learned the following important truths related to obedience: Even though we may try to justify our disobedience to the Lord's commandments, He will hold us accountable for disobeying them. The greatest offering we can give the Lord is our complete obedience to Him. Seeking to please others rather than the Lord can lead us to disobey His commandments.

### Introduction

As a child, Samuel served in the tabernacle under the high priest, Eli. One night Samuel received a revelation from the Lord. Samuel learned to recognize the voice of the Lord. The Lord spoke through him, and the people recognized him as a prophet.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### **1 Samuel 3:1–14**

##### *The Lord calls Samuel*

Before class, make preparations to produce several different sounds. (For example, you could bring items such as a bell, a whistle, or blocks of wood to hit together.) Select some sounds that students may recognize and others they may not recognize. (Instead of preparing to make sounds, you could record the voices of six individuals, choosing some people whose voices students may recognize and others whose voices they may not recognize.)

Invite students to close their eyes before each sound is made (or before each voice recording is played). After each sound, invite them to try to identify what (or whose voice) they heard.

Afterward, ask students why they recognized some sounds (or voices) and may not have recognized others. Encourage them to look, as they study 1 Samuel 3, for the voice that young Samuel learned to recognize.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 3:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the spiritual condition of the people during Samuel's youth.

- What do you think it means that "the word of the Lord was precious in those days"? (Revelations from the Lord were rare.)
- What might this tell us about the spiritual condition of the people at this time?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 3:2–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened in the tabernacle one night.

- Why do you think Samuel did not recognize the voice?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 3:7–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what helped Samuel recognize the Lord's voice.

- According to verse 7, why did Samuel initially not recognize the voice?
- What did Eli counsel Samuel to do if he heard the voice again?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 3:11–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Samuel after Samuel recognized His voice. Invite them to report what they find.

- Why do you think the Lord spoke to Samuel and not to Eli?

Explain that the Lord was displeased with Eli for allowing the iniquity in his household to continue without correction. The Lord was also giving Samuel guidance and instruction in preparation for his calling as a prophet.

- What can we learn from Samuel's experience that will help us receive knowledge from the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we increase our ability to receive and understand personal revelation, we will be able to recognize the voice of the Lord more easily and receive His guidance and instruction.**)

You may want to explain that while Samuel may have heard an audible voice, the voice of the Lord is most often manifested to His children through the voice of His Spirit, which is usually not a voice one hears as much as one feels.

To help students understand how we can learn to recognize the voice of the Lord in our lives and receive His guidance, ask each student to silently read one of the following references and look for the answer to the corresponding question. (You may want to write the references and questions on the board or provide each student with a strip of paper with one of the references and the associated question written on it.)

*1 Nephi 17:45 (What can prevent me from recognizing the Lord's voice?)*

*Alma 5:57 (What is one thing I need to do if I want to learn to recognize the Lord's voice?)*

*Doctrine and Covenants 1:38 (Who may speak for the Lord?)*

*Doctrine and Covenants 8:2–3; 11:12–13 (How can I recognize when the Lord speaks to me through the Spirit?)*

*Doctrine and Covenants 18:34–36 (What is one way I can hear the voice of the Lord daily?)*

After sufficient time, invite five students to each read aloud a different set of verses and the associated question and then answer the question in their own words.

Ask the class to list on the board different ways the Lord can speak to us. (After they identify several ways, make sure they understand that the Lord can communicate with us through visions, speech, dreams, and sometimes appearances. Most often we hear His voice through His prophets, the scriptures, and the Holy Ghost as impressions, thoughts, and ideas (see John 16:13–15).

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who described how the Lord communicates with us through His Spirit:

"The Spirit does not get our attention by shouting or shaking us with a heavy hand. Rather it whispers. It caresses so gently that if we are preoccupied we may not feel it at all. . . .

"Occasionally it will press just firmly enough for us to pay heed. But most of the time, if we do not heed the gentle feeling, the Spirit will withdraw and wait until we come seeking and listening" ("The Candle of the Lord," *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 53).

- What are some preoccupations that may prevent us from hearing and recognizing the gentle whisper of the Lord's voice?
- How have you learned to recognize when the Lord is speaking to you through the Spirit?

Ask students to ponder an experience they have had when they recognized the Lord's voice and followed His guidance. Consider inviting one or two students to share their experiences with the class. (Caution them about sharing experiences that are too personal or sacred.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals what they feel they need to do to become more familiar with the Lord's voice.

You may want to share an experience you have had when you recognized the voice of the Lord.

Encourage students to continue to learn to recognize the Lord's voice and rely on the guidance He gives them.

## Next Unit (1 Samuel 16–2 Samuel 10)

Ask students to ponder the following questions: What is the biggest challenge you are facing in your life right now? Do you feel you can overcome it? Explain that as they study David's experience with a giant challenge in his life, they will learn principles that can help them overcome any challenge they face. Tell them they will also learn about the blessings of having a good friend, how kindness can change a bad situation into a good one, and the importance of obeying the Lord with exactness.

## LESSON 86

# 1 Samuel 16

### Introduction

After rejecting Saul as the king of Israel, the Lord sent Samuel to Bethlehem to find a new king among the sons of Jesse. The Lord inspired Samuel to anoint David

as the next king of Israel. David was chosen to be Saul's armor-bearer and to play music on a harp when Saul was troubled by an evil spirit.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 16:1–13

#### *The Lord inspires Samuel to anoint David as the next king of Israel*

Before class, decorate two small paper bags in different ways. Put something valuable in one bag and something of little value in the other (such as a piece of candy in one bag and just the candy wrapper in the other). Show the class the two bags, and explain that one of the bags contains something valuable.

- Without seeing what is inside, which bag would you choose?
- Why would you make that choice?

Explain that as they study 1 Samuel 16:1–13, they will learn a truth about making judgments based on outward appearances. (Set the bags aside without revealing what is in them. You will use them later in the lesson.)

Help students understand the context of this chapter by reminding them that the Lord had rejected Saul as the king of Israel (see 1 Samuel 15:26).

- According to what you learned in previous lessons, why did the Lord reject Saul as king? (See 1 Samuel 15.)

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 16:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord told Samuel to do after He rejected Saul as king.

- What did the Lord tell Samuel to do?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 16:2–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Samuel responded to the Lord's command to anoint one of Jesse's sons as the next king of Israel.

- What was Samuel worried about?
- What did the Lord tell Samuel to do so Saul would not be suspicious?
- According to verse 3, how would Samuel know whom to anoint as the next king of Israel?

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 16:6 silently, looking for what Samuel thought when he saw one of Jesse's sons. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 16:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Samuel after Samuel thought that Eliab should be the next king.

- Why did God tell Samuel not to look at Eliab's height or physical appearance as a way to decide whether he should be the new king?
- What does this verse teach us about how God sees and judges us? (Write the following truth on the board: **God judges us by our hearts rather than our outward appearance.**)
- What do you think it means that God judges us by our hearts?

Provide each student with a copy of the following statement by Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read it aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for additional insights into what it means to be judged by our hearts.

### 1 Samuel 16:7

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix at the end of this manual.



“When the Lord measures an individual, . . . He measures the heart as an indicator of the person’s capacity and potential to bless others.

“Why the heart? Because the heart is a synonym for one’s entire make-up. . . .

“The measure of our hearts is the measure of our total performance. As used by the Lord, the ‘heart’ of a person describes his effort to better self, or others, or the conditions he confronts” (“The Measure of Our Hearts,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 15).

- According to Elder Ashton, what does the Lord measure when He judges us by our hearts?
- Why is it important for you to know that God judges you by your heart and not your physical appearance?

Point out that although God judges us by our hearts, He still expects us to take care of our bodies and be neat and clean in our physical appearance. Our dress and grooming can be a reflection of our hearts.

Show the class the two bags from the beginning of the lesson. Ask a student to come to the front of the class, look inside the bags, and report to the class what they contain.

- How might this example relate to the principle written on the board?
- What problems might we experience if we make a judgment without knowing what is inside a person’s heart?

Invite students to think about a time when they judged someone based on his or her physical appearance but realized later that they had judged the person incorrectly. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class. You may also want to share an experience. Ask students to think about whether they are currently judging someone based solely on their physical appearance. Invite students to make an effort to discern the hearts of these individuals.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 16:8–13. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened as Samuel continued seeking for a new king among Jesse’s sons. Invite students to report what they find. You may need to explain that the word *ruddy* in verse 12 refers to having a red complexion or red hair.

- Why did Samuel anoint David as the next king?

### 1 Samuel 16:14–23

#### *David is selected as Saul’s armor-bearer*

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 16:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened to Saul. Point out the Joseph Smith Translation in verse 14, footnote c. Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation makes a similar change in verses 15, 16, and 23.

- What happened to Saul?

Remind students that Saul had seriously offended God by disobeying His commandments. Because of his sins, he felt troubled. Invite students to read 1 Samuel 16:15–16 silently, looking for what Saul’s servants suggested could help Saul feel better.

- What did the servants suggest could help Saul feel better?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 16:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the person who one of the servants suggested should play music for Saul.

- Who did one of the servants suggest should play the harp for Saul? (A son of Jesse. If needed, explain that the servant was referring to David.)
- According to verse 18, why would David be a good choice to help Saul?

Summarize 1 Samuel 16:19–22 by explaining that Saul sent messengers to Jesse and requested that David be sent to the king. David went with the king’s servants and was presented before the king. David became Saul’s armor-bearer, which was a person selected by the king to carry his armor and to stand by the king in times of danger. Hence David was introduced into the palace and the future seat of power he had been ordained to succeed (see 1 Samuel 16:13). David was following God’s plan, and thereby God’s design for him was unfolding according to the divine timetable.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 16:23 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for what effect David’s music had on Saul. Remind students that the Joseph Smith Translation changed the phrase “an evil spirit from God” to an evil spirit “which was not of God” (in 1 Samuel 16:23, footnote b).

- What happened when David played music for Saul? (The evil spirit departed.)
- What kind of music do you think has the power to drive away evil influences?

Point out that although Saul may have temporarily felt better by listening to spiritually uplifting music, the only way Saul could have found lasting peace was by repenting.

### Scripture Mastery—1 Samuel 16:7

Invite the class to recite together the last half of 1 Samuel 16:7, starting with “the Lord seeth.”

To help students apply the doctrine taught in 1 Samuel 16:7, read aloud the following scenarios and ask them to discuss how they might use what they learned from 1 Samuel 16:7 to help change their thoughts and actions if they were in these situations.

1. You wish you looked like some of your peers at school. You feel like you are not as attractive as others.
2. You make fun of a classmate because his or her clothing is not as nice as that of the rest of your classmates.
3. You have a neighbor who drinks alcohol and smokes cigarettes. You do not think he or she would be interested in learning more about the Church.

## Commentary and Background Information

### 1 Samuel 16:7. “But the Lord looketh on the heart”

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency explained how the Lord views His children:

“Heavenly Father’s interest in you does not depend on how rich or beautiful or healthy or smart you are. He sees you not as the world sees you; He sees who you really are. He looks on your heart [see 1 Samuel 16:7]. And He loves you [see 1 Peter 5:6–7] because you are His child” (“Your Wonderful Journey Home,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 128).

### 1 Samuel 16:23. Uplifting music can help drive evil from our lives

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught the following about using uplifting music to drive evil from our lives. He compared the mind to a stage on which someone is always performing and emphasized that we can choose whether to allow righteous or evil performances to take center stage. He said:

“If you can control your thoughts, you can overcome habits, even degrading personal habits. If you can learn to master them you will have a happy life.

“This is what I would teach you. Choose from among the sacred music of the Church a favorite hymn, one with words that are uplifting and music that is reverent, one that makes you feel something akin to inspiration. . . . Go over it in your mind carefully. Memorize it. Even though you have had no musical training, you can think through a hymn.

“Now, use this hymn as the place for your thoughts to go. Make it your emergency channel. Whenever you

find these shady actors have slipped from the sidelines of your thinking onto the stage of your mind, put on this record, as it were.

“As the music begins and as the words form in your thoughts, the unworthy ones will slip shamefully away. It will change the whole mood on the stage of your mind. Because it is uplifting and clean, the baser thoughts will disappear. For while virtue, by choice, *will not* associate with filth, evil *cannot* tolerate the presence of light.

“In due time you will find yourself, on occasion, humming the music inwardly. As you retrace your thoughts, you discover some influence from the world about you encouraged an unworthy thought to move on stage in your mind, and the music almost automatically began” (“Inspiring Music—Worthy Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 28).

*For the Strength of Youth* states:

“Music can enrich your life. It can edify and inspire you and help you draw closer to Heavenly Father. Music has a profound effect on your mind, spirit, and behavior.

“Choose carefully the music you listen to. Pay attention to how you feel when you are listening. Some music can carry evil and destructive messages. Do not listen to music that encourages immorality or glorifies violence through its lyrics, beat, or intensity. Do not listen to music that uses vulgar or offensive language or promotes evil practices. Such music can dull your spiritual sensitivity.

“Learn and sing the hymns. Hymns can lift your spirit, move you to righteous action, and help you withstand the temptations of the adversary” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 22).

# 1 Samuel 17

## Introduction

The Philistines again came to battle against the Israelites. Goliath, a giant, challenged the army of Israel to send a soldier to face him in combat. David, a young shepherd,

accepted the challenge, and King Saul sent him to fight Goliath. With the Lord's help, David slew Goliath.

### Use the curriculum

As you prepare each lesson, prayerfully review the curriculum along with your study of the scripture block. As you do, the Holy Ghost can help you adapt the lesson to the needs of your students. You may choose to use all or some of the teaching suggestions for a scripture block, or you may adapt the suggested ideas according to the needs and circumstances of your class.

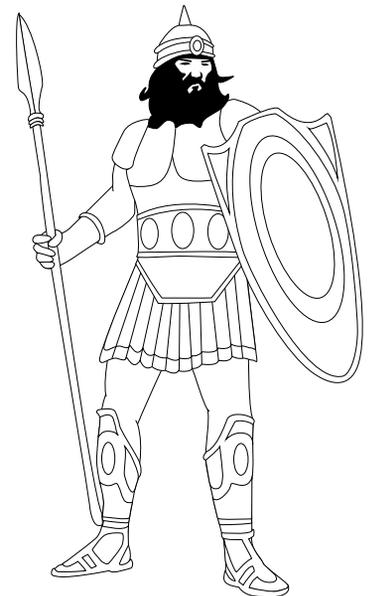
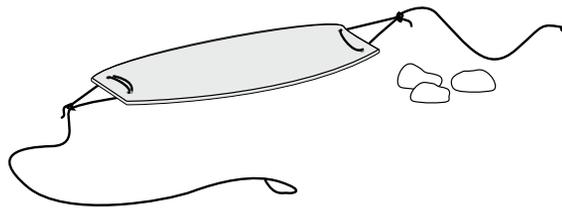
## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 17:1–40

#### David is chosen to fight Goliath

Before class, prepare the following visual aids:

1. To help students visualize Goliath's actual size, make a life-size drawing of him in the classroom or put a mark on the wall at nine feet, nine inches (three meters).
2. To help students understand what David used to defeat Goliath, draw a picture of a sling or construct one by using any sturdy fabric or soft leather for the pouch (an oval of about 3 x 5 inches [8 x 13 centimeters]) and something like shoelaces for the strings (any length from 18 to 24 inches [46 to 60 centimeters]). Tie a knot in the end of one string and a small loop in the end of the other.



Begin class by asking students what they think are the biggest challenges youths face in our day. Write their responses on the board. Then ask them to think about a challenge they are currently facing.

Invite students to look for principles that can help them know how to endure or overcome the challenges they are facing as they study the account of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17.

Summarize 1 Samuel 17:1–3 by explaining that the Philistines came again to battle against the Israelites. Draw on the board a simple picture depicting two mountains with a valley between them. Explain that the Philistines stood on one mountain and the Israelites stood on the other mountain.



Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 17:4–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Goliath and his armor and weapons were described.

- How tall was Goliath? (Explain that he could have been approximately nine feet, nine inches [three meters] tall.)

Invite several students to come to the front of the class and compare their height to the picture of Goliath or to the mark of Goliath's height on the wall.

Explain that Goliath's coat of mail (the armor over his upper body) weighed approximately 150 pounds (68 kilograms), and the iron tip of his spear weighed between 12 and 26 pounds

(5 and 12 kilograms). Explain that greaves are pieces of armor protecting the shins, and a target is armor protecting the neck (see 1 Samuel 17:6, footnotes *a* and *b*).

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the challenge Goliath gave to the Israelites.

- What challenge did Goliath give to the Israelites?
- How might you have responded to Goliath’s challenge if you had been in the camp of the Israelites?
- According to verse 11, how did the Israelite soldiers respond to Goliath’s challenge? (Explain that the word *dismayed* implies that the Israelites were distressed and frightened by the challenge.)

Summarize 1 Samuel 17:12–18 by explaining that while the army of Israel was encamped against the army of the Philistines, David was at home tending his father’s sheep. David’s father gave him food to take to his brothers, who were soldiers in the army of Israel, with instructions to see how they were doing at the battlefield.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 17:19–26. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when David arrived at the Israelite camp.

- How was David’s reaction to Goliath’s challenge different from the reaction of the Israelite soldiers? (David was not afraid.)

Summarize 1 Samuel 17:27–31 by explaining that David’s oldest brother, Eliab, was angry and questioned David’s intentions when he heard how David reacted to Goliath’s challenge. Despite his brother’s anger, David continued to tell the Israelites that they should not be afraid of Goliath. Some of the soldiers told King Saul what David said, and the king asked to see him.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:32–37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when King Saul and David met.

- How might Saul’s response to David in verse 33 be similar to what we sometimes feel when we face challenges?
- According to verses 34–36, what did David say when Saul told him that he was too young to fight with Goliath?
- According to verse 37, why did David believe he could defeat Goliath?

Write the following phrase on the board: *Remembering how the Lord has helped us in the past will . . .*

Ask students how they would complete this statement based on what they learned from David’s response. Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **remembering how the Lord has helped us in the past will strengthen our faith to endure or overcome our present challenges.**

- Why do you think remembering how the Lord has helped us in the past will help us with our present challenges?

Invite students to think about a time when the Lord helped them (or someone they know) endure or overcome a challenge. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class. After they share, ask them how that experience has helped them with other challenges or how that experience could help them with other challenges in the future.

Encourage students to remember what the Lord has done for them in the past as they seek to endure and overcome the challenges they are facing now and the challenges they will face in the future.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:38–40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what was done to prepare David for battle against Goliath.

- Why did David decide not to use King Saul’s armor? (Explain that the phrase “he had not proved it” in verse 39 means that David was not used to wearing armor.)
- What did David do to prepare for the battle?

Show students the sling you drew or constructed. Explain that slings were commonly used as weapons in David’s day. To become accurate with the sling, a person had to spend a considerable amount of time using it. David had used a sling to protect his father’s sheep. If you constructed a sling, illustrate the difficulty of using a sling effectively by inviting a few

students to attempt to hit a target while using a sling and a marshmallow or another small, round, and soft object.

Explain that the loop goes over the index or third finger while the knot is held between the thumb and index finger; the object is slung by swinging the sling over the head and releasing the knotted string as the pouch begins its arc toward the target. Timing is critical. (You may consider allowing other students to try this activity at the end of the lesson. Make sure not to let this object lesson overshadow the truths taught in 1 Samuel 17.)

## 1 Samuel 17:41–58

### *With the strength of the Lord, David slays Goliath*

Invite two students to come to the front of the class to represent David and Goliath. Ask the student who represents Goliath to read 1 Samuel 17:41–44 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for phrases that show what Goliath thought of David. Explain that the word *stave* in verse 43 is referring to a staff or pole.

- What did Goliath think of David?
- If you were David, how might you have responded to Goliath’s insults?

Ask the student representing David to read 1 Samuel 17:45–47 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how David responded to Goliath.

- How would you summarize David’s response to Goliath?
- According to verse 47, what did David say the assembly would know after he defeated Goliath?
- What does David’s response reveal about him?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:48–51 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Goliath.

- How did David exercise his faith in the Lord?
- What principles can we learn from this story? (As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following truth: **As we exercise faith in the Lord, He will help us with our challenges.**)
- What are some ways we can exercise our faith in the Lord when we experience challenges?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement from *True to the Faith*:

“Faith is much more than passive belief. You express your faith through action—by the way you live. . . . Your faith can lead you to do good works, obey the commandments, and repent of your sins” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 54–55).

Read the following scenarios to the class, and ask students to explain how someone with these challenges could exercise faith in the Lord to receive His help:

1. A young man’s parents decide to get a divorce.
2. A young woman is struggling to overcome some addictions.
3. A young woman knows she needs to forgive someone who caused her harm.
4. A young man has health problems that limit the activities he can participate in.

Invite students to ponder what they can do to exercise faith so they can receive the Lord’s help to face their own challenges. Consider sharing an experience you have had when you exercised faith in the Lord and received His help with a challenge.

Summarize 1 Samuel 17:52–57 by explaining that after David defeated Goliath, the Philistine army fled, and the army of the Israelites chased after them. David took Goliath’s head to Jerusalem, and King Saul marveled at David’s bravery.

To help students apply the truths they have learned, invite them to think again about a challenge they are currently facing. Invite them to answer the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What will you do to better exercise your faith as you face your challenges?

After sufficient time, invite several students to share with the class what they wrote, if it is not too personal. Conclude by testifying of the principles you have discussed.

## LESSON 88

# 1 Samuel 18–24

### Introduction

Saul appointed David leader over his armies but became jealous of David's success and sought to kill him. David fled from Saul, and he and the men who joined him

received help from several people. While hiding in a cave, David had the opportunity to kill Saul but chose to let him live because a prophet of God had anointed Saul.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 18

*As David behaves wisely and is blessed by the Lord, Saul grows increasingly jealous*

Invite students to name some poor choices that people could make because of anger or jealousy. Explain that as students study 1 Samuel 18, they will learn principles that will help them better understand the dangers of anger and jealousy and help them know how to respond when others are angry or jealous.

Summarize 1 Samuel 18:1–5 by explaining that after David defeated Goliath, he became close friends with Saul's son Jonathan. Saul set David over the army. Jonathan could have been jealous of David's success, but he instead rejoiced. When Jonathan gave his clothing and weapons to David, he was showing his friendship and his support of David becoming the next king (see 1 Samuel 23:16–17).

Invite a few students to read 1 Samuel 18:6–9 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for how Saul felt about David's success.

- How did Saul respond to David's success and recognition in battle?

Point out the phrase "Saul eyed David from that day and forward" in verse 9, and explain that it refers to Saul's growing jealousy and anger toward David.

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 18:10–11 silently, looking for what Saul did because of his jealousy and anger toward David. Explain that the Joseph Smith Translation changes the phrase "the evil spirit from God" in verse 10 to "the evil spirit which was not of God" (in 1 Samuel 18:10, footnote *a*).

- According to verse 11, what did Saul do because of his jealousy and anger toward David?
- Based on this account, what happens to us when we allow ourselves to be jealous and angry? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **When we are jealous and angry, we allow the influence of the adversary into our lives.**)
- Why do you think jealousy and anger allow the influence of the adversary into our lives?

Provide each student with a copy of the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read the statement aloud, and ask the class to follow along.



"There are going to be times in our lives when someone else gets an unexpected blessing or receives some special recognition. May I plead with us not to be hurt—and certainly not to feel envious—when good fortune comes to another person? We are not diminished when someone else is added upon. We are not in a race against each other. . . . The race we are *really* in is the race against sin, and surely envy is one of the most universal of those" ("The Laborers in the Vineyard," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 31).

- What reasons did Elder Holland give for why we should not feel envious when others receive blessings?

### Remember the purpose of seminary

The purpose of seminary is to help youth understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven. As you prepare your lessons, prayerfully determine how you can help achieve this objective each day.

Encourage students to strive to avoid jealousy when others receive a blessing or some other recognition but instead to be excited for others' blessings or achievements.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 18:12–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how David behaved in response to Saul's jealousy and anger.

- What do you think it means to behave wisely?

Invite a student to read Alma 37:35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Alma taught his son about being wise.

- Based on what Alma told his son, what does it mean to behave wisely?
- What does the phrase "behaved himself wisely in all his ways" in 1 Samuel 18:14 tell us about David? (One way David was wise was through keeping the commandments in everything he did.)
- What can we learn about behaving wisely from this account about David? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we behave wisely, we invite the Lord to be with us.**)

Invite students to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- When have you seen someone behave wisely in a difficult situation? What lessons did you learn?
- What can you do to behave wisely in your everyday life? Give specific examples.

Summarize 1 Samuel 18:17–27 by explaining that Saul devised a plan to have David killed. He offered one of his daughters for David to marry if David would kill one hundred Philistines. Saul hoped that David would be killed in battle, but David was victorious and married Saul's daughter Michal.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 18:28–30 aloud, and ask students to look for the differences in the choices Saul and David made. Ask students to report what they find.

## 1 Samuel 19–22

### *David receives help as he flees from Saul*

Ask students what they would do if someone was chasing them and trying to harm them.

Summarize 1 Samuel 19:1–17 by explaining that Saul commanded his son Jonathan and all his servants to kill David. Jonathan informed David of his father's plans and persuaded Saul to promise not to kill David. However, after David returned victorious from another battle with the Philistines, Saul's jealousy returned and he tried repeatedly to kill David.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 19:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom David fled to for help.

- Why do you think it was wise for David to go to the prophet?

Summarize 1 Samuel 19:19–24 by explaining that when Saul found out David was with the prophet Samuel, he attempted to capture David. However, because of the Lord's influence, Saul was unable to take him.

Explain that in 1 Samuel 20 we learn that after David left the prophet Samuel, David met with Jonathan and they made a covenant of friendship. Jonathan covenanted to warn David of danger from his father and David covenanted to watch over Jonathan's family, including his posterity. David decided to hide from the king the next day instead of eating with him, and he requested Jonathan's help in discovering Saul's plot against him. When Saul did not see David at his table the next day, he became angry and told Jonathan that if David was allowed to live then Jonathan would never be king. Jonathan sent a message to David to flee for safety.

Invite students to read the chapter headings for 1 Samuel 21–22 silently, looking for whom David fled to for safety and what Saul did to those who helped David.

## 1 Samuel 23–24

### *David defeats the Philistines and chooses not to kill Saul*

Ask students to imagine the following scenario: You are being continually ridiculed and belittled by a peer at school. This peer also tries to turn your friends against you. One day, you discover a way to get revenge or retaliate.

- How should you respond to the opportunity to get revenge? Why?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study 1 Samuel 23–24 that can guide them when they are tempted to retaliate against others.

Summarize 1 Samuel 23 by explaining that when Saul discovered David’s location, he again sent his men to capture David. These men pursued David into the wilderness. While in the wilderness, Jonathan found David and encouraged him in his ordeal. While chasing David, Saul learned that the Philistines had again invaded his land, and he returned home to fight the Philistines.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 24:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the situation David found himself in when Saul resumed his pursuit.

- What situation did David find himself in?
- How might you have felt if you had been in David’s position and realized that the man who had been trying to kill you was vulnerable and in the cave where you were hiding?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 24:4–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what David did to Saul.

- What did David do to Saul? (Explain that cutting off the skirt of Saul’s robe meant that David cut off the border of Saul’s robe that symbolized Saul’s authority [see 1 Samuel 24:4, footnote *a*]. It also showed that David had been close enough to Saul to harm him, but he had chosen not to.)
- Why didn’t David kill Saul? (If students need help, direct them to verse 6.)
- If you had been in Saul’s position, how might you have felt when you found out that David had spared your life?

Divide the class into small groups. Invite them to read 1 Samuel 24:8–15 together, looking for why David said he would not kill Saul. Then have them discuss the following questions:

- Who did David say was the judge between him and Saul?
- What does David’s remark that he would not stretch forth his hand against the Lord’s anointed (see verses 6 and 10) teach us about David? What principle can we learn from David about not seeking revenge against those who have hurt us?

Ask someone from each group to write on the board the principle they identified. Among the principles students may identify is the following: **Because the Lord is a perfect judge, we do not need to seek revenge against those who have hurt us.**

Invite students to consider how this principle might help someone know what to do when they have a chance to retaliate against someone who has hurt them.

- What might be the danger in our trying to judge others?

Encourage students to let the Lord be the judge in situations when others hurt them and to not seek revenge. Remind students to pray for help to overcome any desires to seek revenge they may have. (*Note:* Seeking revenge is different from seeking justice. Letting the Lord be the judge does not mean you should not seek help when it is needed. For example, victims of any type of abuse should still seek help from parents and priesthood leaders as needed.)

## Commentary and Background Information

### 1 Samuel 19:19–24. “They also prophesied”

Saul attempted to capture David while he was at the dwelling place of Samuel the prophet. “A spiritual phenomenon” saved David from Saul and his messengers

(Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* [1993], 246). The phrase “they also prophesied” (1 Samuel 19:20) refers to “a religious exercise of singing or chanting praises to God” (*A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament*, 246).

# 1 Samuel 25–31

## Introduction

While fleeing from Saul, David's men sought supplies from a wealthy man named Nabal. Nabal insulted David's men and refused to help them. David intended to slay Nabal and his servants, but Nabal's wife, Abigail, interceded and calmed David, who spared Nabal's life. David spared Saul's life again and fled to Philistine

territory. When Saul was unable to receive guidance from the Lord, he sought help from the witch of Endor. The Amalekites attacked the Philistine kingdom where David had fled, but David's army repelled the attack. Three of Saul's sons were killed in battle with the Philistines, and Saul took his own life.

### Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning

Each lesson in seminary focuses on a scripture block rather than on a particular concept, theme, doctrine, or principle. As teachers and students study these scripture blocks sequentially, they incorporate many of the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning. These fundamentals include understanding the context and content of a scripture block; identifying, understanding, and feeling the truth and importance of gospel doctrines and principles; and applying those doctrines and principles.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Samuel 25

#### *Abigail calms David and saves her husband, Nabal, and the men of their household*

Line up several dominoes in a row. (You could also do this activity with other objects, such as hymnbooks.) Ask a student to push down the first domino so it tips over the other dominoes.

- How might the effect of the first domino falling relate to the good choices we make in our lives?

Invite students to look for a principle as they study 1 Samuel 25 that relates to the effects their good choices have on the people around them.

Summarize 1 Samuel 25:1 by explaining that Samuel the prophet died and all the Israelites gathered to mourn his loss. After Samuel's funeral, David and his men went into the wilderness.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 25:2–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who David encountered in the wilderness.

- What kind of person was Nabal? (After students respond, you may want to point out that verse 3, footnote *a*, describes Nabal as being "rude, rough, [or] 'hard.'")

Summarize 1 Samuel 25:4–9 by explaining that when David learned that the wealthy Nabal was nearby shearing his sheep, David sent 10 servants to request supplies for his men.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 25:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Nabal responded to David's servants.

- How did Nabal respond to David's servants?
- How did David respond to Nabal's insult?

Summarize 1 Samuel 25:14–17 by explaining that one of Nabal's servants told Abigail, Nabal's wife, how her husband had mistreated David's men. The servant also told Abigail how David and his men had provided protection to Nabal's servants and had never tried to take any of Nabal's animals.

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 25:18–19 silently, looking for what Abigail chose to do after she learned about her husband's actions.

- What did Abigail do when she heard the news?

Summarize 1 Samuel 25:20–31 by explaining that when Abigail found David in the wilderness, she bowed before him and humbly asked him to spare her household despite the iniquities of her husband.

- What can these actions teach us about Abigail's character?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 25:32–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how David responded to Abigail. (*Note:* The phrase "any that pisseth against the wall" is a cultural expression used to mean "all males.")

- When Abigail chose to make peace with David, what were the positive results for her and her husband? for her entire household?
- What principle does this account illustrate about the potential influence of one person's righteous choice? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Our righteous choices can bless not only us but also others around us.**)

Ask students to explain how Abigail's action relates to the effect the first domino had on the other dominoes.

Invite students to think about a time when they were blessed because one of their peers made a righteous choice. Ask several students to share their experiences with the class. Consider sharing a personal experience as well.

Encourage students to make righteous choices, and challenge them to look for blessings that come to others because of those righteous choices.

Summarize 1 Samuel 25:36–44 by explaining that Nabal died shortly after he found out that Abigail had made peace with David. After Nabal's death, David sent for Abigail and the two were married.

## 1 Samuel 26–27

### *David spares Saul's life again*

Summarize 1 Samuel 26–27 by explaining that King Saul took 3,000 men into the wilderness to find and kill David. When Saul and his men were asleep in their camp one night, David and one of his servants went to where Saul was sleeping. David's servant wanted to kill Saul, but David refused. Later, when King Saul discovered that David had spared his life again, he said he would no longer seek David's life. David did not believe Saul, so he moved his family to live among the Philistines.

## 1 Samuel 28

### *Saul seeks direction from the witch of Endor*

Line up another row of dominoes. Ask a different student to push down the first domino so it tips over the other dominoes in the row. Remind students that earlier we discussed how these dominoes could illustrate the effects of righteous choices.

- How might the effect of these dominoes represent poor choices?

After one or two students respond, invite students as they study 1 Samuel 28 to look for a principle that relates to the effects our poor choices can have.

Explain that in 1 Samuel 28:1–5 we learn that the king of the Philistines wanted David to go with him to war against Israel.

Ask a student to read 1 Samuel 28:5–6 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for how Saul felt when he saw the Philistines and what happened when he asked the Lord for help.

- Why do you think the Lord did not answer Saul?
- Why can our disobedience make it difficult to receive personal revelation and answers to our prayers?
- What can we learn from this account about what happens to us when we disobey God? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **When we willfully disobey God, we separate ourselves from His strength and guidance.** Write this principle on the board.)

Ask students what major decisions they will have to make in the next few years. Write their responses on the board.

- Why might it be important for you to have God's strength and guidance in your life as you face those decisions?
- If you had been one of King Saul's advisers, what would you have told him he should do to receive answers to his prayers?

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 28:7–10 silently, looking for what Saul did when he received no answer from God. Explain that the phrase “hath got a familiar spirit” in verse 7 refers to a person who claimed to be able to speak with the dead.

- What did Saul choose to do when he did not receive answers from God? (Instead of being obedient to the Lord and continuing to seek and strive to be worthy of revelation, Saul chose to turn to wicked sources. By seeking out the woman from Endor, Saul broke God’s command not to turn to those with familiar spirits [see Leviticus 19:31].)

Summarize 1 Samuel 28:11–25 by explaining that the woman Saul went to see claimed that she had called the prophet Samuel from the dead to speak to Saul. She told Saul that he and his sons would be killed the next day in battle with the Philistines. Explain that, despite what she said, it is not possible for a person like this woman to be able to summon the spirits of the Lord’s departed servants. She either pretended to see Samuel or was under the influence of evil powers when she delivered her message to Saul (see Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. [1957–66], 4:107–8).

### 1 Samuel 29–31

#### *The Lord directs David to save his people from the Amalekites*

Direct students’ attention to the list of major decisions on the board.

- What are some of the positive consequences that might come from making righteous decisions? What are some of the negative consequences that might come from making unrighteous decisions?

Summarize 1 Samuel 29:1–11; 30:1–3 by explaining that David and his men were with the armies of the Philistines as they went to fight the Israelites. Several Philistine leaders did not want David and his men in the battle, so the king commanded David and his men to return to the land of the Philistines. When they returned, they found that their city had been destroyed by the Amalekites and that their families had been taken captive.

Invite students to read 1 Samuel 30:4 silently, looking for how David and his men responded. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 30:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what David did during this time of tragedy. Explain that the phrase “encouraged himself in the Lord his God” meant that he trusted in the Lord (see verse 6, footnote *a*). Also explain that the breastplate of the high priest, which held the Urim and Thummim, was attached to the ephod (part of the dress of the high priest; see Exodus 28:26–30). These were divinely approved instruments of revelation. David had asked the high priest to bring the ephod so David could inquire of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim.

- Why do you think David was blessed with the Lord’s direction but King Saul was not?
- What principle can this account teach us about inviting the Lord to direct our lives? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **When we are faithful, we invite the Lord to direct our lives.**)

Invite a few students to share an experience they have had when they felt that the Lord directed their lives.

Summarize 1 Samuel 30:9–31; 31:1–13 by explaining that David and his army conquered the Amalekites and rescued their families. David then shared the enemy’s supplies with his people. In the meantime, the Philistines went to battle against the Israelites. Three of Saul’s sons were killed. Saul was badly wounded, and when he feared he would be killed in battle by the Philistines, he took his own life.

Ask students to consider what effect the choices they are making now will have on them and the people around them. Encourage them to make righteous choices so they can be directed by the Lord.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of 2 Samuel

### Why study this book?

The book of 2 Samuel begins by narrating David's rise and reign as king of Israel, illustrating the Lord's generosity and kindness to those who are faithful to Him. However, in recounting the sins of David and his sons Amnon and Absalom, this book also shows the sorrow and tragedy that accompany violations of the Lord's commandments. Through their study of the book of 2 Samuel, students can learn that if we are not faithful in keeping the commandments of God, we can make mistakes that will dramatically alter the course of our lives and bring harmful consequences upon ourselves and others.

### Who wrote this book?

It is uncertain who wrote 2 Samuel. The books of 1 and 2 Samuel were originally one book of scripture. (See Bible Dictionary, "Samuel, books of.")

### When and where was it written?

It is uncertain when and where 2 Samuel was written.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of 2 Samuel chronicles David's anointing and reign as king of Israel. David is remembered as the greatest king in Israel's history. Because of David's faithfulness, the Lord blessed and honored David. However, 2 Samuel illustrates that even the most righteous can fall if they are not diligent in keeping the commandments. Chapter 11 explains how David's decision to commit adultery with Bathsheba led David down the path of deceit and further sin. The remainder of 2 Samuel describes the suffering and pain that befell the house of David. This account bears a valuable testimony that we need to guard against temptation and ensure we are keeping the commandments of God.

### Outline

**2 Samuel 1–10** David becomes king, first of the tribe of Judah and then of all of Israel. He takes the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and offers to build a temple, but the Lord forbids him from doing so. The Lord is with David as he defeats many nations. He exercises wise judgment and governs his kingdom with both justice and mercy.

**2 Samuel 11–12** David lusts after Bathsheba and commits adultery with her. Bathsheba conceives a child, and David tries to make it appear as though Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, is the father. When this plan does not work, David then arranges for Uriah to be killed in battle and takes Bathsheba as a wife. The Lord reveals to Nathan the prophet what David has done, and Nathan exposes David's sin by means of a parable. Nathan prophesies of the tragedy and misery that will come upon David and his household.

**2 Samuel 13–24** David's family is fractured by lust and murder. His son Absalom conspires against him and seeks the throne. David strives to reign uprightly and is able to maintain control of the kingdom.

# 2 Samuel 1–10

## Introduction

After the death of Saul, the kingdom of Israel was divided into two factions: the Northern Kingdom, also known as Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, also known as Judah. David became the king of Judah, and Saul's son Ishbosheth became the king of Israel. The two kingdoms engaged in a long war. David's forces prevailed, and

David was anointed king of all Israel. A man named Uzzah was killed by the Lord because, without authority to do so, he took hold of the ark of the covenant as it was being transported to Jerusalem. The Lord instructed David not to build a temple, and the Lord blessed David as he reigned righteously as king.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Samuel 1–6

#### *David becomes king of all of Israel and brings the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem*

Bring two neckties to class. Invite a student who does not know how to tie a necktie to attempt to tie one correctly. After this attempt, ask the student what he or she could do to successfully tie the tie. Invite the student to ask another member of the class who knows how to tie a necktie to demonstrate with the second tie. After the first student successfully ties the necktie, ask him or her:

- Why was tying the tie easier when you asked someone for guidance?

Explain that as students study 2 Samuel 1–10, they will see how David sought the Lord's guidance so he could successfully accomplish what the Lord had asked him to do. Invite students to take a moment to ponder their lives and identify areas where they would like to receive the Lord's guidance. Encourage them to look for truths in these chapters that can help them seek the Lord's guidance.

Summarize 2 Samuel 1–5 by explaining that after David mourned the deaths of Saul and Jonathan, he was anointed king of the tribe of Judah. One of Saul's sons, Ishbosheth, became king of the remaining tribes, and his forces engaged in a long war with David's forces. After David and his armies prevailed, David was anointed king over all of Israel.

Explain that one of David's first challenges as king of Israel was battling the Philistines. Write the following questions on the board:

*What did David ask, and what did the Lord tell him?*

*What did David do, and what was the result?*

Invite students to read 2 Samuel 5:18–21 silently, looking for answers to the questions on the board. After students read, divide them into pairs, and ask them to share their answers with each other.

Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 5:22–25 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord told David when the Philistines came up to battle a second time.

- According to verse 23, what did the Lord tell David to do? (You may need to explain that the Lord told David to instruct his forces to circle around behind the Philistines and attack when they heard the wind blowing in the trees.)
- Why was David successful in his military campaign against the Philistines? (He inquired of the Lord about what he should do and then acted on the direction he received. You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases "David inquired of the Lord" in verses 19 and 23 and "David did so, as the Lord had commanded him" in verse 25.)
- What principle can we learn from David's example of inquiring of the Lord and following the Lord's direction? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we inquire of the Lord and follow His direction, then He can guide us and help us succeed in our righteous endeavors.**)

- Why do you think it is important not only to ask the Lord for guidance but also to follow His direction?

Invite students to respond to the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals (write these questions on the board):

*When have you asked for and received direction from the Lord? What were you prompted to do? What was the result as you acted on that prompting?*

After sufficient time, invite several students to share with the class what they wrote. Invite any students who would like to share their testimonies to do so. Encourage students to always seek the Lord’s direction and be willing to follow it.

To prepare students to study 2 Samuel 6, invite a student to come to the front of the class. Place your scriptures on a table or desk, and begin to push them off the table. Ask the student:

- If these scriptures begin to fall, what will your natural reaction be?

Ask students to explain how they would react if the scriptures did fall and the student caught them but was then punished for doing so. Explain that something similar happened while David was transporting the ark of the covenant from Gibeah to his new capital, Jerusalem. Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 6:3–7 aloud. Invite students to ponder why Uzzah was punished for doing something that seems helpful.

- Why do you think the consequence for trying to steady the ark when the oxen stumbled was so severe?

Invite a student to read aloud the statements below. Ask students to listen for anything that helps them understand this account better:

“The ark was the symbol of God’s presence, His glory and majesty. When first given to Israel, the ark was placed in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, and not even the priest was allowed to approach it. Only the high priest, a type of Christ, could approach it, and then only after going through an elaborate ritual of personal cleansing and propitiation [regaining God’s favor by repenting] for his sins” (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual*, 2nd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2001], 188). When moving the ark, priests were required to use poles running through rings on the sides to carry it. According to Numbers 4:15, the consequence for touching the ark without authorization was death.

Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said:

“Some may reason that [Uzzah] was only trying—though mistakenly—to help out. But given the numerous times the Lord had saved and spared Israel, including the high dramas of the Red Sea and of the manna from heaven, surely He [the Lord] knew how to keep the ark in balance!” (*Meek and Lowly* [1987], 15).

- Why do you think Uzzah was punished for steadying the ark?

Explain that steadying the ark can be compared to trying to correct something in the Church without having received the authority to do so. Provide students with copies of the following statement by President David O. McKay, and invite a student to read it aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for additional dangers that come from seeking to correct or direct Church leaders or members without the authority to do so.



“It is a little dangerous for us to go out of our own sphere and try unauthoritatively to direct the efforts of a brother. You remember the case of Uzzah who stretched forth his hand to steady the ark. He seemed justified when the oxen stumbled in putting forth his hand to steady that symbol of the covenant. We today think his punishment was very severe. Be that as it may, the incident conveys a lesson of life. Let us look around us and see how quickly men who attempt unauthoritatively to steady the ark die spiritually. Their souls become embittered, their minds distorted, their judgment faulty, and their spirit depressed. Such is the pitiable condition of men who, neglecting their own responsibilities, spend their time in finding fault with others” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1936, 60).

- What are the consequences of seeking to “steady the ark,” or trying to direct or correct Church leaders?
- What principle can we learn from the account of Uzzah? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Those who attempt to**

### Help students understand context and content

One fundamental element of gospel teaching and learning is understanding the context and content of a scripture block. Context includes the circumstances or background of a particular passage or account in the scriptures. The content includes the stories, people, events, sermons, and inspired commentary that are described or recorded in the scriptures. As you help students understand the context and content of the scriptures, they will be prepared to recognize the messages of the inspired authors.

**direct God’s work without His authority bring spiritual death upon themselves.**

Write this principle on the board.)

- How are people today trying to correct or direct God’s work even though they lack the authority to do so? (Some examples may include advocating that women be ordained to the priesthood and criticizing the Church for sanctioning marriage between a man and a woman only. You might discuss other examples that may be more relevant to your students, such as criticizing local leaders.)

You may want to testify that we can avoid spiritual death and the other consequences of steadying the ark by trusting in the Lord and His chosen servants. Invite students to ponder how they can avoid steadying the ark.

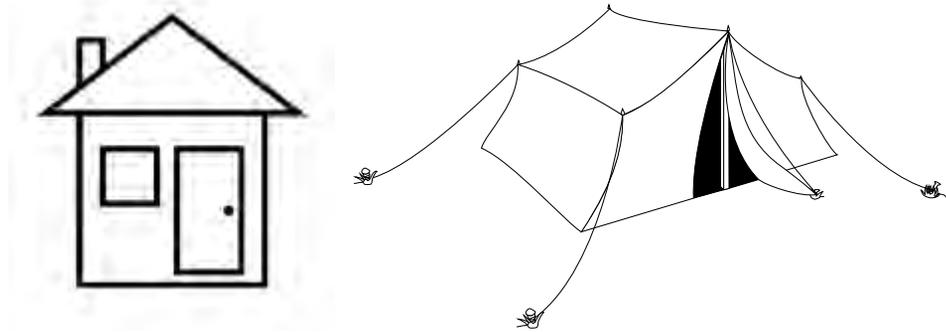
Summarize 2 Samuel 6:8–23 by explaining that after this incident, David brought the ark into Jerusalem amid great joy and celebration. David’s wife Michal criticized David’s joyous behavior, which had a negative effect on their relationship.

## 2 Samuel 7–10

*David obeys the command not to build a temple and is blessed in his reign as king*

Consider drawing a simple picture of a house and a tent on the board.

Invite students to read 2 Samuel 7:1–2 silently, looking for where David was living and what concerned him.



- According to verse 2, what did David not feel right about?
- What do you think David wanted to do?

Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 7:5, 12–13 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord told David about building a temple. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the Lord told the prophet Nathan that David should not build a temple. However, the Lord said He would establish David’s house (his throne and kingdom) forever. He also said that one of David’s descendants would build the temple. In 2 Samuel 7:18–29 we read that David expressed his heartfelt awe and gratitude that the Lord would bless him so greatly.

Summarize 2 Samuel 8–10 by explaining that the Lord blessed and preserved David as he reigned in righteousness. David honored the covenant he had made with Jonathan—he received Jonathan’s son into his home and gave him all of the inheritance belonging to the house of Saul.

Conclude by testifying of the truths you have discussed in today’s lesson.

# Home-Study Lesson

## 1 Samuel 16–31; 2 Samuel 1–10 (Unit 18)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied 1 Samuel 16–2 Samuel 10 (unit 18) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (1 Samuel 16–17)

As students read about David being chosen as the next king of Israel, they learned that God judges us by our hearts rather than our outward appearance.

#### Day 2 (1 Samuel 18–24)

When students studied about Saul's reaction to David's success they learned that when we are jealous and angry, we allow the influence of the adversary into our lives. From David's example, students learned that as we behave wisely, we invite the Lord to be with us. They also learned that because the Lord is a perfect judge, we do not need to seek revenge against those who have hurt us.

#### Day 3 (1 Samuel 25–31)

As students read about what Abigail did to save her family, they learned that our righteous choices can bless not only us but also others around us. From Saul's example they learned that when we disobey God, we lose His strength and guidance. As students studied more about David, they received assurance that when we are faithful, we invite the Lord to direct our lives.

#### Day 4 (2 Samuel 1–10)

In this lesson about David's appointment as king of Israel, students learned that if we inquire of the Lord and follow His direction, then He can guide us and help us succeed in our righteous endeavors. From the account of Uzzah steadying the ark, students learned that those who attempt to direct God's work without His authority bring spiritual death upon themselves.

### Introduction

This lesson can help students understand how they can receive the Lord's help to endure or overcome challenges they face.

### Suggestions for Teaching

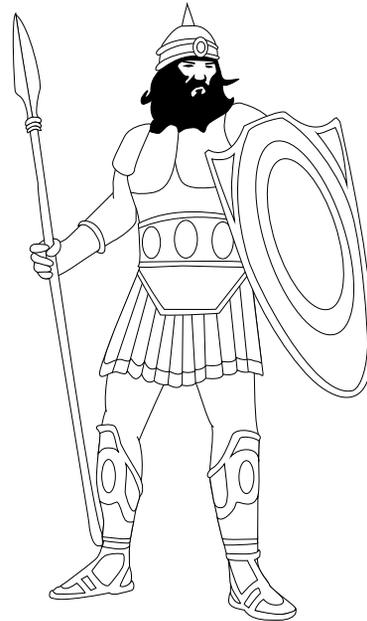
*Note:* Students studied the scripture mastery passage in 1 Samuel 16:7 in this unit. You may want to review it with them and recite it together as a class.

#### 1 Samuel 17:1–40

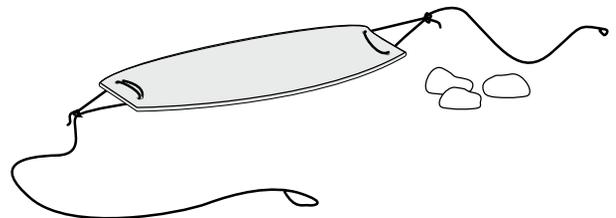
##### *David is chosen to fight Goliath*

Before class, prepare the following visual aids:

1. To help students visualize Goliath's actual size, make a life-size drawing of him in the classroom or put a mark on the wall at nine feet, nine inches (three meters).



2. To help students understand what David used to defeat Goliath, draw a picture of a sling or construct one by using any sturdy fabric or soft leather for the pouch (an oval of about 3 x 5 inches [8 x 13 centimeters]) and something like shoelaces for the strings (any length from 18 to 24 inches



[46 to 60 centimeters]). Tie a knot in the end of one string and a small loop in the end of the other string.

Begin class by asking students what they think are the biggest challenges youths face in our day. Write their responses on

the board. Then ask them to think about a challenge they are currently facing.

Invite students to look for principles that can help them know how to endure or overcome the challenges they are facing as they study the account of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17.

Summarize 1 Samuel 17:1–3 by explaining that the Philistines came again to battle against the Israelites.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:4–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Goliath was described.

- How tall was Goliath? (Explain that he could have been approximately nine feet, nine inches [three meters] tall.)

Invite students to come to the front of the class and compare their height to the picture of Goliath or to the mark of Goliath's height on the wall.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:8–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the challenge Goliath gave to the Israelites.

- What challenge did Goliath give to the Israelites?
- According to verse 11, how did the Israelite soldiers respond to Goliath's challenge?

Summarize 1 Samuel 17:12–18 by explaining that while the army of Israel was encamped against the army of the Philistines, David was at home tending his father's sheep. David's father gave him food to take to his brothers, who were soldiers in the army of Israel, with instructions to see how they were doing at the battlefield.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Samuel 17:19–26. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when David arrived at the Israelite camp.

- How was David's reaction to Goliath's challenge different from the reaction of the Israelite soldiers? (David was not afraid.)

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:27–31 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how David's brother responded to him.

- How did David respond to his brother's rebuke?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:32–37 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Saul said to David.

- How might Saul's response to David in verse 33 be similar to what we sometimes feel when we face challenges?
- According to verses 34–36, what did David say when Saul told him that he was too young to fight with Goliath?
- According to verse 37, why did David believe he could defeat Goliath?

Write the following phrase on the board: *Remembering how the Lord has helped us in the past will . . .*

Ask students how they would complete this statement, based on what they learned from David's response. Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **remembering how the Lord has helped us in the past will strengthen our faith to endure or overcome our present challenges.**

- Why do you think remembering how the Lord has helped us in the past will help us with our present challenges?

Invite students to share about a time when the Lord helped them (or someone they know) endure or overcome a challenge. Invite them to explain how that experience could help them endure or overcome the challenges they face now or will face in the future.

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:38–40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what was done to prepare David for battle against Goliath.

- Why did David decide not to use King Saul's armor? (Explain that the phrase "he had not proved it" in verse 39 means that David was not used to wearing armor.)
- What did David do to prepare for the battle?

Show students the sling you drew or constructed. If you constructed one, illustrate the difficulty of using a sling effectively by inviting a few students to attempt to hit a target while using a sling and a marshmallow or another small, round, and soft object.

Explain that the loop goes over the index or third finger while the knot is held between the thumb and index finger; the object is slung by swinging the sling over the head and releasing the knotted string as the pouch begins its arc toward the target. Timing is critical. (Make sure not to let this object lesson overshadow the truths taught in 1 Samuel 17.)

## 1 Samuel 17:41–58

### *With the strength of the Lord, David slays Goliath*

Invite two students to come to the front of class to represent David and Goliath. Ask the student who represents Goliath to read 1 Samuel 17:41–44 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for phrases that show what Goliath thought of David. Explain that the word *stave* in verse 43 is referring to a staff or pole.

Invite the student who represents David to read 1 Samuel 17:45–47 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how David responded to Goliath.

- What can we learn about David from his response to Goliath?

Read the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"David's reply is one of the great expressions of faith and courage in all our literature. It thrilled me as a boy, and it still thrills me" ("Bible Stories and Personal Protection," *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 38).

- How is David's response to Goliath helpful to those who face mocking or ridicule in our day?

Invite a student to read 1 Samuel 17:48–51 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Goliath.

- How did David exercise his faith in the Lord? (He ran toward Goliath knowing that the Lord would help him.)
- What principles can we learn from this story? (As students express the principles they have identified, emphasize the following truth: **As we exercise our faith in the Lord, He will help us with our challenges.**)

- What are some ways we can exercise our faith in the Lord when we face challenges?

Invite a student to read the following statement about faith from *True to the Faith*:

“Faith is much more than passive belief. You express your faith through action—by the way you live. . . . Your faith can lead you to do good works, obey the commandments, and repent of your sins” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 54–55).

Summarize 1 Samuel 17:52–57 by explaining that after David defeated Goliath, the Philistine army fled, and the army of the Israelites chased after them. David took Goliath’s head to Jerusalem, and King Saul marveled at David’s bravery.

To help students apply the truths they have learned, invite them to think again about a challenge they are currently facing. Ask them to answer the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What will you do to better exercise your faith as you face your challenges?

After sufficient time, invite several students to share with the class what they wrote. Consider sharing one of your personal experiences and testifying of the principles identified in class.

### Next Unit (2 Samuel 11–1 Kings 17)

Ask students to ponder the following questions: Why do some righteous and noble men, such as King David, commit serious sins? Why is it important to confess sins early rather than try to cover them up? Ask students if they have ever seen someone experience sad consequences because he or she did not listen to good advice. Explain that in the next unit they will learn important lessons from the sins David committed. They will also learn how Rehoboam, the son of Solomon and the grandson of David, did not listen to good advice, which led to the division of the kingdom of Israel.

# 2 Samuel 11:1–12:9

## Introduction

King David committed adultery with a woman named Bathsheba who consequently became pregnant. Upon learning of Bathsheba's condition, David tried to cover his sin and eventually arranged for Bathsheba's

husband, Uriah, to be killed in battle. After Uriah's death, the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to David to confront him about his wicked deeds.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Samuel 11:1–5

#### *David commits adultery with Bathsheba*



As class begins, consider showing students a picture of a railroad switch point. Ask students if they can explain what a switch point on a railroad track is. (A switch point is a piece of a railroad track that can move, allowing train cars to be diverted onto another track.)

Explain that President Gordon B. Hinckley, when working for a railroad early in his career, received a call from a railroad worker in the state of New Jersey. He said a passenger train had arrived without its baggage car. Invite a student to read aloud President Hinckley's account of what had happened, and ask the class to listen for what switch points on a train track could represent in our lives.



"We discovered that a baggage car that belonged in Newark, New Jersey, was in fact in New Orleans, Louisiana—1,500 miles from its destination. Just the three-inch movement of the switch in the St. Louis yard by a careless employee had started it on the wrong track, and the distance from its true destination increased dramatically. That is the way it is with our lives. Instead of following a steady course, we are pulled by some mistaken idea in another direction. The movement away from our original destination may be ever so small, but, if continued, that very small movement becomes a great gap and we find ourselves far from where we intended to go" ("Words of the Prophet: Seek Learning," *New Era*, Sept. 2007, 2).

- Considering President Hinckley's statement, what do you think a switch point could represent in our lives?

Ask students to look for principles as they study 2 Samuel 11–12 that can help them make wise decisions. Some decisions we make may appear small or insignificant, but the end consequence of those decisions could greatly affect the course of our lives.

Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 11:1–5 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for a series of decisions King David made that led him in the wrong direction. You might suggest that students mark what they find.

- What were some of the decisions David made that led him in the wrong direction?

List students' responses on the board near the picture of the switch point. Responses might include the following: *tarried at Jerusalem instead of going to battle* (verse 1); *looked upon a woman washing herself* (verse 2); *inquired after her* (verse 3); *brought Bathsheba to his house even though he knew she was married* (verse 4); *committed adultery* (verse 4).

- What can we learn from David's choice to stay home when it was time for kings to be with their soldiers in battle? (Students may use different words, but they should identify something similar to the following principle: **If we are not where we should be, we can become more susceptible to temptation.**)

Invite students to give some examples of situations that illustrate this principle.

Point to David's decisions listed on the board. Then ask the following questions:

- What righteous choice could David have made when he first saw Bathsheba washing herself?

### *Decide which doctrines and principles to emphasize*

A normal scripture block will often contain more material than can be meaningfully discussed in a class period. Use the following guidelines to help you decide what to teach: listen to promptings from the Holy Ghost, seek to determine the intent of the inspired author, emphasize converting principles and doctrines, and consider students' needs and abilities.

- What does the phrase “the woman was very beautiful to look upon” in verse 2 imply that David chose to do?
- At what other points could David have controlled his lustful desires and corrected the direction he was heading? (As students respond, you might ask how the results of each corrected decision may have changed David’s experience.)
- What principle can we learn from David’s choice to entertain lustful desires? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but help them recognize the following: **If we choose to entertain lustful desires, we become susceptible to serious sins.** Write this principle on the board.)

Explain that one way some people choose to entertain lustful desires is by using pornography. The word *pornography* refers to any pictures, videos, books, or song lyrics intended to stimulate sexual desires. Consider inviting a student to read aloud the following statement:

“Pornography in all forms is especially dangerous and addictive. What may begin as an unexpected exposure or a curious exploration can become a destructive habit. Use of pornography is a serious sin and can lead to other sexual transgression. Avoid pornography at all costs. . . . It causes you to lose the guidance of the Spirit and can damage your ability to have a normal relationship with others, especially your future spouse. It limits your ability to feel true love. If you encounter pornography, turn away from it immediately” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 12).

 To help students understand and feel the truth and importance of the principles they have learned from the account of David and Bathsheba, you may want to show the video “David and Bathsheba: To Look Upon” (4:15). In this video, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles uses the account of David and Bathsheba to illustrate the damaging effects of pornography and to offer hope to those under its influence. Ask students to consider as they watch the video how David’s life could have been different if he had chosen not to look upon Bathsheba and then inquire after her and send for her after he saw her from his roof. This video is available on LDS.org.

Invite students to ponder for a moment about what they can do to both avoid and control unwanted thoughts and lustful desires.

Encourage students to go where they should be and to refuse to entertain lustful desires so they can avoid temptation and sin. Testify of the happiness that can result from learning to control desires and of the Lord’s willingness to help us succeed in doing so.

## 2 Samuel 11:6–27

### *David attempts to hide his sin*

Ask students to imagine they have an opportunity to counsel David about what he should do regarding his adultery with Bathsheba.

- What would you counsel David to do?

Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 11:6–13 aloud. Ask the class to look for what David chose to do instead of repent.

- Why do you think David was trying to persuade Uriah to go home? (As students respond, you may want to point out that David wanted Uriah to spend the night with Bathsheba so it would appear that Uriah was responsible for his wife’s pregnancy.)
- Why did Uriah refuse to go home?
- In what ways did Uriah’s actions, which were motivated by devotion to Israel, contrast with David’s actions? (Uriah showed great integrity and self-control, but David’s actions were selfish and unrestrained.)

Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 11:14–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what David did to hide his sin of adultery.

- What sin did David commit in order to hide his adultery?
- What can we learn from David’s attempt to hide his sin? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **Seeking to hide our sins can lead to additional and more serious sins.**)
- What are some other examples of how hiding sins can lead to more serious sins?

#### *Help students identify doctrines and principles*

One central purpose of studying the scriptures is to learn doctrines and principles of the gospel. Identifying doctrines and principles from the scriptures is a Fundamental of Gospel Teaching and Learning. Learning how to identify them takes thoughtful effort and practice. As you help students identify doctrines and principles, be sure to help them clearly and simply state these truths to ensure they understand them.

Summarize 2 Samuel 11:18–25 by explaining that when a messenger reported the death of several of David’s soldiers, including Uriah, David replied with indifference, saying, “the sword devoureth one as well as another” and encouraged his army to continue in battle.

Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 11:26–27. Ask the class to look for what David did next.

- What did David do after Uriah was dead?

Explain that David thought that no one had found out about his sins and that he had successfully hidden them.

- What do we learn from verse 27 that counters the idea that one can successfully sin in secret?

## 2 Samuel 12:1–9

### *David’s sins are exposed, and he experiences serious consequences*

Explain that the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to David, and Nathan told him a parable (a story with symbolic meaning). Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 12:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Nathan was teaching David.

- What does it mean in verse 4 that the rich man “took the poor man’s lamb, and dressed it”? (He killed the lamb and prepared it as a meal for his guest.)
- Why was this a cruel thing for the rich man to do?

Ask a student to read 2 Samuel 12:5–6 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what David said should happen to the rich man.

- What punishment did King David propose for the rich man who stole the poor man’s lamb?

Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 12:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and imagine how it might have felt to be in David’s position as he listened to the prophet say these words.

- If you had been in David’s position, how might you have felt when the prophet Nathan said, “Thou art the man”? Why?
- How was David like the rich man in the parable?
- What can we learn from this account of Nathan exposing David’s sins? (Students may identify a variety of truths, including the following: **We cannot hide our sins from God.**)
- Considering what you have learned from the account of David and his sins, why do you think it is important that we admit our mistakes and sins and correct them early?

Testify of the truths identified in this lesson, and invite students to ponder how they will apply these truths. You may want to encourage students to consider carefully where their decisions—even those that seem small—are leading them. Also encourage them to repent of their sins quickly rather than trying to hide them.

### Scripture Mastery Review

Using tests and quizzes allows students to assess their mastery in locating, understanding, or memorizing scripture mastery passages. It can also help them determine which passages they know well and which they still need to master. As students perform well on tests and quizzes, their confidence in their knowledge of the scriptures will grow.

Students have studied ten scripture mastery passages so far in this course. Create and administer a scripture mastery test on these ten passages. This could be done using the scripture mastery bookmark or cards, and you could administer the test on paper or verbally. (Some testing ideas can be found in the appendix of this manual.)

## LESSON 92

# 2 Samuel 12:10–24:25

### Introduction

The prophet Nathan confronted King David about David's adultery with Bathsheba and Uriah's murder. Nathan explained that the consequences of David's actions would affect David, his family, and the entire

kingdom. In fulfillment of Nathan's prophecies, the turmoil and strife in David's household led to a civil war that threatened to destroy the kingdom.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Samuel 12:10–31

#### *Nathan prophecies of the consequences of David's sins*

Before class write the following phrases on the board:

*Cheating on a homework assignment*

*Lying to parents*

*Refusing to forgive someone*

Invite students to read the phrases on the board aloud.

- What are some possible unforeseen consequences of making these choices?

Ask a student to recount the sinful choices King David made involving Bathsheba and Uriah. (David committed adultery with Bathsheba and arranged for her husband, Uriah, to be killed.)

Explain that after the prophet Nathan taught the parable of the ewe lamb, he told David the consequences of his choices and actions. Invite students to look for principles as they study 2 Samuel 12–24 that can help them when they are tempted to sin.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Samuel 12:10–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the consequences of King David's sinful choices. You may want to suggest that students mark these consequences in their scriptures.

- What consequences would result from David's sins?
- What do you think the phrase "the sword shall never depart from thine house" means (verse 10)? (Explain that the sword is symbolic of violence and war. For the rest of David's life and reign as king, conflict and war would plague his family and kingdom.)
- Who else would be affected by David's sins? (People in his kingdom, including his wives and children.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about the consequences of sin? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **When we choose to sin, we may bring unforeseen and long-term consequences upon ourselves and others.**)

To help students understand that some choices may have long-term consequences even after we repent and are forgiven, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"It is a fundamental truth that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ we can be cleansed. We can become virtuous and pure. However, sometimes our poor choices leave us with long-term consequences. One of the vital steps to complete repentance is to bear the short- and long-term consequences of our past sins" ("Personal Strength through the Atonement of Jesus Christ," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 82–83).

- What are some examples of poor choices that might result in unforeseen and long-term consequences both for us and for others?

### *Help students understand the meaning of doctrines and principles*

Once students identify doctrines and principles as they are found in the scriptures, you can guide discussions that help them better understand these truths. These discussions can help students analyze the meaning of a principle, understand the principle's relationship to other doctrines, and identify ways to apply the principle in their lives.

Summarize the rest of 2 Samuel 12 by explaining that the child born to David and Bathsheba died, as Nathan prophesied. David and Bathsheba had another son, whom they named Solomon.

## 2 Samuel 13–18

### *Turmoil and strife in David's family lead to civil war*

Explain that 2 Samuel 13–18 describes tragic events involving two of King David's sons, Amnon and Absalom. These chapters also show the fulfillment of the prophesied consequences of David's sins.

Divide the class into three groups. (If your class is large, you may want to divide students into more than three groups. If you do, you will need to give more than one group the same assignment.) Explain that each group will be assigned to study a scripture block and to prepare to do the following (write these instructions on the board):

1. Summarize the events described in these verses.
2. Explain the possible short-term consequences of Amnon's or Absalom's choices.
3. Explain what you think might have been some of the unforeseen or long-term consequences of Amnon's or Absalom's choices.

Give each group one of the following assignments:

---

#### **Group 1: Amnon**

Read 2 Samuel 13:1–18 aloud in your group, and look for the sin that Amnon committed against his half-sister Tamar.

#### **Group 2: Absalom**

In 2 Samuel 13:1–20 we read that David's son Amnon lusted after his half-sister Tamar. Using deception, Amnon raped her. Read 2 Samuel 13:21–39 aloud in your group, and look for how Tamar's brother Absalom responded to what Amnon did to Tamar.

#### **Group 3: Absalom**

In 2 Samuel 13–14 we read that David's son Absalom conspired to have his half-brother Amnon killed because Amnon had raped Tamar, Absalom's sister. Absalom fled to the land Geshur for three years before he returned to Jerusalem. Read the following verses aloud in your group, and look for what Absalom planned to do and what his actions led to: 2 Samuel 15:1–6, 10–17; 2 Samuel 16:20–22.

---

Give students several minutes to read their assigned verses and discuss their responses to the instructions on the board. After sufficient time, invite the first group to report its responses to the class (the other two groups will report later).

Write the words *love* and *lust* on the board.

- Which word best describes Amnon's behavior?

Invite students to read 2 Samuel 13:4 silently, looking for how Amnon described his feelings toward Tamar. Ask students to report what they find.

- Why might some people mistake lust for love?

To help students understand the difference between love and lust, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Brother Tad R. Callister, Sunday School general president, given while he was a member of the Presidency of the Seventy:

“Satan is the great counterfeiter. He tries to [present] lust as love. There is a simple test to detect the difference. Love is motivated by self-control, obedience to God's moral laws, respect for others, and unselfishness. On the other hand, lust is motivated by disobedience, self-gratification, and lack of discipline” (“The Lord's Standard of Morality,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2014, 48).

- How would you summarize the difference between love and lust?

To help students identify additional principles in this account, invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Samuel 13:10–15. Ask the class to follow along, looking for evidence that Amnon lusted after Tamar rather than loved her.

- According to verses 12–13, how did Tamar respond to Amnon's desire to lie with her?
- How did she try to persuade him not to commit sin?

You might explain that the word *folly* in this context means something that is morally wrong.

- Why do you think Amnon “would not hearken unto her voice” (verse 14)? What may have caused him to dismiss or ignore the consequences of his actions?
- How did yielding to lust affect Amnon’s attitude and actions toward Tamar?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we lust, then . . .*

Ask students to complete the principle on the board. Write their responses on the board.

If students do not identify principles similar to the following, write them on the board as well: **If we lust, then we lose the Spirit and may dismiss or ignore the consequences of our actions, and if we lust, then we lose the Spirit and our love and concern for others may diminish.**

- Why do you think yielding to lust destroys our love and concern for others?
- What are some things we can do to avoid and resist lust?

Invite the second group to report to the class. Ask students what caused Absalom to hate his brother Amnon (see 2 Samuel 13:22). Replace *lust* with *are angry* in the principles written on the board.

- How can anger cause us to ignore or dismiss the consequences of our actions? How can anger cause our love and concern for others to diminish?

Invite the third group to report to the class. Replace *angry* with *prideful* in the principles written on the board.

- How was Absalom’s conspiracy to become king a form of pride?
- How can pride cause us to ignore or dismiss the consequences of our actions? How can pride cause our love and concern for others to diminish?

Summarize 2 Samuel 18 by explaining that during the battle between Absalom’s supporters and King David’s men, Absalom became entangled in a tree. When Joab, the captain of King David’s army, found Absalom, he killed him. Invite a student to read 2 Samuel 18:33 aloud.

Ask the class to follow along, looking for how David reacted to the death of his son.

- Despite Absalom’s rebellion, why do you think David wept over his son’s death?
- What effects did the choices of King David, Amnon, and Absalom have on their family?

You might consider sharing your testimony of the short- and long-term effects your choices have had on you and your family. (Be careful not to share past transgressions or sins. You may want to focus on the effects of positive choices you have made.) Encourage students to make righteous choices that can bless them and their families both now and in the future.

Provide students with copies of the following instructions, as well as pieces of paper they can use to record their responses. Explain that they will not be asked to share their responses with anyone.

---

Consider both the positive and negative choices you are currently making and how those choices affect those around you, especially your family. Select one or two of your choices and answer the following questions:

- What effects might these choices be having on you and your family?
- What might be some of the long-term consequences of these choices and behaviors?
- As you make these choices, what changes could you make that could bless you and your family both now and in the future?

---

## 2 Samuel 19–24

### *Insurrection, famine, and pestilence threaten David’s kingdom*

Summarize 2 Samuel 19–24 by explaining that after Absalom’s death, David returned to Jerusalem. Another rebellion among the tribes of Israel was quickly put down by Joab, who led David’s army. Israel suffered a famine that lasted three years. King David displeased the Lord by counting the number of men in Judah and Israel who could serve in the military. The scriptures do not explain why this numbering of the people was offensive, but it might have been representative of David’s trust in the strength of his army rather than in the power of God. To save the people from a plague, David offered sacrifices to the Lord.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of 1 Kings

### Why study this book?

The book of 1 Kings provides an account of the death of David, the reign of his son Solomon, and the decline and division of the Kingdom of Israel after Solomon and many of his successors turned to idol worship. It also recounts the ministry of the prophet Elijah among the northern ten tribes of Israel. By studying this book, students can learn truths that will help them understand the importance of worshipping the Lord in His temple, marrying in the covenant, making righteous choices, and listening to the still, small voice of the Lord.

### Who wrote this book?

“The books [of 1 and 2 Kings] were compiled by some unknown writer from a variety of written documents, including the state chronicles” (Bible Dictionary, “Kings, books of”). The state chronicles were not the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles but rather a collection of records maintained under the direction of the kings of Israel.

### When and where was it written?

It is unclear when and where the books of 1 and 2 Kings were written. At one time, 1 and 2 Kings were a single book called Kings. The division that created the current books of 1 and 2 Kings took place when the Bible was translated into Greek. (See Bible Dictionary, “Kings, books of.”)

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The books of 1 and 2 Kings cover more than 400 years of Israelite history, starting with the death of King David (approximately 1015 B.C.) and concluding with the death of King Jehoiachin (sometime after approximately 561 B.C.). These books are rich in history and doctrine, and they provide background and context for a significant portion of the Old Testament. For example, in the book of 1 Kings we read about the rise of King Solomon, who built and dedicated a temple to the Lord. The book of 1 Kings also explains that

Solomon married women outside of the covenant. Many of these women turned Solomon’s heart away from the Lord and toward the worship of false gods (see 1 Kings 11:4–8). Solomon’s decision to turn away from the Lord eventually led to widespread idolatry in Israel and the division of the kingdom.

Additionally, the book of 1 Kings introduces the reader to the bold and noble prophet Elijah. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that Elijah “holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the Priesthood” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 310). “The power of Elijah is the sealing power of the priesthood by which things that are bound or loosed on earth are bound or loosed in heaven [see D&C 128:8–18]” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Elijah”; scriptures.lds.org). Through the power of the priesthood, Elijah caused a drought that lasted three and a half years, raised the dead, called down fire from heaven, and prophesied the downfall of King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, who together ruled in wickedness in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

### Outline

**1 Kings 1–11** Before his death, King David has his son Solomon anointed king. Solomon rules his kingdom with great wisdom. Solomon builds a temple and his palace at Jerusalem, beginning the period known as the “golden age of Israel.” The Queen of Sheba visits Solomon. Solomon’s wives lure him away from worshipping the Lord and encourage him to worship false gods. Solomon’s kingdom is threatened by Jeroboam.

**1 Kings 12–16** All the tribes of Israel except Judah and Benjamin rebel against Solomon’s son Rehoboam. The kingdom is divided, and Jeroboam becomes the ruler of the Northern Kingdom (also known as Israel), leaving Rehoboam to rule the Southern Kingdom (also known as Judah). Jeroboam and Rehoboam both establish idol worship in their kingdoms, and many rulers of both kingdoms follow this pattern of idol worship.

**1 Kings 17–22** The prophet Elijah causes a drought in the land. He raises a widow’s son from the dead. With great power from God, Elijah competes with the priests of Baal and shows that Jehovah is God. After this miracle, Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab and a supporter of Baal, tries to kill Elijah. Elijah travels to Mount Horeb, where the Lord speaks to him in a still, small voice. Elijah meets Elisha, who will succeed him as prophet. Elijah prophesies the deaths of Ahab and Jezebel. Following Ahab’s death, Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, reigns in wickedness.

## LESSON 93

# 1 Kings 1–10

### Introduction

As King David neared his death, he named his son Solomon as heir to the throne. The Lord blessed Solomon and established him as a wise and prosperous ruler. King Solomon built a temple and dedicated it to

the Lord. The Lord accepted the temple as a place where He could dwell among His people if they remained faithful to Him.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Kings 1–4

#### *Solomon is established as King David's successor*

Ask students to think of a time when they sincerely wanted to help a family member, friend, or someone else who was facing difficulties but felt they were not able to help as much as they would have liked. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Invite students to look for truths as they study 1 Kings 1–4 that can help them when they seek to serve others but do not feel capable of doing so effectively.

Summarize 1 Kings 1:1–3:8 by explaining that David settled a conflict concerning who would succeed him as the king of Israel by naming his son Solomon as the heir to the throne. Those who sought to cause division in the kingdom were either banished or put to death. Solomon traveled to Gibeon to offer sacrifices upon an altar, and the Lord appeared to him and asked what blessing he desired.

Invite students to read 1 Kings 3:9 silently, looking for what Solomon desired.

- What did Solomon desire?
- According to verse 9, why did Solomon seek an understanding heart?
- What does this request tell us about the kind of king Solomon wanted to become?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Kings 3:10–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord felt about Solomon's desire.

- How did the Lord feel about Solomon's desire?
- Why do you think the Lord was pleased?
- How might Solomon have been able to better serve his people because of the additional blessings of riches and honor?
- From the Lord's response to Solomon, what principle can we learn about what the Lord will do when we seek His help to better serve others? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **When we selflessly seek the Lord's help to serve others, He will magnify our abilities to serve.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)

Explain that in 1 Kings 3:16–23, we read that Solomon went to Jerusalem, worshipped the Lord, and provided a feast for all his servants. During the feast two women petitioned King Solomon to judge a difficult circumstance. The two women lived with each other and bore children about the same time. One night one of the women woke up to find that her baby had died. Rather than mourn the loss of her baby, she switched her dead baby with the other woman's baby. The next morning, when the second woman awoke to nurse her child, she found a dead baby that was not her son. The first woman denied the other woman's accusation fervently. They sought King Solomon's judgment to settle the matter.

- Why would this be a difficult situation to judge?
- What might you have done to find out which woman was telling the truth?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 3:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Solomon handled the matter.

- How do you think the true mother of the child would react to this plan?

Invite another student to read 1 Kings 3:26–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Solomon identified the rightful mother.

Refer to the principle you wrote on the board.

- How did the Lord magnify Solomon’s ability to judge this situation righteously?
- When might you seek the Lord’s help as Solomon did to better serve someone?

Explain that in 1 Kings 3:28 we read that all of Israel heard of this experience and recognized that God had blessed King Solomon to be wise in judgment. In 1 Kings 4, we learn that knowledge of Solomon’s wisdom spread to other nations.

## 1 Kings 5–7

### *Solomon builds a house to the Lord using the finest materials*

Display one or more pictures of a temple.

- Why does the Church go to such great lengths to build temples all over the world?
- Why do some Latter-day Saints sacrifice so much in order to worship in the temple?

Remind students that David had desired to build a temple, but the Lord instructed him not to. Invite students to read 1 Kings 5:5 silently, looking for what Solomon intended to do.

Ask students to report what they found.

Explain that 1 Kings 5–7 records Solomon’s efforts to build a temple unto the Lord. Invite students to read 1 Kings 5:17 silently, looking for evidence of the quality of this temple.

Explain that while the people were building the temple, the word of the Lord came to Solomon. Invite a student to read 1 Kings 6:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the promise the Lord made to Solomon and his people. You may want to explain that the word *statutes* refers to the Lord’s laws.

- What principle do these verses teach about what the Lord expects of His people in order for His presence to dwell in the temple? (**If we walk in the Lord’s ways, then the Lord will be with us in His temple.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)
- What are some of the Lord’s statutes and commandments in our day that we must obey to be worthy to enjoy His presence in the temple?

Explain that Solomon’s temple was different than our temples today because it was patterned after the tabernacle the children of Israel carried with them through the wilderness. Nevertheless, like the ancient tabernacle and the temples today, the temple Solomon built was a symbol of the Lord’s presence with His people. By making every effort to be worthy to enter and serve in the temple, we demonstrate our desire to enjoy His presence.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:



“Those who understand the eternal blessings which come from the temple know that no sacrifice is too great, no price too heavy, no struggle too difficult in order to receive those blessings. . . .

“Your sacrifice may be bringing your life into compliance with what is required to receive a recommend, perhaps by forsaking long-held habits which disqualify you” (“The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World,” *Ensign* or

*Liahona*, May 2011, 92–93).

Invite students to reflect on what they can do to more fully walk in the Lord’s ways in order to enjoy His presence in the temple.

Summarize 1 Kings 6:14–7:51 by explaining that it took approximately seven years to finish building the temple and thirteen years for Solomon to finish building his palace.

## 1 Kings 8

### *Solomon dedicates the temple to the Lord*

Ask students if they have ever participated in the dedication of a temple or a ward meeting-house. Invite students to share their experiences with the class.

- Why do you think these meetings are often very spiritual occasions?



Summarize 1 Kings 8:1–21 by explaining that Solomon gathered many Israelites to participate in the dedication of the temple. After they placed the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, the glory of the Lord appeared as a cloud that filled the temple. Explain that 1 Kings 8:22–53 contains the dedicatory prayer Solomon offered on this occasion. After Solomon declared the goodness and might of the Lord (see verses 22–28), he prayed that having a temple among them would be a blessing and help the people maintain their commitment to the Lord.

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 8:29–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a desire Solomon expressed during his dedicatory prayer.

- What desire did Solomon express?

Divide the class into four small groups and assign each group one of the following passages from the dedicatory prayer of Solomon’s temple: 1 Kings 8:33–34, 35–36, 37–40, and 46–49. Write the following questions on the board and invite students to search their assigned verses for the answers:

*What challenges did Solomon anticipate Israel would face?*

*What blessings did Solomon ask the Lord to bestow on the people as they worshipped the Lord in the temple?*

When students have finished, invite each group to explain to the class what they learned.

- What principle about participating in temple worship can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we worship the Lord in the temple, then the Lord may grant us blessings to help us with challenges we face**. Consider writing this principle on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:



“The temple is . . . a place of personal inspiration and revelation. Legion are those who in times of stress, when difficult decisions must be made and perplexing problems must be handled, have come to the temple in a spirit of fasting and prayer to seek divine direction. Many have testified that while voices of revelation were not heard, impressions concerning a course to follow were experienced at that time or later which became answers to their prayers” (“The Salt Lake Temple,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1993, 6).

- When have you or someone you know been blessed to better face a particular challenge after participating in temple worship? (You may also want to share an experience.)

Summarize 1 Kings 8:50–66 by explaining that Solomon concluded the dedicatory prayer and offered sacrifices that were accepted by the Lord (see 2 Chronicles 7:1).

## 1 Kings 9–10

### *The Lord hallows the temple and fulfills His promises to Solomon*

Explain that in 1 Kings 9–10, we learn that the Lord fulfilled His promises to Solomon. Divide the class in half. Invite half the class to read 1 Kings 9:1–9 silently and look for an illustration of the following principle: **If we walk in the Lord’s ways, then the Lord will be with us in His temple**. Ask the other half of the class to read 1 Kings 10:1–9 silently and look for an illustration of the following principle: **When we selflessly seek the Lord’s help to serve others, He will magnify our abilities to serve**. Invite students to report what they found.

Invite students to reflect on the principles learned in this lesson and determine what they will do to live these principles. You may want to invite students to record their goals in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

#### **Give students time to answer**

Sometimes students may not immediately respond to an effective question. Do not be concerned with this silence if it does not go on too long. At times, students need an opportunity to reflect on what they have been asked and to consider how to respond. Such reflection can facilitate instruction by the Holy Ghost.

# 1 Kings 11–16

## Introduction

In Solomon's later years, he disobeyed the Lord's commandments by marrying many wives outside the covenant. Some of Solomon's wives encouraged him to worship idols and turn his heart away from the Lord. After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam decided to increase the people's burdens. The people revolted

and were divided into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Jeroboam, king of the Northern Kingdom, introduced idolatry and other wicked practices among his people. Subsequent kings in Israel and Judah drifted further into wickedness.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Kings 11

*Solomon marries many wives outside the covenant, and they turn his heart away from God*

Invite a student to read aloud the following scenario:

For some time, a woman has been seriously dating a man who is not a member of the Church. She deeply cares for him. The woman becomes upset when a Church leader expresses loving concern for her because the man she is dating is not a member of the Church.

Ask students to ponder what they would say to this woman. Invite students to look for truths as they study 1 Kings 11–16 that can help them decide whom they will date and marry.

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 11:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Solomon's situation was similar to the previously read scenario. Invite students to report what they find. Explain that the phrase "strange women" refers to women who were not of the house of Israel. Remind students that the Israelites had covenanted to serve the Lord and thereby receive His protection. Marrying within the covenant meant marrying a faithful member of the house of Israel. The many "strange women" Solomon married were not part of the gospel covenant and came from nations that did not worship the Lord or keep His commandments. (You may want to explain that many of these marriages reflected political alliances Solomon had made with other nations.)

- According to verse 2, what warning had the Lord previously given about what would happen to Israelites who married outside of the covenant? (Those whom they married would turn their hearts away from the Lord and toward false gods.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Kings 11:3–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the result of Solomon's decision to marry women who were not part of the covenant. (You may want to point out that verse 4, footnote *b*, indicates that David's heart had not been perfect with the Lord.)

- How did Solomon's choice to marry outside of the covenant affect him? (Solomon began to worship his wives' false gods, and his heart turned away from the Lord.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about why marriage in the covenant is important? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we marry in the covenant, our hearts are more likely to turn toward God and we can receive the full blessings of the gospel.**)

To help students understand this principle, ask them the following questions:

- How do we marry in the covenant today? (We go to the temple with a worthy member of the Church to receive the marriage sealing ordinance.)
- In what ways can marrying in the covenant help us keep our hearts turned toward the Lord?

To help students feel the truth and importance of this principle, invite them to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their responses to the following question:

- Why do you want to marry someone who will help you stay faithful to the Lord?

Inform students that as they study the remainder of 1 Kings 11–16, they will see how Solomon’s decision to marry outside of the covenant not only turned his heart away from God but also influenced others to turn their hearts away from God.

Ask a student to read 1 Kings 11:9–11 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened as a result of Solomon’s disobedience.

- What happened as a result of Solomon’s disobedience?

Summarize 1 Kings 11:14–25 by explaining that after Solomon turned his heart away from God, He allowed the Israelites’ enemies to afflict them.

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 11:26–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for who else began to oppose Solomon. Ask students to report what they find.

- What kind of a person was Jeroboam?

Bring a piece of fabric or paper to class. Tear or cut the fabric or paper into 12 pieces. Give 10 pieces to one student. Explain that something similar happened to Jeroboam. Ask students to read 1 Kings 11:29–31 silently and look for why Jeroboam was given 10 pieces of fabric.

- Why did the prophet Ahijah give 10 pieces of fabric to Jeroboam?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 11:37–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord promised Jeroboam if he would keep the commandments as king. Invite students to report what they find. Summarize 1 Kings 11:39–43 by explaining that when Solomon learned Jeroboam was a threat to his kingdom, he sought to kill Jeroboam. Jeroboam fled to Egypt.

## 1 Kings 12:1–24

*After Rehoboam vows to continue to make his people’s burdens heavy, ten of the tribes revolt against him*

Summarize 1 Kings 12:1–24 by explaining that after Solomon’s death, his son Rehoboam became king over all of Israel. Jeroboam returned to Israel from Egypt and, along with others, pleaded with Rehoboam to lessen the burdens Solomon had placed on the people to support his many building projects. Rehoboam chose instead to increase the people’s burdens. The ten tribes living in the north rebelled against Rehoboam and made Jeroboam their king, which fulfilled the words of the prophet Ahijah. This revolt divided the kingdom in two: the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Ask students to turn to Bible Maps, no. 3, “The Division of the 12 Tribes,” in the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible. Ask them to find the border between Judah and northern Israel.

## 1 Kings 12:25–14:31

*Jeroboam and Rehoboam practice idolatry in their kingdoms*

Divide the class into two groups. Assign one group to study the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the other group to study the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Provide students with copies of the information below for their assigned kingdom. Ask students to read the information and the assigned verses and then discuss the accompanying question with their group.

### Northern Kingdom (1 Kings 12:25–14:20)

Because the temple was located in Judah, Jeroboam feared that his subjects would travel south to worship the Lord and eventually become sympathetic to the Southern Kingdom. To prevent this, Jeroboam established new places of worship, idols, and feasts in the Northern Kingdom and appointed his own priests. Jeroboam thus led his people toward apostasy by turning them away from worshipping the Lord at His temple.

The Lord sent a prophet from Judah to warn Jeroboam about his wickedness and idolatry. Despite seeing miraculous signs of the Lord’s power, Jeroboam did not repent and continued to promote idol worship.

### *Help students feel the truth and importance of doctrines and principles*

Once students have identified and come to understand a gospel principle or doctrine in the scriptures, they will often not apply that truth until they feel of its truth and importance through the Spirit. Ask questions that will help students share experiences and testify of the gospel truths they have identified and reflect on what they mean to them personally.

Read 1 Kings 14:7–9, 14–16, and look for the consequences that would come upon Jeroboam and the 10 tribes of Israel because of their idol worship.

- How did worshipping false gods affect the people in the Northern Kingdom of Israel?

### Southern Kingdom (1 Kings 14:21–31)

After Solomon’s death, his son Rehoboam ruled in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Read 1 Kings 14:21–24, and look for the spiritual state of the people in Judah.

An especially evil practice of idol worship involving immorality often took place around the groves built to false gods. The word *sodomites* in verse 24 refers to male prostitutes (see footnote *a*).

- How did worshipping false gods affect the people in the Southern Kingdom of Judah?

After students complete their assignments, invite a student from each group to summarize what occurred in the kingdom they studied and how those events relate to Solomon’s choice to marry outside the covenant and worship false gods. After the students report, ask the class:

- How could choosing to marry outside the covenant affect those who come after us?  
How could choosing to marry within the covenant affect those who come after us?
- How could worshipping anything or anyone other than our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, lead us astray?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Spencer W. Kimball, who taught how our marriage decision will affect our families (you may want to provide students with copies of the statement):



“Marriage is perhaps the most vital of all the decisions and has the most far-reaching effects, for it has to do not only with immediate happiness, but also with eternal joys. It affects not only the two people involved, but also their families and particularly their children and their children’s children down through the many generations” (“Oneness in Marriage,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1977, 3).

Refer to the scenario presented at the beginning of class. Ask students to share how the truths taught in this lesson can help them explain why Church leaders counsel us to be sealed in the temple.

- How can understanding the importance of marrying in the covenant influence the choices you make today?

Remind students of the Lord’s promise to Jeroboam concerning what would happen if Jeroboam kept the commandments as king (see 1 Kings 11:38).

- What principle can we learn from the accounts of Solomon, Jeroboam, and Rehoboam about what happens when we choose to turn away from the Lord? (As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following: **If we turn away from the Lord, then we will lose His promised blessings.**)
- What can we do to ensure our hearts stay turned toward the Lord?

### 1 Kings 15–16

*A series of wicked and righteous kings rule over Judah and Israel for many years*

Summarize 1 Kings 15–16 by explaining that after the death of Jeroboam, a series of wicked kings reigned in Israel. Each of the kings in Israel continued in the ways of Jeroboam by worshipping false gods. However, Asa, a king of Judah, was righteous and followed the Lord.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths students identified in class today. Invite students to faithfully live the gospel and prepare to be sealed in the temple one day.

## LESSON 95

# 1 Kings 17

### Introduction

Because King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, established the worship of Baal throughout the Northern Kingdom, the prophet Elijah sealed the heavens, causing years of

drought. The Lord preserved Elijah and eventually led him to a widow in Zarephath, who fed him for many days. Elijah raised the widow's son from the dead.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Kings 17:1–16

#### *A widow in Zarephath provides for Elijah and is blessed with food*

Write the following question on the board: *What are some choices the Lord and His prophets have asked you to make that require you to exercise faith?*

You may want to discuss this question as a class and have students write their responses on the board. Or you may want to divide them into small groups and ask them to discuss their answers. (Answers may include paying tithing, living the standards of the Church [such as those outlined in *For the Strength of Youth*], and preparing for missionary service.) You may want to share an experience when you faced a decision in which you had to choose whether or not to act in faith.

Invite students to look for principles as they study 1 Kings 17 that can help them understand the blessings they will receive as they make righteous choices with faith.

Remind students that Ahab became the king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, outside of the covenant. She was a devoted follower of Baal—a false god commonly worshipped among the Canaanites. Together Ahab and Jezebel promoted idol worship in the Northern Kingdom of Israel (see 1 Kings 16:30–33; see also Bible Dictionary, “Jezebel”).

Explain that during this time the Lord sent a prophet named Elijah to deliver a message to King Ahab. Elijah held the sealing power of the Melchizedek Priesthood, “by which things that are bound or loosed on earth are bound or loosed in heaven (D&C 128:8–18)” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Elijah”; scriptures.lds.org).

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Elijah said to Ahab.

- In your own words, how would you summarize what Elijah said to Ahab?

Point out that Ahab and others who worshipped Baal claimed that Baal—rather than the Lord—had power over the weather.

- What purposes do you think the Lord may have had in sending Elijah to tell Ahab that it would not rain until Elijah said so? (It would provide evidence of the Lord's power and Elijah's calling as a prophet. A drought might also help to humble Ahab and encourage him and other Israelites who had strayed from the Lord to repent.)
- How might a drought throughout the land also affect Elijah?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:2–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord instructed Elijah to do during the drought.

- How was Elijah blessed for following the Lord's instructions?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened next.

- Where did the Lord tell Elijah to go after the brook dried up? Why? (You may want to explain that the word *sustain* in this context means to nourish by providing food.)

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as Elijah obeyed these instructions from the Lord.

- What did Elijah ask the widow to do?
- Why was the widow hesitant to bring a piece of bread to Elijah?
- If you had been in Elijah's position, how might you have felt after learning about the desperate circumstances of this widow and her son?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Elijah responded to the woman.

- What did Elijah instruct the woman to do?
- How would it test the woman's faith to feed Elijah before she fed her son and herself?
- What blessings did the Lord promise to give the woman if she fed Elijah first?

Refer to the question you wrote on the board at the beginning of class and the responses students gave.

- How is the choice this woman faced similar to some of the choices the Lord and His prophets have asked us to make?
- What might you have done if you had been in the widow's position? Why?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the woman chose to do.

- How did the woman show her faith after listening to what Elijah said?
- What blessings did she receive after she acted in faith?

Invite students to identify a principle illustrated by the account of this widow. They may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **Before we can receive the Lord's promised blessings, we must first act in faith.** Consider writing this principle on the board.

- Why do you think it is important for us to first demonstrate faith before we receive the Lord's promised blessings?
- When have you, or someone you know, acted in faith and experienced the Lord's blessings as a result?

## 1 Kings 17:17–24

### *Elijah raises the widow's son from the dead*

Invite students to ponder the following question:

- Have you ever felt like you were doing your best to exercise faith and obey the words of the Lord and His prophets, but you still experienced challenges in your life?

Explain that after the woman acted in faith on Elijah's words and received the promised blessings, tragedy struck in her home. Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened.

- What happened to the woman's son?
- How might this event have been a challenge for her faith?
- What feelings do you think Elijah might have had when this happened?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Kings 17:19–23. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Elijah did after the boy died.

- How did Elijah show his faith in the Lord? What happened next?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how this experience affected the widow's faith and testimony.

- What did the woman say she now knew after all that she had experienced?
- As you consider the woman's actions and her resulting testimony recorded in 1 Kings 17:24, what principle can we learn about knowing the truth of the Lord's words? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we exercise faith in the Lord's words, we can come to know and testify that His words are true.**)

To help students explain, share, and testify of the doctrines and principles they have identified today, invite them to write a two- to three-minute talk using the following outline:

1. Choose a section in *For the Strength of Youth*. Read the section you chose, and identify promised blessings that you feel are important to youth today. (For example, some of the promised blessings listed in the “Honesty and Integrity” entry of the booklet include “strength of character,” “peace of mind and self-respect,” and being “trusted by the Lord [and] worthy to enter into His holy temples” [*For the Strength of Youth* (booklet, 2011), 19].)
2. Using *For the Strength of Youth* and related scriptures as resources, explain how we must act in faith to receive the promised blessings you identified.
3. Give an example of an experience when you or someone else acted in faith and received promised blessings.
4. Share your testimony that the standards the Lord has given us through His prophets are true.

After students have had sufficient time to prepare, you may want to assign them to use their talks to teach one another or invite a few to give their talks to the class. (If there is not time to give their talks during this class, consider asking some students to use their talks as part of class devotionals in the future. You might also encourage them to use their talks during family home evening or in conversations with family members or friends.)

Conclude by testifying of the principles you have discussed. Ask students to ponder what they feel the Lord would have them do to act in faith so they can receive His promised blessings. Invite them to act on the promptings they receive.

### Scripture Mastery Review

Divide the class into groups of four or five. Give each group a six-sided die and a pencil. (If dice are not available, consider adapting the activity by placing six small pieces of paper, each with one of the numbers from 1 to 6 written on it, in an envelope or other container.) Each student will also need a blank piece of paper. Have each group of students sit closely around a table or in a circle. Invite them to open their scriptures to 1 Samuel 16:7 or another mastery passage they are working to memorize. Explain that the object of the activity is to be the first person in the group to write out the passage in its entirety. However, because there is only one pencil per group, only one person in the group can write at a time. A person qualifies to use the pencil by rolling a 1 on the die. Have the members of each group take turns rolling the die (or taking a piece of paper and then returning it). When a person rolls (or selects) a 1, he or she takes the pencil and begins writing, saying aloud each of the words while writing them. Meanwhile, the others in the group take turns rolling the die to qualify to use the pencil. When another student in the group rolls a 1, that person takes the pencil from the previous writer and begins writing the verse on his or her paper while saying the words. The previous writer joins the rest of the group in rolling the die. When students qualify for the pencil and have already written a portion of the verse on their papers, they must read aloud the portion they have written before writing more of the verse. (This provides the repetition that will help students to memorize the verse.) The activity concludes when a student from each of the groups writes the passage in its entirety.

Ask the class to repeat the verse in unison after the activity.

#### **Help students apply doctrines and principles**

After students have identified, understood, and felt the truth and importance of a doctrine or principle found in the scriptures, encourage them to apply that truth in their lives.

Students apply truths they have learned when they think, speak, and live according to those truths. As students apply the principles of the gospel in their lives, they will receive promised blessings and gain a deeper understanding and testimony of what they have applied.

# Home-Study Lesson

## 2 Samuel 11–24; 1 Kings 1–17 (Unit 19)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied 2 Samuel 11–1 Kings 17 (unit 19) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the direction of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (2 Samuel 11:1–12:9)

From King David's tragic mistakes with Bathsheba and her husband, students learned the following truths: If we are not where we should be, we can become more susceptible to temptation. If we choose to entertain lustful desires, we can become more susceptible to serious sins. Seeking to hide our sins can lead to additional and more serious sins, and we cannot hide our sins from God.

#### Day 2 (2 Samuel 12:9–24:25)

Students learned about some of the consequences David brought upon his family and the kingdom because of his sins. They learned that when we choose to sin, we may bring unforeseen and long-term consequences upon ourselves and others. From choices made by David's sons, students learned that if we yield to lustful desires, anger, or pride, then we may dismiss or ignore the consequences of our actions and our love and concern for others may diminish.

#### Day 3 (1 Kings 1–10)

As they studied the reign of King Solomon, students learned the following principles: When we selflessly seek the Lord's help to serve others, He will magnify our abilities to serve. If we walk in the Lord's ways, then the Lord will be with us in His temple. If we worship the Lord in the temple, then He may grant us blessings to help us with challenges we face.

#### Day 4 (1 Kings 11–17)

The account of Solomon's marriages helped students identify that if we marry in the covenant, our hearts are more likely to turn toward God. They also learned that if we turn away from the Lord, then we will lose His promised blessings.

### Introduction

Because King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, established the worship of Baal throughout the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the prophet Elijah sealed the heavens, causing years of drought. The Lord preserved Elijah and eventually led him to a widow in Zarephath, who fed him during the drought. Elijah raised the widow's son from the dead.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### 1 Kings 17:1–16

*A widow in Zarephath provides for Elijah and is blessed with food*

Write the following question on the board: *What are some choices the Lord and His prophets have asked you to make that require you to exercise faith?*

You may want to discuss this question as a class and have students write their responses on the board. Or you may want to divide them into small groups and ask them to discuss their answers.

You may want to share an experience when you faced a decision in which you had to choose whether or not to act in faith.

Invite students to look for principles as they study 1 Kings 17 that can help them understand the blessings they will receive as they make righteous choices with faith.

Remind students that Ahab became the king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, outside of the covenant. She was a devoted follower of Baal—a false god commonly worshipped among the Canaanites. Together Ahab and Jezebel promoted idol worship in the Northern Kingdom of Israel (see 1 Kings 16:30–33; see also Bible Dictionary, “Jezebel”).

Explain that during this time the Lord sent a prophet named Elijah to deliver a message to King Ahab. Elijah held the sealing power of the Melchizedek Priesthood, “by which things that are bound or loosed on earth are bound or loosed in heaven (D&C 128:8–18)” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Elijah”; scriptures.lds.org).

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Elijah said to Ahab.

- What did Elijah tell Ahab? (There would be a drought in the land.)

Point out that Ahab and others who worshipped Baal claimed that Baal—rather than the Lord—had power over the weather.

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:2–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord instructed Elijah to do during the drought.

- How was Elijah blessed for following the Lord's instructions?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened next.

- Where did the Lord tell Elijah to go after the brook dried up? Why? (You may want to explain that the word *sustain* in this context means to nourish by providing food.)

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:10–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when Elijah met the widow.

- Why did the widow feel she could not feed Elijah?
- How would it test the widow's faith to feed Elijah before she fed her son and herself?
- What blessings did the Lord promise to give the woman if she fed Elijah first?

Refer to the question you wrote on the board at the beginning of class and the responses students gave.

- How is the choice this woman faced similar to some of the choices the Lord and His prophets have asked us to make?
- What might you have done if you had been in the widow's position? Why?

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the woman chose to do.

- How did the woman show her faith after listening to what Elijah said?
- What blessings did she receive after she acted in faith?

Invite students to identify a principle illustrated by the account of this widow. They may identify a variety of principles, including the following: **Before we can receive the Lord's promised blessings, we must first act in faith.** Consider writing this principle on the board.

- Why do you think it is important for us to first demonstrate faith before we receive the Lord's promised blessings?

Ask students to describe an experience when they, or someone they know, acted in faith and received the Lord's blessings as a result.

## 1 Kings 17:17–24

### *Elijah raises the widow's son from the dead*

Invite students to ponder the following question:

- Have you ever felt like you were doing your best to exercise faith and obey the words of the Lord and His prophets, but you still experienced challenges in your life?

Explain that after the woman acted in faith on Elijah's words and received the promised blessings, tragedy struck in her home. Invite a student to read 1 Kings 17:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened.

- What happened to the woman's son?
- How might this event have been a challenge for her faith?
- What feelings do you think Elijah might have had when this happened?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Kings 17:19–24. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Elijah did after the boy died and how the experience affected the widow's faith and testimony.

- How did Elijah show his faith in the Lord? What happened next?
- What did the woman say she now knew after all that she had experienced?
- As you consider the woman's actions and her resulting testimony recorded in 1 Kings 17:24, what principle can we learn about knowing the truth of the Lord's words? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we exercise faith in the Lord's words, we can come to know and testify that His words are true.** Write this principle on the board.)

Consider inviting students to think about how they have come to know that the Lord's words are true. Invite a few students to share their testimonies of this principle. You may also want to share your testimony.

Ask students to ponder what they feel the Lord would have them do to act in faith so they can receive His promised blessings. Invite them to act on the promptings they receive.

## Next Unit (1 Kings 18–2 Kings 20)

Show students the picture *Elijah Contends against the Priests of Baal* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 20; see also LDS.org). Explain that in their study during the coming week, they will learn about a confrontation between Elijah and the priests of Baal; how God blessed Elijah to defeat the priests of Baal; and how the wicked queen Jezebel finally met her end.

# 1 Kings 18–22

## Introduction

The prophet Elijah called the children of Israel to repent. To show the people that the God of Israel was the only true God, Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to a contest. Elijah prevailed in the contest and then opened the

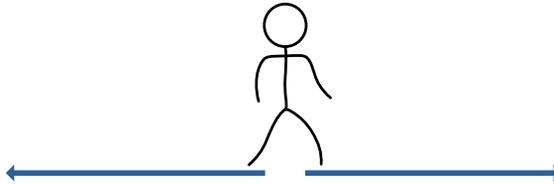
heavens to rain. When Jezebel sought Elijah's life, he fled. The Lord comforted Elijah and showed him there were 7,000 who were faithful to the Lord.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 1 Kings 18

*God demonstrates His power in a contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal*

Using tape, make two lines on the floor as shown (or you could draw lines on the board).



Ask a student to stand in the middle where the ends of the lines are closer together and to place one foot on each line. Explain that one line represents the ways of the Lord, and the other represents false gods and the ways of the world. Then ask the student the following question:

- What would happen if you tried to walk down both lines at the same time? (Eventually the student would have to choose which line to follow.)

Thank the student for participating, and invite him or her to be seated. Ask the class:

- What are some ways we may be tempted to try to follow the Lord and the ways of the world at the same time?

Invite students to look for principles as they study 1 Kings 18 that can guide them when they must choose whether they will follow either the Lord and His prophets or the world.

To provide context for 1 Kings 18, remind the class that under the leadership of King Ahab and his wife, Jezebel, most of the people in the Northern Kingdom of Israel had chosen wickedness and were worshipping false gods. Consequently, Elijah had used the sealing power to bring a drought upon the land (see 1 Kings 17:1). Jezebel had killed many of the Lord's prophets, but Elijah had survived. Summarize 1 Kings 18:1–16 by explaining that Elijah sent a man to tell King Ahab that Elijah was waiting to meet with him.

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 18:17–18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ahab and Elijah said to each other.

- What did Ahab claim Elijah had done? What trouble do you think Ahab was referring to? (You may need to explain that Ahab was likely referring to the drought upon the land.)

Point out that it had not rained in about three years.

- What did Elijah say was the true cause of Israel's troubles?

Explain that Elijah proposed a contest that would demonstrate that Jehovah was the true God. Invite a student to read 1 Kings 18:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom Elijah told Ahab to send to this contest.

- Whom did Elijah ask Ahab to send? (All the Israelites and 850 false prophets who worshipped Baal.)

### Ask questions that help students understand scripture content

Analysis questions can help students expand their understanding of the scriptures by helping them know what to look for when they examine scripture passages. Analysis questions can also help students clarify the meaning of words or phrases and examine the details of the story line to find greater meaning. The analyzing process helps prepare students to be able to identify doctrines and principles.

You may want to draw the following diagram on the board to help students visualize this contest:



Ask a student to read 1 Kings 18:21–22 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Elijah said to the people. You may want to explain that the word *halt* in this case means to hesitate or waver in choosing whom to follow.

- What did Elijah tell the people to do?
- What truth can Elijah’s words teach us about what the Lord allows us to do? (Students may use different words, but they may identify a truth like the following: **The Lord allows us to choose whether we will follow Him or the false gods and unrighteous ways of the world.**)

To help students understand this truth, ask a student to read aloud the following statement from *For the Strength of Youth*:

“You are responsible for the choices you make. . . .

“While you are free to choose your course of action, you are not free to choose the consequences. Whether for good or bad, consequences follow as a natural result of the choices you make” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 2).

Invite students to look for consequences of the choice to follow the Lord or to follow Baal as they continue to study 1 Kings 18.

Invite a student to read 1 Kings 18:23–24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the conditions of the contest between the false prophets and Elijah. (You may want to explain that a bullock is a young bull.)

- What were the conditions of the contest?

Ask a student to read 1 Kings 18:25–29 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened when the false prophets called upon Baal.

- What happened when the false prophets called upon Baal?

Explain that these false prophets were wicked people who deliberately led the Israelites away from worshipping the Lord. They promoted evil practices such as sexual immorality and the sacrifice of innocent children. Elijah’s words in verse 27 emphasized that the gods of these false prophets had no power to bless or save the children of Israel.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 1 Kings 18:30–35. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Elijah prepared his sacrifice to the Lord.

To help students visualize Elijah’s preparations, you may want to display a bowl, place a few sticks in it, and pour water over the sticks.

- Why might Elijah have poured so much water on the sacrifice and altar? (You may need to explain that it seems Elijah wanted to leave no doubt about the Lord’s power to consume the sacrifice with fire.)

Ask a student to read 1 Kings 18:36–37 aloud. Invite the class to look for what Elijah prayed for.

- According to verse 37, in what ways did Elijah want the people to be affected by the demonstration of the Lord’s power?

Ask a student to read 1 Kings 18:38–40 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened after Elijah prayed.

- What happened after Elijah prayed?
- According to verse 39, what did the people say?

- What truths can we learn from this account? (Students may identify several truths, including the following: **The Lord’s power is greater than the power of men, and the Lord can help us know that He is the true God.**)

Summarize 1 Kings 18:41–44 by explaining that after the contest, Elijah prophesied that rain would soon come upon the land. Ask students to read 1 Kings 18:45 silently to see what happened.

## 1 Kings 19

*Elijah flees to Mount Horeb, where the Lord gives him comfort and assurance through the still, small voice*

Ask a student to read 1 Kings 19:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Ahab did after witnessing Elijah’s miracles and how Ahab’s wife, Jezebel, responded.

- How did Jezebel respond to what Ahab told her? (Jezebel swore an oath that she would have Elijah killed within 24 hours.)

Summarize 1 Kings 19:3–8 by explaining that Elijah fled from the land of Israel and traveled many days until he came to Mount Horeb (another name for Mount Sinai).

- What are some great events that took place at Mount Sinai during the time of Moses?

Ask a student to read 1 Kings 19:9–12 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened as Elijah came to the mount.

- How did the Lord choose to communicate with Elijah on this occasion? (Through a still, small voice.)
- What can we learn from this account about how the Lord will often communicate with us? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **The Lord often speaks to us through the still, small voice of the Spirit.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)

Invite students to be completely still and quiet for 30 seconds and to listen for any sounds they did not notice before.

- What sounds did you hear that you did not notice before?
- How might this activity illustrate what we must do to receive the messages the Lord may give us through the still, small voice of the Spirit?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“That sweet, quiet voice of inspiration comes more as a feeling than it does as a sound. Pure intelligence can be spoken into the mind. The Holy Ghost communicates with our spirits through the mind more than through the physical senses [see 1 Corinthians 2:14; D&C 8:2; 9:8–9]. This guidance comes as thoughts, as feelings through promptings and impressions [see D&C 11:13; 100:5]. . . .

“This process is not reserved for the prophets alone. The gift of the Holy Ghost operates equally with men, women, and even little children. It is within this wondrous gift and power that the spiritual remedy to any problem can be found. . . .

“You can know the things you need to know. Pray that you will learn to receive that inspiration and remain worthy to receive it. Keep that channel—your mind—clean and free from the clutter of the world” (“Prayer and Promptings,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 44, 45).

- What can prevent us from hearing the still, small voice of the Spirit?
- When have you felt the still, small voice of the Spirit speak to you? How was that experience a blessing to you? (Remind students not to share anything that is sacred or too personal. You may also want to share an experience.)

Invite students to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: What will I do to better listen to and follow the still, small voice of the Spirit?

Explain that the Lord comforted Elijah on the mount by teaching him that he was not alone. Invite students to scan 1 Kings 19:16–18 and look for who besides Elijah was still faithful to the Lord.

Summarize 1 Kings 19:19–21 by explaining that Elijah did as the Lord commanded and called Elisha to be a prophet.

## 1 Kings 20–22

### *The Israelites defend themselves against Syria, and Ahab dies*

Summarize 1 Kings 20–22 by explaining that the Israelites defended themselves in battle against the Syrians. Elijah prophesied that Ahab and Jezebel would die. His words were fulfilled, and eventually they were both killed (see 2 Kings 9).

You may want to conclude by testifying of the truths identified in this lesson. Encourage students to act on what they wrote about how they would listen to and follow the still, small voice.

## Commentary and Background Information

### 1 Kings 18:21. “How long halt ye between two opinions?”

Sister Sharon G. Larsen of the Young Women general presidency taught:

“Our faith and commitment are tested when the world offers tempting and enticing alternatives that can turn our faces from the Lord’s kingdom. Some would like to live in that eternal city and still keep a ‘summer home’ in Babylon. If we are not consciously and deliberately choosing the kingdom of God, we will in fact be moving backwards as the kingdom of God moves forward” (“Agency—A Blessing and a Burden,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 12).

### 1 Kings 18:20–42. The prophet Elijah and the false prophets of Baal gathered unto Mount Carmel

The following images of Mount Carmel in Israel can help students visualize the place where Elijah called down fire from heaven and the false prophets of Baal failed.



Aerial view of one of the spurs of Mount Carmel in Israel.



Panoramic view of the slope of the Carmel Mountain range. The Jezreel Valley is seen in the distance.



A statue commemorating the victory of Elijah over the wicked priests of Baal, located on top of Mount Carmel in modern-day Israel.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of 2 Kings

### Why study this book?

The book of 2 Kings describes the history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, focusing on the spiritual successes and failures of each kingdom. The book also explains why Israel and Judah lost the Lord's protection and were conquered. Studying 1 and 2 Kings can help students understand the history that forms the background for many of the prophetic books of the Old Testament. Students can liken the lessons recorded by the authors of 2 Kings to their own lives and learn how to live in a way that allows them to receive the Lord's protection and avoid succumbing to temptations.

### Who wrote this book?

"The books [of 1 and 2 Kings] were compiled by some unknown writer from a variety of written documents, including the state chronicles" (Bible Dictionary, "Kings, books of"). The state chronicles were not the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles but rather a collection of records maintained under the direction of the kings of Israel.

### When and where was it written?

It is unclear when and where the books of 1 Kings and 2 Kings were written. At one time, 1 and 2 Kings were a single book called Kings. The division that created the current books of 1 and 2 Kings took place when the Bible was translated into Greek. (See Bible Dictionary, "Kings, books of.")

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The books of 1 and 2 Kings cover more than 400 years of Israelite history, starting with the death of King David (approximately 1015 B.C.) and concluding with the death of King Jehoiachin (some time after approximately 561 B.C.). The book of 2 Kings outlines the causes of the scattering of Israel. Because of the wickedness of the people in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, they were conquered

by Assyria around 721 B.C. Unfortunately, Judah did not learn from the mistakes of Israel. Even though some of the kings of Judah mentioned in 2 Kings were faithful and obedient, there were many who were wicked. One of these kings was King Manasseh, whose wickedness caused Judah to lose its divine protection. Babylon crushed the Southern Kingdom and carried its people into captivity (587 B.C.), fulfilling Lehi's prophecy that Jerusalem would be destroyed (see 1 Nephi 1:13, 18).

The miracles recorded in 2 Kings are memorable examples of the Lord's power. The book records that the prophet Elijah divided the Jordan River and was taken into heaven in a chariot of fire. Elijah's successor, Elisha, likewise divided the Jordan River. Elisha also raised the dead, instructed Naaman to bathe seven times in the Jordan River so Naaman could be healed of his leprosy, caused an axe head to float, and prophesied of a famine that lasted seven years.

In addition, the book of 2 Kings describes the setting of Isaiah's ministry in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The book records that Isaiah advised the righteous King Hezekiah of Judah and prophesied that Babylon would conquer and pillage Judah.

### Outline

**2 Kings 1–13** In the Northern Kingdom, Elijah is translated and taken into heaven and Elisha begins his ministry. Judah and Israel unite in a war against Moab and are victorious. The Lord heals Naaman, the captain of the Syrian army, of his leprosy. The people of Israel experience famines. The wicked Jezebel is killed, and the house of Ahab is destroyed. Elisha dies.

**2 Kings 14–20** Many of the kings of Israel reign in wickedness. King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria takes many of the Israelites captive. King Ahaz of Judah reigns in wickedness. The idolatrous ten tribes of Israel are carried into captivity by King Sargon of Assyria. King Hezekiah reigns over Judah in righteousness, obeying the Lord and eliminating the places devoted to the worship of false gods. Because of King Hezekiah's faith and trust in God, an angel destroys the Assyrian army, fulfilling a prophecy of Isaiah.

**2 Kings 21–25** In the Southern Kingdom, King Manasseh temporarily restores idol worship. Righteous King Josiah repairs the temple, and the book of the law is found. Josiah reads the book of the law to the people, eliminates the places devoted to the worship of false gods, and reinstates the Passover. Josiah is killed in battle. Babylon invades Judah and carries many of the people into captivity, including King Zedekiah. After many years, King Jehoiachin of Judah is released from prison and is allowed to live out his final days in relative peace and comfort in Babylon.

## LESSON 97

# 2 Kings 1–4

### Introduction

Elijah prophesied the death of Ahaziah. Elijah was translated, and Elisha took up the prophetic mantle. Because the kings of Israel and Judah sought and

obeyed counsel from Elisha, they prevailed against the king of Moab in battle. The Lord also blessed a widow after she came to Elisha for help.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Kings 1–2

#### *Elijah is translated, and Elisha takes up the prophetic mantle*

Ask students to think about a time when a Church leader they admire was released from his or her calling.

- How did you feel when this person was released?
- Why can it sometimes be difficult when leaders we admire are released from their callings?
- What challenges can we sometimes experience in accepting a new leader?

Invite students as they study 2 Kings 1–2 to look for truths that can help us when Church leaders are released.

Summarize 2 Kings 1 by explaining that King Ahab died and his son Ahaziah continued in the wicked ways of his father. After being injured in a fall, Ahaziah sought counsel from a false god. In response, the Lord sent Elijah to tell Ahaziah that he would not recover from his injury and that he would die. This event occurred near the end of Elijah's ministry.

Explain that Elisha, who served with the prophet Elijah, revered his leader. Divide students into pairs. Invite each partnership to read 2 Kings 2:1–6 aloud. Ask one student in each pair to look for what Elijah requested of Elisha each time the Lord commanded Elijah to travel to a different location. Ask the other student in each pair to look for Elisha's responses.

After sufficient time, ask the class the following questions:

- What did Elijah request of Elisha three times?
- What did Elisha say to Elijah three times?
- What can Elisha's responses teach us about following the prophet?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 2:7–10. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Elijah asked Elisha after they crossed over the Jordan River. (You may need to explain that the "sons of the prophets" were groups of disciples who met together to worship the Lord and receive instruction under the direction of the prophets [see Bible Dictionary, "Schools of the Prophets"]. You may also need to explain that a *mantle* is a cloak.)

- What did Elijah ask Elisha after they crossed the Jordan River?
- What did Elisha desire from Elijah? (Explain that the request for a double portion of Elijah's spirit was essentially a request to inherit Elijah's spiritual gifts, which would help Elisha to carry on the prophetic ministry.)
- How did Elijah say Elisha would know if his request had been granted?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 2:11–14. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened next.

- What happened to Elijah? (You may need to explain that Elijah was taken from the earth as a translated being.)
- What did Elisha do that helped him cross the Jordan River? (Elisha called upon God to part the waters in the same way that Elijah had done earlier.)

**Ask questions that help students identify doctrines and principles**

As students develop their understanding of the scriptures, they are better able to identify the principles and doctrines contained in them. Asking questions that challenge students to analyze the text can help them draw conclusions and articulate clearly the principles or doctrines found in the text they are studying.

- What do you think the passing of Elijah’s mantle to Elisha represented? (The authority and power of a leader being transferred to the new leader. Explain that in the Church today we sometimes refer to a leader’s calling, authority, and duties as his or her “mantle.”)
- What truth can we learn from these verses about what the Lord will do when He calls an individual to serve Him? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **The Lord gives authority and power to those whom He calls.**)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 2:15–18. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the sons of the prophets responded to Elisha’s new role as prophet.

- Even though the sons of the prophets recognized that the prophetic mantle had fallen upon Elisha, what did they still want to do?
- How might the reaction of the sons of the prophets show a lack of understanding about Elisha’s new role?
- How can understanding the truth you identified from 2 Kings 2:11–14 help us when Church leaders are released and new leaders are called?

Ask students to explain how they would use the truth they identified to help someone who is having a difficult time following a new Church leader. You may also want to invite students to share about a time when they knew that God had given a newly called leader authority and power.

Summarize 2 Kings 2:19–22 by explaining that Elisha learned that the water in Jericho was unusable. Elisha healed the waters for the people, saving them from death and famine.

Explain that according to 2 Kings 2:23–25 some youths (“not little children” [2 Kings 2:23, footnote *a*]) mocked Elisha as the Lord’s representative. Invite a student to read aloud 2 Kings 2:24 to learn what happened to these youths who mocked the Lord’s prophet.

## 2 Kings 3

### *The kings of Israel and Judah unite against Moab*

Invite a student to read aloud the following summary of 2 Kings 3:1–10:

After Ahaziah died, his brother Jehoram became the king of Israel. The Moabites, who had been paying tribute to Israel, rebelled against Jehoram, who then sought help from Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. These two kings, along with the king of Edom, united to stop the Moabite rebellion. After they had traveled together for seven days, there was not enough water for the soldiers or their animals.

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 3:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for whom the kings turned to for guidance.

- To whom did the kings turn for guidance?

Summarize 2 Kings 3:13–15 by explaining that Elisha assisted the kings.

Invite students to read 2 Kings 3:16–20 silently, looking for what Elisha said the Lord would do for the army.

- What did Elisha say the Lord would do?
- What did the army need to do?

Summarize 2 Kings 3:21–27 by explaining that because of how the sun was shining on the water in the valley in the morning, the water appeared as blood to the Moabites. The Moabites believed that the three armies of the kings had turned on each other and were now weakened or destroyed. The Moabites entered the Israelite camp so they could take any valuable possessions the armies had left behind, but instead they were ambushed and defeated.

- What principle can we learn from this account about what we can do when we need the Lord’s help? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we seek for guidance from the Lord’s prophets, then we can receive His protection from those influences that would harm us.**)
- When have you followed the words of the Lord’s prophets and received the Lord’s help as a result?

Encourage students to study the words of the prophets regularly so they can invite and receive the Lord's help in their lives.

## 2 Kings 4:1–7

### *Elisha multiplies a widow's oil to help her redeem her sons*

Give each student a small cup. Explain that they will understand the purpose of the cups as they study 2 Kings 4.

Explain that a widow came to Elisha seeking help with a serious problem. Invite a student to read 2 Kings 4:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what she needed help with.

- What did this widow need Elisha's help with? (She needed help saving her sons from being forced into slavery to pay off a debt.)
- What emotions do you think this mother was experiencing at this time?
- How did the widow demonstrate her faith in the Lord?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 4:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the instructions Elisha gave to the widow.

- What did Elisha tell the widow to do? How much oil did the widow have? How many additional vessels did Elisha tell the widow to gather?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 4:5 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the widow did next. Invite students to report what they find.

To help students visualize the events recorded in 2 Kings 4:5–6, ask two students to act as the sons of the widow and gather the cups from each class member. Invite the two students to place the cups on a table at the front of the room. Hold up a larger cup or pitcher of water (make sure it contains less water than can fill the cups at the front of the class), and ask the class how many of the small cups they think the water in the pitcher can fill. After students respond, begin to fill the small cups with water. When you run out of water, ask students to read 2 Kings 4:6 silently and look for how the demonstration with the water and the cups is different from what happened with the widow's oil.

- What happened when the widow poured her one pot of oil into the empty vessels she had borrowed? (Miraculously, she was able to fill all of them.)

Invite a student to read aloud 2 Kings 4:7. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Elisha said to the woman after this event.

- What did Elisha say to do with the oil the Lord had blessed her with?
- Why do you think the widow and her sons received more oil than they needed to pay their debts?
- What principle can we learn from this account about what can happen when we turn to the Lord in faith? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **When we turn to the Lord in faith, He can bless us according to our needs and righteous desires.**)

Ask students to ponder a time when they made an effort to turn to the Lord when they were in need and the Lord in turn blessed them with what they needed or desired. Invite a few students to share their experiences with the class if they are not too personal or sacred.

## 2 Kings 4:8–44

### *Elisha performs miracles by the power of God*

Summarize 2 Kings 4:8–44 by explaining that as Elisha traveled, he promised a woman that she would bear a child. When that child later died, Elisha raised him from the dead. Elisha also purified a poisonous pot of pottage and multiplied food for the people to eat.

Testify of the truths you have discussed, and invite students to act on these truths.

# 2 Kings 5–13

## Introduction

The Syrian military leader Naaman was healed of leprosy as he followed the counsel of the prophet Elisha. Later, Elisha miraculously caused an axe head

to float in water. Elisha also helped Israel defeat the Syrian army by revealing Syria's war plans to the king of Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Kings 5

#### *Naaman follows the counsel of Elisha and is healed of his leprosy*

Ask students to consider how they would respond in the following scenario: A friend who is not very religious asks you for advice on how to handle a difficult personal problem. You suggest to her that when you struggle with challenges, you pray to God for help. She responds, "I don't think my prayers would be answered because I don't even know if I believe in God."

- What would you say to your friend to help her strengthen her belief in God?

Invite students to look for principles as they study 2 Kings 5 that can help them and others increase their faith in God.

Explain that while Elisha was serving as a prophet in Israel, a man named Naaman was living in the neighboring country of Syria. Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for details about Naaman.

- What do we learn about Naaman from these verses? (Explain that "captain of the host of the king of Syria" means that he was the commander of the Syrian army.)
- Why might it have been difficult for Naaman when he discovered he had leprosy? (Leprosy would have caused Naaman to develop disfiguring sores—likely making him a social outcast—and could have resulted in his death.)

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Naaman learned of a possible solution to his problem.

- Who did the Israelite maid say could heal Naaman? (The prophet Elisha.)

Summarize 2 Kings 5:5–8 by explaining that the king of Syria sent Naaman with a letter to the king of Israel asking that Naaman be healed of his leprosy. When Elisha heard about Naaman's request, he told the king of Israel to send Naaman to him.

- If you had been Naaman, who held the important position of captain of the Syrian army, what are some things you might have expected Elisha to do so that you would be healed?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when Naaman went to see Elisha.

- How did Elisha communicate with Naaman?
- What did Elisha tell Naaman to do in order to be healed?
- If you were Naaman, how might you have responded to Elisha's instructions?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Naaman responded to Elisha's instructions. Explain that Abana and Pharpar were rivers in Naaman's homeland.

- According to verse 11, why was Naaman upset about how Elisha had given his instructions?
- According to verse 12, why was Naaman upset about the instructions Elisha had given?
- In what ways might following these instructions have been a test of faith for Naaman?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the questions Naaman's servants asked him.

- In your own words, how would you summarize the questions Naaman’s servants asked him?
- What truths can we learn from the servants’ questions? (Students may identify truths similar to the following: **If we have faith that the prophet speaks for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, then we will follow all of his words. As we do the small and simple things requested by God’s prophets, we will receive great blessings.**)
- Why might we be more willing to do something great and less willing to do something small to keep the commandments?

Invite students to ponder examples of small things that the Lord has asked of them. Encourage them to identify one small thing they can do to show their faithfulness to the Lord.

 You may want to show the video “Naaman and Elisha” (14:30). If so, after you have shown the video, invite students to read 2 Kings 5:14 silently, pondering how they might have felt if they had been in Naaman’s situation. This video can be found on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org).

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Naaman chose to do.

- How did Naaman show his faith in the words of God as given through Elisha?
- If you were Naaman, what might you have been thinking the first time you dipped yourself in the water? The second time? The seventh time?
- What thoughts or feelings might you have had as you saw your leprosy healed?
- How might this experience have affected your testimony of the prophet’s calling?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Naaman did after he was cleansed. Invite students to report what they find.

- What did Naaman come to know through this experience?
- What will happen to our testimonies of God if we choose to exercise faith in His words? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we exercise faith by acting on God’s words, our testimony of Him will be strengthened.**)
- Why do you think we frequently need to exercise faith in God before our testimonies are strengthened?

Refer to the scenario at the beginning of the lesson. Ask a few students to explain how they could use the account of Naaman and the principles they have identified to help their friend. Ask them to consider what she would need to do to exercise her faith in God so that her belief in or testimony of Him could be strengthened.

- When have you exercised faith by acting on God’s words?
- How was your testimony of God strengthened as a result?

Invite students to ponder aspects of their testimonies that they would like to strengthen. Ask them to think about what they can do to exercise their faith in God’s words so that those parts of their testimony can grow.

Explain that in 2 Kings 5:15–27 we learn that Naaman wanted to thank Elisha by giving him money and gifts. Elisha declined Naaman’s offer. After Naaman departed, Elisha’s servant Gehazi went after Naaman and lied to him, saying that Elisha requested silver and clothing. Naaman gave Gehazi gifts, which Gehazi kept for himself. The Lord punished Gehazi by afflicting him with Naaman’s leprosy.

## 2 Kings 6:1–7

### *Elisha causes an axe head to float*

Write the following list on the board:

*Taking a difficult test at school*

*Losing keys or a cell phone*

*Deciding which classes to take*

Explain that this is a list of common challenges or decisions that a youth might face. Invite students to write additional challenges or decisions on the board. Ask students which of these listed items they think God cares about the most, and why.

### **Ask questions that help students understand doctrines and principles**

After identifying principles and doctrines, students need to understand them before they can be meaningfully applied. Ask questions that lead students to more clearly understand the meaning of a particular principle or doctrine, that encourage students to think about a principle in a modern context, or that invite students to explain their understanding of a principle.

Summarize 2 Kings 6:1–3 by explaining that Elisha gave the sons of the prophets permission to build a new home because the one they were living in was too small.

Invite students to read 2 Kings 6:4–5 silently, looking for what happened as they were cutting down trees to build the new home.

- Why was losing this axe head a concern for these men?
- Considering the grand scope of God’s plan, how important do you think an axe head is to God?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 6:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Elisha did. Invite students to report what they find. Explain that the phrase “the iron did swim” means the axe head floated to the surface of the water.

- If you had been the man who had borrowed the axe, how might you have felt when you saw the axe head floating in the water?
- What can this miracle teach us about God’s awareness of us and our concerns? (Students may identify a truth such as the following: **God is aware of our concerns and is merciful to us.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson:

“Our Heavenly Father is aware of our needs and will help us as we call upon Him for assistance. I believe that no concern of ours is too small or insignificant. The Lord is in the details of our lives” (“Consider the Blessings,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 88).

Invite students to share experiences they have had when the Lord has helped them in small ways.

## 2 Kings 6:8–13:25

### *Israel and Syria battle each other, and new kings reign in Israel*

Explain that Syria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel began to fight each other, and the king of Syria would privately discuss his battle plans with his servants.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 6:9–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Israel learned of the Syrian army’s plans.

- What did Elisha reveal to the king of Israel?
- What did the Syrian king command his army to do?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 6:15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Elisha and his servant reacted when they learned the Syrian army was surrounding them.

- How did Elisha answer his servant’s question?
- Why might Elisha’s answer have been confusing to the servant?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 6:17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord did for the servant.

- What did Elisha’s servant see after his eyes were opened?
- What do you think happened to his fear when he saw the heavenly army?

Summarize 2 Kings 6:18–23 by explaining that the Lord caused the Syrian army to be unable to comprehend where they were. Elisha led the army into Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Elisha persuaded the king of Israel to feed and care for the Syrians. This particular army of Syrians never returned to Israel.

- Based on the account we just studied, what do we learn the Lord will do for those who are faithful to Him? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **as we are faithful to the Lord, we can receive His help in our challenges, even though we may not be aware of His help at the time.**)
- How can knowing this principle help us “fear not” (2 Kings 6:16) when we are faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges?

Invite students to think of challenges they have experienced and ponder how the Lord may have helped them, even though they may not have been aware of His help at the time.

Summarize 2 Kings 6:24–13:25 by explaining that these chapters chronicle the wars between Israel and Syria and the reigns of several kings in both Israel and Judah.

Conclude with your testimony of the truths identified in this lesson, and invite students to apply these truths in their lives.

## LESSON 99

# 2 Kings 14–17

### Introduction

These chapters identify several kings from the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. In an effort to gain the favor of the king of Assyria, Ahaz, king of Judah, gave him gold and silver from the temple and the royal treasury. Ahaz also defiled the temple by replacing the altar with one

fashioned after a pagan altar in Damascus and by making other unauthorized changes to the temple. The rulers of the Northern Kingdom of Israel perpetuated wickedness, and the kingdom was conquered by the Assyrians.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Kings 14–15

#### *Many kings rule in Judah and Israel*

Before class write the following references on the board:

<i>2 Kings 14:1, 3</i>	<i>2 Kings 15:17–18</i>
<i>2 Kings 14:23–24</i>	<i>2 Kings 15:23–24</i>
<i>2 Kings 15:1, 3</i>	<i>2 Kings 15:27–28</i>
<i>2 Kings 15:8–9</i>	<i>2 Kings 15:32, 34</i>

Begin by asking students to consider how they would respond in the following situations:

(1) Your best friend has started using illegal drugs; (2) As a parent, you discover that your children have been viewing inappropriate shows and images on the television and computer.

- Why would it be dangerous to do nothing in these situations?

Invite students as they study 2 Kings 14–15 to look for what can happen if we do not remove evil influences from our lives and help others to do the same.

Explain that the verses referenced on the board describe various rulers of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. Invite students to scan the verses, looking for which kings were righteous. Ask a few students to write the names of the righteous kings next to their references on the board. (Students should identify Amaziah [2 Kings 14:1, 3], Azariah, also known as Uzziah [2 Kings 15:1, 3; see also Bible Dictionary, “Azariah”], and Jotham [2 Kings 15:32, 34].)

Ask students if they noticed which kingdom these righteous kings ruled. (The Southern Kingdom of Judah.)

- What do you think the phrase “did that which is right in the sight of the Lord” might mean?

Invite a few students to read aloud 2 Kings 14:4; 15:4; 15:35. Ask students to follow along, looking for what each king failed to do.

Explain that “high places” refers to locations where idol worship took place. They may also have been places where other wicked acts were committed (like human sacrifice and sexual immorality). The failure to remove these high places allowed wicked practices to continue within the kingdom of Judah.

- What might result if we fail to remove evil influences from our lives? (Students may use different words, but be sure to emphasize that **if we do not remove evil influences from our lives, we place ourselves and our families in spiritual danger.**)

Invite students to identify some evil influences today and how they could be removed from an individual’s life. Invite students to ponder whether there are any evil influences they need to remove from their lives. Challenge them to pray for the strength and courage to remove them.

## 2 Kings 16–17

### *King Ahaz defiles the temple, and the kingdom of Israel is conquered*

Ask students if they have ever seen someone try to please another person in order to obtain something in return.

- What might the danger be in doing this?

Encourage students as they study 2 Kings 16 to look for how Ahaz, king of Judah, sought to please the king of Assyria to obtain his help.

Invite students to scan 2 Kings 16:1–4 silently. Point out that Ahaz did evil in the sight of the Lord by sacrificing his son to the heathen gods (see also 2 Chronicles 28:3) and by offering sacrifice in the high places. Invite a student to read 2 Kings 16:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the difficulty that came to Ahaz and the people of Judah.

- What difficulty arose for Ahaz and the people of Judah? (The armies of Israel and Syria besieged Jerusalem. You may need to explain that in this context *besiege* means to surround a city and try to take control of it. Explain that the nations of Israel and Syria intended to force Judah into an alliance against the nation of Assyria.)
- What do you think you would have done if you had been in Ahaz’s position?

Ask a student to read 2 Kings 16:7–8 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for how Ahaz responded in this situation.

- What did Ahaz do to gain favor with the king of Assyria?

Explain that Ahaz also went to the city of Damascus (the capital of Syria, north of Judah and Israel) to meet with the king of Assyria and further seek his favor and help.

Invite half the class to read 2 Kings 16:10–16 silently and the other half to read 2 Chronicles 28:22–25 silently, looking for actions that indicate Ahaz’s lack of faith in the Lord. Ask students to report what they find. (Ahaz offered sacrifices to the idols in Damascus and ordered that the altar in the temple at Jerusalem be replaced with an altar designed like one he had seen in Damascus. He also made unauthorized changes to the holy priesthood ordinances, destroyed or altered sacred temple vessels and the “sea” (font), had the temple closed, and set up places of idolatry in Jerusalem.)

- Why do you think Ahaz wanted to “fashion” (or make) an altar like the one he found in Damascus?
- Whom do you think Ahaz was trying to please?
- How might Ahaz’s actions have been displeasing to the Lord?

Ask students to read 2 Kings 16:17–18 silently, looking for how Ahaz treated the items in the temple and why he treated them that way. Invite them to explain what they learn. Make sure students understand that Ahaz “turned” or changed the furnishings in the Lord’s house to please the Assyrian king and win his favor. These actions show that Ahaz sought to please the world instead of Jehovah.

Explain that the kings of Israel were much like King Ahaz of Judah. Invite a student to read 2 Kings 17:3 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what King Hoshea of Israel did to appease a different king of Assyria.

Explain that 2 Kings 17:4–12 describes how Hoshea offended the Assyrian king and was put in prison, and his people were conquered after three years of siege. You may want to invite students to mark 2 Kings 17:6, which describes the downfall of the kingdom of Israel and the beginning of the scattering of the ten tribes of Israel.

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 17:13–14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord did *before* He allowed the Assyrians to conquer and carry away the kingdom of Israel.

- What truth can we learn from these verses about how the Lord tries to save His people? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord sends prophets to preach repentance and help us live righteously.**)

Because they hardened their hearts against the Lord’s servants, the people of the kingdom of Israel were conquered and taken captive by Assyria. Their identity as distinct tribes and as the covenant people of Jehovah was lost. However, the ten tribes are not lost to the Lord, and some of them were visited by Jesus Christ after His Resurrection (see 3 Nephi 15:15–16:5).

The scattering of the ten tribes began with the Assyrians, and they were eventually scattered and lost among other peoples of the earth (see 1 Nephi 22:3–5). They will remain lost until they turn their hearts to Jesus Christ as part of the Restoration and gathering in the latter days (see D&C 110:11; Articles of Faith 1:10).

Invite students to read 2 Kings 17:15–17 silently, looking for what the Israelites did to please other people and nations. Ask them to report what they find.

- According to verse 15, what did the Israelites reject? What did they follow?
- According to verse 16, what did the Israelites leave? Whom did they serve?
- According to verse 17, what did the Israelites do to their children? What things did they turn to for revelation?

Ask a student to read 2 Kings 17:18–21, 23 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the results of the Israelites' open rebellion and wickedness.

- What do you think the phrase “removed them out of his sight” (verse 18) means?
- According to verse 20, what did the Lord do as a result of their wickedness?
- What can we learn from the accounts of the wicked kings of Israel and Judah trying to please the corrupt nations around them? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **when we seek to please others above God, we lose His protection.**)
- What are some examples of situations in which a Latter-day Saint youth might be tempted to please others above God?

To provide an example of one young woman who sought to please God instead of her peers, you may want to invite a student to read aloud the following account shared by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“I spoke with a Laurel from the United States. I quote from her email:

“This past year some of my friends on Facebook began posting their position on marriage. Many favored same-sex marriage, and several LDS youth indicated they “liked” the postings. I made no comment.

“I decided to declare my belief in traditional marriage in a thoughtful way.

“With my profile picture, I added the caption “I believe in marriage between a man and a woman.” Almost instantly I started receiving messages. “You are selfish.” “You are judgmental.” One compared me to a slave owner. And I received this post from a great friend who is a strong member of the Church: “You need to catch up with the times. Things are changing and so should you.”

“‘I did not fight back,’ she said, ‘but I did not take my statement down’” (“Spiritual Whirlwinds,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 19–20).

- How did this young woman show her loyalty to God instead of to her peers?

Read the following questions aloud, and give students time between questions to ponder their responses: (1) Do I think more about pleasing others than I do about pleasing God? (2) What are some things that distract me from loving God or that turn my heart and mind away from Him? (3) How have I recently shown God that I love Him above all others?

Invite students to share experiences they have had when they or someone they know loved God and tried to please Him above others and were blessed with His guidance or protection. You may want to conclude by sharing an experience of your own.

### *Ask questions that invite feelings and testimony*

After students understand a doctrine or principle taught in the scriptures, teachers can ask questions that cause students to reflect on past spiritual experiences related to that doctrine or principle. These questions can lead students to feel more deeply the truthfulness and significance of that gospel principle in their lives. Sometimes, these feelings can strengthen a student's desire to live a gospel principle more faithfully.

# 2 Kings 18–20

## Introduction

Hezekiah, king of Judah, reigned in righteousness and removed idolatry from his kingdom. During his reign, Assyria carried the Northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity and later invaded the southern kingdom of Judah. Under threat of attack, Hezekiah sent servants to the prophet Isaiah to ask him to pray for the people. The Lord, through Isaiah, told the people to not be afraid;

He would help them. Hezekiah further prayed about the Assyrian threat, and the Lord assured him that He would defend the city. An angel sent by the Lord smote the Assyrian camp, killing 185,000 Assyrians. Later, because of Hezekiah's pleading and righteousness, the Lord extended his life.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Kings 18

#### *Assyria conquers Israel and later threatens Hezekiah and the people of Judah*

Invite students to respond to the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What challenges or fears do you have?
- How might those challenges or fears test your faith in the Lord?

Explain that 2 Kings 18–20 records the challenges and fears of Hezekiah, the king of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Invite students to look for principles that can help them with their challenges and fears as they study these chapters.

Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 18:3–8. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the good things Hezekiah did as king.

- What words or phrases in verses 3–8 describe Hezekiah's righteousness?
- According to verse 7, what blessing did Hezekiah receive for trusting in the Lord and keeping His commandments?
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we trust in the Lord and keep His commandments, then He will be with us.**)
- In what ways do we benefit from having the Lord with us?

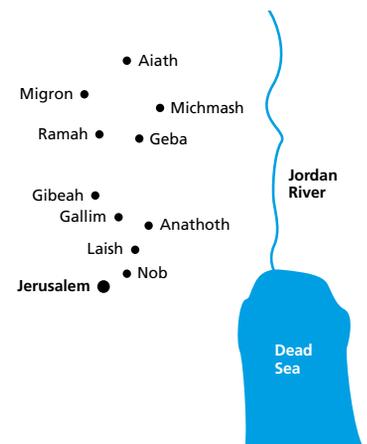
Summarize 2 Kings 18:9–12 by explaining that Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel—the 10 tribes who mostly lived in the regions of Samaria and Galilee—"because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed his covenant" (2 Kings 18:12).

Explain that about seven years after the Assyrian king Sargon (who succeeded Shalmaneser [see verse 9]) conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and carried the people away into captivity, Sennacherib succeeded him as the king (see 2 Kings 18:9–10, 13). Ask a student to read 2 Kings 18:13 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Sennacherib decided to do.

- What did Sennacherib decide to do?

Draw the accompanying map on the board. Point out that Sennacherib planned to conquer Jerusalem—the capital of the kingdom of Judah. The Assyrian army appeared to be unstoppable. They had a reputation of viciously desolating the lands and torturing the people they conquered, thus inspiring fear in those who opposed them.

- What thoughts or feelings would you have had if you had lived in Jerusalem and knew the Assyrian army was approaching?



Explain that the prophet Isaiah prophesied of the Assyrian invasion. Ask a few students to read Isaiah 10:28–32 aloud. After each verse is read, invite the class to report what Isaiah said would happen at each city. As students report on each city, cross it out on the map on the board to show that it would be conquered by the Assyrian army. Explain that the cities of Madmenah and Gebim (see verse 31) are not included on the map because we do not know where they were located.

Point out that the city of Nob was less than one mile (1.6 km) north of Jerusalem. This means that the Assyrian army came extremely close to Jerusalem.

- What do you think it means in verse 32 that Sennacherib would “shake his hand against . . . Jerusalem”? (He would threaten it but not destroy it. Do not cross out Jerusalem on the map.)

Explain that as recorded in Isaiah 10:33–34, Isaiah compared the Assyrian army to a bough, or large branch, of a tree. Ask a student to read these verses aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Isaiah said would happen to the Assyrian army before it could conquer Jerusalem.

- What did Isaiah say would happen to the Assyrian army?

Point out that the book of 2 Chronicles preserves important details about how Hezekiah led his people during this time. Invite a student to read 2 Chronicles 32:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Hezekiah told the people of Jerusalem.

- How did Hezekiah demonstrate his faith in the Lord at this time?

Explain that just as Isaiah prophesied, the Assyrian army arrived outside of Jerusalem after conquering the cities along the way. One of the Assyrians’ strategies was to send negotiators to a city before their army would attack. The Assyrians used their reputation as brutal, ruthless warriors to intimidate cities and persuade them to surrender. Sennacherib sent negotiators to Jerusalem, where they were met by Hezekiah’s representatives.

Invite two students to come to the front of the class. Assign one to be Rab-shakeh (Sennacherib’s negotiator) and the other to be Eliakim (one of Hezekiah’s representatives). You may want to make name badges for the two students to wear.

Explain that the conversation between Rab-shakeh and Eliakim was witnessed by the people in Jerusalem, who were watching from atop the city walls (see 2 Kings 18:26). Invite the rest of the class to imagine they are like the people on the wall and can see the Assyrian army right outside their city as they listen to the conversation.

Ask the student representing Rab-shakeh to read 2 Kings 18:19–20 aloud. Invite the class to listen for the questions Rab-shakeh asked.

- What questions did Rab-shakeh ask? What do you think his intention was?

Summarize 2 Kings 18:21–25 by explaining that Rab-shakeh then scoffed at Judah’s alliance with Egypt and mocked the Lord.

Ask the student representing Eliakim to read 2 Kings 18:26 aloud. Invite the class to listen for the request he made.

- Why did Eliakim want Rab-shakeh to speak in Syrian? (So the people of Jerusalem would not be able to understand his threats.)

Invite the student representing Rab-shakeh to read 2 Kings 18:28–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Rab-shakeh’s response to this request.

- What did Rab-shakeh say to try to convince the people of Jerusalem to surrender?

Thank the students who participated in the role play, and invite them to return to their seats.

- How might Rab-shakeh’s words have persuaded some people in Jerusalem not to trust in the Lord?
- In what situations might others try to sway us from trusting in the Lord?

## 2 Kings 19

### *Hezekiah asks the Lord to save Jerusalem, and an angel destroys the Assyrian army*

Ask a student to read 2 Kings 19:1 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Hezekiah’s response when he received news of Rab-shakeh’s threats.

- Why do you think Hezekiah “rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth”?
- Where did Hezekiah go?

Summarize 2 Kings 19:2–5 by explaining that Hezekiah sent messengers to inform the prophet Isaiah of the Assyrians’ threats, to seek his counsel, and to ask him to pray for the people.

Ask a student to read 2 Kings 19:6–7 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Isaiah’s response.

- How was Isaiah’s response similar to his prophecy in Isaiah 10?

Explain that Rab-shakeh then sent messengers to Hezekiah with another message. Ask a student to read 2 Kings 19:10–11. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Rab-shakeh’s message.

- What choice did Hezekiah have to make? (Whether to believe Isaiah and trust in the Lord or believe Rab-shakeh and surrender to Assyria.)
- What would you do if you had to make a difficult decision like this? Why?

Invite a few students to read 2 Kings 19:14–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Hezekiah did during this difficult time.

- What did Hezekiah choose to do?

Ask students to read 2 Kings 19:20 silently, looking for evidence that the Lord heard Hezekiah’s prayer. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize 2 Kings 19:21–34 by explaining that Isaiah again reassured Hezekiah that the Lord would defend Jerusalem against the Assyrian army.

Ask a student to read 2 Kings 19:32–37 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened to the Assyrian army and their king, Sennacherib.

- What happened to the army during the night? What happened to Sennacherib?
- What principles can we learn from this account? (Students may identify several principles, including the following: **If we turn to the Lord, then He can help us overcome our fears and challenges.**)
- When have you turned to the Lord for help with a fear or challenge? How did the Lord help you? (You may want to share one of your own personal experiences.)

Point out that Hezekiah did three things to turn to the Lord: (1) he went to the temple (see 2 Kings 19:1); (2) he sought the counsel of the prophet (see 2 Kings 19:2–5); (3) he prayed to the Lord (see 2 Kings 19:14–19). Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how well they feel they are doing in each of those three areas and how they can improve.

## 2 Kings 20

### *The Lord extends Hezekiah’s life, and Hezekiah entertains Babylonian messengers*

Explain that Hezekiah later faced another challenge. Ask students to read 2 Kings 20:1 silently, looking for the challenge Hezekiah faced.

- What challenge did Hezekiah face?

Ask a student to read 2 Kings 20:2–6 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how Hezekiah responded to this challenge.

- What did Hezekiah do? How was he blessed?
- What principle can we learn from this account? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we exercise faith in the Lord, we can be healed according to His will.** In rare circumstances the Lord in His mercy will extend the life of an individual in mortality.)

Summarize 2 Kings 20:7–20 by explaining that the Lord showed Hezekiah a sign to confirm that He would heal him. Later, Isaiah prophesied that Babylon would conquer the kingdom of Judah.

Invite students to ponder how they can apply the principles discussed in this lesson when they face their challenges or fears. Testify of these principles, and invite students to apply them in their lives.

# Home-Study Lesson

## 1 Kings 18–22; 2 Kings 1–20 (Unit 20)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied 1 Kings 18–2 Kings 20 (unit 20) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (1 Kings 18–22)**

From Elijah's confrontation with the priests of Baal, students learned that the Lord allows us to choose whether we will follow Him or the false gods and unrighteous ways of the world, and the Lord can help us know that He is the true God. When students studied about how the Lord spoke to Elijah, they learned that the Lord often speaks to us through a still, small voice.

#### **Day 2 (2 Kings 1–13)**

From their study of Elijah being taken up to heaven and Elisha accepting the call to be the Lord's prophet, students learned that the Lord gives authority and power to those He calls. Later, while studying how Elisha helped three kings defeat the rebellious Moabites, students learned that if we seek for guidance from the Lord through the words of His prophets in our times of need, then we will receive the Lord's help. As students studied Elisha's experience of helping a faithful woman save her sons from enslavement, they learned that when we turn to the Lord in faith, He can bless us according to our needs and righteous desires.

#### **Day 3 (2 Kings 14–17)**

As students learned that the kings of Israel did not remove the idolatrous influences from their kingdom, they identified the principle that if we do not remove evil influences from our lives, we place ourselves and our families in spiritual danger. Before Israel was conquered by the Assyrians, the Lord sent a prophet to preach repentance and help them live in righteousness, just as He does today. From King Ahaz's efforts to please the corrupt nations around him, students learned that when we seek to please others above God, we lose His presence and protection.

#### **Day 4 (2 Kings 18–20)**

Hezekiah was an example of righteousness. From their study of his life, students learned that if we have faith in the Lord—trusting in Him and keeping His commandments—then He will be with us. They also learned that if we turn to the Lord, then He can help us overcome our fears and challenges. Later in his life, Hezekiah became ill. Students learned that if we exercise faith in the Lord, we can be healed according to His will.

### Introduction

Naaman, the Syrian military leader, had leprosy. Through the suggestion of an Israelite maid in his household, he sought healing from the prophet Elisha. By studying his experience, students will learn what we can do to show our faith in the Lord and to increase our testimony of Him.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### 2 Kings 5

*Naaman follows the counsel of Elisha and is healed of leprosy*

Ask students to consider how they would respond in the following scenario: A friend who is not very religious asks you for advice on how to handle a difficult personal problem. You suggest to her that when you struggle with challenges, you pray to God for help. She responds, "I don't think my prayers would be answered because I don't even know if I believe in God."

- What would you say to your friend to help her strengthen her belief in God?

Invite students to look for principles as they study 2 Kings 5 that can help them and others increase their faith in God.

Explain that while Elisha was serving as a prophet in Israel, a man named Naaman was living in the neighboring country of Syria. Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for details about Naaman.

- What do we learn about Naaman from these verses? (Explain that "captain of the host of the king of Syria" means that he was the commander of the Syrian army.)

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:2–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Naaman learned of a possible solution to his problem.

- Who did the Israelite maid say could heal Naaman? (The prophet Elisha.)

Summarize 2 Kings 5:5–8 by explaining that the king of Syria sent Naaman with a letter to the king of Israel asking that Naaman be healed of his leprosy. When Elisha heard about Naaman's request, he told the king of Israel to send Naaman to him.

- If you had been Naaman, who held the important position of captain of the Syrian army, what are some things you might have expected Elisha to do so that you would be healed?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when Naaman went to see Elisha.

- How did Elisha communicate with Naaman?
- What did Elisha tell Naaman to do in order to be healed?
- If you were Naaman, how might you have responded to Elisha's instructions?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Naaman responded to Elisha's instructions. Explain that Abana and Pharpar were rivers in Naaman's homeland.

- According to verse 11, why was Naaman upset about how Elisha had given his instructions?
- According to verse 12, why was Naaman upset about the instructions Elisha had given?
- In what ways might following these instructions have been a test of faith for Naaman?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the questions Naaman's servants asked him.

- In your own words, how would you summarize the questions Naaman's servants asked him?
- What truths can we learn from the servants' questions? (Students may identify several truths, including the following: **If we have faith that the prophet speaks for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, then we will follow all of his words. As we do the small and simple things requested by God's prophets, we will receive great blessings.**)
- Why might we be more willing to do something great and less willing to do something small to keep the commandments?
- How does learning to obey the prophets in the small things prepare us to do the greater things we may be called to do in the kingdom?

Invite students to ponder some examples of small things that the Lord has asked of them. Encourage them to identify one small thing they can do to show their faithfulness to the Lord.

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Naaman chose to do.

- How did Naaman show his faith in the words of God as given through His prophet Elisha?
- If you were Naaman, what might you have been thinking the first time you dipped yourself in the water? The second time? The seventh time?
- What thoughts or feelings might you have had as you saw your leprosy healed?
- How might this experience have affected your testimony of the prophet's calling?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 5:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Naaman did after he was cleansed. Invite students to report what they find.

- What did Naaman come to know through this experience?
- What will happen to our testimonies of God as we choose to exercise faith in His words? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we exercise faith by acting on God's words, our testimony of Him is strengthened.**)
- Why do you think we frequently need to exercise faith in God before our testimonies are strengthened?

Refer to the scenario at the beginning of the lesson. Ask a few students to explain how they could use the account of Naaman and the principles they identified to help their friend. Ask

them to consider what she would need to do to exercise her faith in God so that her belief in or testimony of Him could be strengthened.

- When have you exercised faith by acting on God's words?
- How was your testimony of God strengthened as a result?

Invite students to ponder aspects of their testimonies that they would like to strengthen. Ask them to think about what they can do to exercise their faith in God's words so that those parts of their testimony can grow.

## 2 Kings 6–13

*Elisha causes an axe head to float; Israel and Syria battle each other*

Summarize 2 Kings 6 by explaining that Elisha performed another miracle by causing an axe head that had fallen into the water to float to the surface. Explain that in 2 Kings 7–13 we learn that Syria and the Northern Kingdom of Israel began to war against each other; these chapters chronicle those wars.

During the war between Syria and Israel, the king of Syria would privately discuss his battle plans with his servants. Through inspiration, Elisha knew the king's plans and would inform the king of Israel of Syria's plans. When he learned what Elisha was doing, the Syrian king commanded his army to capture Elisha. When the Syrian army surrounded the city the prophet was in, the servant of Elisha was afraid.

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 6:15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Elisha told his servant.

- How did Elisha answer his servant's question?
- Why might Elisha's answer have been confusing to the servant?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 6:17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the servant came to understand what the prophet told him.

- What did Elisha's servant see after his eyes were opened?
- What do you think happened to his fear when he saw the heavenly army?
- How can knowing that "they that be with us [the righteous] are more than they that be with them [the wicked]" (2 Kings 6:16) help when we are faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges?

Conclude with your testimony of truths identified in today's lesson, and invite students to apply these truths in their lives.

## Next Unit (2 Kings 21–Nehemiah 13)

Ask students to consider what kind of opposition they have faced as they have tried to keep the commandments of the Lord and how they responded to that opposition. Explain that in their studies next week, they will learn principles that can help them when they encounter opposition to their efforts to be righteous.

# 2 Kings 21–25

## Introduction

Under the reign of kings Manasseh and Amon, the kingdom of Judah engaged in wicked practices of idolatry. When Josiah became the king, he used the book of the law to call the people to repentance.

After Josiah was killed in battle, the next four kings led Judah back to wickedness. Under the reign of King Zedekiah, Jerusalem was destroyed and the people taken into bondage in Babylon.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### 2 Kings 21:1–23:25

*After Manasseh and Amon reign in wickedness, Josiah helps the people of Judah return to the Lord*

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a list of five to ten people they spend the most time with. Invite them to consider ways the people on their lists may influence them. Also ask students to ponder what influence they may have on the people they listed.

Invite students as they study 2 Kings 21–23 to look for principles that can help them understand how their choices can impact the lives of others.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 21:1–9. Ask the class to follow along and look for ways King Hezekiah’s son Manasseh influenced the people of Judah.

- What are some ways Manasseh influenced the people of Judah?

Explain that in verse 6 the statement that Manasseh “made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments” likely means that Manasseh offered one of his own children as a sacrifice to one of the false gods he worshipped, and he sought and heeded false prophets and prophecies.

- What principles can we learn from Manasseh’s unrighteous influence upon the people of Judah? (Students may identify several principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we make wicked choices, then our actions can lead others to sin.**)

Invite students to think of examples of this principle in our day. Ask a few of them to share general examples they thought of. Caution them not to share anything that is too personal or to mention the names of individuals.

Display a dish (such as a bowl) and a rag. Ask a student to read 2 Kings 21:10–13 aloud.

Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord compared to a dish.

- What did the Lord compare to a dish?
- What do you think the Lord meant when He said He would wipe Jerusalem “as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down”? (Demonstrate these actions with the dish to help students understand that Jerusalem would be conquered and emptied of its people.)

Summarize the remainder of 2 Kings 21 by explaining that Manasseh died and his son Amon became the king. Amon followed his father’s example by ruling in wickedness. He was killed by his servants two years after he became king. The people then appointed Amon’s son Josiah as the next king.

Ask a student to read 2 Kings 22:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what kinds of choices Josiah made as king of Judah.

- What kinds of choices did Josiah make as king?

 To help students understand the content of 2 Kings 22–23, consider showing the video “Josiah and the Book of the Law” (12:25), which depicts King Josiah’s efforts to

### Follow the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning

As you teach, emphasize the Fundamentals of Gospel Teaching and Learning, such as understanding the context and content of the scriptures; identifying, understanding, and feeling the truth and importance of gospel doctrines and principles; and applying doctrines and principles. These fundamentals are not methods but outcomes to be achieved. They establish a pattern that teachers and students can follow to instill the gospel in their minds and hearts.

restore the people of Judah to the path of righteousness. You could show the video after you introduce students to Josiah in 2 Kings 22:1–2. As students watch the video, ask them to look for ways Josiah influenced his people. The video can replace some of the reading and questions in the lesson material. However, students should still be given the opportunity to identify principles from these chapters. This video can be found on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org).

Summarize 2 Kings 22:3–7 by explaining that Josiah arranged payment for workers to repair the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. Ask a student to read 2 Kings 22:8 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and identify what was found in the temple.

- What was found in the temple?
- What was the book of the law? (Scrolls that contained scripture, including the Lord’s law given through Moses.)

Explain that the scriptures had been lost or hidden during the reign of the wicked kings before Josiah.

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 22:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Josiah responded when the book of the law was found and read to him.

- How did Josiah respond when he heard the words of the book of the law?
- Why do you think Josiah was so concerned after he heard the words of the scriptures?

Summarize 2 Kings 22:14–20 by explaining that a prophetess named Huldah recounted the scriptural prophecy of judgment against the wicked. She also prophesied that Josiah would be blessed because of his faithfulness to the Lord. Huldah was a prophetess in the sense that she had the gift of prophecy. This gift is available to all members of the Lord’s Church.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 23:1–4, 21–23. Ask the class to follow along and look for the kind of influence Josiah’s leadership and scripture reading had on his people.

- What do you think it means that “all the people stood to the covenant”? (2 Kings 23:3). (The people promised to live according to the covenant recorded in the book of the law.)
- How would you summarize the influence Josiah had on his people?
- What principles can we learn from Josiah’s example? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we make righteous choices, then our actions can lead others to turn to the Lord.**)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement from *For the Strength of Youth*:

“As you strive to live the gospel, you will encourage your friends to do likewise. Set an example of keeping the commandments, participating in Church activities, preparing to serve the Lord throughout your life, and remaining worthy to attend the temple.

“Invite your friends of other faiths to your Church meetings and activities. Help them feel welcome and included. Many people have joined the Church through the example and fellowship of their friends. Also make a special effort to reach out to new converts and to those who are less active” (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 17).

- In what ways have you been blessed because of the righteous choices of others?
- When have you been able to help someone by setting a good example or by reaching out to him or her?

Invite a student to read 2 Kings 23:25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what helped Josiah have such a great impact on his people. Ask students to report what they find.

- What can the account of Josiah teach us about the importance of studying the scriptures? (Summarize students’ responses by writing the following principle on the board: **Studying the scriptures can help us turn to the Lord with all our heart and put away evil influences.**)

Write the following questions on the board:

*What can you do or have you done to make scripture study a meaningful experience?*

*What impact does studying the scriptures have on you?*

Invite students to work in pairs and discuss their answers to these questions. Alternatively, you could invite a panel of three or four students to the front of the class and ask them to share their answers to the questions with the entire class.

Invite students to continue to prayerfully study the scriptures daily.

## 2 Kings 23:26–25:30

### *Jerusalem is destroyed, and the people of Judah are brought into captivity*

Summarize 2 Kings 23:26–37 by explaining that after King Josiah had ruled for 31 years, he was killed in a battle. After his death, two of his sons, Jehoahaz and then Jehoiakim, ruled in wickedness and led the people again into idolatry.

Explain that in 2 Kings 24, we learn that Jehoiaikim’s son Jehoiachin became king of Judah. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 24:9–11, 13–16. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened during Jehoiachin’s reign.

- What happened during Jehoiachin’s reign?

Summarize 2 Kings 24:17–20 by explaining that the Babylonian king installed Zedekiah, of Judah, as a local king to rule his people but pay tribute to the Babylonians. Ask students to scan 2 Kings 24:19 to see whether Zedekiah promoted righteousness or wickedness during his reign as king.

Summarize 2 Kings 25:1–8 by explaining that Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon, and the Babylonians again attacked Jerusalem.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from 2 Kings 25:6–12. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened to Zedekiah, his sons, and the city of Jerusalem.

- What did the Babylonians do to Zedekiah and his sons?

Point out that one of Zedekiah’s sons, named Mulek, escaped the destruction of Jerusalem. The Lord directed Mulek and others to the promised land in the Americas sometime after Lehi and his family had left Jerusalem. Some of Lehi’s descendants found the descendants of Mulek and joined with them in Zarahemla. (See Omni 1:12–19; Mosiah 25:2; Helaman 8:21.)

- What did the Babylonians do to most of the people of Judah? (They carried them captive into Babylon.)
- What happened to the temple, the houses, and the walls of Jerusalem? (You may want to hold up the dish you displayed earlier to emphasize that the words of the prophets concerning Jerusalem were fulfilled.)
- From the account of Zedekiah and his people, what principle can we learn about the consequences of disobeying the Lord’s commandments? (Students may identify a principle such as the following: **If we disobey the Lord’s commandments, then we may lose His protection.**)

You may want to conclude the lesson by sharing your testimony of the principles discussed in this lesson.

### Scripture Mastery Review

Consider looking ahead at some of the scripture mastery passages students may not yet be familiar with. Invite students to read them (you may want to suggest that students mark them in their scriptures). You might assign a new scripture mastery passage to each student or to pairs of students and ask them to create a picture on a piece of paper that visually depicts the truths taught in the passage. Invite them to explain their pictures to the class. You may want to display the pictures for future reference.

*Note:* You might consider using this scripture mastery activity at the beginning or end of any lesson as time allows.

# The Books of 1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles

### Why study these books?

A chronicle is an account of historical events presented in the order in which they occurred. Studying 1 and 2 Chronicles can help students understand the overarching history of God's ancient people from the time of Adam to the time of King Cyrus of Persia. Though 1 and 2 Chronicles present much of the same history as 1 and 2 Kings, there are additional details in Chronicles that give insight into how the Lord interacted with His people, especially during the reigns of the kings.

### Who wrote these books?

Although we do not know exactly who wrote or compiled the historical information in 1 and 2 Chronicles, "the books contain several references to the sources whence information was derived; for example, 'the book of Nathan the prophet, the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and the visions of Iddo the seer' (2 Chr. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 26:22; 32:32; 33:18). These passages make it clear that, from the earliest times of the kingdom, writers living amid the events described, and generally of the prophetic order, recorded the history of their own times. These records along with [the books of] Samuel and Kings formed the material out of which our books of Chronicles were compiled, the compilers choosing such portions as suited the purpose of their composition" (Bible Dictionary, "Chronicles").

### When and where were they written?

We do not know when or where the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles were written. However, 2 Chronicles mentions the decree made by King Cyrus of Persia allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem (see 2 Chronicles 36:22–23). This inclusion may suggest that the books of Chronicles, or at least a portion of them, were compiled sometime after 537 B.C., when King Cyrus made this decree. Originally, 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book (see Bible Dictionary, "Chronicles").

### What are some distinctive features of these books?

Although the books of Kings and the books of Chronicles cover much of the same period in Israelite history, the books of Chronicles highlight the Southern Kingdom of Judah and generally only mention the Northern Kingdom when describing ways that it interacted with Judah. Various details not found in the books of Samuel and Kings are included in Chronicles, such as a prophecy of Elijah concerning the wicked king Jehoram (see 2 Chronicles 21:12–15). "Though secular events are not excluded from [the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles], the writers dwell with most satisfaction upon the ecclesiastical and religious aspects of the history, and the progress of temple worship in Jerusalem" (Bible Dictionary, "Chronicles").

### Outline

**1 Chronicles 1–9** Genealogies of the patriarchs and the sons of Jacob are listed.

**1 Chronicles 10–22** After Saul dies, David reigns as king over all the tribes of Israel. He brings the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, which becomes the capital of the kingdom. The Lord commands David to not build a house of the Lord and promises that David's son will build it. King David defeats other nations in battle and reigns justly in Israel.

**1 Chronicles 23–29** David prepares his son Solomon and the Levites to build the temple. David dies, and Solomon reigns.

**2 Chronicles 1–9** King Solomon is blessed by the Lord with great wisdom and wealth. He builds and dedicates the temple in Jerusalem. The Lord appears to Solomon and promises to bless the Israelites according to their obedience. After a 40-year reign, Solomon dies and his son Rehoboam reigns.

**2 Chronicles 10–35** Ten tribes of Israel rebel against Rehoboam, and the kingdom divides. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin remain in Judah. Many kings reign in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

**2 Chronicles 36** King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon captures the Southern Kingdom and appoints Zedekiah to reign in Jerusalem. Zedekiah rebels, and Babylon destroys Jerusalem and the temple, taking the remnant of the people captive. After the Persian Empire overruns Babylon, the Jews are permitted to return and rebuild the temple.

## LESSON 102

# 1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles

### Introduction

The books of 1 and 2 Chronicles contain a brief history of the Lord's people from the time of Adam to the time of King Cyrus of Persia. Because the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles largely present much of the same history

as 1 and 2 Kings, this lesson will serve as a review of material students have previously studied. It will also provide context that will help students as they continue their study of the Old Testament.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### 1 Chronicles

*The lineage and history from Adam to King David is given*

Before class, create six signs and label them as follows: *United Kingdom of Israel (Kings David and Solomon)*, *Northern Kingdom (Israel)*, *Southern Kingdom (Judah)*, *Captivity in Assyria*, *Captivity in Babylon*, and *The Americas*. Display the signs around the classroom as shown in the accompanying diagram. (Or you may use the graphic "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance" found at the end of this lesson to write these same titles on the board in chronological order.)

Also, label three pieces of paper as follows (using large letters) and set them aside: *Ten Tribes*, *Tribes of Judah and Benjamin*, and *Lehi*.

As class begins, invite students to open their Bibles to the table of contents. Ask students to find the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles.

Explain that the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles present a genealogy and condensed history from Adam to about 537 B.C. These books, along with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, mention a number of the prophets whose writings make up the last portions of the Old Testament. However, the books in the latter part of the Old Testament are not in chronological order. One of the purposes of today's lesson is to provide an overview of how these prophetic writings fit into Israel's history.

Before class write each of the names of the last 25 Old Testament books (those after 2 Chronicles) in large letters on separate sheets of paper (or have students create these at this point in the lesson). Distribute these 25 papers among the students. If your class is smaller, some students may have more than one paper. Ask students to hold on to their papers until later in the lesson.

Summarize 1 Chronicles by explaining that this book provides a genealogy of the Lord's people from the time of Adam to the time of the Babylonian captivity as well as a brief account of the reign of King David.

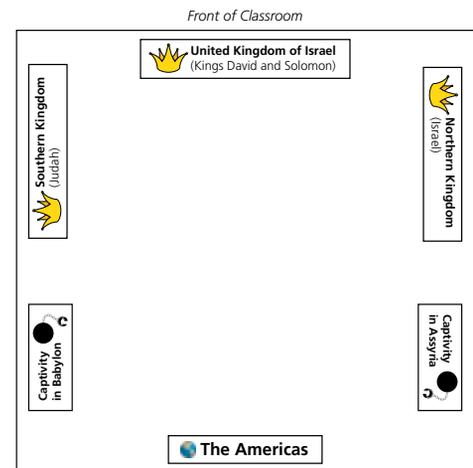
Invite a student to read 1 Chronicles 16:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what David wrote at a time of celebration in Jerusalem. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that a psalm is a poem of praise, worship, or lamentation, often set to music. You may want to invite students to read the portion of David's psalm recorded in 1 Chronicles 16:8–12. Point out that David wrote some of the psalms contained in the book of Psalms. Invite the student with *Psalms* written on his or her paper to come to the front of the room and place it under the sign *United Kingdom of Israel (Kings David and Solomon)*.

#### 2 Chronicles

*A brief history from King Solomon to the Persian Empire is chronicled*

Summarize the content of 2 Chronicles by explaining that this book provides a history of events from the time of King Solomon until the time when King Cyrus of Persia allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. The beginning of 2 Chronicles recounts when the Lord appeared to Solomon and asked what gift Solomon would desire.



#### Teacher presentation

Teacher presentation needs careful planning and preparation. Teacher presentation may be likened to the string in a necklace of pearls. The pearls are various teaching methods (questions, discussion, group work, visuals, and so on) that are held together by your presentation (instruction and explanation). You should be familiar with the content of this lesson so you can move students and visuals as indicated to present an overview of Old Testament history.

- What gift did Solomon request of the Lord when he became king of Israel? (Wisdom [see 2 Chronicles 1:7–12].)

Explain that some of Solomon’s wise sayings are recorded in the book of Proverbs. Ask the student with the paper labeled *Proverbs* to place it under the sign *United Kingdom of Israel (Kings David and Solomon)*.

Explain that Psalms and Proverbs, along with Job, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, are collectively known as the wisdom literature or the poetry books. We do not know for certain who wrote Job, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon or when they were written, but for this lesson, we will group them together with the other wisdom books. Ask the students with *Job*, *Ecclesiastes*, and *Song of Solomon* written on their papers to place them under the sign *United Kingdom of Israel (Kings David and Solomon)*.

- What happened to the United Kingdom of Israel after Solomon died? (It was divided [see 1 Kings 12]. Ten of the tribes formed the Northern Kingdom, called Israel. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin formed the Southern Kingdom, called Judah.)

Invite half of the class to take the paper labeled *Ten Tribes* and stand by the *Northern Kingdom (Israel)* sign, and invite the other half to take the paper labeled *Tribes of Judah and Benjamin* and stand by the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign. (Students should take their scriptures and other labeled papers with them.)

Explain that the Lord called prophets to minister to the people in both kingdoms. Ask the students with *Amos*, *Jonah*, and *Hosea* written on their papers to place them under the *Northern Kingdom (Israel)* sign. (Throughout this lesson, you may want to have students place the half sheets of paper in the order given in the lesson so that students can see the probable order in which the prophets ministered.) Ask the students with *Joel*, *Isaiah*, and *Micah* written on their papers to place them under the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign.

- What happened to the Northern Kingdom of Israel when the people became wicked? (They were conquered and carried away into captivity in about 721 B.C.)

Ask the students by the *Northern Kingdom (Israel)* sign to move to the *Captivity in Assyria* sign. Explain that these tribes were eventually scattered throughout the nations of the earth, and we do not know where they are (see 1 Nephi 22:3–4). They are often referred to as “the lost ten tribes.”

Remind students that the Assyrians also tried to conquer the Southern Kingdom, but because the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were righteous at that time, the Lord preserved them (see 2 Kings 19:32–35).

Tell students that the Lord continued to help the people in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Invite a student to read 2 Chronicles 36:14–15 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Lord did to help His people. Ask students to report what they find. Explain that the messengers referred to in these verses were prophets of the Lord.

- From what you have learned in these verses, why does the Lord send prophets to warn us of sin in our day? (**Because of the Lord’s compassion for us, He sends prophets to warn us of the consequences of sin.**)
- How can the prophets’ warnings about the consequences of sin help us understand the Lord’s compassion for us?

Point out that many of the teachings of the prophets sent to warn Judah are found in the latter part of the Old Testament. Ask the students with the papers labeled *Nahum*, *Zephaniah*, *Jeremiah*, *Lamentations*, *Obadiah*, and *Habakkuk* to place them under the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign. Also place the paper labeled *Lehi* next to *Jeremiah*. Explain that Lehi was among the prophets who taught at Jerusalem.

Invite a student to read 2 Chronicles 36:16–20 aloud, and ask the class to look for how the people in the Southern Kingdom treated the Lord’s prophets and what happened as a result.

- How did the people in the Southern Kingdom treat the prophets?
- What happened to them because they rejected the prophets?
- What principle can we learn from their experience? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **Those who reject the words of the prophets will eventually experience the judgments of God.**)

Ask a student to pick up and hold the paper with *Lehi* written on it.

- What happened to Lehi during this time?

Ask the student with the *Lehi* paper to stand under the sign labeled *The Americas*. Explain that Lehi and his family left Jerusalem shortly before the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

- According to 2 Chronicles 36:20, what happened to most of the Jews in Jerusalem who were not killed?

Invite the students by the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign to stand under the *Captivity in Babylon* sign.

Explain that even after the Jews were conquered and carried into captivity, the Lord continued to call prophets. Ask the students with *Daniel* and *Ezekiel* written on their papers to place them under the *Captivity in Babylon* sign.

Explain that after some time, the Persians conquered the Babylonian Empire and allowed the Jews from the former Kingdom of Judah to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (see 2 Chronicles 36:22–23).

Invite a few students standing near the *Captivity in Babylon* sign to return to the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign.

Explain that the Lord called Haggai and Zechariah to minister to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem. Ask the students with the papers labeled *Haggai* and *Zechariah* to place them under the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign.

Explain that some years later, a Jew named Esther became the queen of Persia. Invite the student with the paper labeled *Esther* to place it under the *Captivity in Babylon* sign. Tell students that later, Ezra led most of the Jews back to Jerusalem and sought to reestablish the law of Moses among the people. Nehemiah also came to Jerusalem and led the Jews in rebuilding the walls of the city. Ask the students with *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* written on their papers to place them under the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign.

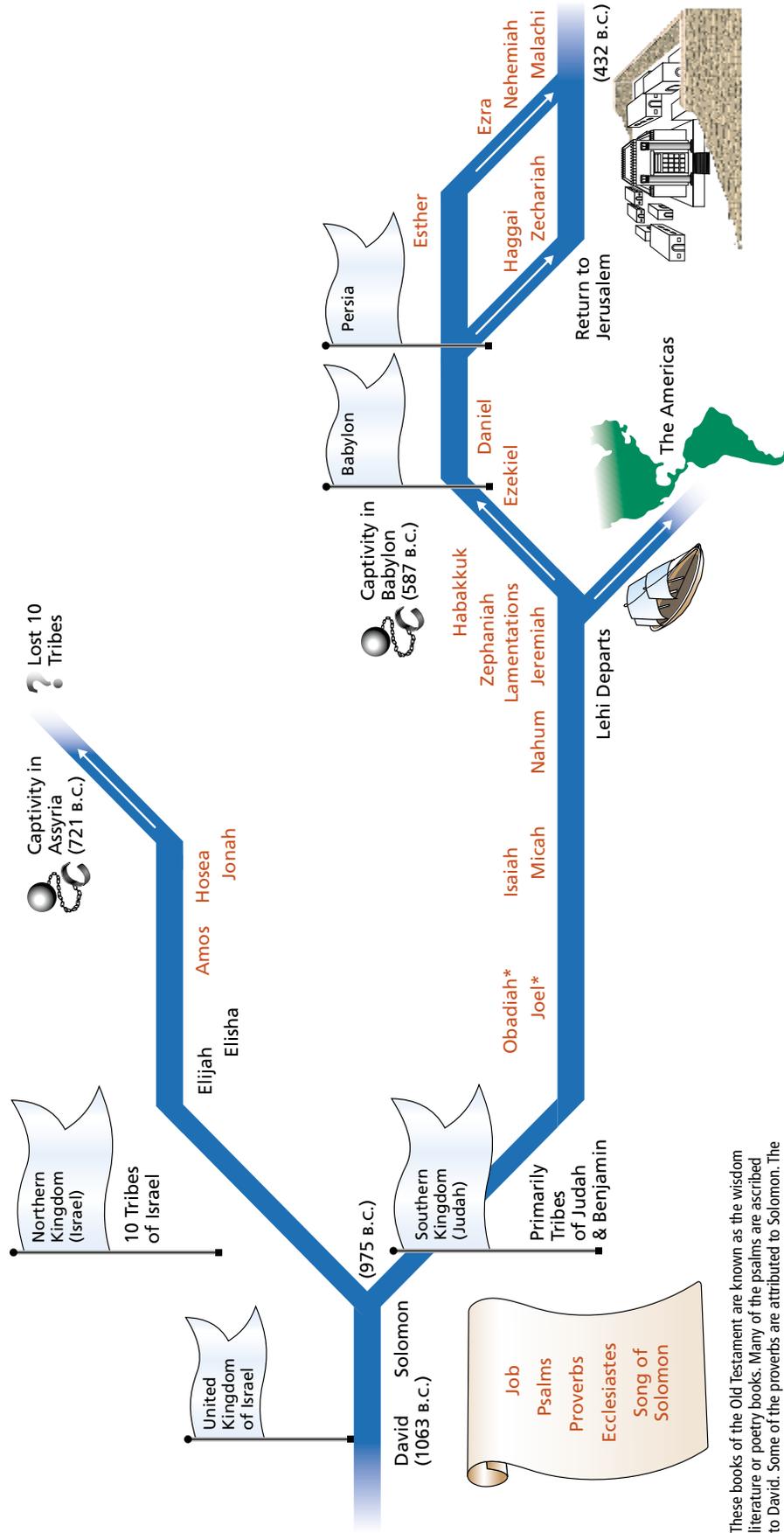
Point out that the last prophet we have record of in the Old Testament is Malachi. Ask the student with *Malachi* written on his or her paper to place it under the *Southern Kingdom (Judah)* sign.

Invite students to return to their seats. Ask them to look at the names of the books of the Old Testament placed around the room, and then ask them to open again to the table of contents in their Bibles.

- What have you learned today about the order of the books in the latter part of the Old Testament?
- How might it be helpful as you study these books to understand when and where these prophets lived?

Testify of the love and compassion the Lord has for us and of the value of prophets who can speak for God. Consider making copies of the graphic “The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance” for students to use as they study the remaining books of the Old Testament.

# The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance



These books of the Old Testament are known as the wisdom literature or poetry books. Many of the psalms are ascribed to David. Some of the proverbs are attributed to Solomon. The authors of Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Job are unknown. When Job lived is also unknown. The Joseph Smith Translation "states that 'the Songs of Solomon are not inspired writings'" (Bible Dictionary, "Song of Solomon").

\* Time of ministry uncertain

# The Book of Ezra

### Why study this book?

The book of Ezra provides an account of the return of two groups of Jews from Babylon to Jerusalem, where they rebuilt the temple and their community. As students study the book of Ezra, they can learn about how the Lord enables His people to overcome opposition and accomplish His will. Students can also learn about the importance of not repeating the sins of previous generations.

### Who wrote this book?

Although the book of Ezra contains some material that is written as a first-person memoir (see Ezra 7–9), we do not know who ultimately combined this material with the rest of the narrative. Many scholars believe that the person who compiled the book of Ezra also compiled or wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know when or where the book of Ezra was written. Estimates regarding when the book of Ezra was written generally range from 440 to 300 B.C. Although most of the book was written in Hebrew, portions of it (see Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26) were written in Aramaic, the language of the Persian Empire. The inclusion of Aramaic may indicate that parts of the book of Ezra were written during or after the period when the Persian Empire ruled Israel (approximately 530–334 B.C.).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

One of the most notable events described in the book of Ezra is the completion of the temple in Jerusalem, which had been destroyed many years earlier by the Babylonians. Ezra 1–6 contains an account of the return of the first group of Jews to Jerusalem in approximately 537 B.C. and their efforts to rebuild the temple. Ezra 7–10 contains an account of Ezra's return to Jerusalem in approximately 458 B.C. and his efforts to help the Jews living there keep the Lord's commandment to not marry outside of the covenant.

### Outline

**Ezra 1** In fulfillment of prophecy, King Cyrus of Persia allows the Jews living in Babylon to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. The first group of Jews returns under the leadership of Sheshbazzar (who may also be known as Zerubbabel; see Bible Dictionary, "Zerubbabel").

**Ezra 2–4** Returning exiles are listed. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, the Jewish leader of the region, and Jeshua, the high priest, the Jews first rebuild the altar at the temple. They begin rebuilding the temple, but they are forced to stop because of the Samaritans' complaints about them to the king of Persia.

**Ezra 5–6** After many years of not working on the temple, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the prophets Haggai and Zechariah lead efforts to resume rebuilding the temple. Darius, the king of Persia at the time, reconfirms the Jews' commission from King Cyrus to rebuild the temple. The temple is completed and dedicated.

**Ezra 7–10** Ezra is commissioned by King Artaxerxes to lead another group of Jews to Jerusalem. He discovers that many Jews, including leaders, have disobeyed the Lord by intermarrying with non-Israelites who practice idolatry. Those who are guilty confess their sin and separate from their foreign wives.

# Ezra 1–6

## Introduction

In fulfillment of prophecy, the Lord inspired Cyrus, king of Persia, to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Ezra 1–6 gives an account of the first group of Jews who returned to Jerusalem and began reconstructing the temple. However, opposition

from adversaries halted the Jews' efforts. Through the encouragement and help of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the Jews overcame the opposition and completed and dedicated the temple.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ezra 1

*The Lord inspires King Cyrus to allow the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple*

Before class, write the following questions on the board: *Do you think it is possible for the Lord to inspire someone who is not a member of the Church to accomplish His purposes? Why or why not?*

Ask a few students to respond to the questions on the board. Invite the class to continue to ponder these questions as they study Ezra 1 and learn about the actions of King Cyrus, who was not one of the Lord's covenant people.

Explain that after the Jews were carried away captive to Babylon, Cyrus, the king of Persia, conquered the Babylonians and became the new ruler of the Jews. (You might invite students to look at "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance" [see lesson 102].) The book of Ezra begins with an account of Cyrus's interactions with the Jews.

Invite a student to read Ezra 1:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Cyrus did.

- What did Cyrus do?

You may want to point out the phrase "that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled" (Ezra 1:1). Explain that Cyrus's actions were a fulfillment of prophecy. (You may want to suggest that students write *Jeremiah 25:11*; *29:10* and *Isaiah 44:28*; *45:1* in the margin of their scriptures next to Ezra 1:1. Explain that even though the books of Jeremiah and Isaiah come after the book of Ezra in the Bible, Jeremiah and Isaiah prophesied many years before the events recorded in Ezra took place.)

Point out the phrase "the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus" (Ezra 1:1).

- What do you think this phrase means?
- What can we learn from this account about how the Lord can accomplish His purposes? (As students respond, emphasize the following principle: **The Lord can inspire people, regardless of their religious background, to accomplish His purposes.**)
- Can you think of individuals from various backgrounds whom the Lord has inspired to accomplish His purposes? (If students need ideas, you might suggest people who were inspired to contribute to the translation or printing of the Bible, such as John Wycliffe, William Tyndale, or Johannes Gutenberg.)

Invite a student to read Ezra 1:4, 7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Cyrus did to support the Jews in these efforts to rebuild the temple.

- What did Cyrus do to support the Jews in their efforts to rebuild the temple?

### Ezra 2–3

*Many Jews go to Jerusalem and begin reconstructing the temple*

Explain that Ezra 2 contains a list of Jews who were among the first to return to Jerusalem and indicates that this group included approximately 50,000 people.

Summarize Ezra 3:1–9 by explaining that the Jews first rebuilt the altar of the temple and began offering sacrifices. They were directed by Zerubbabel, the Jewish man appointed by the Persians to serve as the governor of the Jews, and Jeshua, the presiding high priest of the Aaronic Priesthood. Many Jews contributed time and resources to the reconstruction of the temple.

Invite students to read Ezra 3:10–13 silently, looking for how the Jews responded when the foundation of the temple was laid.

- How did the Jews show their gratitude and excitement for the construction of the temple?
- Why do you think their joy was so great? Why do you think that many of those who had seen the original temple wept?

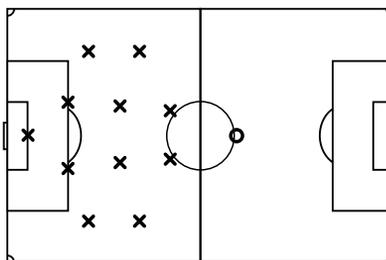
## Ezra 4–6

### *The Jews overcome opposition and complete and dedicate the temple*

Display a soccer ball, and ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class. Give him or her the ball. Tape a small image of a soccer goal on one of the classroom walls near the floor. Ask the student what he or she should do with the soccer ball to score. (Kick the ball into the goal.) Invite the student to softly kick the ball toward the goal on the wall and score.

- What would make this experience more like attempting to score in an actual soccer match? (Having opponents and teammates.)
- What is the opposing team trying to accomplish when you have the ball?

Draw a picture of a soccer field on the board and a circle representing the person with the ball. Then draw 11 X's representing the 11 opponents who are trying to prevent the other team from scoring.



- How can the opposition someone faces in a soccer match be like what we experience as we try to keep the Lord's commandments?
- What are different forms of opposition we might face in our efforts to obey the Lord? (Label some of the X's on the board with forms of opposition that students mention. They do not need to name 11.)

Invite students to look for truths as they study Ezra 4–6 that can help them overcome opposition to their efforts to obey the Lord.

Explain that when the Jews returned to Jerusalem, there was a group of people living nearby called Samaritans. The Samaritans were “people who lived in Samaria after the northern kingdom of Israel was captured by the Assyrians. The Samaritans were partly Israelite and partly Gentile. Their religion was a mixture of Jewish and pagan beliefs and practices” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Samaritans”; scriptures.lds.org).

Invite a student to read Ezra 4:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Samaritans are described and what the Samaritans wanted to do.

- In verse 1, how does the writer describe the Samaritans?
- What did the Samaritans want to do?

Invite a student to read Ezra 4:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Zerubbabel responded to the Samaritans' request.

- What did Zerubbabel and the leaders of the Jews tell these people?

Invite a student to read Ezra 4:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Samaritans responded after Zerubbabel and the other leaders rejected their offer.

- How did the Samaritans respond when Zerubbabel and the other leaders rejected their offer?

Summarize Ezra 4:6–24 by explaining that these verses contain additional accounts of ways in which the Samaritans sought to oppose the Jews' efforts to rebuild their temple and Jerusalem. The reconstruction of the temple halted for several years, largely because of the opposition of the Samaritans. After years of not working on the reconstruction, some Jews lost interest in rebuilding the temple (see Haggai 1:2–6).

Invite a student to read Ezra 5:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Jews eventually resumed their efforts to rebuild the temple.

- Why did the Jews resume their efforts to rebuild the temple?

Explain that when local Persian-appointed governors learned that the Jews had resumed building the temple, they questioned the Jews' authority to do so and opposed the Jews' renewed efforts. Invite a student to read Ezra 5:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for why the local governors could not hinder the Jews' efforts to rebuild the temple. (You may need to point out that by this time, a new king, Darius, ruled the Persian Empire.)

- What do you think it means that “the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease”? (God was watching over the Jews and preventing the local governors from stopping them as they rebuilt the temple.)
- What truth can we learn from Ezra 5:5 that can encourage us when we face opposition? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **God watches over and helps those who seek to obey Him.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)
- What are some ways in which God watches over and helps His people when they are faced with difficulties in their lives?

Summarize Ezra 5:6–6:6 by explaining that the governors over the region wrote a letter to King Darius informing him of what the Jews were doing. They reported that the Jews claimed Cyrus had made a decree allowing them to rebuild the temple and provided them with resources for the endeavor. Darius ordered the king's records to be searched, and Cyrus's decree was found.

Invite a student to read Ezra 6:7–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Darius wrote back to the local governors.

- What did Darius order the local governors to do?
- In what ways might Darius's response have strengthened the faith and courage of the Jews?

Invite a student to read Ezra 6:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened after Darius's decree was received.

- What were the Jews able to do after King Darius's decree was received?
- What influence did the prophets have on the Jews' efforts to rebuild the temple?
- What principle can we learn from the example of the Jews following the prophets? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **By following the prophets, we can overcome opposition and prosper in our efforts to obey the Lord.**)

Direct students' attention to the different forms of opposition listed on the board.

- What teachings or examples set by prophets can we follow to overcome these different forms of opposition?
- When have you seen someone overcome opposition and prosper in his or her efforts to obey the Lord by following the prophets?

Invite students to reflect on opposition they might be experiencing in their efforts to obey the Lord. Ask them to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What will you do to follow the prophets so you can overcome opposition and prosper in your efforts to obey the Lord?

Summarize Ezra 6:15–22 by explaining that the Jews offered generous sacrifices as part of the dedication of the temple. They also celebrated the Passover. You may want to invite students to read Ezra 6:22 silently, looking for an illustration of the first truth identified in this lesson.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths discussed in this lesson.

### **Trust in your students**

Teachers should have faith that with proper guidance and encouragement, students can understand the scriptures, learn to identify doctrines and principles, explain the gospel to others, and apply gospel teachings in their lives. President J. Reuben Clark Jr. described some characteristics of seminary and institute students: “The youth of the Church are hungry for things of the Spirit; they are eager to learn the gospel, and they want it straight, undiluted” (*The Charted Course of the Church in Education*, rev. ed. [booklet, 1994], 3).

## LESSON 104

# Ezra 7–10

### Introduction

About 60 years after the temple was rebuilt at Jerusalem, Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, appointed Ezra to lead another group of Jews to Judah and provided him with money and supplies to beautify the temple. Ezra fasted and prayed that God would protect them as they traveled

to Jerusalem. Ezra sorrowed when he learned that some of the Jews in Jerusalem had married out of the covenant. He counseled the people to repent, and they made a covenant to put away their sins.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ezra 7

#### *The Persian king provides Ezra with money and supplies to beautify the temple at Jerusalem*

Provide students with a copy of the following statement by Sir Winston Churchill, prime minister of the United Kingdom during World War II. Invite a student to read the statement aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how it relates to us today.

“To every man there comes . . . that special moment when he is figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to do a special thing unique to him and fitted to his talent. What a tragedy if that moment finds him unprepared or unqualified for the work which would be his finest hour” (as quoted by Jeffrey R. Holland, “Sanctify Yourselves,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 40).

Explain that in Ezra 7–10 students will learn about Ezra, who prepared and qualified himself to have God’s help as he faced challenges and fulfilled his mission in life. Invite students to look for principles that will help them qualify for God’s help as they fulfill their missions in life.

Explain that the events in Ezra 7 occurred more than 60 years after the temple in Jerusalem was finished and dedicated. Summarize Ezra 7:1–5 by explaining that Ezra, a descendant of Aaron who held the priesthood, lived in Shushan, the capital of the Persian Empire, when Artaxerxes reigned as king of Persia.

Invite a student to read Ezra 7:6 aloud, and ask the class to look for how Ezra was described.

- What do you think “a ready scribe” means? (Explain that scribes had the responsibility to study and teach the scriptures. A “ready scribe in the law of Moses” was someone who was skillful in explaining the law.)
- According to verse 6, why was Ezra successful as he made requests of the king?

Summarize Ezra 7:7–8 by explaining that Ezra and hundreds of Jews were allowed to leave captivity and travel approximately 900 miles from Shushan to Jerusalem. This journey was extremely dangerous because the Israelites had to travel through thief-infested deserts carrying the large amounts of gold, silver, and other treasure that Artaxerxes had given them to beautify the temple in Jerusalem (see Ezra 7:15–23).

Invite a student to read Ezra 7:9 aloud, and ask the class to look for what helped Ezra safely make the dangerous journey to Jerusalem.

- What do you think it means that Ezra had the “good hand of his God upon him”?

Invite a student to read Ezra 7:10 aloud, and ask the class to look for what Ezra did to invite God’s hand to be upon him.

- What did Ezra do so that God’s hand could be upon him?

Explain that the phrase “for Ezra had prepared his heart” implies that Ezra had tried his best to seek to know and live God’s commandments and to teach them to others.

- What principle can we learn from this account that will help us have the Lord’s hand upon us? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a principle)

similar to the following: **As we try our best to fully live and teach the commandments, then the Lord's hand will be upon us to bless our lives.**)

- Why do you think we need to try our best in order to receive the blessings of the Lord in our lives?

Ask students to think about a time when they felt the Lord's hand in their lives. Invite a few students to share their experiences. You may also want to share an experience from your life.

Remind students of the statement by Sir Winston Churchill that you shared at the beginning of the lesson. Then ask:

- How might having the hand of the Lord upon you help you prepare to perform a good work that you have been uniquely prepared to do?

Ask students to ponder a commandment they could obey more fully. Invite them to write a goal describing what they will do to try their best to more fully live this commandment and receive the Lord's blessings.

Summarize Ezra 7:12–26 by explaining that these verses recount the letter King Artaxerxes wrote authorizing Ezra to lead the group of Jews back to Jerusalem and to appoint government leaders in Jerusalem.

Invite a student to read Ezra 7:27–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for Ezra's response to King Artaxerxes's letter.

- To whom did Ezra give credit for the king's generosity?
- According to verse 28, what blessings did Ezra say he had received from God?

## Ezra 8

### *Ezra and the people fast and pray before they journey to Jerusalem*

Summarize Ezra 8:1–20 by explaining that these verses list those who traveled with Ezra to Jerusalem. Invite a student to read Ezra 8:21–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ezra asked these people to do before they began their journey.

- What did Ezra ask the people to do before they began their journey?
- According to verse 22, why didn't Ezra ask the king for a military escort from Babylon to Jerusalem? (Ezra had testified to the king that God's hand would be upon all those who seek Him. Ezra was unwilling to ask the king for an escort because he was concerned that the king would then question Ezra's words.)

Summarize Ezra 8:24–30 by explaining that Ezra divided the treasure among several people and gave them charge to deliver it safely to Jerusalem.

Invite a student to read Ezra 8:31–32 aloud. Ask the class to look for what God did for those who traveled with Ezra. You may need to explain that the terms "enemy" and "such as lay in wait by the way" in verse 31 refer to those who would try to stop the Israelites from returning to Jerusalem or rob them of the treasures they carried.

- What blessing did Ezra's group receive because they fasted and prayed?
- What principle can we learn about fasting and prayer from this account? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we fast and pray, we can receive the Lord's help with challenges we face.**)

Invite students to share an experience, if not too personal, when they or someone they know fasted and prayed and received the Lord's help with a challenge they were facing.

Invite students to consider a challenge they are facing. Encourage them to apply the principles they have learned in this lesson to receive the help they need from God.

## Ezra 9–10

### *Ezra mourns over the sins of the people and teaches them to confess and forsake their sins*

Read the following scenario:

After a young man learns the seriousness of sexual sin, he feels a strong desire to repent but is not sure how to do it. Ask students to silently ponder if they have ever wondered what they need to do to repent of their sins.

### *Give students opportunities to share*

Sharing insights and relevant experiences clarifies a person's understanding of gospel doctrines and principles. As students share such experiences, they are often led by the Holy Ghost to a deeper understanding and testimony of the very things they are expressing. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, their words and experiences can also have a significant impact on the hearts and minds of their peers.

Invite students to look for truths as they study Ezra 9–10 that can help them know what they need to do to repent of their sins.

Invite a student to read Ezra 9:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Ezra learned about the people when he arrived in Jerusalem.

- What did Ezra learn the people had done?
- Why was it a transgression for the Israelites to intermarry with other groups of people?

Explain that marriage is a sacred covenant and the Lord desires that each married couple should work together to be worthy of the blessings of eternal marriage. The law of Moses forbade Israelites from marrying those who worshipped idols and other false gods (see Deuteronomy 7:3–6). Yet many Israelites in Jerusalem had intermarried with these unbelieving people, which led the Israelites to adopt false religious practices.

Summarize Ezra 9:4–15 by explaining that Ezra prayed and acknowledged the sins of the people. He also recounted the consequences that had come to the Israelites in the past because of their sins.

Invite a student to read Ezra 10:1–3 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the people needed to do to repent of their trespass against God. (You may want to explain that the term “strange wives” refers to women who worshipped idols and had married Israelites.)

- What did the people need to do to repent?

Summarize Ezra 10:4–9 by explaining that Ezra called for all of the Israelites living throughout Judah to meet together at Jerusalem in three days. Invite students to read Ezra 10:10–12 silently, looking for what Ezra told the people when they came to Jerusalem.

- What was Ezra’s message to the people? (Ezra told them that they needed to confess their sin and separate themselves from their wives who worshipped idols.)

Explain that it may have been very difficult for the Israelites to repent and separate themselves from their wives who worshipped idols.

- What does the people’s response in verse 12 reveal about them?
- Based on what Ezra told the people, what can we learn about what we must do to repent of our sins? (**To repent, we must confess and forsake our sins.** Consider suggesting that your students mark the phrases that teach this truth.)

Invite a student to read the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“I testify that of all the necessary steps to repentance, the most critically important is for you to have a conviction that forgiveness comes in and through Jesus Christ. It is essential to know that only on His terms can you be forgiven. You will be helped as you exercise faith in Christ. [See 2 Nephi 9:22–24; Alma 11:40.] That means you trust Him and His teachings” (“Peace of Conscience and Peace of Mind,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 17).

Testify that students can exercise faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and receive forgiveness as they confess and forsake their sins.

Summarize Ezra 10:13–44 by explaining that Ezra appointed priesthood leaders to travel among the Israelites to help them do what the Lord had commanded.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Ezra 1–10. Additional context for the book of Ezra

For helpful context and background for the book of Ezra, see “Ezra Unfolds the Scriptures” (*Ensign*, Dec. 2002, 47–49).

# The Book of Nehemiah

### Why study this book?

The book of Nehemiah provides an account of Nehemiah, a leader of the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem. Under his direction, the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt. However, "Nehemiah was not satisfied with simply building physical structures; he wanted his people to be edified spiritually as well," and he helped the Jews "take control of their lives, land, and destiny as the people of God" (Modesto M. Amistad Jr., "Wanted: Modern Nehemiahs," *Ensign*, Dec. 2002, 45, 46). He also exemplified many righteous qualities. "He was humble, self-motivated, confident in the will of God, willing to take the lead, full of faith, fearless, an organizer, obedient, and just" ("Wanted: Modern Nehemiahs," 46). By studying the book of Nehemiah, students can both see an example of righteous leadership and learn the value of building themselves spiritually.

### Who wrote this book?

The author of the book of Nehemiah is unknown. However, the book has an autobiographical style. Nehemiah 1:1 mentions that these are "the words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah," and the rest of the narrative is written primarily in the first person. This may suggest that at least portions of the book were written by Nehemiah himself.

### When and where was it written?

The date and location of the writing of the book of Nehemiah are unknown. However, Nehemiah 1:1 mentions that the record was started at Shushan, in Persia, in "the twentieth year," which refers to the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, who ruled from 465 B.C. to 424 B.C.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Nehemiah is the continuation of the account that begins in the book of Ezra. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah originally made up one book in the Hebrew scriptural canon. The book was divided into two books in the third century A.D.

The book of Nehemiah records an important time period in Jewish history, which included the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem as well as the rebuilding of the spiritual lives of the Jews who had returned from captivity. When the Israelites returned to Jerusalem after their long captivity in Babylon, they found their city in ruins. The protective wall around the city of Jerusalem had been reduced to rubble, which left the Israelites vulnerable to attacks by their enemies. Under the direction of Nehemiah, the Israelites began to rebuild the wall.

During the reconstruction of the wall, the Israelites faced opposition. When Nehemiah's enemies tried to lure him away from the site, he responded, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Nehemiah 6:3). In so doing, Nehemiah demonstrated his commitment to fulfill the pledge he had made to the Lord to rebuild Jerusalem (see Nehemiah 1:11; 2:4–5). Nehemiah can serve as an example to us of the importance of remaining faithful to the Lord even in the midst of opposition.

### Outline

**Nehemiah 1–6** Nehemiah, a Jew serving as the cupbearer of the king of Persia, fasts and prays when he learns that the Jews in Jerusalem are suffering and that the walls surrounding Jerusalem have been broken down. King Artaxerxes grants Nehemiah's request to return and rebuild the walls and gates of the city. Nehemiah travels to Jerusalem and directs the Jews in rebuilding the walls of the city despite opposition.

**Nehemiah 7** To protect the Jews living in Jerusalem, Nehemiah orders that the gates of the city be opened only during the heat of the day and shut and barred at all other times. He also appoints guards to watch over the gates and the homes of the Jews. He reviews the genealogical record of the Jews living in Jerusalem; those who cannot prove through genealogical records that they are Levites are denied the priesthood.

**Nehemiah 8–10** Ezra reads aloud and interprets the law of Moses to the Jews. The people weep when they hear the scriptures read aloud. They fast and confess their sins before the Lord. Some of the Jews recount the history of the Israelites and some of God's blessings to them from Abraham to their own day. The people covenant to marry only within the house of Israel, honor the Sabbath, pay tithing, and keep the Lord's commandments.

**Nehemiah 11–12** The walls of Jerusalem are completed and dedicated. The people give thanks to God.

**Nehemiah 13** Nehemiah leaves Jerusalem for several years, and during his absence, the Jews in Jerusalem begin to break their covenants and neglect the law of Moses. Nehemiah returns and helps the people keep their covenants by cleansing the temple, reinstating Sabbath observance, and teaching the people about marriage within the covenant.

## LESSON 105

# Nehemiah

### Introduction

Nehemiah led the Jews in rebuilding the walls surrounding Jerusalem. Later, Ezra the priest strengthened

the Jews by teaching them from the scriptures, and Nehemiah sought to help them keep their covenants.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Nehemiah 1–6

#### *Nehemiah directs the Jews in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem despite opposition*

Before class, write on the board the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (This statement is found in “Remember How You Felt,” *New Era*, Aug. 2004, 6.)

*“Opposition turns up almost anyplace something good has happened” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland).*

Invite a student to read the statement on the board aloud. To give illustrations of this statement, invite students to explain how individuals in the following scenarios might experience opposition:

1. A young man has made the choice to serve a full-time mission and is eagerly preparing.
2. A young woman has set a goal to keep the Sabbath day holy at home, even though some members of her family are not active members of the Church.
3. A young man has decided to help each person in his priesthood quorum participate in Church meetings and activities.

Point out that in the book of Nehemiah we learn about the opposition Nehemiah faced and how he overcame that opposition. Invite students as they study the book of Nehemiah to look for principles that will help them overcome opposition in their lives.

Explain that Nehemiah was a Jew who served as the cupbearer to the Persian king (see Nehemiah 1:11). As the cupbearer, he was in charge of protecting the king’s cup from being poisoned. Nehemiah was in a position of trust and honor before the king.

Ask a student to read Nehemiah 1:3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what Nehemiah learned about the remnant (or group) of Jews who were living in Jerusalem.

- What did Nehemiah learn about the Jews in Jerusalem and the condition of the city?

Remind students that approximately 90 years earlier, the Persian king Cyrus had allowed many Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and establish a community there. Without a wall, Jerusalem was unsafe to live in, and the temple was in danger of being destroyed again.

Ask a student to read Nehemiah 1:4 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Nehemiah did after he heard this news. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize Nehemiah 1:5–11 by explaining that these verses contain Nehemiah’s prayer for the Jews in Jerusalem. He also prayed that the Lord would prosper him as he sought help from the Persian king Artaxerxes.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Nehemiah 2:1–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the king’s reaction to Nehemiah when he requested permission to go help rebuild the wall in Jerusalem.

- What did the king notice about Nehemiah?
- How was the king’s reaction an answer to Nehemiah’s prayers?

Summarize Nehemiah 2:7–16 by explaining that Nehemiah requested that the king write letters to the governors of Persian provinces so they would allow Nehemiah to pass through their lands on his way to Jerusalem. The king also provided Nehemiah with supplies he needed to rebuild the walls and gates of the city.

Invite a student to read Nehemiah 2:17–19 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Nehemiah announced when he came to Jerusalem and how the people there reacted.

- What did Nehemiah announce to the people in Jerusalem?
- According to verse 18, how did the Jews respond to Nehemiah’s announcement?
- According to verse 19, how did Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem oppose Nehemiah? (Explain that these three men were powerful leaders of other groups of people who were living near Jerusalem. Sanballat was the Persian governor of Samaria and opposed all the works of Nehemiah.)

Invite students to read Nehemiah 2:20 silently, looking for what Nehemiah said after being mocked.

- What impresses you about Nehemiah’s response to the people who opposed him?

Write the following incomplete principle on the board: *We will accomplish the work of the Lord despite opposition if we . . .*

Invite students to look for ways to complete this principle as they study Nehemiah 3–6.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Nehemiah 3:1–3, 12–16. Explain that many groups of Jews each worked on small sections of the wall.

- What do you think would be some advantages of having many people each work on small sections of the wall?
- Based on the example of the people who repaired the walls of Jerusalem, how would you complete the principle on the board? (Students should identify a principle such as the following: **We will accomplish the work of the Lord despite opposition if we each do our part.** Write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to share some examples of small things they can do to help accomplish the work of the Lord.

Divide students into pairs. Assign one of the partners to silently read Nehemiah 4:6–9, 14–17, looking for additional ways to complete the phrase written on the board. Assign the other partner to silently read Nehemiah 6:1–9, looking for additional ways to complete the phrase written on the board. Ask students to write on a piece of paper how they would complete the phrase based on what they read.

After sufficient time, invite students to report to their partners what they wrote. Once both partners have reported, ask the class:

- Based on Nehemiah 4 and Nehemiah 6, how did you complete the statement on the board? (As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following truths: **We will accomplish the work of the Lord despite opposition if we pray and then heed the inspiration we receive, and we will accomplish the work of the Lord despite opposition if we remain focused on doing the work of the Lord.** Write these principles on the board.)

Refer to the scenarios discussed at the beginning of the lesson, and invite students to explain how the principles they identified could help the individuals in those scenarios.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:

“Think of the power we would have as individuals . . . if, in response to every temptation to lose focus or lower our standards—the standards of God, we responded, ‘I am doing a great work and cannot come down.’” (“We Are Doing a Great Work and Cannot Come Down,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 62).

- How did President Uchtdorf say we should respond when we are faced with opposition or temptation? (Consider suggesting that students mark the phrase in Nehemiah 6:3 that President Uchtdorf quoted.)

Invite students to think of a time when they or someone they know has been strengthened during opposition by doing the Lord’s will. Ask a few students to share their experiences with the class. Encourage students to ponder the phrase “I am doing a great work and cannot come down” the next time they face opposition in doing God’s will.

Invite students to read Nehemiah 6:15–16 silently, looking for what the Jews were able to accomplish by living the principles written on the board. Ask students to report what they find.

## Nehemiah 7

### *Priests without genealogical records are denied the priesthood*

Summarize Nehemiah 7 by explaining that the Lord inspired Nehemiah to trace the genealogy of the Israelites who had returned to Jerusalem. Men who claimed to be of the tribe of Levi but did not have genealogical records to prove their ancestry were denied the priesthood.

## Nehemiah 8–10

### *Ezra reads and interprets the scriptures to the people*

Explain that the Jews who were living in Jerusalem during Nehemiah's time had been lost spiritually for several years without the nourishment of scriptures or sacred ordinances.

- What would you do to help restore their spiritual health?

Point out that the priest Ezra was living in Jerusalem during the same time as Nehemiah. Invite students to read Nehemiah 8:1–3 silently, looking for what Ezra did to help the people regain their spiritual health.

- What did Ezra do to help the people regain their spiritual health?

Invite a student to read Nehemiah 8:3, 6, 12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people responded when they heard and understood the scriptures.

- What did the people feel and do?

Summarize the rest of Nehemiah 8 by explaining that once the Jews understood the scriptures, they blessed the Lord and acted immediately to obey the law.

Explain that in Nehemiah 9 we read that the Jews fasted, confessed their sins, and recited their history. Write the following scripture passages on the board: *Nehemiah 9:15–17*; *Nehemiah 9:18–20*; *Nehemiah 9:24–27*. Invite students to pick one of the three scripture passages and read it silently, looking for blessings the Jews praised God for as they prayed. Invite them to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Nehemiah 9:38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Jews promised to do because of what they learned from the scriptures about God and His blessings.

- Based on this account, what can happen to us as we learn from the scriptures about God and His blessings? (Write the following truth on the board: **As we learn from the scriptures about God and His goodness, we have a greater desire to enter into and keep His covenants.**)
- What account from the scriptures has helped you have a greater desire to obey God and remain faithful to your covenants?

Encourage students to make a commitment to study or continue to study their scriptures daily to help strengthen their desire to obey God and make covenants with Him.

Summarize Nehemiah 10 by explaining that after the Israelites understood the scriptures, they covenanted not to marry outside of Israel and to keep the Sabbath day holy.

## Nehemiah 11–13

### *The temple walls are dedicated, and Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem and corrects abuses of the law of Moses*

Summarize Nehemiah 11–12 by explaining that after the people determined who would live in Jerusalem and who would live in other cities, the walls of Jerusalem were dedicated.

Summarize Nehemiah 13 by explaining that while Nehemiah was away from Jerusalem for several years, many of the Jews struggled to live according to their covenants. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem and helped them keep their covenants by removing evil influences and reinstating Sabbath observance.

#### *Encourage a habit of daily scripture study*

Few things will have a more powerful and long-lasting influence for good in the lives of students than helping them learn to love the scriptures and study them on a daily basis. One way to do this is to teach students the doctrines and principles behind daily personal scripture study.

# Home-Study Lesson

## 2 Kings 21–25; 1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles; Ezra; Nehemiah (Unit 21)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied 2 Kings 21–Nehemiah 13 (unit 21) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (2 Kings 21–2 Chronicles 36)

As students learned about some of the wicked kings in Judah, they discovered that if we make wicked choices, then our actions can lead others to sin. As they studied about righteous King Josiah, they learned that if we make righteous choices, then our actions can lead others to turn to the Lord. They also learned that if we disobey the Lord's commandments, then we may lose His protection.

#### Day 2 (Ezra 1–6)

Students learned that Cyrus, the king of Persia, allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. From this account, they learned that the Lord can inspire people, regardless of their religious background, to accomplish His purposes. As students read about the Jews' efforts to rebuild the temple, they learned that by following the prophets, we can overcome opposition and prosper in our efforts to obey the Lord.

#### Day 3 (Ezra 7–10)

As students read about Ezra, they learned that if we prepare our hearts to fully live and teach the commandments, then the Lord's hand will be upon us to bless our lives. They also learned that if we fast and pray, we can receive the Lord's strength, and that to repent, we must confess and forsake our sins.

#### Day 4 (Nehemiah)

By reading how Nehemiah rebuilt the walls surrounding Jerusalem, students discovered the following principle: We will accomplish the work of the Lord despite opposition if we do our part, pray to the Lord for strength, and remain focused on doing the work of the Lord. They also discovered that as we learn from the scriptures about God and His goodness, we have a greater desire to enter into and keep His covenants.

### Introduction

Because the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles largely present much of the same history as 1 and 2 Kings, this lesson will serve as a review of material students have previously studied. It will also provide context that will help them as they continue their study of the Old Testament.

### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* You could teach the daily teacher lesson written for 1 and 2 Chronicles (lesson 102), or you could use the following lesson. Adapt either lesson as needed.

#### 1 and 2 Chronicles

*A lineage and brief history from Adam to King Cyrus of Persia is chronicled*

Provide each student with the handout "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance" found at the end of the 1 and 2 Chronicles daily teacher lesson (lesson 102).

Invite students to open their Bibles to the table of contents. Ask them to find the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles.

Explain that 1 and 2 Chronicles present a genealogy and condensed history from Adam to about 537 B.C. These books, along with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, mention a number of the prophets whose writings make up the last portions of the Old Testament. However, the books in the latter part of the Old Testament are not in chronological order. One of the purposes of today's lesson is to provide an overview of how these prophetic writings fit into the history of Israel.

Invite a student to read aloud the names of the books listed on the scroll near the bottom-left corner of their handout. Explain that David wrote some of the psalms contained in the book of Psalms. Psalms are poems of praise, adoration, worship, regret, repentance, or sorrow, often set to music. You may want to invite students to read a portion of one of David's psalms in 1 Chronicles 16:8–12.

Explain that some of Solomon's wisdom is recorded in the book of Proverbs. Invite a student to read aloud the paragraph explaining wisdom literature, found under the scroll on the handout. Then ask:

- What happened to the united kingdom of Israel after Solomon died? (It was divided [see 1 Kings 12]. Ten of the tribes followed Jeroboam and formed the Northern Kingdom, called Israel. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin followed Solomon's son Rehoboam and formed the Southern Kingdom, called Judah.)
- Who were some of the prophets who ministered among the people of the Northern Kingdom? (Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, and Jonah.)

- What eventually happened to the Northern Kingdom of Israel when the people became wicked? (The Lord allowed the Assyrian Empire to conquer the ten tribes and carry them away into captivity in about 721 B.C. These tribes were eventually scattered throughout the nations of the earth [see 1 Nephi 22:3–4]. They are often referred to as “the lost ten tribes.”)

Tell students that the Lord continued to help and guide the people in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Invite a student to read 2 Chronicles 36:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord did to help His people. Ask students to report what they find. Explain that the messengers referred to in these verses were prophets of the Lord.

- From what you have learned in these verses, why does the Lord send prophets in our day to warn us of sin? (The following is a principle students may identify: **Because of the Lord’s compassion for us, He sends prophets to warn us of the consequences of sin.** Write this principle on the board.)
- How can the prophets’ warnings about the consequences of sin help us understand the Lord’s compassion for us?

Invite students to notice on their handout the names of some of the prophets who ministered to the Southern Kingdom.

Invite a student to read 2 Chronicles 36:16–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people in the Southern Kingdom treated the Lord’s prophets and what happened as a result.

- How did the people in the Southern Kingdom of Judah treat the Lord’s prophets?
- What happened to them because they rejected the prophets?
- What happened to the prophet Lehi during this time? (Lehi and his family left Jerusalem and traveled to the Americas shortly before the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 587 B.C. We have the record of Lehi and his descendants in the Book of Mormon.)

- According to 2 Chronicles 36:20, what happened to most of the Jews in Jerusalem who were not killed? (They were carried away captive into Babylon.)

Invite students to notice who the Lord sent to minister to the Jews in captivity in Babylon. Explain that the Lord helped Daniel rise to be one of the wise men in the king’s court in Babylon and that the prophet Ezekiel ministered to the Israelites. After some time, the Persians conquered the Babylonian Empire and allowed some Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (see 2 Chronicles 36:22–23). The Lord called Haggai and Zechariah to minister to this group in Jerusalem.

Explain that during this time, a Jewish woman named Esther became the queen of Persia. Later, Ezra and Nehemiah led most of the Jews back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city and begin reestablishing the Jewish nation in the promised land.

Explain that the last prophet we have record of in the Old Testament is Malachi.

- How might it be helpful as you study these books to understand when and where these prophets lived?

Testify of the love and compassion the Lord has for us and the value of prophets who can speak for God. Invite students to continue to use their handout as they study the remaining books of the Old Testament during this course.

### Next Unit (Esther–Psalms 24)

Ask students if they have ever been afraid to stand up for what was right because of the possible consequences. Explain that in the next unit they will study the life of a courageous woman who saved the lives of thousands of Jews by standing up for what was right. Then ask students the following questions: How does inspirational music bless our Church meetings? What is your favorite hymn? Explain that the book of Psalms is a collection of sacred poems that are praises and prayers to God, and many of them were written as songs. Ask students if they have a favorite Psalm.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Esther

### Why study this book?

The book of Esther provides an excellent illustration of the power and influence for good that one person can have. As an exiled Jew in Persia, Esther rose to the position of the queen of Persia and then faced the possibility of being executed along with the rest of her people. As students study this book, they can learn the importance of acting courageously in frightening situations, and they can learn how to develop trust in the Lord.

### Who wrote this book?

We do not know who wrote the book of Esther.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know when or where the book of Esther was written. However, the events of this book occurred while many of the Jews were living in Persia after being deported from Jerusalem. "Most scholars place the events recorded in the book of Esther between about 482 B.C. and 478 B.C." (*Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 329).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Esther is one of only two books in the Old Testament that is named for a woman. Additionally, "the book [of Esther] contains no direct reference to God, but He is everywhere taken for granted, as the book infers a providential destiny (Esth. 4:13–16) and speaks of fasting for deliverance" (Bible Dictionary, "Esther, book of"). Although the book of Esther comes after the book of Nehemiah in the Bible, according to some scholars the events recorded in Esther may have occurred about 30 or more years before the events recorded in Nehemiah.

### Outline

**Esther 1–2** King Ahasuerus is displeased by the conduct of Queen Vashti and deposes her. Many of the beautiful young virgins in the empire are presented to the king so he can choose a new queen. Ahasuerus selects Esther as his new queen.

**Esther 3–5** Mordecai, Esther's cousin and adoptive father, refuses to bow down to Haman. In response, Haman crafts a plan to destroy all of the Jews in the kingdom. The Jews mourn, weep, and fast for deliverance. Esther risks her life by going to see the king uninvited. The king receives her kindly and agrees to attend a banquet with Haman.

**Esther 6–8** On the second day of the banquet, Esther tells the king about Haman's plot to kill the Jews. The king has Haman hanged on the gallows Haman had intended to use for Mordecai. The king honors Mordecai and allows him and Esther to reverse the edict to kill the Jews.

**Esther 9–10** The Jews receive authority from the king to kill their enemies in the kingdom. They institute the Feast of Purim to commemorate their miraculous deliverance from Haman's plan.

## LESSON 106

# Esther

### Introduction

After deposing Queen Vashti, King Ahasuerus of Persia chose a Jewish girl named Esther to be his new queen. Esther's cousin and guardian, Mordecai, offended Haman, a leader in the Persian kingdom, by not bowing to him. Haman received permission from the king

to destroy all of the Jews in the kingdom. After fasting along with the Jews, Esther risked her life by approaching the king to intervene in the Jews' behalf. She exposed Haman's treachery and saved the Jews from their enemies.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Esther 1–5

#### *Esther becomes queen of Persia, and Haman plots to destroy the Jews*

Before class, write the following questions on the board: *If you could have lived during any other time period in history, when would it have been and why? If you could have been born in any other place in the present, where would it have been and why?*

Divide students into pairs. Invite one student in each partnership to respond to the first question on the board and the other student in each partnership to respond to the second question. Invite a few students to share their responses with the class. Then write the following question on the board: *Why has the Lord sent me to the earth at this time and placed me in my circumstances?*

Explain that the book of Esther relates the story of a young woman who was placed in a situation in which she had an opportunity to perform a great act of service for the Lord's people.

To help students visualize when and where the events in the book of Esther took place, invite them to open to Bible Maps, no. 7, "The Persian Empire," in the Bible appendix. Explain that Esther was born when the Jews were in captivity and exile. In Esther's day, the Persian Empire controlled a large portion of the Middle East. Esther lived in Shushan, which was the capital of the Persian Empire.

 Consider showing students the video "For Such a Time as This" (13:44) in place of part of the lesson. If you choose to show the video, you might want to start it after explaining that "Esther lived in Shushan, which was the capital of the Persian Empire." After the video, resume using the teaching suggestions, starting with the question "Why did Mordecai's suggestion for Esther to go to the king concern her?" This video is available on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org).

Summarize Esther 1 by explaining that Ahasuerus, the king of Persia, became displeased with his queen, Vashti, and decided to replace her. In Esther 2 we read that the king sought a new queen from among the fair young women of the kingdom.

Assign students to work in pairs and read together the story of how Esther became queen of Persia from the following verses: Esther 2:5–11, 16–17. Invite a pair of students to summarize what they read and then ask:

- According to verse 10, why didn't the king know that Esther was a Jew? (Esther kept her identity as a Jew secret. Mordecai, Esther's cousin and the man who had raised her, had instructed Esther not to reveal that she was a Jew.)

Summarize Esther 2:21–23 by explaining that after Esther was made queen, Mordecai discovered a plot to assassinate the king and told Esther about it. As a result, the would-be assassins were caught and killed.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Esther 3:1–2, 5–6, 8–13. Invite students to follow along and look for the problem that Esther, Mordecai, and the Jews faced.

- What did Haman convince King Ahasuerus to approve?
- If you had been a Jew living at this time and had received this news, what do you think you would have done in response?

### **Help students fulfill their role in the learning process**

Spiritual learning requires students to make an effort and exercise agency. You can help students understand, accept, and fulfill their role in gospel learning by inviting them to read scriptures aloud, respond to questions, ask questions, and share experiences and testimonies. As students actively fulfill their role in gospel learning, they open their hearts to the influence of the Holy Ghost. Look for ways to invite all students to participate in this lesson.

Ask a student to read Esther 4:1–3 aloud. Invite students to follow along and look for the Jews' reaction to this decree.

- How did the Jews respond to the decree?
- What do you think could be a possible solution to this problem?

Explain that Esther sent a messenger to Mordecai to find out what his concern was. Through this representative, Mordecai sent a message back to Esther. Invite students to read Esther 4:8 silently and look for what Mordecai asked Esther to do.

- What did Mordecai ask Esther to do?

Explain that while Mordecai's suggestion might sound easy for Esther to follow, it caused a problem for her. Invite a student to read Esther 4:11 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for Esther's concern.

- Why did Mordecai's suggestion for Esther to go to the king concern her?

Explain that during this time kings were frequently in danger of assassination, so they surrounded themselves with guards and had harsh penalties for anyone who came uninvited into any room they were in. Esther would be risking her life if she went in to the king without having been called. Her life would be spared only if he held out his golden scepter to her.

- If you had been Esther, what might you have concluded from the fact that the king had not asked to see you for 30 days?

Explain that when Mordecai received Esther's response describing her concern, he sent her another message. Invite a student to read Esther 4:13–14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Mordecai told her. (You may need to explain that the phrase "hold-est thy peace" means to not speak, and the word *enlargement* in verse 14 means relief [see footnote a].)

- What do you think Mordecai meant when he told Esther that she might have come to the kingdom "for such a time as this" (verse 14)?
- What truths can we learn from Mordecai's suggestion about why Esther might have become queen? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **the Lord can place us in particular circumstances so we can help others.**)

Invite students to briefly ponder the third question written on the board at the beginning of class.

Explain that like Esther, we have a responsibility to help other people in the various circumstances and situations we are in, even when we may feel hesitant to do so.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf. Ask students to listen for what the Lord expects of us:

"The Lord gave you your responsibilities for a reason. There may be people and hearts only you can reach and touch. Perhaps no one else could do it in quite the same way" ("Lift Where You Stand," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 56).

- According to President Uchtdorf's statement, what can each of us do in a unique way?

Write the following questions on the board, and invite students to respond to them in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

*When have you seen someone use his or her position or circumstances to bless the lives of others?*

*In the particular circumstances the Lord has placed you in, how can you bless the lives of others?*

Invite a few students to share their thoughts with the class.

Ask students to ponder whether they have ever worried that they may not be strong enough to do something that God wants them to do.

Explain that Esther sent another response to Mordecai through the palace messengers. Invite a student to read Esther 4:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for her decision.

- What was courageous about Esther's decision?
- Why do you think Esther asked that all of the Jews in the city fast for three days before she went in to see the king?

- What principle can we learn from Esther about preparing to do difficult things? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we fast and pray for the Lord's help, He can bless us with spiritual strength to do difficult things.**)

Encourage students to fast and pray for greater spiritual strength and courage to do difficult things in their lives. You may want to suggest that students also consider asking loved ones to join them in their fasting and prayers.

## Esther 5–10

### *Esther reveals Haman's plot, and the Jews prevail against their enemies*

Ask students to read Esther 5:1 silently and try to imagine how Esther might have been feeling as she entered the king's inner court. Invite students to share their thoughts with the class.

- Why do you think Esther was willing to risk her life?

Invite a student to read Esther 5:2–3 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what happened when the king saw Esther. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that for the remaining chapters of Esther, students will read the account of Esther aloud in a way that resembles how it is read on the Jewish holiday of Purim (see Bible Dictionary, "Feasts"). As part of this celebration, the story of Esther is read aloud to children. When the name *Mordecai* is read, they all cheer. In contrast, when the name *Haman* is read, they all boo or show disapproval.

Write the following scripture passages on the board: *Esther 5:9, 12–14* and *Esther 7:1–6, 9–10*. Invite two students to read these passages aloud at the appropriate times in the following script. Invite the class to follow along as the students read aloud. You can read the part of the narrator.

---

**Narrator:** After the king asked Esther what she wanted from him, she asked if he and Haman would come to a banquet that she would prepare for them. The king and Haman gladly accepted the invitation.

**Student 1:** Esther 5:9, 12–14

**Narrator:** The king could not sleep the night before the banquet. He had some official reports read to him and learned that Mordecai had saved his life by stopping the assassination attempt. As a result, he had Haman bestow a great honor on Mordecai, further fueling Haman's hatred of Mordecai and the Jews.

**Student 2:** Esther 7:1–6, 9–10

**Narrator:** After Haman died, King Ahasuerus gave a second decree to preserve the Jews and give them power to destroy their enemies within the kingdom. The Feast of Purim was instituted to help the Jews remember their deliverance from Haman. Mordecai was elevated to second-in-command in the kingdom.

---

After this activity, ask:

- What were the consequences of Esther acting courageously to save the Jews? What principles can we learn from the example of Queen Esther? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we act courageously to do what is right, then our efforts can bless the lives of many people.**)
- When have you or someone you know acted courageously to do the right thing? How were others blessed because of this courageous action?

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to testify of truths they have learned from the account of Esther. Invite students to follow the example of Esther by acting courageously to choose the right in difficult situations and finding ways to serve others.

# The Book of Job

## Why study this book?

One of the most basic questions any person of faith must wrestle with is why bad things happen to good people. The book of Job gives an account of a righteous man who faithfully responded to difficult trials. Job's experience invites us to ponder difficult questions about the causes of suffering, the frailty of human existence, and the reasons to trust in God, even when life seems unfair. Throughout all of his trials, Job retained his integrity and his trust in God even when another suggested that he "curse God, and die" (Job 2:9). Because all of us may feel like Job at one time or another, this book offers a poignant analysis of some of life's most difficult questions.

## Who wrote this book?

We do not know who wrote the book of Job.

## When and where was it written?

We do not know when or where the book of Job was written.

## What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Job is written almost entirely in poetic language, with a prologue

and an epilogue in prose, and is often classified as wisdom literature. One of the book's most unique qualities is that it asks two difficult questions—"Why do righteous people choose righteousness?" and "Why do the righteous suffer?"—but offers no simple answers. Instead, the book of Job invites faithful readers to exercise faith in God, as when Job said of the Lord, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15). The book also urges the faithful to look beyond the trials of this life to the glorious Resurrection, made possible by the Savior, for Job boldly testified, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and . . . in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25–26).

The book of Job is also distinctive for a passage confirming the reality of the pre-mortal life, in which "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" at the Creation of the earth (Job 38:7).

Modern revelation confirms the existence of the man Job. As recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, Jesus Christ comforted the Prophet Joseph Smith by comparing his afflictions to those of Job: "Thou art not yet as Job; thy friends do not contend against thee, neither charge thee with transgression, as they did Job" (D&C 121:10).

## Outline

**Job 1–2** In a prologue that begins the poetic narrative, the Lord and Satan are imagined to discuss Job's faithfulness and prosperity. Satan suggests that Job is righteous only because he is blessed. The Lord gives Satan permission to afflict Job but not kill him. Job perseveres and remains faithful through the loss of his personal wealth, his children, and finally his own health.

**Job 3–37** Job laments his afflictions and wonders if it would have been better to never have been born. Three of Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, come to offer comfort to Job but begin to question his claims that he does not deserve his suffering. The four then discuss the nature of suffering in this life. Job's friends say that God's justice does not punish the righteous; therefore, Job's suffering must be linked to some sin he has committed. Job avows his innocence and maintains his trust in God, even though he does not know why these trials have come upon him. A younger man named Elihu then offers his insights on the reasons for Job's suffering.

**Job 38:1–42:6** The Lord appears and asks Job many questions, leading Job to consider the ultimate power and superiority of God. The Lord explains to Job that it is difficult for a mortal to see things from His perspective. Job humbly submits to the Lord and His judgments.

**Job 42:7–16** In a brief epilogue, the Lord blesses Job for his faithfulness by granting him double the possessions he lost, allowing him to have the same number of children once more, and restoring him to his former status. Job lives a long and full life.

## LESSON 107

# Job 1–16

### Introduction

Job, a righteous, God-fearing man, experienced severe trials and afflictions. Job lost all of his property, his children died, and he suffered great physical agony. In the

midst of his suffering, Job was visited by three friends. Though Job's friends intended to comfort him, they accused him of transgression.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Job 1:1–2:10

*Job endures the loss of his possessions and children and is afflicted with boils*

Invite students to ponder the following questions:

- How do you typically respond when something bad happens to you?
- How might you respond if something bad happened to you and you had done nothing to deserve it?

Explain that the book of Job tells about a man who experienced severe trials and afflictions. Some have wondered if Job was a fictional character, but both ancient scripture and modern revelation clarify that Job was a real person who went through very real suffering (see Ezekiel 14:14, 20; James 5:11; D&C 121:10). Invite students as they study Job 1–16 to look for principles that can help them when they or those around them experience trials.

Invite a student to read Job 1:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for words or phrases that describe Job.

- What words or phrases did you find that describe Job? (You may want to clarify that the word *perfect* in verse 1 does not mean Job was without sin. Rather it implies that Job faithfully kept the commandments of God. Those who keep the commandments and endure to the end will eventually be made perfect through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.)

Explain that Job 1:6–12 contains a poetic rendition of a conversation between the Lord and Satan, who became the adversary of mankind following his rebellion during the Council in Heaven (see Moses 4:1–4; Guide to the Scriptures, “Devil”; scriptures.lds.org). (You may want to inform students that *satan* is a Hebrew word meaning “adversary”; these verses in Job 1 use the form *hassatan*, meaning “the adversary,” which describes the devil’s role here.) Ask three students to read Job 1:6–12 aloud by assigning one student to read the words of the narrator, another to read the words of the Lord, and the third to read the words of Satan. Invite the class to follow along and look for what Satan claimed about Job.

- According to verses 9–10, what did Satan claim about Job? (Satan claimed that Job feared or worshipped the Lord only because the Lord had protected and blessed Job.)
- According to verse 11, what did Satan claim Job would do if the Lord removed His protection and blessings from Job? (Satan claimed that Job would curse the Lord.)
- According to verse 12, what did the Lord allow Satan to do? What limits did the Lord set on Satan’s power to test Job? (Satan was allowed to afflict all that Job had, but he was not allowed to harm Job.)

Point out that contrary to the account in Job 1:6–12 (and a similar account in Job 2:1–6), the Lord does not really make agreements with Satan. The conversations between the Lord and Satan in the book of Job are presented in a poetic narrative that emphasizes Satan’s role as our adversary. In reality, the Lord has power over Satan and has no need to bargain with him.

Ask a student to read Job 1:13–19 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and identify all that Job lost.

- If you were Job, what questions or feelings would you have after experiencing these losses?

Invite a student to read Job 1:20–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Job responded to these trials.

### Using the curriculum

Curriculum materials are your main resource outside of the scriptures themselves for preparing and teaching effective lessons. President Henry B. Eyring taught: “We can unlock the power of the curriculum simply by acting on our faith that it is inspired of God. . . .

“Sticking with the content of the curriculum as well as its sequence will unlock our unique teaching gifts, not stifle them” (“The Lord Will Multiply the Harvest” [evening with Elder Henry B. Eyring, Feb. 6, 1998], 4, 5; si.lds.org).

- How did Job demonstrate faith in God during these trials?
- What principle can we learn from Job's example as he experienced these trials? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **We can choose to have faith in God even in the midst of our trials.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)

Summarize Job 2:1–2 by explaining that these verses introduce another poetic rendition of a conversation between the Lord and Satan. Ask three students to read Job 2:3–6 aloud by assigning one student to read the words of the narrator, another to read the words of the Lord, and the third to read the words of Satan. Invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord and Satan each said about Job.

- According to verse 3, what did the Lord say about Job?
- What did Satan claim about Job? (Satan claimed that if Job were afflicted physically, then Job would curse the Lord.)
- What did the Lord allow Satan to do? (Afflict Job physically but not kill him.)

Ask a student to read Job 2:7–9 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Job next.

- How was Job afflicted this time? What are boils? (Boils are a very painful skin condition.)

You may want to explain that a potsherd is a piece of broken pottery. Job was using the potsherd to try to scrape off his diseased skin.

- What did Job's wife encourage him to do?
- How might we be tempted to curse God, or blame Him and turn away from Him, during our trials?

Invite a student to read Job 2:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Job responded to the afflictions he experienced.

- How did Job continue to show faith in God during his trials?

Refer to the principle you wrote on the board earlier. To help students further understand and feel the truth and importance of this principle, ask:

- What can we do to show faith in God during our trials?
- Who is someone you admire for choosing to have faith in God during trials? How did this person show faith in God?

### **Job 2:11–16:22**

#### *Job and three friends discuss why Job's misfortunes may have come upon him*

Ask students to consider whether they have ever had a friend help them during a difficult time.

Summarize Job 2:11–13 by explaining that three of Job's friends—Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—came to Job to comfort him in his afflictions. Job expressed some of his thoughts and feelings to his friends. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Job 3:1–4, 25; 6:1–3. Ask the class to follow along and look for thoughts and feelings Job experienced because of his trials.

- What thoughts and feelings did Job experience because of his trials?

Summarize Job 4–16 by explaining that each of Job's friends expressed his belief that Job's afflictions had come upon him because of something wrong he had done. Write the following names and references on the board:

*Eliphaz: Job 4:7–9; 15:4–6*

*Bildad: Job 8:1–6, 20*

*Zophar: Job 11:1–6*

Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group to study the words of one of Job's friends in the scripture references you wrote on the board. Ask students to look for phrases indicating why each friend believed Job deserved his afflictions. Then ask each group to report what they find.

- Based on what we learned about Job, did Job's afflictions come upon him because of sin? (No.)

- From Job’s experience, what truths can we learn about trials and difficulties? (Students may give a variety of answers, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Trials and difficulties come upon the righteous as well as the wicked.**)
- Why do you think it is important to know that trials and difficulties come upon the righteous as well as the wicked?

Invite a student to read Job 10:2, 15 aloud. Explain that these verses record that Job said he did not know why his afflictions had come upon him. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Although we may not know the reasons for our trials, we can . . .*

Invite students to ponder how they might complete this statement as they continue to study Job’s words. Ask a student to read Job 13:13–16 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what Job said he would do no matter what happened to him.

- What did Job say he would do no matter what happened to him? (Trust in the Lord.)
- Based on Job’s example, how would you complete the statement on the board? (Using students’ words, complete the principle so that it conveys the following truth: **Although we may not know the reasons for our trials, we must continue to trust in the Lord.**)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (You may want to provide students with copies of this statement.) Invite students to follow along and look for what can prevent us from trusting in the Lord and what we can do to trust in the Lord.



“When you face adversity, you can be led to ask many questions. Some serve a useful purpose; others do not. To ask, Why does this have to happen to me? Why do I have to suffer this, now? What have I done to cause this? will lead you into blind alleys. It really does no good to ask questions that reflect opposition to the will of God. Rather ask, What am I to do? What am I to learn from this experience? What am I to change? Whom am I to help? How can I remember my

many blessings in times of trial? . . .

“This life is an experience in profound trust—trust in Jesus Christ, trust in His teachings, trust in our capacity as led by the Holy Spirit to obey those teachings. . . . To trust means to obey willingly without knowing the end from the beginning (see Prov. 3:5–7). To produce fruit, your trust in the Lord must be more powerful and enduring than your confidence in your own personal feelings and experience” (“Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- According to Elder Scott, what are some examples of questions we can ask during times of trial to help us to develop greater trust in the Lord?

Ask students to ponder again the statement by Elder Scott and consider what they will do to show their trust in the Lord. You may want to invite a few students to share what they are going to do to show their trust in the Lord.

You may want to conclude by testifying of the Lord’s love for all of us. Invite students to act on any promptings they have received to place their faith and trust in the Lord.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Job 2:6. “The Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand”

As long as we are faithful to the Lord, He will never allow Satan to tempt or try us more than we are able to overcome (see 1 Corinthians 10:13).

President James E. Faust of the First Presidency affirmed:

“The power to resist Satan may be stronger than we realize. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: ‘All beings who have bodies have power over those who have not. The

devil has no power over us only as we permit him. The moment we revolt at anything which comes from God, the devil takes power’ [*The Words of Joseph Smith*, ed. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook (1980), 60].

“He also stated, ‘Wicked spirits have their bounds, limits, and laws by which they are governed’ [*History of the Church*, 4:576]. So Satan and his angels are not all-powerful” (“The Forces That Will Save Us,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2007, 8).

# Job 17–37

## Introduction

After suffering great afflictions, Job defended himself against his friends' accusations and testified of his

Redeemer. Elihu, one of Job's friends, challenged Job's claims of innocence.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Job 17–22

#### *Job responds to the words of his friends and testifies of his Redeemer*

To prepare students to study Job 17–31, ask a student to read aloud the following account: When President Thomas S. Monson was a youth, his 15-year-old friend and neighbor named Arthur Patton enlisted in the United States Navy to serve in World War II. President Monson recalled:



“Arthur’s mother was so proud of the blue star which graced her living room window. It represented to every passerby that her son wore the uniform of his country and was actively serving. When I would pass the house, she often opened the door and invited me in to read the latest letter from Arthur. Her eyes would fill with tears; I would then be asked to read aloud. Arthur meant everything to his widowed mother. . . .

“ . . . While at Saipan in the South Pacific, the ship [Arthur served on] was attacked. Arthur was one of those on board who was lost at sea.

“The blue star was taken from its hallowed spot in the front window of the Patton home. It was replaced by one of gold, indicating that he whom the blue star represented had been killed in battle. A light went out in the life of Mrs. Patton. She groped in utter darkness and deep despair.

“With a prayer in my heart, I approached the familiar walkway to the Patton home, wondering what words of comfort could come from the lips of a mere boy” (“Mrs. Patton—the Story Continues,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 22).

Invite students to ponder what they would say to comfort someone who was grieving the death of a loved one.

Point out that like Mrs. Patton, we may experience times when we will grieve the death of a loved one. In addition, each of us at some time will die. Invite students, as they continue their study of the book of Job, to look for truths that can help us when we or our loved ones are confronted with death.

Briefly review Job’s afflictions by asking the following questions:

- What had happened to Job’s children? (See Job 1:18–19.)
- What physical affliction was Job suffering from? (See Job 2:7.)

Invite a student to read Job 17:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Job said about his condition.

- What do you think Job meant when he said, “The graves are ready for me”? (Job felt that he was near death.)

Ask a student to read Job 17:15 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the question Job asked.

- How do you think Job may have felt when he asked, “Where is now my hope?” (Job may have been lamenting and sorrowing about his circumstances.)

Summarize Job 18 by explaining that after Job mentioned that he might soon die, one of his friends, Bildad, spoke about the state of the wicked who do not know God, implying that Job was also wicked.

Invite a student to read Job 19:1–3, 19–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Job said to his friends. (You may want to explain that the phrase “my flesh” in verse 22 means the state of Job’s body, or his suffering [see Job 19:22, footnote a].)

- How would you summarize Job’s response to his friends?

Invite a student to read Job 19:23–27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Job testified that he knew.

- What did Job testify that he knew?

Explain that the phrase “after my skin worms destroy this body” in verse 26 refers to the death and decay of Job’s physical body. Then point out the phrase “yet in my flesh I shall see God.”

- How is it possible for Job to see God in his physical body after he dies and his physical body decomposes? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board: **Because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we too will be resurrected.**)
- How can knowing that Jesus Christ has brought about the Resurrection of all mankind help us as we experience trials? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **Our testimony of the Savior and the Resurrection can give us hope in the midst of our trials.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)

Point out that our testimony of the Savior and the Resurrection can give us hope not only when we are confronted with death but also when we experience other challenges. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The assurance of resurrection gives us the strength and perspective to endure the mortal challenges faced by each of us and by those we love, such things as the physical, mental, or emotional deficiencies we bring with us at birth or acquire during mortal life. Because of the resurrection, we know that these mortal deficiencies are only temporary!” (“Resurrection,” *Ensign*, May 2000, 15).

- When have you witnessed someone’s faith and testimony in the Savior and the Resurrection give them hope in the midst of a trial?

Point out that Job not only possessed a testimony of the Savior but also desired to write it down, preserve it, and share it with others (see Job 19:23). Explain that recording and preserving our testimonies can help us during future times of trial to remember the comforting and hopeful doctrines we know to be true. Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their testimonies of the truths you have discussed concerning Jesus Christ and the Resurrection. Invite students to share their testimonies of the Savior with the class. You may also want to share your testimony.

Remind students of President Monson’s experience in which he went as a young man to comfort Mrs. Patton after her son, Arthur, was killed. Invite a student to read aloud the conclusion of President Monson’s account.

“Mrs. Patton gazed into my eyes and spoke: ‘Tommy, I belong to no church, but you do. Tell me, will Arthur live again?’ To the best of my ability, I testified to her that Arthur would indeed live again” (“Mrs. Patton—the Story Continues,” 22).

Twenty-five years later, after President Monson had lost contact with Mrs. Patton, he gave a talk during a general conference of the Church entitled “Mrs. Patton, Arthur Lives!” (see Conference Report, Apr. 1969, 126–29). President Monson recalled:



“I expressed to Mrs. Patton my personal testimony as a special witness, telling her that God our Father was mindful of her—that through sincere prayer she could communicate with Him; that He too had a Son who died, even Jesus Christ the Lord; that He is our advocate with the Father, the Prince of Peace, our Savior and divine Redeemer, and one day we would see Him face-to-face.

“I hoped that my message to Mrs. Patton would reach and touch others who had lost a loved one.

“. . . I had little or no hope that Mrs. Patton would actually hear the talk. I had no reason to think she would listen to general conference. As I have mentioned, she was not a member of the Church. And then I learned that something akin to a miracle had taken place. Having no idea whatsoever who would be speaking at conference or what subjects they might speak about, Latter-day Saint neighbors of Mrs. Terese Patton in California, where

### Invite students to testify of doctrines and principles

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “A testimony is to be found in the bearing of it!” (“The Candle of the Lord,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1983, 54). Sharing your testimony not only blesses you but can also strengthen the faith and testimonies of others. A testimony can be a statement of what you know to be true, spoken with sincerity and conviction. It can also be a simple affirmation of how you feel about a doctrine or principle of the gospel and the difference it has made in your life.

she had moved, invited her to their home to listen to a session of conference with them. She accepted their invitation and thus was listening to the very session where I directed my remarks to her personally.

“. . . To my astonishment and joy, I received a letter . . . from Mrs. Terese Patton. I share with you a part of that letter:

“Dear Tommy,

“. . . I don't know how to thank you for your comforting words, both when Arthur died and again in your talk. I have had many questions over the years, and you have answered them. I am now at peace concerning Arthur. . . . God bless and keep you always” (“Mrs. Patton—the Story Continues,” 23–24).

- Why is it important for us to share our testimony of the Savior with others?

Invite students to prayerfully seek opportunities to share their testimony of Jesus Christ with others.

Summarize Job 20–22 by explaining that Job's friends insisted that the wicked cannot prosper. Job acknowledged that sometimes the wicked do prosper in terms of their worldly possessions, but ultimately the Lord will administer justice on the Day of Judgment.

### Job 23–31

#### *Job teaches how his trials have benefited him*

Summarize Job 23 by explaining that Job taught about the ways the Lord had blessed him by allowing him to experience trials. Copy the following statements on the board or provide them on a handout for students:

*Job 23:6. If we turn to the Lord in our afflictions, then \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Job 23:10. Our trials can \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Job 23:16. Our trials can \_\_\_\_\_.*

Invite students to read the scripture references and complete the statements based on what they read. Students may identify principles such as the following: **If we turn to the Lord in our afflictions, then He will strengthen us. Our trials can help refine and purify us. Our trials can help soften our hearts.** To help students understand and feel the truth and importance of these principles, consider asking questions such as the following:

- How have you been strengthened in your afflictions as you have turned to the Lord?
- How have your trials helped to refine and purify you?
- How have your trials made your heart softer or more tender?

Summarize Job 24–31 by explaining that Job's friends continued to challenge Job and he responded to their accusations by expressing his faith in God, thereby showing his humility and integrity.

### Job 32–37

#### *Elihu speaks against Job and his friends*

Summarize Job 32–37 by explaining that Elihu, another of Job's friends, spoke out against Job and his other friends because he believed they had not been firm enough with Job and had failed to answer Job's questions. Elihu also discussed some challenges that are common to all people.

To conclude you may want to briefly review the doctrines and principles students have identified in this lesson. Consider closing by inviting the class to sing “I Know That My Redeemer Lives” (*Hymns*, no. 136).

# Job 38–42

## Introduction

The Lord responded to Job’s pleas and reminded him that He is all-knowing and all-powerful. Job replied humbly and was instructed further about the Lord’s

power. The Lord chastised Job’s friends, accepted Job’s repentance, and made the remaining part of Job’s life more prosperous than it was at the beginning.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Job 38–41

#### *The Lord instructs Job concerning His power*

To help prepare students to study Job 38–42, invite them to roll up a sheet of paper and look through it with one eye while closing their other eye. Invite a few students to explain what difficulties they might experience if they went about their daily activities with their vision limited in this way.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for some things that might cause us to have a limited perspective.

“From the limited perspective of those who do not have knowledge, understanding, or faith in the Father’s plan—who look at the world only through the lens of mortality with its wars, violence, disease, and evil—this life can seem depressing, chaotic, unfair, and meaningless” (“The Songs They Could Not Sing,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 104).

According to Elder Cook, what can cause us to have a limited perspective? (Viewing earth life and its challenges without knowledge or understanding of Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness or faith in that plan.)

- What are some examples of challenges or trials that may be especially difficult to experience without understanding or having faith in Heavenly Father’s plan?
- How are these challenges similar to some of the trials Job experienced?

Invite students as they study Job 38–42 to look for truths that can help them strengthen their faith in Heavenly Father and expand their vision of His plan in order to better meet the challenges they may experience.

Explain that after Job and his friends discussed possible reasons for Job’s suffering, the Lord spoke directly to Job. Invite a student to read Job 38:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look at the end of verse 3 for the instruction the Lord gave to Job.

- According to the end of verse 3, what did the Lord say He wanted Job to do? (Answer the Lord’s questions.)

Ask a student to read Job 38:4–7 aloud, and invite the class to follow along, looking for the questions the Lord asked Job.

- In your own words, how would you summarize the questions the Lord asked Job? (The Lord asked Job to consider where he was when the earth was created and who created the earth, implying that God has all power.)
- Who do you think are the sons of God mentioned in verse 7?

To help the class understand verse 7, you may want to invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Thomas S. Monson. Invite students to follow along, looking for who was among the “sons of God” who “shouted for joy” (Job 38:7).

“We lived before our birth into mortality. In our premortal state, we were doubtless among the sons and daughters of God who shouted for joy because of the opportunity to come to this challenging yet necessary mortal existence. We knew that our purpose was to gain a physical body, to overcome trials, and to prove that we would keep the commandments of God” (“He Is Risen!” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 88).

### *Lead students through the learning process*

Students are edified when they are led through a learning process that is similar to what the teacher experienced during lesson preparation. Help them search the scriptures for understanding and discover the truths of the gospel for themselves. By giving them opportunities to explain the gospel in their own words and to share and testify of what they know and feel, you can help them strengthen their testimonies of the gospel.

- How does President Monson’s statement help you understand the meaning of verse 7? (After students respond, you may want to suggest that they write the following truth in the margin of their scriptures near verse 7: **Before we were born on earth, we lived with Heavenly Father and rejoiced in His plan of happiness.**)
- When we face challenges, why might it be helpful to remember that we rejoiced at the opportunity to experience life on earth?

Summarize the remainder of Job 38 as well as Job 39–41 by explaining that the Lord illustrated His knowledge and power by asking Job many questions about how He created and still directs the earth, emphasizing the limited knowledge and power of humans.

## Job 42

### *The Lord blesses Job so that he is more prosperous than when he began*

Ask a student to read Job 42:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what Job said after the Lord spoke to him.

- What did Job say he knew about the Lord? (After students respond, you may want to write the following doctrine on the board: **The Lord has all power and knows all things.**)
- Why do you think it would be important to have a testimony of this truth—particularly during times when we face challenges?

Ask a student to read Job 42:5–6 aloud. Invite the class to look for how Job was affected as he learned more about the Lord.

- What do you think Job meant when he said, “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes”? (Job 42:6). (Help students understand that Job did not hate himself. Rather, he humbly acknowledged his weaknesses, sins, and limitations before the Lord.)

Point out that after Job acknowledged his limitations and repented of his sins, the Lord spoke to Job’s friends who had misjudged Job and tried to convince him that he did not deserve the Lord’s mercy.

Invite students to consider a time in their lives when, like Job, they may have been misjudged by a friend (or friends).

- Why can it be hurtful if we are misjudged by friends? How might we be tempted to react toward our friends when they misjudge us?

Invite a student to read Job 42:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the instruction the Lord gave to Job’s friends.

- What did the Lord command Job’s friends to do?
- According to verse 8, what did the Lord instruct Job to do for these friends who had misjudged him?
- What principle can we learn from this instruction? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **The Lord wants us to pray for those who misjudge us.**)
- Why do you think the Lord wants us to pray for those who misjudge us?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Job 42:10–17. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Job experienced in the remainder of his life.

- What gave Job strength to remain faithful to the Lord in his trials? What specific trials that Job faced (loss of friends, loss of family members, loss of goods and possessions) might be difficult for you to endure faithfully?
- How did the Lord bless Job after he remained faithful and endured such great trials?
- What principles can we learn from Job’s experience? (As students share the principles they have identified, emphasize the following: **If we remain faithful to the Lord in our trials, then He will bless us abundantly according to His will.**)

Invite students to come to the board and list some things we can do to show we are faithful to the Lord during our trials. After students have written a list on the board, you may also want to ask them to give examples of ways the Lord can bless us when we do the things listed on the board.

To help students understand ways the Lord may bless us as we remain faithful in our trials, consider inviting a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite the class to listen for ways the Lord may bless those who are faithful to Him during their trials.



“The Lord compensates the faithful for every loss. That which is taken away from those who love the Lord will be added unto them in His own way. While it may not come at the time we desire, the faithful will know that every tear today will eventually be returned a hundredfold with tears of rejoicing and gratitude.

“One of the blessings of the gospel is the knowledge that when the curtain of death signals the end of our mortal lives, life will continue on the other side of the veil. There we will be given new opportunities. Not even death can take from us the eternal blessings promised by a loving Heavenly Father” (“Come What May, and Love It,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 28).

- According to Elder Wirthlin, how can the Lord bless us if we are faithful during our trials? (Help students understand that the Lord’s blessings can come to us in this life and also after we die.)
- How have you been blessed as you have remained faithful to the Lord during your trials? (After students respond, you may also want to share an experience.)

You may want to conclude this lesson by testifying of the truths you have discussed today. Invite students to select from the list on the board one thing they can work on to help them remain faithful during their trials. Encourage them to do the thing they chose.

### Scripture Mastery Review

As a simple review to help students remember the location of the 10 scripture mastery passages that have been introduced thus far in the course, ask each student to draw a four-by-four grid on a piece of paper.


Invite students to write each of the 10 scripture mastery references randomly in the squares on the grid. Ask them to repeat 6 of the references in the remaining squares.

Read a portion of one of the 10 scripture mastery passages aloud, and ask students to place a finger on the reference on their grids that they think corresponds with the passage. Say the reference aloud, and have students check their answers. If they are pointing to the correct reference, ask them to mark the square with an X.

Instruct students to call out “Scripture mastery!” when they mark four squares in a row (vertically, horizontally, or diagonally). You could continue until everyone has four in a row or until students have marked all of their squares.

### Supplemental Teaching Idea

#### Job 38–42. Video presentation—“Come What May, and Love It”

Instead of asking a student to read the statement by Elder Wirthlin, you could show the video “Come What

May, and Love It” (3:31). Before you show the video, ask students to listen for ways the Lord may bless those who are faithful to Him during their trials.

# The Book of Psalms

### Why study this book?

Reading and pondering the book of Psalms can bring students nearer to God and help them feel His love. Psalms has been a source of inspiration for worship since ancient times and continues to be cherished for worship and study by both Jews and Christians. As a collection of ancient Israel's poetic hymns, petitions, and praises, the book of Psalms can resonate with students as they consider the ways they worship the Lord, plead for His deliverance, and thank Him for His help. Studying the truths in the book of Psalms can bring students peace and inspire them to praise and trust God.

### Who wrote this book?

The book of Psalms attributes at least 73 (or about half) of the psalms to David and attributes other psalms to other authors, including Asaph (Psalms 50; 73–83) and Heman (Psalm 88). These attributions, however, appear in titles that “are added to some of the psalms, but it is open to question whether these are as old as the words to which they are attached” (Bible Dictionary, “Psalms”).

### When and where was it written?

The multiple authors who wrote the psalms lived at different times, most of them between about 1000 and 500 B.C. It is not certain when the book of Psalms was compiled in its current form, but events mentioned in Psalm 137 indicate this process was not completed until after the Jewish exile in Babylon: “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. . . . For there they . . . carried us away captive” (Psalm 137:1, 3).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Psalms is the Old Testament book most quoted in the New Testament, for “no book of the Old Testament is more Christian in its inner sense or more fully attested as such by the use made of it than the Psalms” (Bible Dictionary, “Psalms”). Many of the psalms contain prophetic references to the Savior and allude to events that would take place during the Savior's life (see Psalms 22:1, 7–8, 16, 18; 34:20; 41:9; 69:20–21).

The book of Psalms is divided into five main sections (Psalms 1–41; 42–72; 73–89; 90–106; 107–150), each of which ends with an expression of praise (for example, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen” [Psalm 41:13]). Many of the psalms were originally written as hymns to be sung in religious services. These hymns were used for prayer, praises, and meditation, and some of the texts show similarities to Hebrew poetry. Some titles are “probably names of tunes, well known at the time, to which the psalms were appointed to be sung” (Bible Dictionary, “Psalms”).

### Outline

**Psalms 1–41** The book of Psalms begins with a contrast between the godly and the ungodly. Some of these psalms put great emphasis on trusting God rather than earthly objects or people and remind us that we need not fear because God is with us. Another psalm reminds us that God will judge our hearts and that we should seek after God's mercy.

**Psalms 42–72** These psalms could be summarized with the phrase “God is our refuge and strength” (Psalm 46:1). One psalm reminds us to cast our burdens upon the Lord in every challenge or trial. Another encourages us to wait patiently upon God in all things.

**Psalms 73–89** These psalms encompass several themes and frequently describe God as a judge who can rebuke wicked earthly judges and destroy Israel's enemies. In Psalm 86, King David records a plea that God teach us His way so we can walk in truth.

**Psalms 90–106** Many of these psalms encourage us to praise the Lord, remember that vengeance belongs to Him, declare His glory, and serve Him with gladness.

**Psalms 107–150** These psalms recognize that “children are an heritage of the Lord” (Psalm 127:3) and that they are an eternal blessing for righteous parents. One psalm near the end of the book offers a heartfelt plea that the Lord will deliver us and keep us from the evil and violent practices of wicked men.

## LESSON 110

# Psalms, Part 1

### Introduction

The book of Psalms is a collection of sacred songs, poems, and prayers. This is the first of three lessons on the book of Psalms. The psalms discussed in this lesson include songs of praise to the Lord and prophecies

concerning Jesus Christ's suffering and death. This lesson also discusses Psalm 23, which teaches about the Lord's care and protection over us.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Psalms 9, 22, 31, 34, 69

#### *The Psalmist praises and prophecies of Jesus Christ*

You may want to begin the lesson by asking students to raise their hands if they enjoy music. Invite several students to explain why they enjoy music. (You may want to point out that music can help us express our feelings.)

Invite students to look through their hymnbooks to find a hymn that expresses their feelings about the Lord. Ask a few students to tell the class which hymn they selected and why.

Explain that the book of Psalms is a collection of sacred songs, poems, and prayers to God. In ancient times, the Israelites would sing or recite the psalms as part of their worship of the Lord.

Invite a student to read Psalm 9:1–2, 9–10, 13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for phrases that may reflect their feelings for the Lord.

- What phrases in these verses reflect some of your feelings for the Lord?

To prepare students to study some of the psalms that contain prophecies of Jesus Christ, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Jesus Himself quoted the book of Psalms more than any other Old Testament text. Beyond the Savior’s own use of these writings, the authors of the four Gospels [Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John] drew heavily on the psalms as they strove to document His life and ministry, particularly those excruciating hours of His arrest, trial, and Crucifixion” (*For Times of Trouble* [2012], 7–8).

To remind the class of the events surrounding Jesus Christ’s suffering and death, invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from the following scripture passages: Matthew 27:26–43, 46; Luke 23:46; John 19:31–33, 36. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the specific experiences Jesus Christ had leading up to and during His Crucifixion.

Explain that following His Resurrection, Jesus Christ appeared to His Apostles and taught them that He had fulfilled the prophecies concerning Him that were written in the psalms and other Old Testament passages (see Luke 24:44–46). To prepare students to study some of the psalms the Savior may have referred to, write the following scripture references on the board:

*Psalm 22:1, 7–8, 16, 18*

*Psalm 31:5*

*Psalm 34:20*

*Psalm 69:21*

You may want to study these scripture references as a class, or you could assign students to read them silently or with a partner. Ask students to look for phrases that relate to the Crucifixion of the Savior. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What truths can we learn from studying these psalms and learning about how they were fulfilled? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truths:

### **Prepare each lesson with students in mind**

As you prepare to teach, consider what you hope will occur in students’ lives as a result of the lesson. President Thomas S. Monson reminded gospel instructors: “The goal of gospel teaching . . . is not to ‘pour information’ into the minds of class members. . . . *The aim is to inspire the individual to think about, feel about, and then do something about living gospel principles*” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 107).

**Prophecies of Jesus Christ’s suffering and death were given long before He was born on earth. The prophecies of Jesus Christ’s suffering and death were fulfilled.)**

- How can our faith in Jesus Christ be strengthened by knowing that prophecies of His suffering and death were given long before He was born on earth and that these prophecies were fulfilled?

**Psalm 23**

*The Psalmist declares, “The Lord is my shepherd”*

Write the following words randomly on the board:

Death	Anger	Confusion	Heartache
Fear	Sickness	Loneliness	

Ask students to reflect on the last time they experienced or worried about any of the challenges listed on the board.

Explain that Psalm 23 teaches how the Lord can help us when we experience difficulties. This psalm is widely regarded as one of the most beloved scripture passages in the Bible. Because Psalm 23 is a poem, it contains vivid images and symbols.

Invite a student to read Psalm 23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the images and symbols in this poem.

- What is the Lord compared to in verses 1–4?

You may want to display the picture Jesus Carrying a Lost Lamb (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 64; see also LDS.org). Point out that if the Lord is like a shepherd, then we are like sheep.

- In what ways are we like sheep in need of a shepherd?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland:



“We need a shepherd because in innocence or ignorance—but on occasion willfully and against counsel—we turn ‘every one to his own way’ and as a result ‘have gone astray’ [Isaiah 53:6]. We wander here and scamper there, inspect this and nibble at that, until at some point we look up and realize we are either lost or about to be destroyed. We realize that we, or others who affect us, have done either something stupid or something wrong—which are so very often the same thing. We realize we desperately need help; we are in trouble and frantically look about for our shepherd, our defender, our savior” (*For Times of Trouble*, 204).

Invite students to review Psalm 23:1–4, looking for phrases that teach what the Lord does for us as our Shepherd. Ask students to report what they find. As they do so, you may want to ask follow-up questions such as the following:

- What do you think that phrase means?
- When have you felt the Lord bless you in that way?

To help students understand the images of the rod and staff in verse 4, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Holland:

“In ancient days the only instruments a shepherd carried were a rod and a staff. The rod was a short, stout, club-like weapon used to defend oneself or the flock from an intruder. It was meant to be—and to convey—strength and power in the hand of a strong shepherd who knew how to use it. . . .

“The staff was a longer, lighter piece, usually with a hook (or crook) on the end used for rescuing a stranded sheep. It, more than the rod, is associated in both art and myth with the shepherd and his vigilant watchcare. . . . Everything about the staff speaks of safety and care. It is the great scriptural instrument of rescue and redemption.

“In life we need defending and we need rescue. One way or the other, we are vulnerable. Whether it be in threatening confrontations or routine wandering, we are blessed and protected by God’s vigilant care. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me” (*For Times of Trouble*, 217–18).



Explain that in Psalm 23:5, the image of the Lord changes from a shepherd to a host who provides a feast for us. Invite students to review verses 5–6, looking for phrases that indicate how the Lord is like a host who serves and feeds us. (You may want to explain that in ancient times, hosts would anoint the heads of their honored guests with expensive perfumed oil.)

- What phrases indicate that the Lord is like a host who serves and feeds us? (As students respond, ask them to explain how these phrases help us understand what the Lord does for us.)
- How would you summarize a principle that we can learn from Psalm 23? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we trust in the Lord, He will lead and care for us.**)
- How has the Lord led or cared for you as you have trusted in Him?

Ask students to ponder experiences they have had when they trusted in the Lord and felt that He led or cared for them. You may want to invite several students to share their experiences with the class. Consider sharing an experience of your own as well.

Invite students to apply what they have learned by encouraging them to always trust in the Lord, their Shepherd.

### Scripture Mastery Review

To help students increase their understanding of scripture mastery passages, give them an opportunity to create their own questions about the passages. Invite students to work together, as a class or in small groups, to write clues that point to specific scripture mastery passages. (You may want to select a group of passages that you would like students to learn or review.) Then ask them to read their clues to you. Points are awarded to you if you guess a scripture mastery passage correctly. Points are awarded to the class if you are unable to guess correctly.

*Note:* If you do not have time to use this activity as part of this lesson, you may use it for a different lesson. For other review activities, see the appendix of this manual.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Esther; Job; Psalms, Part 1 (Unit 22)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles your students learned as they studied Esther 1–Job 42 and the Psalms, Part 1 (unit 22) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Esther 1–Job 16)

The book of Esther contains the account of a young woman who was placed in a time and position to perform a great act of service for the Lord's people. Students learned of her faithful and courageous efforts to save her people from their enemies. By studying Job's example of steadiness and commitment to the Lord during his suffering, students learned that we can choose to have faith in God even in the midst of our trials. They also learned that trials and difficulties come upon the righteous as well as the wicked, and although we may not know the reasons for our trials, we can trust in the Lord.

#### Day 2 (Job 17–37)

From Job's response to his friends, students learned that because of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we too will be resurrected, and our testimony of the Savior can give us hope in the midst of our trials. Additionally, students learned from Job that if we come to the Lord in our afflictions, then He will strengthen us. Those same trials can also refine and purify us and even soften our hearts.

#### Day 3 (Job 38–42)

While studying the Lord's instructions to Job, students learned that before we were born on earth, we lived with Heavenly Father and rejoiced in His plan of happiness. They also learned that the Lord has all power and knows all things. From the Lord's instruction regarding Job's friends, students identified that the Lord wants us to pray for those who misjudge us.

#### Day 4 (Psalms, Part 1)

Students studied various prophecies concerning Jesus Christ and learned that the prophecies of Jesus Christ's suffering and death were given long before He was born on earth and that they were fulfilled. In addition, they learned from Psalm 23 that if we trust in the Lord, He will lead and care for us.

### Introduction

After deposing Queen Vashti, King Ahasuerus of Persia chose a Jewish girl named Esther to be his new queen. Esther's cousin and guardian, Mordecai, offended Haman, a leader in the Persian kingdom, by not bowing to him. Haman received permission from the king to destroy all of the Jews in the kingdom. Esther risked her life by approaching the king to intervene in the Jews' behalf. She exposed Haman's treachery and saved the Jews from their enemies.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Esther 1–5

*Esther becomes queen of Persia, and Haman plots to destroy the Jews*

Before class, write the following questions on the board: *If you could have lived during any other time period in history, when would it have been and why? If you could have been born in any other place in the present, where would it have been and why?*

Divide students into pairs. Invite one student in each partnership to answer the first question on the board and the other student in each partnership to answer the second question. After they have shared their answers with their partners, invite a few students to share their answers with the class. Then write the following question on the board: *Why has the Lord sent you to the earth at this time and placed you in your circumstances?*

Invite students to ponder this question as they study the book of Esther during this lesson.

Explain that the book of Esther contains the account of a young woman who was placed in a time and in a position to perform a great act of service for the Lord's people. In Esther's day, the Persian Empire controlled a large portion of the Middle East where many Israelites from the kingdom of Judah (Jews) lived. Esther lived in Shushan, which was the capital of the Persian Empire.

Invite a student to summarize Esther 1–3. Ensure that students understand that Ahasuerus, the king of Persia, became displeased with his queen, Vashti, and decided to replace her. The king selected Esther as his new queen from among the young women of the kingdom. Esther kept her identity as a Jew secret because Mordecai, Esther's cousin and the man who had raised her, had instructed her not to reveal she was a Jew. The king promoted a man named Haman to be his chief minister and commanded all of his servants to bow before Haman as he passed by. Mordecai refused to do so, and this infuriated Haman. As a result, Haman sought to kill all of the Jews in the kingdom. He proposed the idea to the king, and he was given the authority to do as he desired. The decree was published and sent forth throughout the land.

Invite students to read Esther 4:8 silently, looking for what Mordecai asked Esther to do.

- What did Mordecai ask Esther to do? (To go to the king and plead for him to save her people.)

Explain that while Mordecai's suggestion might sound easy for Esther to follow, it would have been difficult and dangerous for her. Invite a student to read Esther 4:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Esther's concern.

- Why would Mordecai's suggestion for Esther to go to the king have been difficult for her?

Invite a student to explain why no one was allowed into the king's presence without being called. Ensure that students understand that during this time, kings were often in danger of assassination, so they surrounded themselves with guards and had harsh penalties for anyone who came uninvited into any room they were in. Esther would be risking her life if she went in to the king without having been called. Her life would be spared only if he held out his golden scepter to her.

Invite a student to read Esther 4:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Mordecai told Esther. (You may need to explain that in verse 14 the phrase "holdest thy peace" means to not speak, and the word *enlargement* means relief [see Esther 4:14, footnote a].)

- What do you think Mordecai meant when he told Esther that she might have come to the kingdom "for such a time as this" (Esther 4:14)? (Perhaps the Lord had placed Esther in her position for the purpose of saving the Jews.)
- What truths can we learn from Mordecai's suggestion about why Esther might have become queen? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **the Lord can place us in particular circumstances so we can help others**. Using students' words, write this truth on the board.)

Invite students to briefly ponder the third question you wrote on the board at the beginning of class: Why has the Lord sent you to the earth at this time and placed you in your circumstances?

Explain that, like Esther, we have a responsibility to help other people in the various circumstances and situations we are in, even when we may feel hesitant to do so.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for what the Lord expects of us.

"The Lord gave you your responsibilities for a reason. There may be people and hearts only you can reach and touch. Perhaps no one else could do it in quite the same way" ("Lift Where You Stand," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 56).

- According to President Uchtdorf's statement, why has the Lord given us our various responsibilities?

Invite students to answer the following questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- When have you seen someone use his or her position or circumstances to bless the lives of others, and how did this affect you?
- In the particular circumstances the Lord has placed you in, how can you bless the lives of others?

Ask students to ponder whether they have ever worried that they may not be strong enough to do something that God wants them to do.

Explain that Esther sent the palace messengers with her response to Mordecai's request that she go to the king for help. Invite a student to read Esther 4:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for her decision and what she asked Mordecai to do.

- Why do you think Esther asked that all of the Jews in the city fast for three days before she went in to see the king?
- What principle can we learn from Esther about preparing to do difficult things? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we fast and pray for the Lord's help, He can bless us with spiritual strength to do difficult things.**)

Encourage students to fast and pray for greater spiritual strength and courage to do difficult things. You may want to suggest that students also consider asking loved ones to join them in their fasting and prayers.

## Esther 5–10

### *Esther reveals Haman's plot, and the Jews prevail against their enemies*

Invite a student to read Esther 5:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened when the king saw Esther. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize Esther 5:4–10:3 by explaining that after the king asked Esther what she wanted from him, she asked if he and Haman would come to a banquet that she would prepare for them. The king and Haman gladly accepted the invitation. The next day Esther revealed that she was a Jew and that Haman was plotting to kill all of the Jews in the kingdom.

Invite a couple of students to read Esther 7:7–8, 10; 8:7–8, 11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the result of Esther's courage. Invite students to share what they find.

- What were the consequences of Esther acting courageously to save the Jews?
- What principles can we learn from the example of Queen Esther? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but be sure to emphasize that **if we act courageously to do what is right, then our efforts can bless the lives of many people.**)
- When have you or someone you know acted courageously to do the right thing? How were others blessed because of this courageous action?

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to testify of truths they have learned from the account of Esther. Invite them to follow the example of Esther by acting courageously to choose the right in difficult situations and finding ways to serve others.

## Next Unit (Psalms, Parts 2–3; Proverbs–Song of Solomon)

Invite students to consider how their attitudes about life and the choices they make would be different without an understanding of the plan of salvation. Explain that as they continue to study the book of Psalms, they will discover truths that can add purpose to their lives and help them to know what they must do to dwell in God's presence.

# Psalms, Part 2

## Introduction

This lesson is the second of three lessons on the book of Psalms and focuses on Psalms 24, 33, and 51. Psalm 24 teaches what we must do to be worthy to enter the

Lord's house and dwell in His presence eternally; Psalm 33 declares that the earth is full of the Lord's goodness; and Psalm 51 contains David's pleas for forgiveness of his sins.

## Suggestions for Teaching

 **Psalm 24:3–4** is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

### Psalm 24

*The Psalmist teaches what we must do to dwell in the Lord's presence*

Ask students what they think might be required to gain entrance to the following: a movie theater, an office building with security, a public sporting event, and a prestigious university.

- Why are there requirements for entering these or other places?

Invite a student to read Psalm 24:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for another place we can enter only after we have met certain qualifications.

- What do you think the phrases “the hill of the Lord” and “his holy place” refer to? (The temple or the Lord's presence. You may want to explain that the temple in Jerusalem was built on top of a hill.)

Ask a student to read Psalm 24:4–5 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what we must do to qualify to worship in the Lord's house and be prepared to dwell in His presence.

- According to verse 4, what must we do to qualify to worship in the Lord's house and be prepared to dwell in His presence? (Using students' words, write a principle similar to the following on the board: **To be worthy to worship in the Lord's house and to be prepared to dwell in His presence, we must have clean hands and a pure heart.**)
- What do you think it means to have clean hands and a pure heart?
- In what ways can unrighteous influences make it difficult for us to have clean hands and a pure heart?

Assure students that although it may be difficult for us to keep our hands clean and our hearts pure because of the evil influences that often surround us, it is possible to do so because of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. (You may want to provide students with copies of this statement.) Encourage students to find and mark phrases that help them understand the Savior's role in helping us to have clean hands and a pure heart.



“Let me suggest that hands are made clean through the process of putting off the natural man and by overcoming sin and the evil influences in our lives through the Savior's Atonement. Hearts are purified as we receive His strengthening power to do good and become better. All of our worthy desires and good works, as necessary as they are, can never produce clean hands and a pure heart. It is the Atonement of Jesus Christ that provides both a *cleansing and redeeming power* that helps us to overcome sin and a *sanctifying and strengthening power* that helps us to become better than we ever could by relying only upon our own strength” (“Clean Hands and a Pure Heart,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 82).

- What phrases in this statement help you understand what we must do to have clean hands and a pure heart?
- How does the Savior help us in this process?

Invite students to read Psalm 24:3–5 again silently and to ponder how well they are meeting the Lord’s requirements to enter His temple and ultimately dwell in His presence. Testify of the Savior’s role in helping us to be worthy to dwell with Him and our Father in Heaven. Encourage students to do whatever is necessary for them to be able to stand before the Lord with clean hands and a pure heart.

### Psalm 33

#### *The earth is full of the Lord’s goodness*

Ask students to tell about a time when they have been in awe of the beauty or enormity of God’s creations. You might also share a personal experience. If you have a picture that illustrates your experience, you could show that also.

Explain that part of Psalm 33 is a song praising the Lord for His power and goodness, which are manifest in His creations. Invite students to read Psalm 33:1–3 silently, looking for what the writer of this psalm wants us to do.

- What does the writer of this psalm want us to do?

Invite a student to read Psalm 33:4–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for reasons why the people of the earth should praise the Lord and sing to Him. Ask students to report what they find.

- What do you think it means in verse 8 to “fear the Lord” and “stand in awe of him”? (In this context, to “fear the Lord” means to respect or reverence Him and His power. To “stand in awe of him” implies that we should praise and admire Him and His creations.)

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Pondering about the Lord and His creations can lead us to . . .*

- Based on what you have read in Psalm 33, how would you complete this statement? (The following is one way students might complete the principle: **Pondering about the Lord and His creations can lead us to praise and revere Him.** Using students’ words, complete the statement on the board.)

Give students a few minutes to ponder about the Lord and what He has created for them. Consider singing as a class a hymn or song of praise such as “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” (*Hymns*, no. 72), “For the Beauty of the Earth” (*Hymns*, no. 92), or “My Heavenly Father Loves Me” (*Children’s Songbook*, 228–29). Invite students to share why they are thankful for the Lord and His creations.

#### *Help students reflect on principles*

One of the most effective ways to help students invite the influence of the Spirit into their hearts and to prepare them to act on a principle they have learned is to encourage them to reflect on personal experiences related to that principle. Doing so can help students recognize the effect the principle has had on their lives or the lives of others.

### Psalm 51

#### *David pleads for forgiveness and the Lord’s help*

Show students a picture of David facing Goliath, such as *David Slays Goliath* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 19; see also LDS.org). Then ask the following questions:

- What are some of the great things David did in his life?
- What are some of the sinful things David did in his life?

Invite students to imagine how David may have felt about his sins involving Bathsheba and Uriah. Explain that David’s sincere remorse for these sins is recorded in Psalm 51. Although David “hath fallen from his exaltation” because he had planned the death of Uriah (D&C 132:39), he received a promise that his soul would not be left in hell (see Psalm 16:8–10; *History of the Church*, 6:253). David’s humility and heartfelt desire to be restored to God’s grace and acceptance are examples of true principles of repentance. (See Bible Dictionary, “David.”) As students study Psalm 51, invite them to consider what lessons they can learn about repentance and about the Lord from David’s pleas for forgiveness.

Divide students into groups of four. Ask each group to assign each person in the group to look for answers to one of the following questions (you may want to provide each group with a copy of the following questions or write the questions on the board). Invite students to read Psalm 51 aloud in their groups. Invite them to mark in their scriptures or write on a piece of paper words and phrases that help answer the following questions:

1. What is unrepented sin like?
2. What is repentance like?



3. What is forgiveness like?
4. What are some of the characteristics of God?

After students have read the psalm, invite them to share their answers to their individual questions with the other students in their group. You might suggest that they mark in their scriptures or write on their papers words and phrases shared by others in the group. Then ask the class:

- What doctrines and principles can we learn from Psalm 51? (Write the doctrines and principles that students identify on the board. Their responses could include principles such as the following: **If we acknowledge our sins and offer the Savior a broken heart and contrite spirit, then He can make us clean. As we understand the merciful character of God, we will have confidence to turn to Him to seek forgiveness of our sins and help with our troubles.**)
- What does it mean to offer the Savior a broken heart and a contrite spirit?

If possible, provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder Bruce D. Porter of the Seventy. Invite a student to read the statement aloud. Ask the class to look for and mark what Elder Porter teaches about having a broken heart and a contrite spirit.



“Those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit are willing to do anything and everything that God asks of them, without resistance or resentment. We cease doing things our way and learn to do them God’s way instead. In such a condition of submissiveness, the Atonement can take effect and true repentance can occur” (“A Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 32).

- What can we do to receive a more broken heart and contrite spirit?

Share your testimony that the Lord can make us clean if we acknowledge our sins and come before Him with a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

Invite students to consider what they will do to offer the Lord a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Encourage them to turn to the Lord and trust that the Lord will forgive them of their sins and help them with their troubles.

### Scripture Mastery—Psalm 24:3–4

To help students memorize Psalm 24:3–4, divide students into pairs and ask each partnership to read the verses aloud together three times. Invite the class to close their scriptures. Give each partnership a piece of paper, and ask them to help each other write out the verses as well as they can from memory. After sufficient time, ask a few pairs to read what they wrote. Allow students to open their scriptures and determine how well they wrote out the verses. After a few students share their responses, read the verses in unison as a class.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Psalm 51:17. A broken heart and a contrite spirit

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“In ancient times when people wanted to worship the Lord and seek His blessings, they often brought a gift. For example, when they went to the temple, they brought a sacrifice to place on the altar. After His

Atonement and Resurrection, the Savior said He would no longer accept burnt offerings of animals. The gift or sacrifice He will accept now is ‘a broken heart and a contrite spirit’ [3 Nephi 9:20]. As you seek the blessing of conversion, you can offer the Lord the gift of your broken, or repentant, heart and your contrite, or obedient, spirit. In reality, it is the gift of yourself—what you are and what you are becoming” (“When Thou Art Converted,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2004, 12).

## LESSON 112

# Psalms, Part 3

### Introduction

Psalms 88–150 contain praise for the Lord’s mercy and goodness. Included are psalms that express gratitude for the word of God (Psalm 119) and declare children to be

cherished gifts from the Lord (Psalm 127). Psalms 140–45 contain a few of David’s prayers to God pleading for deliverance from his enemies.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Psalm 119

#### *The Lord blesses those who keep His laws*

Display several items that help provide people with direction or guidance, such as a flashlight, a compass or GPS, a map, and a picture of a lighthouse.

- What do all these objects have in common?
- How can each of these objects provide someone with guidance and direction?
- What are some situations in which youth today may need divine guidance and direction?

Invite students as they study Psalm 119 to look for what can help give guidance and direction for our lives.

Explain that Psalm 119 is a poem containing eight verses of scripture for each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

Invite a student to read Psalm 119:1–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Psalmist said makes a person blessed. Explain that the word *blessed* in these verses means happy and that the word *undefiled* in verse 1 means to be pure or free from sin.

- According to the Psalmist, what makes a person blessed or happy?
- What do you think it means to “walk in the law of the Lord” (Psalm 119:1)?
- How can obeying God’s words and commandments bring us happiness?

Point out the word *precepts* in verse 4. Explain that precepts are commandments or teachings to live by. Other words used as synonyms for God’s words and teachings in this psalm include testimonies, statutes, law, commandments, ordinances, and ways. Consider listing these words on the board.

Explain that the writer of Psalm 119 used symbols to describe his love for the word of God and the blessings that can come through diligently studying and obeying His words. To help students understand these symbolic expressions, write the following references on the board (do not write the words and phrases in parentheses):

1. *Psalm 119:14, 72, 127* (riches, gold, and silver)
2. *Psalm 119:24* (counsellor)
3. *Psalm 119:35* (path)
4. *Psalm 119:54* (songs)
5. *Psalm 119:103* (sweeter than honey)

Divide students into five groups, and assign each group one of the references on the board. (For smaller classes, you may need to assign several references to individual students.)

Display the following objects or pictures of these objects: a hymnbook, coins (or something representing riches), honey (or something sweet), a picture of a path, and a picture of a counselor (for example, a counselor in the First Presidency of the Church or a school counselor). Provide each group with the following handout, and invite them to complete the activities listed:



 **Psalm 119:105**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

**Handout**

1. Read your assigned scripture passage together, looking for what the Psalmist compared to the word of God.
2. Take the object or picture from the front of the classroom that corresponds to your assigned scripture passage.
3. Discuss how the object or picture is helpful in understanding the importance of the word of God.
4. Share examples or experiences that illustrate how the object or picture is like the word of God.

After students have had sufficient time to complete the instructions on the handout, ask them to select one student from each group to read their group's assigned scripture passage to the class, display their item, and share what they discussed in their groups.

Invite a student to read Psalm 119:105 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Psalmist compared the word of God to.

- What did the Psalmist liken the word of God to?

You may want to dim the lights in the room and turn on a flashlight.

- How might the word of God be like a lamp or light to us as we study it? (Write the following truth on the board: **As we study the word of God, we can receive guidance for our lives.** You may want to suggest that students write this truth in their scriptures next to Psalm 119:105 or in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.)
- What are sources of God's word that provide light and guidance for our lives?

To help students understand what we can do to obtain guidance from God's word, invite a student to read Psalm 119:11, 15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Psalmist did with the word of God.

- What did the Psalmist do with the word of God?
- What do you think the Psalmist meant in verse 11 by the phrase, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart"?

Write the following question on the board, and ask students to ponder it and then write a response in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: *When has the word of God been like a lamp or light to you, giving guidance for your life?*

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they wrote. You may want to share how God's word has helped guide and bless your life.

Invite students to write down a specific goal for what they will do to become more familiar with the word of God so they can receive the promised guidance.

 **Psalm 127:3**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

**Psalm 127*****Children are a cherished gift from the Lord***

Display a picture of children to the class. Read the following scenario, and ask students to consider how they would respond:

A friend says to you, "Having a family seems like a burden that would prevent me from doing other important things with my life. When I get older, I think I would be much happier if I did not have children."

- How would you respond to your friend?
- What are some priorities people might put ahead of having children?

Explain that Psalm 127 teaches the Lord's views on having children. Summarize Psalm 127:1–2 by explaining that the Psalmist wrote of our dependence upon the Lord.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Psalm 127:3–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what these verses teach about children.

- In verse 3, what words did the Psalmist use to describe children? (*Heritage* and *reward*. Explain that the word *heritage* in verse 3 refers to an inheritance, possession, or gift from the Lord.)

Explain that the word *quiver* in verse 5 refers to a case for holding arrows.

- According to verse 5, what did the Psalmist say about the man who has a “quiver full” of children?
- What principle do these verses teach about children? (Although students may state it differently, help them identify the following principle: **Children are gifts from the Lord and can bring parents great happiness.** Write this principle on the board.)
- How can children bring parents great happiness?
- How can remembering that children are gifts from the Lord influence our attitude toward having and rearing children?

You may want to share your testimony of the blessings and happiness that can come from having children.

## Psalms 140–150

### *David prays for deliverance from his enemies*

Explain that Psalms 140–45 contain a few of David’s prayers to God.

Write the following scripture references on the board: *Psalm 140:1, 4; Psalm 141:4; Psalm 142:5–6; Psalm 143:8–10; Psalm 144:11*. Invite students to pick two of the scripture passages and read them silently, looking for what David prayed for.

- What did David pray for?
- What modern enemies might we pray for Heavenly Father to deliver us from?

Write the following phrase on the board: *A principle I can learn from David is . . .*

Invite a student to read Psalm 145:18–20 aloud, and ask the class to follow along, looking for principles David taught in these verses. Explain that in verse 18 the word *nigh* means to be close or near and that to call upon God “in truth” implies praying with real intent and with a sincere heart (see Moroni 10:4).

Ask students to complete the statement on the board in their class notebooks or scripture study journals based on what they have learned from these verses.

Invite a few students to share with the class the principle they wrote. Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **as we pray to God in sincerity and truth, He will be near us and if we love God, He will spiritually preserve us.**

- What does it mean to have God near us?
- What blessings do you think come from having God near us?

Conclude the lesson by encouraging students to pray with sincerity as David did.

### Scripture Mastery—Psalm 119:105

To help students memorize Psalm 119:105, invite them to write the words of the verse on a card or small piece of paper. Encourage them to place the paper on or near a lamp or a light switch in their home for the next week and to quote the verse each time they see it.

### Scripture Mastery—Psalm 127:3

Before class, print or write the words from Psalm 127:3 on a piece of paper and make several copies. Cut each word out, and place the words in an envelope or small bag. Do this for each copy you made. Divide the class into small teams with two to four students on each team. Give each team an envelope or bag containing the words from Psalm 127:3. When you say “go,” each team is to arrange the words in the correct order to form the passage. The first team to complete the passage wins. Invite each team to repeat the verse until they can say it together in unison without looking at it.

*Note:* Because of the length of this lesson, you may want to use this activity on another day when you have more time.

# The Book of Proverbs

### Why study this book?

The book of Proverbs contains many brief but wise statements about how to live a godly life. Although the book was written in ancient Israel, its messages remain applicable in the modern world. As students study this book, they can learn wisdom that will help them draw closer to the Lord.

### Who wrote this book?

Some of the book of Proverbs is attributed to “Solomon the son of David, the king of Israel” (see Proverbs 1:1; 10:1; 25:1; see also 1 Kings 4:32; Guide to the Scriptures, “Proverb—the book of Proverbs”; scriptures.lds.org). However, while Solomon is considered an author of many of the proverbs, it is best to think of the book of Proverbs as a library of the wisdom of the Israelites. Some of its content is deeply spiritual, while some “does not rise above the plane of worldly wisdom, but throughout it is taken for granted that ‘the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom’ (1:7; 9:10)” (Bible Dictionary, “Proverbs, book of”).

### When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when or where the book of Proverbs was written, but the initial compilation of Proverbs is traditionally thought to have taken place during the reign of King Solomon in Jerusalem, between 1015 and 975 B.C. It is likely that many of the proverbs came from oral traditions that existed before Solomon’s time. Also, some proverbs were added after Solomon’s time: chapters 25–29 were added in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah (see Proverbs 25:1). It is unknown when the book reached its final form.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Proverbs was written as poetry, and it employs many of the techniques common to Hebraic poetry—vivid imagery, parallelism, and other literary techniques—to guide the reader in the quest for wisdom. The introductory verses of the book express this central theme: “A wise man will hear, and will increase in learning . . . but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:5, 7).

The wisdom contained within the book of Proverbs covers nearly every aspect of life. The proverbs focus as much on the quirks of human nature as they do on the basic behavior of a righteous person and on man’s proper relationship to God. Because the proverbs address such varied topics, a verse in Proverbs often has no connection to the verses before or after it. However, readers can find within Proverbs many passages that are simple, humorous, profound, and beautiful. One well-known passage tenderly describes the attributes of a righteous woman and declares that she is far more precious than rubies (see Proverbs 31:10–31).

### Outline

**Proverbs 1–9** These proverbs contain a poetic invitation for the reader to seek after and acquire true wisdom. They expound on the nature of knowledge, the meaning of life, and the path to success.

**Proverbs 10–24** These proverbs comprise many short sayings about right and wrong ways of living. They offer practical advice about family life, controlling anger, the dangers of pride, and a number of other topics.

**Proverbs 25–29** These proverbs speak about righteous leadership, the duty of the people to help the poor, and the value of wisdom in daily life.

**Proverbs 30–31** The words of Agur and King Lemuel conclude the book. Agur admonishes the reader that “every word of God is pure” (Proverbs 30:5) and speaks of the dangers of hypocrisy. King Lemuel recites the words of his mother that warn against strong drink. A virtuous woman is more valuable than the riches of this world; she reveres the Lord and is diligent, generous, wise, and kind.

## LESSON 113

# Proverbs 1–9

### Introduction

The book of Proverbs is a collection of short sayings that express truths about life, human nature, and the consequences of righteous and wicked behaviors. This

lesson provides teaching ideas for some of the proverbs contained in Proverbs 1–9 concerning the importance of seeking wisdom and trusting in the Lord.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Proverbs 1–9

#### *The proverbs counsel us to seek wisdom and trust in the Lord*

Ask students to think of a favorite quote or short phrase of wisdom that they know. Ask a few students to share their phrase with the class.

Explain that a proverb is a short saying that is intended to teach a lesson about life. The book of Proverbs is a collection of many sayings of wisdom collected by the Israelites. Many of the proverbs are attributed to King Solomon.

Invite a student to read Proverbs 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for words and phrases that describe the purposes of these proverbs.

- What is the purpose of the proverbs? (To provide wisdom, instruction, and understanding.)

Ask a student to read Proverbs 1:7 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for one of the key elements in gaining knowledge.

- Why do you think some passages in the Bible instruct us to love and trust the Lord with all our hearts, but this passage tells us to fear the Lord?
- What does it mean to fear the Lord? (If students have trouble answering this question, invite them to look in verse 7, footnote *a*, to find an alternate meaning for the phrase “fear of the Lord” [“reverence of the Lord”].)
- What principle can you identify from this verse? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we have reverence for the Lord and His teachings, then He will bless us with knowledge and wisdom.**)

To help students understand how we can show reverence for the Lord and His teachings, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President David O. McKay. Ask students to listen for what it means to have reverence for the Lord.

“Reverence is profound respect mingled with love. . . . [One writer] says it is ‘the highest of human feelings.’ . . .

“Reverence embraces regard, deference, honor, and esteem” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: David O. McKay* [2003], 30).

- How does this statement help us understand what it means to have reverence for the Lord and His teachings?
- How can showing reverence for the Lord and His teachings help us receive knowledge and wisdom?

To help students consider the value of wisdom, ask:

- Do you think it is possible to be knowledgeable or well educated but not wise?
- What are some examples of this? (You might give an example of a medical doctor who understands the detrimental health effects of smoking cigarettes yet still chooses to smoke.)
- What do you think is the difference between knowledge and wisdom?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President McKay. Ask students to listen for what it means to be wise.

“Gaining knowledge is one thing, and applying it [is] quite another. Wisdom is the right application of knowledge, and true education—the education for which the Church stands—is the application of knowledge to the development of a noble and Godlike character” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1968, 93–94).

- How would you summarize what it means to be wise?

Create the following chart as a handout for students:

Scripture reference	Blessings of seeking wisdom
Proverbs 2:10–15	
Proverbs 3:13–18, 35	
Proverbs 4:5–9	

Assign students to work in pairs, and ask them to study the scripture references on the handout together. As they study, ask them to look for ways we can be blessed by seeking wisdom and to write down what they find in the right-hand column of their handout. You may want to explain that to be “froward in their paths” (verse 15) means to be wayward or to go in a direction opposite of what is expected.

After students have had sufficient time to complete the handout, write the following incomplete principle on the board: *If we seek wisdom, then . . .*

- Based on what you learned in your study, how would you complete this principle? (Students may give a variety of answers. Complete the principle on the board so it conveys the following truth: **If we seek wisdom, then we can avoid sin and enjoy happiness and peace.**)
- What are some examples you have seen of how seeking wisdom can help us avoid sin and enjoy happiness and peace?

You may want to testify of the blessings that come from seeking wisdom. Invite students to seek wisdom by living according to the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

To prepare the class to identify a principle in Proverbs 3, invite two students to each read aloud one of the following scenarios. Ask the class to listen for what the individuals in these scenarios have in common.

1. A Latter-day Saint young man is attracted to a young woman who does not believe in the Lord’s standards concerning the law of chastity. The young man’s parents have asked him not to spend time with her anymore, explaining that in their prayers and discussions together they have had uneasy feelings about his relationship with her. The young man feels his parents are overreacting, and he becomes upset with them.
  2. A Latter-day Saint young woman has prepared for years to try out for an exclusive singing and dancing performance group. She prays and asks Heavenly Father to help her perform well so she can become part of the group. Following the tryouts she learns that she was not invited to join the group, and she feels hurt and frustrated. She wonders why Heavenly Father did not answer her prayers in the way she wanted Him to.
- In each of these scenarios, what kind of decision is the person faced with? (Students may give a variety of answers, but be sure to emphasize that in each case, the person must decide whether he or she will trust in the Lord or in his or her own reasoning.)
  - What are some other situations in which we might have to decide whether we will trust in the Lord over our own reasoning?

Ask a student to read Proverbs 3:5–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how we are to trust in the Lord and why we should trust in Him.

- How are we to trust in the Lord?
- What do you think it means to trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not unto our own understanding?
- According to verse 6, what blessing is promised to those who trust in the Lord with all their heart?

 **Proverbs 3:5–6**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- How would you state a principle from Proverbs 3:5–6 using the words *if* and *then*? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure to emphasize that **if we trust in the Lord with all our heart, then He will direct our paths.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for a way we can show the Lord we trust in Him with all our heart.



“Our Father in Heaven has invited you to express your needs, hopes, and desires unto Him. That should not be done in a spirit of negotiation, but rather as a willingness to obey His will no matter what direction that takes. His invitation, ‘Ask, and ye shall receive’ (3 Ne. 27:29) does not assure that you will get what you *want*. It does guarantee that, if worthy, you will get what you *need*, as judged by a Father that loves you perfectly, who wants your eternal happiness even more than do you” (“Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- According to this statement, how can we show the Lord that we trust Him with all our heart?

Invite students to again read aloud the two scenarios presented earlier. After each scenario is read, ask the class to explain how the person in the scenario can place his or her trust in the Lord and how the person may be directed to paths of happiness as a result.

Ask students to reflect on a time in their lives when they trusted in the Lord and felt that He directed their path. Invite students to testify of the importance of trusting in the Lord and perhaps share the experience they thought of. (Caution students not to share anything that is sacred or too personal.) As students share experiences, you may want to ask follow-up questions such as the following:

- As you trusted in the Lord, how did you know that He was directing your path?
- How has this experience helped you to have greater trust in the Lord?
- How might this experience influence the way you respond in the future when you must decide between trusting in the Lord and depending on your own reasoning?

Summarize Proverbs 4–9 by explaining that these chapters encourage us to seek wisdom, warn against associating with those who are immoral, and strongly condemn a prideful heart, dishonesty, murder, hardheartedness, slander, gossip, and contention (see Proverbs 6:16–19). If time permits, you might want to suggest that students mark the six things the Lord hates that are mentioned in Proverbs 6:16–19.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the principle that the Lord will direct our paths as we trust in Him with all our heart. Invite students to consider how they can show greater trust in the Lord, and encourage them to do so.

### Scripture Mastery—Proverbs 3:5–6

Invite students to recite together Proverbs 3:5–6. Then ask:

- What do you think is the meaning of the phrase “in all thy ways acknowledge him”? How can we do this each day?

Give students a card or a piece of paper and ask them to fold it in half. Invite them to write *Acknowledge Him* at the top of one column and *He shall direct thy paths* at the top of the other. Invite students to set a goal to record on the card ways they acknowledge the Lord and ways that He directs their paths. Invite them to determine a span of time they would like to keep this record. You might give students time in a later class to share their experiences with recording how they acknowledged the Lord and how He directed their paths.

## Commentary and Background Information

**Proverbs 6:16–19. “These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him”**

“Seven is a number that symbolizes completeness; this list covers most abominable attitudes and acts, including

pride, lying, murder, malicious thought, eagerness for evil, false testimony, and raising dissension. These generate most of the ills of society” (Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-Day Commentary On The Old Testament* [1993], 474).

# Proverbs 10–31

## Introduction

Proverbs 10–31 teaches the wisdom of choosing righteousness and virtue and the foolishness of following after the world. The book of Proverbs concludes with

a poem focusing on the characteristics of a virtuous woman, whose value “is far above rubies” (Proverbs 31:10).

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Proverbs 10–30

*The proverbs offer counsel to gain wisdom and understanding*

Write the following proverb on the board: *How much better is it to get \_\_\_\_\_ than gold!*

Invite students to explain how they would complete the statement and why.

Ask a student to read Proverbs 16:16 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the word that fills in the blank.

Remind students that a primary purpose of the book of Proverbs is to impart wisdom (see Proverbs 1:1–4). Explain that in their study of Proverbs 10–30, they will have the opportunity to discover and “teach one another words of wisdom” (D&C 88:118). Provide students with copies of the following chart as a handout. (The chart highlights proverbs containing principles that may be relevant to students’ lives.)

Proverbs			
10:4, 12, 17	15:1, 3, 16, 20, 26, 32	21:21, 25	27:1–2
11:17, 19, 28	16:7, 18, 32	22:6	28:1, 13
12:15, 19, 22	17:17, 22	23:7	29:18
13:1, 7, 15, 20	18:10, 12	24:1–2	30:5
14:21, 34	20:1	25:21–22	

### Determine pacing

Avoid taking so much time on the first part of the lesson that you have to rush through the rest. As you prepare, estimate how much time you will need to cover each part of the lesson, based on the teaching methods you have chosen. Because you will often have more material than time in which to teach it, you will need to determine which parts of the scripture block to emphasize and which to summarize.

Explain to students that they will have about five minutes to silently study some of the proverbs listed in the chart. Invite them to look for and choose a proverb they feel teaches an important principle that they would be comfortable teaching to their classmates. Explain that they do not need to choose an entire group of proverbs listed on the same line or in the same column, but that they can choose one or more verses from anywhere on the chart.

After students have had time to study and choose a proverb, invite them to prepare to teach it to others using the instructions listed at the bottom of the handout.

To provide an example for students, you may want to teach a principle from a proverb of your choice by using the instructions listed on the handout. When students are prepared to teach, you could assign them to teach one another in pairs or in small groups, or you could invite students to teach the entire class.

### Proverbs 31

*The characteristics of a virtuous woman are praised*

Display a small amount of money. You may want to remind students of the proverb they studied that teaches that wisdom is more valuable than gold (see Proverbs 16:16).

- In addition to wisdom, what else would you say is more valuable than riches?

Invite a student to read Proverbs 31:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who is more valuable than riches.

- Who is more valuable than riches? (You may need to explain that rubies are very valuable stones that are sometimes used in making expensive jewelry.)
- What principle can we learn from verse 10 about the value of virtue? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but be sure they identify that **virtue is more valuable than worldly wealth**. Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)
- How would you explain what virtue is?

As part of your discussion on virtue, you may want to invite a student to read aloud the following statement:

"Virtue originates in your innermost thoughts and desires. It is a pattern of thought and behavior based on high moral standards. Since the Holy Ghost does not dwell in unclean tabernacles, virtue is prerequisite to receiving the Spirit's guidance. What you choose to think and do when you are alone and you believe no one is watching is a strong measure of your virtue.

"Virtuous people are clean and pure spiritually. They focus on righteous, uplifting thoughts and put unworthy thoughts that lead to inappropriate actions out of their minds. They obey God's commandments and follow the counsel of Church leaders. They pray for the strength to resist temptation and do what is right. They quickly repent of any sins or wrongdoings. They live worthy of a temple recommend" (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 118–19).

- Why do you think virtue is so valuable?

Explain that Proverbs 31 includes a description of the author's ideal wife (see Bible Dictionary, "Proverbs, book of"). Invite students to take turns reading aloud from Proverbs 31:11–31. Ask the class to follow along and look for qualities of a virtuous person and blessings we can receive for developing these qualities. (Point out that these qualities and blessings also apply to men.) As students identify qualities and blessings, you may want to ask follow-up questions such as:

- What do you think that phrase means?
- Why would these same qualities be valuable for men to cultivate? Why do you think that is an important quality to have?
- What is an example of how developing that quality can lead to the blessing you identified?

Divide the class into small groups. Ask students to discuss the following question in their groups:

- What are some things we can do that will help us to be virtuous in our thoughts and actions?

After students have had sufficient time to discuss this question, ask each group to choose someone to report their ideas to the class. You may also want to ask a student to read aloud the following statement:

"Your mind is like a stage in a theater; in the theater of your mind, however, only one actor can be on stage at a time. If the stage is left bare, thoughts of darkness and sin often enter the stage to tempt. But these thoughts have no power if the stage of your mind is occupied by wholesome thoughts, such as a memorized hymn or verse of scripture that you can call upon in a moment of temptation. By controlling the stage of your mind, you can successfully resist persistent urges to yield to temptation and indulge in sin. You can become pure and virtuous" (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 119).

Consider inviting students to testify of the value of choosing to live a virtuous and righteous life. Invite students to set a goal of something they will do to help them have virtuous thoughts or develop the qualities identified in Proverbs 31, and encourage them to follow through with their goal.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Ecclesiastes

### Why study this book?

The name Ecclesiastes is a translation of the Hebrew word *koheleth*, which means “one who convenes an assembly” or simply a preacher (see Bible Dictionary, “Ecclesiastes”). Throughout this book, the writer presents a series of questions in search of the purpose of life. His questions and subsequent conclusions illustrate his own journey of seeking to understand why we are here on the earth. As students study this book, they can likewise consider the purpose of mortality and discover with the writer that everyone will one day have to stand before God and be judged.

### Who wrote this book?

Little is known about the writer of Ecclesiastes beyond his own description of

himself as “the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem” (Ecclesiastes 1:1).

### When and where was it written?

It is not clear when or where this book was written. In Ecclesiastes 1:1–11 and 12:8–14, the text refers to the Preacher in third person. This may suggest that someone other than the Preacher compiled his writings and teachings sometime after they were given. This compounds the difficulty of knowing when and where this book was written.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Ecclesiastes is unique because although the Preacher is a believer, he

often poses questions and makes statements as if he were not. Everything that he says, therefore, must be taken in context of his final conclusion in Ecclesiastes 12:13–14 that all of our works in this life will one day be judged by God. The teachings of this book seem to be directed at individuals who do not believe in God or at least are not yet fully committed to Him. The Preacher presents questions and statements that many of these individuals may feel inclined to agree with, but then he helps them to see how much purpose and meaning can come into our lives when we seek to live in accordance with God’s will.

### Outline

**Ecclesiastes 1–2** The Preacher concludes that everything in this life is vanity or fleeting and will not last. In support of this conclusion, he shares various efforts he made to find meaning and purpose in life. He sought after frivolity and pleasure, built “great works” (2:4), and gained riches but found that none of it satisfied him.

**Ecclesiastes 3** The Preacher explains that good and bad things happen to everyone. The works of man do not

last. The works of God, however, are eternal.

**Ecclesiastes 4–8** The Preacher teaches that although this life is temporary and all will one day die, there are things we can do to find contentment in this life. He also identifies things that will surely lead to an unfulfilled life, including oppressing others, accumulating wealth for no other purpose than to have more than another, and failing to seek wisdom.

**Ecclesiastes 9–10** The Preacher asserts that both the wicked and the righteous will experience tragedy. Everyone has a limited amount of time on this earth and will benefit much more from gaining wisdom than from gaining riches or power.

**Ecclesiastes 11–12** The Preacher concludes that unlike most things in life, obedience to God’s commandments is of lasting importance because one day we will die, our spirits will return to God, and He will judge us according to the way we lived during our mortal lives.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Song of Solomon

### Why study this book?

The Joseph Smith Translation states, “The Songs of Solomon are not inspired writings” (quoted in Bible Dictionary, “Song of Solomon”).

### Who wrote this book?

We do not know who wrote the Song of Solomon. “Whether Solomon is actually the author is doubtful” (Bible Dictionary, “Song of Solomon”).

### When and where was it written?

We do not know when or where the Song of Solomon was written.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The Song of Solomon is the only book in the standard works that is considered uninspired (see Bible Dictionary, “Song of Solomon”). When speaking to a group of seminary and institute teachers, Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles commented on each of

the books in the Old Testament. When he came to this book he said, “The Song of Solomon is biblical trash—it is not inspired writing” (“The Bible, a Sealed Book,” in *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [Church Educational System manual, 2004], 127).

### Outline

**Song of Solomon 1–8** Poetry and songs of love and affection are presented.

## LESSON 115

# Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon

### Introduction

The book of Ecclesiastes was written by an individual who called himself “the Preacher” (Ecclesiastes 1:1). The Preacher taught that the conditions of our mortal life are temporary and that God will bring all our works into judgment. The Song of Solomon is poetry that

celebrates the love between a man and a woman. The Joseph Smith Translation manuscript contains the note that “the Songs of Solomon are not inspired writings” (Bible Dictionary, “Song of Solomon”).

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ecclesiastes 1–10

#### *The Preacher teaches that the conditions of our mortal life are temporary*

Before class, write the following phrase on the board: *The purpose of life is . . .*

Ask students how they think people without an understanding of the plan of salvation might finish this statement.

- How do you think your attitude about life and your choices might be different if you did not understand the plan of salvation?

Invite students to look for truths in their study of Ecclesiastes that can deepen their understanding of Heavenly Father’s plan and the purpose of their life on earth.

Explain that *Ecclesiastes* means preacher, which is the self-imposed title of the person who wrote this book. Invite a student to read Ecclesiastes 1:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Preacher taught about life.

- What are some things the Preacher taught about life? (All is vanity. There is no profit to labor under the sun.)

Write the following on the board: “*All is vanity*” and “*under the sun*” = . . .

- What do you think the phrase “all is vanity” (Ecclesiastes 1:2) means? (You may want to direct students to verse 2, footnote *b*.)

Explain that the phrase “under the sun” is another way of saying “during mortality.” Then complete the phrase on the board to read, “*All is vanity*” and “*under the sun*” = *everything is empty, temporary, or meaningless during mortality*.

Explain that this message is a theme throughout the book of Ecclesiastes. The writer of Ecclesiastes often wrote from the perspective of someone who had little to no understanding of the plan of salvation. This perspective can help us recognize that people waste much of their life focusing on pursuits that end when they die.

Explain that in Ecclesiastes 2, the Preacher describes several different ways he sought to find purpose in life. Invite a student to read Ecclesiastes 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the Preacher sought purpose in life. You may need to explain that *mirth* means amusement.

- According to these verses, how did the Preacher seek purpose? (He pursued amusement, pleasure, and laughter. Write students’ answers on the board.)

Divide students into groups of two or three. Invite half of the groups to read Ecclesiastes 2:4–7 and the other half to read Ecclesiastes 2:8–10. Ask them to look for what other things the Preacher did to seek purpose in life.

- What were some other things the Preacher did to seek purpose in life? (Add their answers to the list on the board.)
- How do people today seek purpose in this mortal life in similar ways?

Invite a student to read Ecclesiastes 2:11 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Preacher discovered about his labors.

### Define difficult words and phrases

As students study the scriptures, they may encounter words or phrases that they are unfamiliar with or that they may have difficulty understanding. You can assist students in defining difficult words or phrases by teaching them that dictionaries, student manuals, footnotes, and scripture study helps can often help them understand these challenging words or phrases and thus can assist them in better understanding the content of the scriptures.

- What did the author say about all of the works of his hands? (You may want to explain that the phrase “vexation of spirit” means the Preacher was discouraged with the results of his labors, realizing that they would bring no real profit.)
- Do you agree or disagree with the Preacher’s conclusion? Why?

Summarize Ecclesiastes 3–10 by explaining that the Preacher wrote that even though good and bad things happen to all of us and even though one day we will all die, we can do many things to make our mortal life better before it ends.

Provide students with the following activity on a handout. Invite students to work with a partner and match the scripture references to the appropriate phrase.

_____ 1. Ecclesiastes 4:9–10	a. Whatever you do, work hard and do your best.
_____ 2. Ecclesiastes 5:10–11	b. Even though at times the wicked seem to prosper, in the end it will not be well with them.
_____ 3. Ecclesiastes 7:9	c. Do not set your heart on money, for it will never satisfy.
_____ 4. Ecclesiastes 7:10	d. Avoid idleness, for it can cause us to lose things we care about.
_____ 5. Ecclesiastes 8:11–13	e. Do not spend the present day longing for the past to return.
_____ 6. Ecclesiastes 9:10	f. Good friends will help us through difficult times.
_____ 7. Ecclesiastes 10:18	g. Learn to control your temper.

When students finish, invite them to give their answers to the matching activity. (Answers: 1-f; 2-c; 3-g; 4-e; 5-b; 6-a; 7-d.) Invite a few students to explain what counsel stood out to them and why.

### Ecclesiastes 11–12

#### *The Preacher teaches that we should prepare now for the Final Judgment*

Invite a student to read Ecclesiastes 11:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the writer wanted young people to understand about life.

- What did the Preacher want young people to understand about their choices in life?

Summarize Ecclesiastes 12:1–7 by explaining that the writer reiterated that everyone will one day die. Invite a student to read Ecclesiastes 12:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what will happen when we die.

- What do you think it means that “then shall the dust return to the earth as it was”? (Ecclesiastes 12:7). (At the time of our death, our physical bodies will decay and return to the earth.)
- What truth do we learn from Ecclesiastes 12:7 about the condition of our spirits after we die? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Although we experience physical death, our spirits continue to live and will return to God.** You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase that teaches this doctrine in verse 7.)

Explain that other scriptures help us understand that at death our spirits do not immediately return to the presence of God but rather go to the spirit world (see D&C 138:11–24). Invite a student to read aloud the following statement concerning the condition of our spirits after we die:

“Death does not change our personality or our desires for good or evil. Those who chose to obey God in this life live in a state of happiness, peace, and rest from troubles and care. Those who chose not to obey in this life and did not repent live in a state of unhappiness. In the spirit world the gospel is preached to those who did not obey the gospel or have the

opportunity to hear it while on earth. We remain in the spirit world until we are resurrected" (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 52).

Extend a piece of string across the classroom, and explain that it represents eternity. (You may want to invite students to imagine that both ends of the string extend infinitely in either direction.)

- How long is our mortal life when compared to eternity? (After students respond, you may want to place a small mark on the string or hang a paper clip on it to represent that our mortal lives are only one small part of our eternal existence.)
- If our mortal life is so short compared to eternity, why do you think the way we choose to spend our time and energy during mortality is so important?

To help students identify the main principle in Ecclesiastes, refer to the definition on the board, reminding them that "everything is empty, temporary, or meaningless during mortality" when life is lived without an understanding of the plan of salvation.

Invite a student to read Ecclesiastes 12:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the Preacher's main conclusion.

- What principle can we learn from our study of Ecclesiastes? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we choose to focus on God and keeping His commandments rather than on worldly pursuits, we will find purpose in mortality and be prepared for the judgment of God.**)

Provide students with a copy of the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask a student to read the statement aloud, and invite the class to follow along, looking for how understanding the doctrines they have identified can influence the decisions they make now.



"We understand that we will live a postmortal life of infinite duration and that we determine the kind of life it will be by our thoughts and actions in mortality. Mortality is very brief but immeasurably important. . . .

"That understanding helps us to make wise decisions in the many choices of our daily lives. Seeing life from an eternal perspective helps us focus our limited mortal energies on the things that matter most. . . .

". . . By virtue of the Savior's atoning sacrifice, we all will be resurrected. Each of us will stand before the judgment bar of the great Jehovah and be rewarded according to our deeds in mortality.

"If we make every earthly decision with this judgment in mind, we will have used our mortal probation wisely and its days will give us peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come" ("The Time to Prepare," *Ensign*, May 1998, 14, 16–17).

Testify that because mortality is temporary, we must take great care with how we choose to use our time and energy. By focusing our time and efforts on the Lord and His work, we will find the greatest amount of purpose and joy in this life and be prepared for life after death.

Invite students to ponder and reflect on their own life and consider what changes they could make. Encourage them to act on the promptings they receive. Remind them that the Lord can help us know what changes we may need to make and can give us strength to change as we seek His help.

## The Song of Solomon

### *Solomon rejoices in the love of a man and a woman*

Summarize the Song of Solomon by explaining that this book is a collection of poetry and songs of love and affection. The Joseph Smith Translation manuscript contains the note that "the Songs of Solomon are not inspired writings" (Bible Dictionary, "Song of Solomon"; see also the note found above Song of Solomon 1:1, footnote *a*).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Psalms, Parts 2–3; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon (Unit 23)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied the lessons on Psalms, Parts 2–3; Proverbs 1–Ecclesiastes 12; and the Song of Solomon (unit 23) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Psalms, Part 2)

In this lesson, students learned that to be worthy to dwell with God in His presence, we must have clean hands and a pure heart. They also learned that pondering about the Lord and His creations can lead us to praise and revere Him. As students studied Psalm 51, which contains David's plea for forgiveness, they learned that the Lord can make us clean if we acknowledge our sins and offer the Savior a broken heart and contrite spirit.

#### Day 2 (Psalms, Part 3)

As they studied Psalm 119, students learned that as we study the word of God, we can receive guidance for our lives. They also learned in Psalm 127 that children are gifts from the Lord and can bring parents great happiness. As students studied the prayers of David, they learned that if we pray to God in sincerity and truth, He will be near us, and if we love God, then He will spiritually preserve us.

#### Day 3 (Proverbs 1–31)

As students studied the book of Proverbs, they learned the following: If we have reverence for the Lord and His teachings, then He will bless us with knowledge and wisdom. If we seek wisdom, then we can avoid sin and enjoy happiness and peace. If we trust in the Lord with all our heart, then He will direct our paths. Virtue is more valuable than worldly wealth.

#### Day 4 (Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon)

In the book of Ecclesiastes, students learned that although we experience physical death, our spirits continue to live and will return to God. They also learned that if we choose to focus on God and keeping His commandments rather than on worldly pursuits, we will find purpose in mortality and be prepared for the judgment of God. Although the Song of Solomon is included among the writings of the Old Testament, the Joseph Smith Translation states that "the Songs of Solomon are not inspired writings" (see Bible Dictionary, "Song of Solomon").

### Introduction

The book of Proverbs is a collection of short sayings that express truths about life, human nature, and the consequences of righteous and wicked behaviors. This lesson provides teaching ideas for selected proverbs concerning the importance of trusting in the Lord and seeking wisdom.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Proverbs 3:5–6

*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart"*

Write the following on the board before class:

*Trust in \_\_\_\_\_ with all thine \_\_\_\_\_; and  
\_\_\_\_\_ not unto thine \_\_\_\_\_.*

*In all thy \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge \_\_\_\_\_, and he shall  
\_\_\_\_\_ thy paths.*

As class begins, ask students to help you fill in the blanks of this scripture mastery passage. Invite them to open their scriptures to Proverbs 3:5–6 if they need help. To help them memorize the passage, consider inviting the class to stand and recite it a few times. Then ask:

- What do you think it means to trust in the Lord with all your heart and to lean not unto your own understanding? (You may want to explain that to lean not unto your own understanding means not to place your reasoning above the Lord's wisdom.)
- According to verse 6, what blessing is promised to those who trust in the Lord with all their heart?
- How would you state a principle from Proverbs 3:5–6 using the words *if* and *then*? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure to emphasize that **if we trust in the Lord with all our heart, then He will direct our paths.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for a way we can show the Lord we trust in Him with all our heart.

"Our Father in Heaven has invited you to express your needs, hopes, and desires unto Him. That should not be done in a spirit of negotiation, but rather as a willingness to obey His will no matter what direction that takes. His invitation, 'Ask, and ye shall receive' (3 Ne. 27:29) does not assure that you will get what you *want*. It does guarantee that, if worthy, you will get what you *need*, as judged by a Father that loves you perfectly, who wants your eternal happiness even more than do you" ("Trust in the Lord," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- According to Elder Scott's statement, how can we show the Lord that we trust Him with all our heart?

Invite a student to read aloud the following scenario. Ask the class to think about how the young woman in the scenario could place her trust in the Lord and how she may be directed to paths of happiness as a result.

A Latter-day Saint young woman does not feel accepted among the other girls her age in her ward. Her bishop explains in an interview that he has felt strongly that the Lord wants her to be the president of her Young Women class. The young woman considers declining the call because she is afraid the other young women will not accept her leadership.

- What advice would you give to this young woman?

Ask students to reflect on a time in their lives when they trusted in the Lord and felt that He directed their path. Invite students to testify of the importance of trusting in the Lord and perhaps share the experience they thought of. (Caution students not to share anything that is sacred or too personal.) As students share experiences, you may want to ask follow-up questions such as the following:

- As you trusted in the Lord, how did you know that He was directing your path?
- How has this experience helped you to have greater trust in the Lord?
- How might this experience influence the way you respond in the future when you must decide between trusting in the Lord and depending on your own reasoning?

Consider sharing your own testimony of the principle that the Lord will direct our paths as we trust in Him with all our heart. Invite students to consider how they can show greater trust in the Lord, and encourage them to do so.

## Proverbs 10–30

*The proverbs offer counsel to gain wisdom and understanding*

Write the following proverb on the board: *How much better is it to get \_\_\_\_\_ than gold!*

Invite students to explain how they would complete the proverb and why.

Ask a student to read Proverbs 16:16 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for the word that fills in the blank.

Explain that a primary purpose of the book of Proverbs is to impart wisdom (see Proverbs 1:1–4). Tell students that in their study of selected passages from Proverbs 10–30 during this lesson, they will have the opportunity to discover and “teach one another words of wisdom” (D&C 88:118). Provide students with copies of the following chart as a handout. (The chart highlights proverbs containing principles that may be relevant to students’ lives.)

Proverbs			
10:4, 12, 17	15:1, 3, 16, 20, 26, 32	21:21, 25	27:1–2
11:17, 19, 28	16:7, 18, 32	22:6	28:1, 13
12:15, 19, 22	17:17, 22	23:7	29:18
13:1, 7, 15, 20	18:10, 12	24:1–2	30:5
14:21, 34	20:1	25:21–22	

Explain that students will have about five minutes to silently study some of the proverbs listed in the chart. Invite them to look for and choose a proverb they feel teaches an important principle that they would be comfortable teaching to their classmates. Explain that they do not need to choose an entire group of proverbs listed on the same line or in the same column, but that they can choose one or more verses from anywhere on the chart.

After students have had time to study and choose a proverb, invite them to prepare to teach it to others. Read aloud the following instructions or write them on the board. (If you provide students with copies of the chart, you may want to include these instructions on the same piece of paper. For your convenience, this has been done for you on a PDF available online.)

1. Read aloud the proverb you chose, and explain a principle it teaches.
2. Share an example or experience from everyday life that illustrates the principle.
3. Explain why the principle is important to you. (You might also consider sharing your testimony of the truthfulness of the principle.)

To provide an example for students, you may want to teach a principle in a proverb of your choice by using the preceding instructions. When students are prepared to teach, you could assign them to teach one another in pairs or in small groups, or you could invite students to teach the entire class.

Close by sharing your testimony of the truths taught in today’s lesson.

## Next Unit (Isaiah 1–23)

Write the following statement on the board: *“Great are the words of Isaiah.”* Ask students if they know who first made this statement. Explain that when Jesus Christ appeared to the Nephites after His Resurrection, He made this statement and commanded the Nephites to study Isaiah’s words (see 3 Nephi 23:1). Why do you think Jesus Christ would praise and instruct us to study the words of Isaiah? What makes Isaiah’s words so great? Tell students that in the next unit they will have an opportunity to study words and teachings of the prophet Isaiah.

# The Book of Isaiah

### Why study this book?

When Jesus Christ visited the Nephites after His Resurrection, He quoted many of the words of Isaiah to them and then said: “A commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah” (3 Nephi 23:1). He also told them that everything Isaiah had prophesied would be fulfilled (see 3 Nephi 23:3). The book of Isaiah was written during a time of great wickedness and apostasy, and it addresses both events of Isaiah’s era and events that would occur in the future. Perhaps the most important part of the book of Isaiah is Isaiah’s testimony and witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Holy One of Israel, and the promised Messiah. Studying the book of Isaiah can strengthen students’ testimonies of the Savior and teach them to listen to the Spirit as they encounter symbolism in the scriptures. As students mature in their understanding of the gospel, they can appreciate Isaiah’s witness and feel a desire to study his words and say as Nephi said: “My soul delighteth in his words . . . for he verily saw my Redeemer” (2 Nephi 11:2).

### Who wrote this book?

Isaiah (the son of Amoz) is the author of the book of Isaiah. His name means “the Lord is salvation,” and this idea is reflected in his writings. Isaiah served as a prophet in Jerusalem for about 40 years (approximately 740–701 B.C.), during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Isaiah was married and had at least two sons (see Isaiah 7:3; 8:1–3). “Tradition states that he was ‘sawn asunder’ during the reign of Manasseh” (Bible Dictionary, “Isaiah”).

### When and where was it written?

The book of Isaiah was written sometime during the ministry of Isaiah (approximately 740–701 B.C.). Since Isaiah’s ministry was centered in Jerusalem, this is the most likely location of the book’s origin.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

“Isaiah is the most quoted of all the prophets, being more frequently quoted by Jesus, Paul, Peter, and John (in his Revelation) than any other Old Testament prophet. Likewise the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants quote from Isaiah more than from any other prophet” (Bible Dictionary, “Isaiah”).

Isaiah’s prophecies often have multiple meanings and fulfillments. Concerning Isaiah’s prophecies, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “The book of Isaiah contains numerous prophecies that seem to have multiple fulfillments. One seems to involve the people of Isaiah’s day or the circumstances of the next generation. Another meaning, often symbolic, seems to refer to events in the meridian of time, when Jerusalem was destroyed and her people scattered after the crucifixion of the Son of God. Still another meaning or fulfillment of the same prophecy seems to relate to the events attending

the Second Coming of the Savior. The fact that many of these prophecies can have multiple meanings underscores the importance of our seeking revelation from the Holy Ghost to help us interpret them. As Nephi says, the words of Isaiah ‘are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy’ (2 Ne. 25:4)” (“Scripture Reading and Revelation,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1995, 8). In Isaiah 29, there is a prophecy of the Restoration that describes the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, including an exchange between Martin Harris and Professor Charles Anthon (see Isaiah 29:11–12; Joseph Smith—History 1:63–65).

Isaiah assumes the reader has an understanding of the geography of Israel and the surrounding regions and of Hebrew poetry.

### Outline

**Isaiah 1–12** Isaiah describes Israel as apostate and corrupt. Isaiah explains that the Israelites will be blessed if they repent and punished if they remain rebellious. He prophesies of events concerning the Restoration, including the latter-day gathering of Israel. Isaiah’s call to the ministry and Judah’s impending wars against Ephraim and Syria are mentioned. Isaiah prophesies of the Messiah.

**Isaiah 13–27** The fall of Babylon will foreshadow the destruction of the world at the Second Coming. Israel will be scattered and then gathered. Israel will enjoy millennial rest and will be victorious over Babylon (the world). Isaiah describes God’s judgments against wicked nations. Israel will fill the earth.

**Isaiah 28–35** Isaiah foretells the apostasy, the Restoration, and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Israel will be scattered because they rejected the Lord and

the prophets. People will turn away from the Lord and become wicked before the Second Coming. Zion will be supported by its stakes. The Lord will punish the wicked at the Second Coming.

**Isaiah 36–39** Isaiah describes the invasion of Assyria. King Hezekiah asks Isaiah for advice to prevent the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Isaiah 40–48** Isaiah writes about Jesus Christ, who will act as a shepherd to Israel and a light to the Gentiles. The Lord will raise up a deliverer (King Cyrus) to free Israel from captivity. This deliverer is a type of Jesus Christ, who will be the true deliverer. Jesus Christ alone will save Israel, and no one will save Babylon.

**Isaiah 49–66** The Lord will gather Israel in the last days. Isaiah describes the Messiah’s suffering. Isaiah invites all to seek the Lord. The Lord will destroy the wicked at His Second Coming.

## LESSON 116

# Isaiah 1–2

### Introduction

The Lord showed Isaiah a vision of the apostate condition of Israel, and He commanded the people to repent and become clean. Isaiah prophesied that the house of the

Lord would be established in the last days and that the proud would be humbled at the Savior's Second Coming.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 1

*Isaiah writes the Lord's words describing the apostate condition of the house of Israel*

Invite a student to read aloud the following scenarios. Ask the class to listen for indicators of the spiritual condition of the young man and the young woman in these scenarios.

1. A young man attends church every Sunday and regularly attends seminary. He also frequently uses foul language, watches inappropriate media, and is cruel to his younger brothers and sisters.
  2. A young woman never misses a day of seminary, always attends church, and recently earned her Personal Progress Award. However, she does righteous things primarily to please her parents and to receive recognition from others. When she is at school, she and her friends make fun of people they see as being different from them.
- What indicators suggest this young man and young woman may be struggling spiritually, even though they both regularly attend church and seminary?
  - What problems may result from the choices of this young man and young woman?

Explain that like the young man and young woman in these scenarios, the Israelites in Isaiah's time were performing outward acts of righteousness but were inwardly sinful and unrepentant. Invite students as they study Isaiah 1 to look for principles that can help them avoid going through the motions of being righteous but without real intent.

To help students understand the historical context of Isaiah's writings, you may want to refer them to the handout "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance" (see lesson 102). Invite students to locate "Isaiah" on the handout. Explain that Isaiah ministered in Jerusalem for about 40 years. He died approximately 100 years before Lehi and his family departed from Jerusalem. Jesus Christ taught: "Great are the words of Isaiah. For surely he spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel" (3 Nephi 23:1–2). Many of Isaiah's teachings pertain directly to our day.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for words and phrases that describe the Israelites' spiritual condition in Isaiah's time.

- What words or phrases did you find that indicate the Israelites' spiritual condition?

Point out that Isaiah often recorded the Lord's words in a poetic form called parallelism. Parallelism occurs when a writer expresses an idea and then repeats or contrasts the idea using a similar sentence structure with different words.

Invite students to review Isaiah 1:2 and look for an example of parallelism.

- What example of parallelism did you find? (Students may mention the phrase "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth.")
- What idea did Isaiah express through these words? (He invited all people everywhere to listen to the words the Lord had given him.)

Explain that Isaiah also used images to illustrate ideas. Invite students to review Isaiah 1:3 and look for the images Isaiah used.

- What images did Isaiah use? (Explain that a crib is a feeding trough where an animal receives food from its master.)

- What did Isaiah contrast the ox and donkey with? (He contrasted them with the rebellious Israelites, who did not know the Lord and were not aware of the physical and spiritual nourishment He had provided for them.)

Explain that recognizing Isaiah's use of poetic parallelism and images can help us better understand his words.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 1:5–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the people were affected by their wickedness. (You may want to explain that the phrase "daughter of Zion" in verse 8 refers to Jerusalem and its inhabitants.)

- What do you think Isaiah was saying about the spiritual condition of the people by describing them as being covered with "wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores" (Isaiah 1:6)?
- What wicked cities did Isaiah compare the Israelites to?

Summarize Isaiah 1:10–15 by explaining that even though the Israelites were wicked at this time, they continued to offer sacrifices at the temple and they outwardly observed sacred occasions such as the Passover and other religious feasts.

To illustrate the Israelites' spiritual condition, display a clean, clear glass with water in it. While the students are watching, add one or two drops of red food coloring to the water.

- How is the water like the intentions of the Israelites' hearts at this time? (The intentions of their hearts had become contaminated by sin.)
- How is the glass like the outward behavior of the Israelites? (It is clean on the outside.)

Invite the class to scan Isaiah 1:11–15, looking for words or phrases that describe how the Lord felt about the Israelites' insincere offerings.

- What words or phrases in these verses show how the Lord felt about the Israelites' insincere offerings? (Possible responses include "what purpose," "I delight not," "no more vain oblations," "I will hide mine eyes." You may need to explain that "vain oblations" are religious offerings given without real intent.)
- If the people were doing some righteous things outwardly, why did the Lord reject those offerings?
- What is more meaningful to the Lord than an outward display of devotion? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Our outward acts of devotion to God are more meaningful to Him when the intentions of our hearts are pure.**)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 1:16–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the invitation the Lord offered to those who were suffering because of their sins.

- What did the Lord invite the Israelites to do?
- How does the Savior help us become clean? (Through the power of His Atonement.)
- What principle about repentance and forgiveness can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we sincerely repent, we can be purified of all of our sins through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.**)

Add a capful (about 1 tablespoon, or 15 milliliters) of chlorine bleach to the glass of water, and stir it gently. Immediately the water will begin to lose the red tint. By the end of class the water should be as clear as it was before you put in the food coloring. (Do not allow students to drink the water; it now contains poisonous chemicals.)

- How is the Atonement of our Savior Jesus Christ similar to the bleach? (The Savior's Atonement, like the bleach, has the power to purify, but we must choose to apply the Atonement in our lives by exercising faith in Christ and repenting of our sins.)

Invite a student to read again the two scenarios presented at the beginning of the lesson. Ask students to explain what the young man and young woman could do to repent and become clean through the Savior's Atonement.

Share your testimony of the power of Jesus Christ's Atonement to help us become pure. Invite students to ponder for a moment what they feel they need to do to become pure, and encourage them to act on the promptings they receive.

Summarize Isaiah 1:20–24 by explaining that the Lord told the people if they would not change they would continue to suffer. However, as recorded in verses 25–31, He promised that in the latter days, He would again redeem His people.

### Isaiah 1:18

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix at the end of this manual.

## Isaiah 2

### *Isaiah prophesies of the establishment of the Lord’s house in the latter days*

Give each student a blank piece of paper and a pencil. Ask students to read Isaiah 2:1–5 silently and draw a picture of what Isaiah described. After sufficient time, invite them to explain their picture to another student. You may want to invite one or two students to display and explain their drawings to the entire class.

- According to verse 2, when will the events described in verses 1–5 happen?
- How do you think these verses are being fulfilled in our day?

Explain that Isaiah prophesied of many events of the latter days, and he often used symbolism in expressing his prophecies. As is often the case in prophetic declarations, some of Isaiah’s writings have dual or multiple meanings. That is, they can apply to more than one situation or may be fulfilled at more than one time. This is sometimes called dualism.

- Why do you think Isaiah called the temple “the mountain of the Lord”?
- According to verse 3, why will people in the last days desire to go to the temple?
- What can we learn from these verses about what happens as we attend the temple? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **as we attend the temple, the Lord will teach us of His ways.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for blessings promised to us when we attend the temple.

“The temple is a great school. It is a house of learning. In the temples the atmosphere is maintained so that it is ideal for instruction on matters that are deeply spiritual. . . . If you will go to the temple and remember that the teaching is symbolic, you will never go in the proper spirit without coming away with your vision extended, feeling a little more exalted, with your knowledge increased as to things that are spiritual” (“The Holy Temple,” *Ensign*, Oct. 2010, 31–32).

- How has attending the temple or studying about the temple helped you learn about the Lord’s ways?

Invite students to seek to learn about the Lord and His ways as they attend or prepare to attend the temple and participate in sacred ordinances there.

Summarize Isaiah 2:6–22 by explaining that in Isaiah’s time the Israelites had become obsessed with wealth and idolatry. Isaiah prophesied that at the time of the Second Coming, the proud and powerful would be humbled for their transgressions.

You may want to conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths you have discussed today.

### Scripture Mastery—Isaiah 1:18

To help students memorize Isaiah 1:18, write the text of the scripture on the board. As a class, recite the scripture aloud together. Invite a student to erase some of the words from the board, and then recite the scripture as a class again. Continue inviting students to erase words from the board. Repeat these steps until all the words on the board have been erased and students can recite the scripture from memory.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Isaiah 2:2–3, 5. Understanding multiple meanings in Isaiah: “Out of Zion shall go forth the law”

During the dedication of the Conference Center in Salt Lake City on October 8, 2000, President Gordon B. Hinckley quoted Isaiah 2:2–3, 5 and stated: “I believe that

prophecy applies to the historic and wonderful Salt Lake Temple. But I believe also that it is related to this magnificent hall. For it is from this pulpit that the law of God shall go forth, together with the word and testimony of the Lord” (“This Great Millennial Year,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 69).

# Isaiah 3–5

## Introduction

Isaiah prophesied of consequences, including woes and judgments, that Judah and Jerusalem would suffer for their corruption. He also prophesied that Jerusalem

would be restored after it was purged, and he prophesied of events in the last days.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 3

#### *Isaiah prophesies of the consequences that will come from disobeying the Lord*

Show students seeds from different fruits, and invite them to guess the fruit each seed will produce. Ask the following questions, replacing *apples* with the name of a fruit that may come from one of the seeds you show your students.

- If you wanted apples, which seed would you need to plant and nourish? Why would you not expect an orange seed to produce apples?

Invite students to ponder how this simple object lesson relates to the choices they make and the consequences that follow. Ask them to look for principles as they study Isaiah 3–5 that can help them make choices that will bring them confidence, peace, and happiness.

Explain that Isaiah 3 contains a prophecy about the house of Judah in Isaiah’s day and that this prophecy also applies to people in our day. Summarize Isaiah 3:1–7 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the physical destruction and spiritual loss that would come upon Judah and Jerusalem.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 3:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what would bring these consequences upon the people.

- What would cause Jerusalem to be ruined and Judah to fall?
- What do you think the phrase “they have rewarded evil unto themselves” (Isaiah 3:9) means? (They have brought evil, trouble, or disaster upon themselves.)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 3:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord taught about choices and consequences.

- What do you think the statement that the righteous “shall eat the fruit of their doings” (verse 10) means?
- What principles can we learn about choices and consequences from these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principles: **If we are righteous, we will enjoy the blessings of our choices. If we sin, we will suffer the negative consequences of our choices.**)
- How do these principles relate to seeds and the fruit they produce?

To help students understand these principles, read the following scenario aloud:

A young man wants to feel confident, happy, and worthy to attend the temple with his ward on Saturday morning. On Friday night, he is tempted to view pornography.

- What fruit will come from planting the seed of sin by viewing pornography? What “seed” must this young man plant to obtain the “fruit” he desires?
- How can remembering the consequences of righteousness and sin help us as we make choices?

Explain that from Isaiah 3:12–24 we can gain a greater understanding of the negative consequences of sinful choices. Explain that Isaiah 3:12–15 includes a description of how the leaders of the people had caused them to go astray and had oppressed the poor. These leaders were men but are described in verse 12 as having acted in childish and weak ways. Isaiah then described the behavior of the daughters of Zion. Explain that although verse 16

can have several meanings, it clearly describes the sinful condition of the daughters of Zion in the latter days. It may also refer to the women of Zion in Isaiah's day or even the nation of Judah. Even though Isaiah specifically referred to "the daughters of Zion," his words can also apply to men.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 3:16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the attitudes and actions of the daughters of Zion.

- What sins had the daughters of Zion committed? (They were arrogant, vain, and looked at others in a seductive way. You might explain that their vanity was influenced by their preoccupation with wealth and fashion [see verses 18–23].)

Summarize Isaiah 3:17–26 by explaining that Isaiah described the consequences of the sins of the daughters of Zion. They would be humbled, lose their possessions, and suffer from war, destruction, and desolation.

## Isaiah 4

### *Isaiah prophesies of events in the last days*

Summarize Isaiah 4 by explaining that Isaiah foresaw the Lord's cleansing of the earth of wickedness and the cleansing and redemption of His people in the millennial day. Point out that in the Joseph Smith Translation, Isaiah 4:1 is moved to become the last verse of Isaiah 3.

Invite students to read Isaiah 4:5–6 silently, looking for what the Lord will provide for the righteous.

- What blessings will the Lord provide for the righteous?

## Isaiah 5

### *Isaiah prophesies of woes and judgments that will come upon the house of Israel*

Read the following scenario aloud:

One of your friends wants to stop attending church meetings and activities and living the Lord's standards.

- What would you say to encourage this friend to not turn away from the Lord?

Invite students to look for a principle in Isaiah 5 that can help them resist the temptation to turn away from the Lord and can help them encourage others to follow Him as well.

Explain that Isaiah 5:1–7 compares the house of Israel to a vineyard. Invite a student to read Isaiah 5:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord did for His vineyard.

- What did the Lord do for His vineyard?
- What kind of fruit did the vineyard produce? Why are wild grapes not desirable? (They can be sour or bitter.)
- How is the vineyard producing sour grapes symbolic of the house of Israel? (Israel had turned away from, or rebelled against, the Lord.)

Write the following phrase on the board: *If we turn away from the Lord, . . .*

Explain that in Isaiah 5:3–4, we read that the Lord asked what more He could have done for the vineyard. He then explained what would happen to the vineyard because it had brought forth poor fruit. Invite a student to read Isaiah 5:5–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord would do to the vineyard.

- What would be the effects of taking away the hedge and breaking down the wall?
- What would happen to the vineyard if it were not worked in or rained upon?
- How are these results similar to the natural consequences that come from disobeying the Lord's commandments?

Add the following clause to the statement on the board: *we will lose His protection and help . . .*

Explain that Isaiah then taught what would happen to Israel as a result of losing the Lord's protection and help. Invite students to search for a word that is repeated in Isaiah 5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, and 22. Ask students to report what they find.

 **Isaiah 5:20**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Explain that *woe* means intense sorrow or suffering. Complete the statement on the board by adding the phrase *and experience sorrow and suffering*. (The statement should read: **If we turn away from the Lord, we will lose His protection and help and experience sorrow and suffering.**)

If possible, provide students with copies of the following handout. At the top of each handout, write one of the following references: Isaiah 5:11–12, Isaiah 5:18–19, Isaiah 5:20–21, or Isaiah 5:22–23. Invite students to complete the activities on the handout.

### Handout

Assigned verses: \_\_\_\_\_

Read these verses, looking for ways people turn away from the Lord.

Write a description, in your own words, of the attitudes and behaviors you read about:

Write two examples of these attitudes and behaviors in our day:

You may need to provide the following explanation to students who read Isaiah 5:18–19:

In Isaiah 5:18 we read that Isaiah foresaw that the people would be tied to their sins like animals are tied to their burdens (see footnote c). Isaiah 5:19 records that because the people were lacking in faith, they were sign seekers who demanded that God demonstrate His power (see 2 Peter 3:3–4).

After students have completed their handouts, assign them to work in groups of four (one student for each assigned reference). Invite them to share with their groups what they wrote. After sufficient time, invite some students to share with the class what they learned.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 5:13–15, 24–25. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional consequences that would come from turning away from the Lord.

- What consequences would come from turning away from the Lord? (You may need to explain that one meaning of the phrase “his hand is stretched out still” [Isaiah 5:25] is that despite all these judgments, justice would not yet be satisfied and the Lord would continue to punish the rebellious.)
- When have you seen someone experience sorrow and suffering because he or she turned away from the Lord? (Remind students that they should not share experiences that are private or too personal.)

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a goal to do one thing they feel could help them turn more fully to the Lord so they can enjoy His protection and help and avoid unnecessary sorrow and suffering.

Summarize the remainder of Isaiah 5 by explaining that Isaiah included a prophecy with multiple meanings: one interpretation teaches about how nations would gather against the Israelites in his day, and the other teaches about how the Lord would gather Israel in the latter days.

 **Scripture Mastery—Isaiah 5:20**

Help students understand this scripture by inviting a few students to come to the front of the class to sample bitter foods (for example, uncured olives, horseradish, citrus peel, or kale). Ask them to describe the taste.

- How would you respond if someone tried to convince you that what you just tasted was sweet?
- How can this example relate to how people in our day might perceive and explain good and evil?
- Why do you think people might call “evil good, and good evil”? (You may need to point out that verse 20 describes people who have lost the ability to distinguish right from wrong, as well as people who are knowingly trying to deceive.)
- How can we tell the difference between what is truly good or evil, light or darkness, and bitter or sweet?

Encourage students to try to recite this scripture three times each day for the next week so they can commit it to memory.

## LESSON 118

# Isaiah 6–9

### Introduction

Isaiah saw the Lord, and the Lord called Isaiah to minister to the people of Judah. Isaiah warned Ahaz, the king of Judah, not to make an alliance with Syria and Israel

against Assyria. Isaiah prophesied of the destruction of the wicked, the gathering of Israel in the latter days, and the power of Jesus Christ to save His people if they will repent.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 6

#### *Isaiah sees the Lord in vision and is called to prophesy to the people*

Ask students what worries or concerns they might have if they were called on a mission to a wicked people.

Explain that Isaiah 6 begins with a vision that Isaiah had when he was called to serve the Lord. Invite a student to read Isaiah 6:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Isaiah saw in this vision.

- According to verse 1, whom did Isaiah see?
- What else did Isaiah see in this vision?

You may want to explain that seraphim are angelic beings that minister in the courts of God (see Bible Dictionary, “Seraphim”). The wings of the seraphim are symbolic of their power to move or to act (see D&C 77:4).

Invite a student to read Isaiah 6:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Isaiah felt in the presence of the Lord.

- How did Isaiah feel in the Lord’s presence? Why? (You may want to point out to students the explanation in Isaiah 6:5, footnote *a*, to help them understand how Isaiah felt.)

Invite students to ponder times when they have felt they were in a very holy place or in the presence of someone very holy.

Ask a student to read Isaiah 6:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened to Isaiah in his vision. Explain that the coal taken from the altar was a symbol of cleansing (see Isaiah 6:6, footnote *a*).

- According to verse 7, what did the seraphim say had happened to Isaiah’s sins? (They had been purged or removed from him.)
- What feelings might you have if a messenger from the Lord pronounced you clean from your sins? Why might you have those feelings?

Ask a student to read Isaiah 6:8 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord asked and how Isaiah responded.

- How did Isaiah respond to the Lord’s invitation to serve? (Explain that this invitation was Isaiah’s call to be a prophet.)
- How might the knowledge that he was clean from sin affect Isaiah’s willingness to serve the Lord?
- From what you learned about Isaiah in this account, how can being cleansed from our sins affect our desire to serve the Lord? (Students may identify a principle such as the following: **As we are forgiven of our sins, we become more willing to do what God asks of us.**)

Explain that when we are clean from our sins, we have a greater desire to serve the Lord and to help others draw closer to Him and become clean as well.

Explain that Isaiah 6:9–10 describes the people to whom Isaiah was called to preach. Invite a student to read Isaiah 6:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord said about how the people would respond to Isaiah’s message.

### *Use objects and pictures to help students understand content*

Part of understanding the scriptures is learning the meanings of difficult words and phrases, parables, and symbols. Objects and pictures can help students visualize some symbols in the scriptures. For example, in addition to talking about an altar, you could display a picture of an altar. Or in addition to talking about how a hot coal can symbolize a cleansing agent, you could display a piece of coal.

- What did the Lord tell Isaiah about how the people would respond to his message? (The people would reject his message and thereby harden their hearts and become spiritually deaf [“make their ears heavy”] and blind [“shut their eyes”]. You may want to clarify that the Lord did not want the people to harden their hearts and become spiritually deaf and blind. Rather, the Lord’s words in verse 10 describe the people’s response to Isaiah’s preaching—they would choose not to listen.)

### Isaiah 7–9

#### Isaiah prophecies of Jesus Christ

Ask students if they know what their name means. Ask a few students to share. Then ask if any of them know why their parents gave them their name, and invite a few students to share.

Explain that the meanings of names in the scriptures can often teach us important truths. Invite a student to read Isaiah 7:3 and 8:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Isaiah named his two sons.

- What names did Isaiah give to his sons?

Draw three columns on the board and label them *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*, *Shear-jashub*, and *Isaiah*. Then ask students to look in Isaiah 7:3, footnote *a*; 8:1, footnote *d*; and 8:18, footnote *a*, to discover the meaning of each name. Invite students to report what they find, and write the meanings on the board under the appropriate name (see the chart below).

Maher-shalal-hash-baz	Shear-jashub	Isaiah
(1) To speed to the spoil (destruction) or (2) he hastens the prey or (3) destruction is imminent	The remnant shall return	(1) The Lord is salvation or (2) Jehovah saves

Invite a student to read Isaiah 8:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Isaiah saw himself and his sons in relation to the children of Israel.

Explain that Isaiah’s and his son’s names were signs of the great things the Lord would do to Israel. Their names represent three themes that are prevalent in Isaiah’s writings: (1) the destruction the people would face if they persisted in wickedness, (2) the eventual gathering of Israel back to the promised land and God’s covenant, and (3) the power of Jesus Christ to save His people.

Write the following references on cards or pieces of paper, and hand them out to students. (Provide duplicate references if you have a large class, or give students more than one reference if your class is small.)

Isaiah 6:11–13	Isaiah 8:15	Isaiah 9:6–7
Isaiah 7:14–16	Isaiah 8:22	Isaiah 9:13–16
Isaiah 8:13, 16–17	Isaiah 9:2	Isaiah 9:18–21

Invite students to read the reference on their card and decide which of the three themes their scripture passage relates to. Ask students to take turns summarizing what they read and what they feel they can learn from that particular prophecy. You could have students place their cards under the appropriate columns on the board.

Explain that because of the people’s wickedness during the time of Isaiah, destruction loomed in their future.

Invite a student to read aloud the following account by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles about a woman he and Elder David S. Baxter met. Invite students to consider how they would respond to the woman.

“Last year while Elder David S. Baxter and I were driving to a stake conference, we stopped at a restaurant. Later when returning to our car, we were approached by a woman who called out to us. We were startled by her appearance. Her grooming (or lack of it) was what I might politely call ‘extreme.’ She asked if we were elders in the Church. We said yes. Almost

unrestrained, she told the story of her tragic life, swamped in sin. Now, only 28 years old, she was miserable. She felt worthless, with nothing to live for. As she spoke, the sweetness of her soul began to emerge. Pleading tearfully, she asked if there was any hope for her, any way up and out of her hopelessness" ("Repentance and Conversion," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2007, 102).

- What would you have said to the woman?

Explain that in Isaiah 9, we read Isaiah's description of how Israel had turned away from the Lord and the consequences that awaited them.

Invite a student to read aloud Isaiah 9:12, 17, 21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a phrase that Isaiah repeated as he taught the people about the consequences of their sins.

- What phrase did Isaiah repeat? ("His anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." Write this statement on the board.)

Explain that Isaiah may have intended more than one meaning with the phrase "his hand is stretched out still," because the Lord's hand can be extended for both justice and mercy. One meaning may be that because the people of Isaiah's time did not turn away from sin (see Isaiah 9:13–16), they would experience the Lord's hand in the form of destruction. But Isaiah may have also been teaching that the Lord still offered hope for eventual mercy if the people would repent. Invite a student to read aloud Isaiah 9:12, footnote *d*.

- What truths can we learn from Isaiah's imagery of the Lord's hand being stretched out? (Although student responses may vary, write the following principles on the board: **If we repent, the Lord is willing to extend His mercy to us and forgive our sins. The justice of God demands punishment for sin, but the Atonement brings about the plan of mercy to appease the demands of justice.**)

Read the conclusion of Elder Nelson's account, and ask students to look for what Elder Nelson and Elder Baxter taught the woman.

"'Yes,' we responded, 'there is hope. Hope is linked to repentance. You can change. You can "come unto Christ, and be perfected in him"' [Moroni 10:32]. We urged her not to procrastinate. She sobbed humbly and thanked us sincerely" ("Repentance and Conversion," *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2007, 102).

- How can both images of the Lord's hand stretched out—one threatening justice and the other offering mercy—help us decide to repent and come unto Him?

Invite students to ponder the love the Savior has for them and to consider what they may need to repent of. Testify of the Lord's willingness to stretch out His hand of mercy to us as we repent.

Draw students' attention to the names of Isaiah and his sons and their meanings. Invite students to look for these three themes as they continue to study Isaiah.

Encourage students to share with a friend or family member what has impressed them during the lesson today.

# Isaiah 10–16

## Introduction

Isaiah foretold the destruction of both Assyria and Babylon, which can be likened to the destruction of the wicked at the Second Coming. He prophesied of the

latter-day Restoration of the Church and its role in gathering Israel. He also prophesied of the destruction of Moab.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 10

*Isaiah prophesies that Assyria will punish Israel and that Assyria will also be destroyed*

Write the word *woe* on the board, and ask students to recall what it means. (Intense sorrow or suffering.) After they respond, invite a student to read Isaiah 10:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what actions would bring intense sorrow and suffering upon Israel.

- What actions would bring suffering upon Israel?

Summarize Isaiah 10:3–4 by explaining that because the leaders and people of Israel had turned away from the Lord through their wickedness, they would be punished and not have the Lord’s help.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 10:5–6 aloud, including the footnote to verse 5. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Israel would be punished for its wickedness.

- Who would the Lord use to punish Israel?

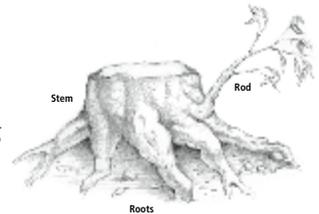
Summarize Isaiah 10:7–19 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that after the Assyrians had fulfilled the Lord’s purposes in punishing Judah and the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the Lord would destroy the Assyrians as well because of their pride and wickedness. This destruction is symbolic of the destruction the proud and wicked will experience at the Second Coming.

Summarize Isaiah 10:20–34 by reminding them that Isaiah foretold that the Assyrian army would destroy many cities as it marched toward Jerusalem; however, Jerusalem would be miraculously spared (see 2 Kings 19).

### Isaiah 11–12

*Isaiah prophesies of the latter-day Restoration and of the Millennium*

Invite a student to come to the board. Ask another student to read Isaiah 11:1, 10 aloud while the first student draws what is read. After the drawing is complete, ask the class if they understand what Isaiah was talking about. Also ask the student who drew on the board to remain at the board and adjust the drawing as needed to match the explanations that will follow.



Explain that sometimes we can better understand the meaning of symbols in the scriptures by referring to explanations found in other scriptures or in the words of modern prophets.

- What objects did Isaiah refer to? (A rod, a stem, a branch, roots, and an ensign.)

Explain that the word *stem* in Isaiah 11:1 is translated from a Hebrew word that can refer to the stump of a tree that has been cut down. Ask the student at the board to revise the drawing to include a tree stump, if needed, and to write *Stem* near the stump. Then ask the student to add roots, if needed, and label them *Roots*.

- According to Isaiah 11:1, what comes out of the stem? (A rod. In other words, new growth.)

Ask the student at the board to draw new growth coming from the stump, if needed, and to label it *Rod*.

Point out that the Prophet Joseph Smith’s explanations of what the stem, rod, and roots represent are recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 113. Invite students to read Doctrine and Covenants 113:1–6 silently, looking for the meanings of these symbols.

- According to Doctrine and Covenants 113:1–2, whom does the stem of Jesse represent?

Invite the student at the board to write *Jesus Christ* on the board next to the word *Stem*. You may want to suggest that students write the meanings of these objects in their scriptures. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles clarified that the branch Isaiah mentioned also represents Jesus Christ (see *The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], 192–94; see also Jeremiah 23:5–6).

- According to verses 3–4, who is the rod?
- According to verses 5–6, who is the root of Jesse?

Explain that Elder McConkie suggested that the rod and the roots could both represent Joseph Smith (see *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [1982], 339–40). Invite a student to write *Joseph Smith* on the board next to *Rod* and *Roots*.

Explain that after Isaiah described some of the conditions of the Millennium (see Isaiah 11:5–9), he prophesied of Joseph Smith and the latter days.

Invite a student to reread Isaiah 11:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Isaiah said that describes Joseph Smith.

- What did Isaiah say that the root of Jesse would be for the people? (An ensign.)
- What is an ensign? (A flag or banner that an army may sometimes gather under or march behind.)

Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 45:9 aloud.

- What is the standard, or ensign, that the Gentiles will seek after? (The everlasting covenant, or the gospel of Jesus Christ.)
- How is establishing an ensign similar to what the Lord did through Joseph Smith?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 11:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Isaiah prophesied would happen in the last days.

- What did Isaiah prophesy would happen in the last days?

Explain that the phrase “set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people” in verse 11 refers to the Restoration of the Church and the latter-day gathering of Israel (see D&C 137:6).

Explain that because of latter-day revelation, we understand that the phrase “he will set up an ensign for the nations” in verse 12 refers to the Restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Write the following phrase on the board: *The restored Church is an ensign to . . .*

- Based on verse 12, how would you complete the phrase? (After students respond, complete the phrase so that it states the following truth: **The restored Church is an ensign to gather scattered Israel back to the gospel of Jesus Christ.**)
- What does it mean to “gather” scattered Israel back to the gospel of Jesus Christ? (To help others join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [see *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (1954–56), 3:255].)
- What can we do as members of the Church to help gather scattered Israel to the Lord?

Summarize Isaiah 11:13–16 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that the Lord would use miraculous means to help gather Israel again.

Invite students to read Isaiah 12:1–3 silently, looking for what these Israelites will do during the Millennium because they have been brought to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- Why do you think they will praise the Lord and have great joy?

Invite students to think of someone they know who is a convert to the Church. Ask a few students to describe how that person felt when he or she joined the Church. Summarize Isaiah 12:4–6 by explaining that those who are gathered into the gospel of Jesus Christ will praise the Savior during the Millennium.

## Isaiah 13–16

### *The destruction of Babylon can be likened to the destruction of the wicked at the Second Coming*

Ask students to imagine that they have the opportunity to join one of two teams. One team is led by a captain who cares very much about his team and wants each team member to succeed. The other team is led by someone who promises great victory and success, but the captain only cares for himself.

- Which team would you join? Why?

Explain that these teams can represent the Lord's side and Satan's side. Write on the board: *The Lord's side* and *Satan's side*. Invite students as they study Isaiah 13–16 to look for gospel truths that will help them know why they should choose to be on the Lord's side instead of Satan's side.

Summarize Isaiah 13:1–10 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the destruction of Babylon and that these events can be seen as a type or similitude of the destruction of the wicked that will take place at the Second Coming of the Savior.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 13:11 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord said He would do to the wicked in Babylon.

- If the punishments described in this verse are a type or similitude of what will occur at the Second Coming, what can we learn about what the Lord will do to the wicked when He comes again? (Using students' words, write the following truth on the board: **When the Lord comes again, He will destroy the wicked.**)

Summarize Isaiah 13:12–22 by explaining that Isaiah continued to prophesy about the destruction of Babylon.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 14:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord will do for His people after Babylon is destroyed.

- If the events described in this verse are a type or similitude of what will occur at the Second Coming, what can we learn about what the Lord will do for His people when He comes again? (Using students' words, write the following truth on the board: **When the Lord comes again, He will be merciful to His people and give them rest.**)
- What kind of rest do you think the Lord's people will receive?

Summarize Isaiah 14:4–11 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the downfall of the Babylonian king and compared this to the downfall of Lucifer, or Satan. Invite a student to read Isaiah 14:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Satan desired.

- According to these verses, what did Satan desire? (Satan wanted to take God's power [see also Moses 4:1; D&C 29:36–37].)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 14:15–20. Ask the class to follow along and look for what will ultimately happen to Satan.

- According to verses 15–16, what will ultimately happen to Satan? What will people say about him? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **Satan will lose his influence and power over mankind, and he will be cast out forever.**)
- How might the truths written on the board help us choose to be on the Savior's side and not Satan's?
- Why do you think Satan succeeds in luring some people to his side, even though he will ultimately lose?

Encourage students to remember the fate of Satan and his followers when they are tempted to leave the Lord's side.

Summarize Isaiah 15–16 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the destruction of Moab. You may want to conclude the lesson by testifying of the truths discussed in this lesson.

#### **Establish a sense of purpose**

A sense of purpose shared by the teacher and the students can increase faith and give direction and meaning to the classroom experience.

## LESSON 120

# Isaiah 17–23

### Introduction

Isaiah prophesied that the Israelites would be scattered because they had forgotten God. He also prophesied of the ensign raised up in the beginning of the last dispensation—the Restoration and establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—and of the Church’s

role in gathering scattered Israel from many nations. Additionally, Isaiah testified of the future Davidic king, even the Messiah, and taught about Jesus Christ’s power to deliver the oppressed and about the universal nature of the Atonement.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 17–18

#### *Isaiah prophesies of the scattering and the latter-day gathering of Israel*

Before class, write the following question on the board:

*What are some situations in which people might trust in their own strength and wisdom rather than trusting God’s way?*

Begin class by inviting students to respond to the question on the board. (Students may give a variety of answers. Possible answers may include purposely putting themselves in a tempting situation but believing they are strong enough to handle it, or thinking that some of the counsel in the *For the Strength of the Youth* booklet does not apply to them.)

- Why do some people trust in their own strength and wisdom rather than trusting God’s way? What are the consequences of not trusting in God?

Explain that in today’s lesson students will study a group of people in Isaiah’s day who trusted in their own strength instead of relying on God. Encourage them to look for the consequences of that decision.

Summarize Isaiah 17 by explaining that it was a message of doom for Damascus, the capital city of Syria, and for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Isaiah prophesied that these two nations would be conquered and scattered by the Assyrian army (see also Isaiah 10:5–6). Isaiah also prophesied that the Lord would rebuke and destroy the Assyrians and the other nations who oppressed Israel.

Explain that Isaiah then prophesied of a future time when several nations would turn to the Lord. Write the following words on the board: *land, ambassadors, messengers, ensign, trumpet*. Invite a student to read Isaiah 18:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Isaiah used these words to teach about the future.

- According to verse 1, where is “the land” Isaiah was prophesying about?

Point out the word *woe* in verse 1. Explain that in this context, rather than referring to suffering or affliction, the word *woe* may be a greeting (see footnote *a*). President Joseph Fielding Smith explained that one possible interpretation of the phrase “the land shadowing with wings” in Isaiah 18:1 is that it refers to the Americas (see *The Signs of the Times* [1952], 51).

- How can each of the words listed on the board relate to the restored Church? (The *land* can refer to the Americas, where the Restoration of the Church began. *Ambassadors* and *messengers* can refer to Apostles and missionaries, who travel all over the world to spread the gospel. An *ensign* is a flag or banner around which armies gather for battle, and a *trumpet* can be used to call people together, so both an *ensign* and a *trumpet* can symbolize the latter-day call to gather to the restored Church of Jesus Christ.)

Summarize Isaiah 18:4–6 by explaining that the Lord used the imagery of a vineyard to describe the destruction of the wicked and the gathering of the righteous in the latter days.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 18:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the people will bring to the Lord.

- What will the people bring to the Lord? (A “present.”)
- What kind of present do you think would be most meaningful to give to the Lord?

### Teacher presentation

Taking an active role in the learning process helps students understand and apply doctrines and principles from the scriptures; however, it does not replace the need for a teacher to appropriately present information at various times while students listen. A teacher may need to explain, clarify, and illustrate concepts so students can more clearly understand a scripture block.

### Isaiah 19–21

#### *Isaiah prophesies Egypt's destruction and future conversion and the destruction of other nations*

Summarize Isaiah 19 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that because of Egypt's idol worship and evil practices the Lord would smite Egypt. However, Isaiah also prophesied that the Egyptians would eventually recognize their need for the Lord and turn to Him.

Summarize Isaiah 20–21 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that other wicked nations would be destroyed.

### Isaiah 22–23

#### *Isaiah prophesies that Jerusalem will be attacked and scourged by Babylon*

Remind students that Isaiah prophesied that Jerusalem would be spared from the Assyrian army (see 2 Kings 19:32–35). However, in Isaiah 22:1–7 we read that Isaiah prophesied that Jerusalem would *not* be spared when the Babylonian army attacked more than a century later.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 22:8–11. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the people in Jerusalem thought they could depend on for protection from the Babylonian army.

- What did the people think they could depend on for protection from the Babylonian army? (Their supply of weapons; the fortifications that strengthened the city wall; and Hezekiah's tunnel, which diverted water into the city from a spring outside the city wall.)

Explain that the people trusted that these preparations would save them because these were the same preparations that had been made when Jerusalem had been miraculously spared from the Assyrian army during the reign of Hezekiah.

- According to verse 11, what was the problem with the people relying on these preparations to save them?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 22:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord called for the people in Jerusalem to do and how they responded.

- According to verse 12, what did the Lord call for the people in Jerusalem to do? (He "[called] for repentance" [see footnote *a*].)
- According to verse 13, how did the people respond to the call to repent? ("They went on with revelry as usual" [see footnote *a*].)

Explain that the expression "let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die" (verse 13) refers to a belief that people are entitled to seek pleasure and commit sin without being concerned about the consequences of their actions. These people either did not believe in God or believed that He would not punish them for their sins (see also 2 Nephi 28:7–9).

- What can this prophecy teach us about the dangers of trusting in our own strength instead of trusting in God? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Trusting in our own strength instead of trusting in God can lead us into sin and ultimately to destruction.**)
- Why do you think trusting in our own strength instead of trusting in God can lead us to commit sin?
- Why do you think Satan is successful in promoting the idea that people are entitled to seek pleasure and commit sin without being concerned about the consequences of their actions?

Write the names *Shebna* and *Eliakim* on the board.

Summarize Isaiah 22:15–25 by explaining that Isaiah told a story about Shebna, the keeper of the treasury of Jerusalem. Shebna was prideful about Jerusalem's wealth. Isaiah prophesied that Assyria would take Shebna and many of Jerusalem's treasures into captivity. Write the words *prideful* and *loved riches* under the name Shebna on the board.

Explain that Isaiah prophesied that a man named Eliakim, which means "God shall cause to arise" (see verse 20, footnote *a*), would replace Shebna. Eliakim was a person who loved and obeyed the Lord. Write the words *obedient* and *loved God* under the name Eliakim on the board.

- What do you think Isaiah was trying to teach with this story?

Explain that there is important symbolism in this story. Only by replacing the love of treasures with the love of God could Jerusalem and its people be redeemed. Likewise, we can be saved only if we abandon the things of the world and follow the Savior.

Explain that the name *Eliakim* has symbolic meaning because it points to Jesus Christ and the Atonement. Invite a student to read Isaiah 22:21–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Isaiah prophesied about Eliakim that points us to Jesus Christ and the Atonement.

- What did Isaiah prophesy about Eliakim that points us to Jesus Christ and the Atonement? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ holds the key of the house of David and the keys of salvation for all mankind.** You may need to explain that the phrase “the key of the house of David” [verse 22] symbolizes the right to rule, which can be obtained only through the holy priesthood of God. Jesus Christ holds all the keys of the priesthood and has power to “shut” and to “open” [verse 22], that is, to bind or loose, and no one can override that power.)
- Why is it important to understand that we must rely on Jesus Christ for our salvation? How does knowing that Jesus Christ holds the keys to our salvation affect how you feel about Him?

Summarize Isaiah 23 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that the coastal city of Tyre, located in modern-day Lebanon, would also be destroyed.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Isaiah 18:7. “In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord”

“The Saints are so determined to offer to the Lord a worthy gift of gathered Israel that, as the Prophet Joseph Smith said, they ‘have labored without pay, to instruct the United States [and now the world] that the gathering had commenced in the western boundaries of Missouri, to build a holy city, where, as may be seen in the eighteenth chapter of Isaiah, the present should “be brought unto the Lord of Hosts.”’ (*History of the Church*, 2:132.) Mount Zion is identified in modern revelation as the New Jerusalem (see D&C 84:2). Thus, once the Church is restored and Ephraim begins the work of gathering Israel from their scattered and peeled condition . . . , they can present a *restored house of Jacob* to the Lord as a gift that will delight Him.

“The Jerusalem Bible renders the phrase in Isaiah 18, ‘a people terrible from their beginning,’ as ‘the nation always feared’; and it renders the phrase ‘whose land the rivers have spoiled’ as ‘the country criss-crossed with rivers.’ These passages seem to refer to America, where the Restoration was to take place” (*Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 156–57).

### Isaiah 22:22–25. “I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place”

“Isaiah made a symbol of Shebna’s replacement, Eliakim. His name means ‘God shall cause to arise,’ anticipating the Savior, who holds the ‘key of the house of David’ but was fastened ‘as a nail in a sure place’ until the burden of the Atonement was complete. Upon Him rests ‘all the glory of his father’s house.’ Isaiah recommended depending on Him for everlasting security (Isa. 22:20–25 and fn.)” (Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* [1993], 517–18).

“The ‘nail in a sure place’ (Isaiah 22:23) is messianic and symbolizes the terrible reality of the cross, though only a part of the total suffering of the Lord that caused Him to ‘tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit’ (D&C 19:18). Just as the nail of the cross that was driven in the sure place secured the body of the one being crucified, so the Savior Himself is, to all who will, a nail in a sure place, for He has given them power so that none need be lost (see John 17:12). As Christ brings the redeemed to the Father, the glory becomes His own, and the redeemed and their offspring will become part of the family of heaven under the throne of Christ (see D&C 19:2; Matthew 28:18; 1 Corinthians 15:27–28; Philippians 2:5–11; 3:21)” (*Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 159).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Isaiah 1–23 (Unit 24)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Isaiah 1–23 (unit 24) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Isaiah 1–5)**

As students learned about sins of the Israelites in Isaiah's day, they discovered that our outward acts of devotion to God are more meaningful to Him when the intentions of our hearts are pure. They also learned principles pertaining to the consequences of choosing to be righteous or to sin.

#### **Day 2 (Isaiah 6–9)**

As students studied about Isaiah's call to prophesy to the people, they learned that as we are cleansed from our sins, we become willing and anxious to do what God asks of us. When students read about the consequences of the Israelites' choices, they discovered the following principles: When we sin, we bring upon ourselves the justice of God. If we repent, the Lord is willing to extend to us His mercy and forgive our sins.

#### **Day 3 (Isaiah 10–16)**

As students read Isaiah's prophecies about the last days, they learned that the restored Church is an ensign to gather scattered Israel back to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They discovered that when the Lord comes again, the wicked will be destroyed, and He will bless His people. They also learned that in the end, Satan's power will be taken from him, and he will be cast out forever.

#### **Day 4 (Isaiah 17–23)**

In this lesson, students read Isaiah's prophecies concerning the latter-day gathering of scattered Israel and Egypt's turning to God. From these prophecies, students learned the following truths: Trusting in our own strength instead of trusting in God can lead us to commit sin and ultimately result in our own destruction. Jesus Christ holds the key of the house of David and the keys of salvation for all mankind.

### Introduction

The Lord invited the Israelites to repent and become clean. Isaiah prophesied that the house of the Lord would be established in the last days and that the proud would be humbled at the Savior's Second Coming.

### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* During their lessons this week, students studied the scripture mastery passages in Isaiah 1:18 and Isaiah 5:20. As class begins, you may want to review or recite Isaiah 5:20 with them and ask them to explain its meaning. Students will discuss Isaiah 1:18 in more depth in this lesson.

#### Isaiah 1

*Isaiah writes the Lord's words describing the apostate condition of the house of Israel*

Display an article of clothing that has a stain on it.

Ask students:

- When have you stained a piece of clothing and worried about whether the stain would come out?
- How can sinning be likened to staining a piece of clothing?

Invite students, as they study Isaiah 1, to look for a principle that can give us hope when we stain our souls with sin.

- From your studies this week, what do you remember about the spiritual condition of the Israelites during Isaiah's day? (If needed, you might invite a student to read Isaiah 1:4 aloud.)

To illustrate part of the Israelites' spiritual condition as taught in Isaiah 1, display a clean, clear glass with water in it. While the students are watching, add one or two drops of red food coloring to the water.

- How is the water like the intentions of the Israelites hearts at this time? (The intentions of their hearts had become contaminated by sin.)
- How is the glass like the outward behavior of the Israelites? (It is clean on the outside. You might remind students that even though the Israelites were wicked at this time, they continued to offer sacrifices at the temple and outwardly observed sacred occasions such as the Passover and other religious feasts.)

Invite the class to scan Isaiah 1:11–15, looking for words or phrases that describe how the Lord felt about the Israelites' insincere offerings.

- What words or phrases in these verses show how the Lord felt about the Israelites' insincere offerings? (Possible responses include "what purpose," "I delight not," "no more vain oblations," "I will hide mine eyes." You may need to explain that "vain oblations" are religious offerings given without real intent.)

- If the people were doing some righteous things outwardly, why did the Lord reject those offerings?
- What is more meaningful to the Lord than an outward display of devotion? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Our outward acts of devotion to God are more meaningful to Him when the intentions of our hearts are pure.**)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 1:16–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the invitation the Lord offered to those who were suffering because of their sins.

- What did the Lord invite the Israelites to do?
- How does the Savior help us become clean? (Through the power of His Atonement.)
- What principle about repentance and forgiveness can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we sincerely repent, we can be purified of all of our sins through the Atonement of Jesus Christ.**)

Add a capful (about 1 tablespoon, or 15 milliliters) of chlorine bleach to the glass of water, and stir it gently. Immediately the water will begin to lose the red tint. By the end of class, the water should be as clear as it was before you put in the food coloring. (This is an object lesson only. Do not allow students to drink the water because it now contains poisonous chemicals.)

- How is the Atonement of our Savior Jesus Christ similar to the bleach? (The Savior's Atonement, like the bleach, has the power to purify, but we must choose to apply the Atonement in our lives by exercising faith in Christ and repenting of our sins.)

Share your testimony of the power of Jesus Christ's Atonement to remove the stain of sin and help us become pure. Invite students to ponder for a moment what they feel they need to do to become pure, and encourage them to act on the promptings they receive.

## Isaiah 2

### *Isaiah prophesies of the establishment of the Lord's house in the latter days*

Ask for a volunteer to draw on the board. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 2:1–5. Ask the volunteer to draw a picture of what Isaiah described. (For added participation, you might invite one student to draw what is described in verses 1–3 and another student to draw what is described in verses 4–5.)

- According to verse 2, when will the events described in verses 1–5 happen?

- How do you think these verses are being fulfilled in our day? (You may want to explain that the prophecy in verse 4 about the end of war will occur during the Millennium, after Jesus Christ's Second Coming.)

Explain that Isaiah prophesied of many events of the latter days, and he often used symbolism in expressing his prophecies. As is often the case in prophetic declarations, some of Isaiah's writings have dual or multiple meanings. That is, they can apply to more than one situation or may be fulfilled at more than one time. This is sometimes called dualism.

- Why do you think Isaiah called the temple "the mountain of the Lord"?
- According to Isaiah 2:3, why will people in the last days desire to go to the temple?
- What can we learn from these verses about what happens as we attend the temple? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **as we attend the temple, the Lord will teach us of His ways.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite the class to listen for blessings promised to us when we attend the temple.

"The temple is a great school. It is a house of learning. In the temples the atmosphere is maintained so that it is ideal for instruction on matters that are deeply spiritual. . . . If you will go to the temple and remember that the teaching is symbolic, you will never go in the proper spirit without coming away with your vision extended, feeling a little more exalted, with your knowledge increased as to things that are spiritual" ("The Holy Temple," *Ensign*, Oct. 2010, 31–32).

- How has attending the temple or studying about the temple helped you learn about the Lord's ways?

Invite students to seek to learn about the Lord and His ways as they attend or prepare to attend the temple and participate in sacred ordinances there.

## Next Unit (Isaiah 24–48)

Ask students if they have ever wondered if the Bible mentions the Book of Mormon. Explain that during the next week they will study a prophecy of Isaiah about the Book of Mormon and its role in the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and in their own lives. Isaiah was specific enough in his prophecy to identify the future dialogue that Martin Harris would have with a learned scholar.

# Isaiah 24–28

## Introduction

Isaiah prophesied that the wicked will be destroyed and the righteous will receive great blessings at the Savior's

Second Coming. Isaiah also testified that the Savior is the only sure foundation on which to build our lives.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 24–27

*Isaiah describes the destruction of the wicked and praises the Lord for blessing the righteous*

Explain that in the 1970s a professor conducted an experiment in which he showed three- to five-year-old children a marshmallow. He told them that they could eat that one marshmallow right away, or they could get two marshmallows if they waited 20 minutes. (You might consider giving students the same challenge.)

- What do you think most of the children did?
- Do you think you would have waited 20 minutes when you were that age? Why or why not?
- What are some things the Lord has asked us to wait for? (Write students' responses on the board. You will refer to this list later in the lesson.)

Invite students to look for principles as they study Isaiah 24–27 that will help them understand why it is important for them to be patient as they wait for the Lord to deliver the blessings He promises.

Summarize Isaiah 24 by explaining that it records a prophecy of the destruction of the wicked at the Second Coming. Then explain that Isaiah 25 contains a poetic celebration of the blessings the Lord will give to the righteous.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 25:1–4. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Isaiah said the Lord had been for the righteous.

- What did Isaiah say the Lord had been for the righteous?

Tell students that Isaiah 25:6–12 includes some of Isaiah's prophecies about the joy the righteous will feel when the Lord comes again. Invite a student to read Isaiah 25:6–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord will do when He comes again. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the symbolic feast described in verse 6 represents the idea that people of all nations will be invited to partake of the blessings of the gospel.

- In what ways is a feast a good representation of the blessings that people who accept the gospel can receive?

Point out the phrase "he will destroy . . . the veil that is spread over all nations" in verse 7. This prophecy refers to the time in which we live (see Moses 7:60–61). The "veil" of darkness that covers the earth refers to widespread lack of knowledge about God and His gospel and lack of faith in Him. This darkness is dispelled by the light of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which will eventually penetrate all nations (see D&C 101:23).

- According to Isaiah 25:8, what will the Lord do for His people in the Millennium?
- How did the Savior "swallow up death in victory"?
- What do you think it means that the Lord "will wipe away tears from off all faces"?

Invite students to read Isaiah 25:9 silently, looking for what the Lord's people will say in the Millennium.

- What will the Lord's people say in the Millennium?

- What principle can we learn from this verse? (As students respond, help them identify the following truth: **If we wait for the Lord, then we can receive His salvation and rejoice.** Consider inviting students to mark the phrases in verse 9 that teach this truth.)

Explain that Isaiah’s prophecy can also apply to waiting on the Lord for promised blessings.

- What does it mean for us to wait for the Lord?

If possible, provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite a student to read it aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for what it means to wait for the Lord:

---

“In the scriptures, the word *wait* means to hope, to anticipate, and to trust. To hope and trust in the Lord requires faith, patience, humility, meekness, long-suffering, keeping the commandments, and enduring to the end” (“Waiting upon the Lord: Thy Will Be Done,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 72).

---

Refer to the list on the board of things the Lord has asked us to wait for.

- What are some additional things we may need to wait for the Lord to bless us with? (Possible answers include faith, answers to prayers, revelation, help in overcoming temptation, forgiveness, marriage, children, physical or spiritual healing, testimony, and answers to questions we struggle with.)
- When have you needed to wait for the Lord before receiving a blessing? What did the Lord require from you before He blessed you?
- Why was the blessing you received worth the wait?

Invite students to write on the back of the statement by Elder Hales or on another piece of paper a goal that states how they will more faithfully wait for the Lord now so that they can rejoice in the blessings that will come later. Ask them to take the paper home and put it somewhere where they will see it often to remind them of their goal.

Summarize Isaiah 26–27 by explaining that Isaiah testified that we can trust in the Lord forever. You may want to suggest that students mark Isaiah 26:4, which teaches about the importance of trusting in the Lord. Isaiah also used the imagery of a vineyard to show how the Lord cares for His people.

## Isaiah 28

### *Isaiah prophesies of the destruction of Ephraim and testifies that Christ is the sure foundation*

If possible, bring to class a ladder, a stone, a clod of dirt, and a seed (or draw these items on the board). Display these items, and invite students to look for how they relate to gospel principles they study Isaiah 28.

Invite students to imagine trying to climb the ladder by skipping four rungs at a time.

- Why would it be difficult to climb a ladder by skipping four rungs at a time?

Explain that in Isaiah 28 we read that Isaiah taught a truth that the wicked Northern Kingdom of Israel needed to understand. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 28:9–10, 13. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a principle we can learn about receiving knowledge and understanding from the Lord. To help students better understand the content of these verses, direct them to also read the information in Isaiah 28:9, footnote *b*, and Isaiah 28:13, footnote *b*.

- What principle can we learn from these verses about how the Lord reveals truth? (Students may suggest several principles, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Lord reveals truth to us precept upon precept and line upon line.** You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases in verses 10 and 13 that teach this truth.)
- What are precepts? (Laws or teachings.) What does it mean that the Lord reveals truth “precept upon precept” and “line upon line”?
- How does this truth relate to the ladder? (The Lord reveals truth to us one step at a time.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask the class to listen for reasons why the Lord reveals truth line upon line.

“It is not wisdom that we should have all knowledge at once presented before us; but that we should have a little at a time; then we can comprehend it.

#### *Use objects to help students understand gospel principles*

Using objects can be an effective way for teachers to help students understand principles of the gospel. Objects can help students visualize, analyze, and understand the scriptures, especially when the objects are used to stimulate a discussion.

“When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 268).

- Why do you think the Lord reveals truth to us one step at a time?

Summarize Isaiah 28:14–15 by explaining that the people did not think they needed the word of the Lord because they believed other things would save them from the problems they would experience.

Show students the stone. Ask students why builders use stone in the foundations of buildings.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 28:16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Isaiah described the stone that Zion, or the Church, would be built on.

- How did Isaiah describe the stone?
- In what ways is the stone a representation of the Savior? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **The Savior is the only sure foundation upon which to build our lives.**)

Summarize Isaiah 28:17–20 by explaining that the Lord told the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom of Israel that they would be swept away because they believed they could build on something other than the Savior.

Show students the dirt clod. Invite a student to read Isaiah 28:24–26 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Isaiah said about dirt clods.

- According to verses 24–25, why does the plowman plow his fields? (To break the dirt clods and prepare the soil for the seeds.)

Explain that just as a plowman breaks apart clods of dirt to soften the soil before planting seeds, the Lord often gives us experiences that will help soften our hearts to prepare us to receive His word.

Show students the seed. Invite a student to read Isaiah 28:27–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Isaiah said about seeds. Explain that fitches, cumin, and bread corn (wheat) are types of seeds and that threshing is a process of removing the seed from its pod or stalk.

- What did Isaiah say about how the fitches and cumin seeds are threshed? (They are not threshed with a threshing instrument; rather, they are beaten out with a staff or rod, which is a more gentle process.)
- Why do you think some seeds need to be threshed in a gentle way?
- What did Isaiah say about how the wheat is threshed? (It can be “bruised,” or crushed, which is a rougher process.)

Explain that this analogy teaches that a farmer knows that different seeds need to be threshed in different ways.

- What principle can we learn from this metaphor about how Heavenly Father works with His children? (Students may identify a variety of principles, including the following truth: **Because the Lord knows each of us individually, He gives us personalized experiences to help us grow.**)

Invite students to share experiences they have had that illustrate this principle. Consider sharing one of your own experiences.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Isaiah 25:6. “A feast of wines on the lees”

“The word *lees* in this passage refers to the sediments attending the preparation of wine; thus ‘wine on the lees’ implies a wine that has been preserved for some

time and, less the sediments left on the bottom, is ‘well refined’—symbolic therefore of the harvest of abundant and supernal blessings awaiting the faithful and obedient” (Ed J. Pinegar and Richard J. Allen, *Unlocking the Old Testament* [2009], 331).

## LESSON 122

# Isaiah 29

### Introduction

Isaiah prophesied of the Great Apostasy and the Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. He prophesied that the Book

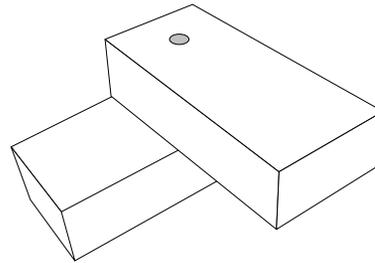
of Mormon would correct false doctrine and bring joy to those who read and live by its teachings.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Isaiah 29:1–17

#### *Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration*

Show students two wooden boards of equal length. Place one of the boards on top of the other, and nail them together at one end so the boards can swivel. Explain that the single nail represents the Bible, the bottom board represents the doctrine of Christ, and the top board represents how some people interpret the Bible. Move the top board to various positions.



- Why are there so many different Christian churches if they all believe in the Bible? (Christian denominations interpret the Bible and Christ's doctrine differently.)
- How can you know the Lord's true doctrine when there are so many ways to interpret the Bible?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Isaiah 29 that can help them know the Lord's true doctrine.

Summarize Isaiah 29:1–8 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred because of the wickedness of the people who lived there. He also referred to the Nephite nation, which would also be destroyed because of wickedness. Point out the phrase, “thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust” (verse 4). Explain that this prophecy refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which was translated from plates hidden in the ground by Moroni. The voice of the Nephite people speaks to us today from the pages of that book. Explain that Isaiah also spoke of the conditions of the latter days (see verses 5–10).

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Isaiah prophesied would happen after the Lord's people fell to their enemies.

- According to verse 10, what did Isaiah say would happen after the Lord's people fell to their enemies? (People would experience “the spirit of deep sleep,” and the prophets and seers would be covered, or removed from the people.)

Explain that with the loss of the prophets and the straying of the Lord's people from the truth, the world would fall into a state of spiritual darkness. This falling away from truth is called apostasy.

Write the phrase *the Great Apostasy* on the board. Explain that Isaiah's words in verses 9–10 refer to a period known as the Great Apostasy, which would occur after the death of the Savior and His Apostles. Over time, people changed many gospel principles and ordinances and altered the organization of the Savior's Church. Consequently, the Lord withdrew the authority and keys of His priesthood from the earth. Many of the “plain and precious” parts of the Bible were also corrupted or lost, and the people no longer had an accurate understanding of God (see 1 Nephi 13:26–29). Eventually many churches were established, but they did not have the authority to perform priesthood ordinances or to properly interpret the Bible.

Write the following doctrine on the board: **During a period of great apostasy, people were without divine direction from living prophets and apostles.**

- How does the object lesson with the boards relate to the Great Apostasy?

Explain that Isaiah also prophesied of events in the last days that would help end the Great Apostasy.

If possible, provide students with copies of the following chart, or copy it on the board before class.

The subject of one of Isaiah's prophecies	Isaiah's prophecy of what the person or people would do	The fulfillment of the prophecy
Isaiah 29:11—"men"		Joseph Smith—History 1:63–65
Isaiah 29:11—"one that is learned"		Joseph Smith—History 1:63–65
Isaiah 29:12—"him that is not learned"		Joseph Smith—History 1:59

Divide students into pairs. Ask each partnership to read the references in the chart together and summarize Isaiah's prophecies and their latter-day fulfillment in the center column. (You may want to explain that Nephi also recorded Isaiah's account in 2 Nephi 27:6–10, 15–20. Nephi's account provides more detail than Isaiah's account in the Bible.) After sufficient time, ask:

- Who delivered the copied characters of the Book of Mormon to the learned man?
- Who was the learned man who said he could not read a sealed book?

Remind students that a portion of the golden plates was sealed, and the Prophet Joseph Smith was commanded not to translate this portion.

- Why might someone with little formal education, like Joseph Smith, be a better choice to translate the Book of Mormon than a scholar like Charles Anthon?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said people would do during the Great Apostasy.

- What do you think it means that people "draw near [the Lord] with their mouth" but "have removed their heart far from [Him]"?

Explain that the phrase "their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" means that people's worship of God would be corrupted by false teachings.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord said He would do to overcome the effects of the Apostasy.

- What did the Lord say He would do to overcome the effects of the Apostasy?
- What is the marvelous work and wonder Isaiah prophesied about?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what Elder Nelson said is the marvelous work and wonder.

"Isaiah foresaw that God would do 'a marvellous work and a wonder' in the latter days (Isaiah 29:14). . . . That marvelous work would include the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration of the gospel" ("Scriptural Witnesses," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 46, endnote 26).

- According to verse 14, what effect will the Restoration and the Book of Mormon have on the wisdom of the world?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *The Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, is a marvelous work that . . .*

- According to verses 13–14, how could we complete this truth? (Students may give many correct responses, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, is a marvelous work that corrects false teachings and counters the wisdom of the world.** Using students' words, complete the statement on the board.)

 **Isaiah 29:13–14**

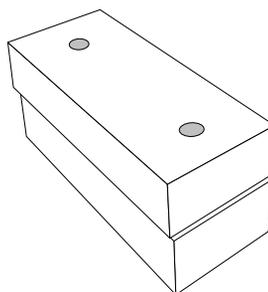
is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Show students a second nail, and explain that it represents the Book of Mormon. Align the boards, and hammer the nail into the end opposite the first nail. Show students that the boards no longer swivel.

- How does the Book of Mormon help correct false doctrine and counter the wisdom of the world?

Invite students to share with a partner some of the blessings they have received because of the Restoration of the gospel and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Summarize Isaiah 29:15–17 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that the Book of Mormon would come forth at a time when people would seek to hide their works from God and would not acknowledge the hand of God in their lives.



### Isaiah 29:18–24

#### *Isaiah prophesies of the positive impact of the restored gospel and the Book of Mormon*

Show students a copy of the Book of Mormon.

- What would you say to someone to interest him or her in reading the Book of Mormon?

Write the following phrase on the board: *If we study the Book of Mormon, it can help us to . . .*

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:18–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Book of Mormon can do for those who study it with a sincere desire to understand its teachings. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What does Isaiah’s imagery in these verses teach about how the Book of Mormon can help us? (List students’ responses on the board to complete the principle.)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:22–24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Isaiah prophesied the Book of Mormon would do for Jacob’s posterity. Explain that the phrase “house of Jacob” in verse 22 refers to the Lord’s covenant people.

- According to verses 23–24, what would the Book of Mormon do for Jacob’s posterity in the latter days? (List students’ responses on the board.)

Point out the phrase “fear the God of Israel” in verse 23, and explain that it means to have reverential awe and respect for God and His covenants. Ask students to ponder the principle about the Book of Mormon on the board.

- Which one of these promises would inspire you to read the Book of Mormon? Why?

You may want to testify of the following principle: **If we study the Book of Mormon, it can help us to have joy, revere God, and understand true doctrine.**

Invite students to share with the class how the Book of Mormon has blessed their lives. You may also want to share an experience from your life.

Encourage students to make a commitment to read the Book of Mormon so they can receive these blessings in their lives. Consider challenging them to give a copy of the Book of Mormon to a family member or friend and to explain the blessings Isaiah promised would come from studying this book.

### Scripture Mastery—Isaiah 29:13–14

The following activity could be used as part of the lesson or on another day when you have time to review Isaiah 29:13–14:

To help students feel the truth and importance of the doctrines taught in Isaiah 29:13–14, invite them to write their names on pieces of paper, along with one or two reasons why the restored gospel and the Book of Mormon are marvelous and wonderful to them. After sufficient time, ask students to pass their papers to other students. Invite students to write on their classmates’ papers one or two reasons why the gospel is marvelous and wonderful to them. Consider repeating the process multiple times. To conclude the activity, ask students to pass the papers back to their original owners. Ask them to read what their classmates wrote. Invite a few students to testify of the reasons why the gospel is marvelous and wonderful to them.

# Isaiah 30–35

## Introduction

Instead of depending on the Lord, the people of Judah sought help from Egypt to defend themselves against Assyria. Isaiah prophesied that the people of Judah would be scattered because of their rebellion. He also

prophesied concerning the Apostasy, the Restoration, and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah testified that the Lord would come to save His people.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 30–31

#### *Isaiah warns Judah not to trust in Egypt and to trust in the Lord instead*

Invite students to think about somebody they know who cheerfully obeys all the words of the prophet and the standards in the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet.

- What are some ways we are blessed when we obey the words of the prophets?
- What can happen to people who refuse to follow the counsel of the Lord’s prophets?

Invite students as they study Isaiah 30–31 to look for a principle that helps them understand what can happen if we refuse to follow the counsel of the Lord’s prophets.

Explain that Isaiah 30–31 contains Isaiah’s message of warning to the people of Judah, who were considering making an alliance with Egypt to protect themselves from the Assyrian army.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 30:1–3, 7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people of Judah rebelled against the Lord when they were under threat of attack.

- How did the people rebel against the Lord?
- Why do you think forming an alliance with Egypt would have been considered rebellion against the Lord?
- According to verse 7, what did Isaiah say would happen if the people of Judah sought help from the Egyptians?

Point out the phrase “their strength is to sit still” in verse 7, and explain that this phrase means that the Jews would have received the strength they needed by depending on the Lord.

Explain that Isaiah 30:8 records the Lord’s commandment to Isaiah to write in a book the Lord’s words regarding the people’s rebellion. Invite a student to read Isaiah 30:9–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Isaiah to write. Explain that the phrase “smooth things” in verse 10 refers to false doctrine and flattering words.

- In what additional ways were the people being rebellious?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for how Elder Holland likened the people of our day to the people in Isaiah’s day.



“Unfortunately, messengers of divinely mandated commandments are often no more popular today than they were anciently. . . .

“Sadly enough, . . . it is a characteristic of our age that if people want any gods at all, they want them to be gods who do not demand much, comfortable gods, smooth gods who not only don’t rock the boat but don’t even row it, gods who pat us on the head, make us giggle, then tell us to run along and pick mari-golds” (“The Cost—and Blessings—of Discipleship,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 7).

- According to Elder Holland, how are some people of our day like the people of Isaiah’s day?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 30:12–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Judah’s rebellion against the Lord would lead to.

- According to verse 13, how did Isaiah describe the iniquity of the people?

Explain that a breach is a fracture or an opening in a wall. In Isaiah’s day people often built walls to protect themselves from their enemies.

- What happens structurally to a wall when it has a fracture or a crack? (It is weakened.)
- Why is a crack or fracture in a wall an appropriate metaphor for sin?
- Based on this metaphor, what happens to us if we sin by rejecting the words of the prophets? (Students may give a variety of answers, but make sure it is clear that **if we rebel against God by rejecting the words of the prophets, then we will be weakened.** Write this principle on the board.)
- In what ways are we weakened when we reject the words of the prophets?

Invite students to think about how they have seen people rebel against God by rejecting the words of the prophets.

- According to verse 14, what will happen if the fracture or crack is not fixed?
- Based on verse 14, what will happen to those who continue to reject the words of the prophets? (After students respond, add the following words to the principle on the board: . . . **and if we continue to reject the words of the prophets, we will suffer spiritual destruction.**)

Point out that sometimes negative consequences do not immediately follow sin. In some cases, these consequences may not come until the next life.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 30:15 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord promised the people if they repented and depended on Him for protection.

- What did the Lord promise the people if they repented and depended on Him for protection?

Summarize the rest of Isaiah 30 by explaining that the people of Judah refused to repent. Isaiah prophesied that they would be defeated by the Assyrians. He also prophesied that Israel would be gathered in the latter days and would be blessed both temporally and spiritually. Isaiah 31 records that the Lord reproved Israel for depending on Egypt for help instead of relying on Him for divine protection and assistance. The chapter also contains a comforting prophecy that in the last days the Lord will defend the righteous inhabitants of Zion.

## Isaiah 32–34

### *Isaiah prophesies of the Restoration and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ*

Write the following questions on the board: *If I were to stand in God’s presence, would I feel worthy to be in His presence? Why or why not?*

Ask students to ponder how they would answer these questions.

Invite students as they study Isaiah 32–34 to look for a principle that teaches us what we can do to be worthy to dwell in the presence of God.

Summarize Isaiah 32 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the Restoration of the gospel and the Millennial reign of the Savior. Isaiah 33:1–9 records that Isaiah prophesied of the wickedness of the world before the Savior’s Second Coming.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 33:10–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Isaiah described the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Invite students to report what they find.

Explain that the phrase “shall they be burned in the fire” in verse 12 means that the wicked will be destroyed by the brightness of the glory of the Savior when He comes again (see D&C 5:19).

Invite a student to read the first sentence of Isaiah 33:14 aloud. Point out that Isaiah is talking about the “sinners in Zion,” meaning certain members of the Church.

- How will these people react to the Savior’s Second Coming?

Invite a student to read aloud the questions found in Isaiah 33:14, and ask:

- What do you think those questions mean?

Explain that Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that these questions are asking who will be worthy to inherit the celestial kingdom (see “Think on These Things,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 47).

Invite students to read Isaiah 33:15–16 silently, looking for who will be worthy to receive eternal life.

- According to verse 15, what will we need to do in order to be worthy to receive eternal life? (List students' responses on the board.)

To help students understand verse 15, ask them to explain what each of the responses listed on the board might mean and how we can live those standards in our day.

- Based on verses 15–16, what principle can we learn about being worthy to dwell in the presence of God? (Students should identify something similar to the following principle: **If we walk righteously, speak uprightly, and do not participate in evil, we will be worthy to dwell in the presence of God.**)

Help students understand this principle by explaining that as we walk righteously, speak uprightly, and do not participate in evil, we become more like God. As we strive to become more like God every day, we become worthy to return to His presence.

Invite students to look at the responses written on the board, and ask them to consider what they need to do to become more like God so they will be worthy to dwell in His presence. Invite them to select one of the items listed on the board and write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a goal for how to improve in that area.

Summarize Isaiah 33:17–24 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the Millennial glory of Zion. Explain that Isaiah 34 contains Isaiah's prophecies of the Lord's Second Coming and the destruction of the wicked.

### Isaiah 35

#### *Isaiah prophesies that the Lord will come again to save His people*

Invite students to imagine that a family member or friend is tired of trying to be righteous. Ask students what they would do to help that individual.

Invite students to look for a principle as they study Isaiah 35 that can help them know how to help that family member or friend.

Explain that Isaiah 35 contains Isaiah's prophecies of the latter-day gathering of Israel. Invite a student to read Isaiah 35:3–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded.

- What does it mean to "strengthen . . . the weak hands" and "confirm the feeble knees"? (Isaiah 35:3). (Strengthen the faith of those who are exhausted, discouraged, or fearful.)
- According to verse 4, what can we do to strengthen the faith of others?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about strengthening the faith of others? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **as we testify that the Lord will come to save and heal us, we can strengthen the faith of others.**)
- How can bearing your testimony of the Lord help strengthen the faith of others?

Invite students to share about a time when they received strength because of someone else's testimony. Challenge them to strengthen the faith of the people around them by sharing their testimonies.

Summarize Isaiah 35:7–10 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of the great blessings that will come to the faithful in the latter days.

#### **Remember the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion**

Remember that "our purpose is to help youth and young adults understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven" (*Gospel Teaching and Learning: A Handbook for Teachers and Leaders in Seminaries and Institutes of Religion* [2012], 1).

### Commentary and Background Information

#### **Isaiah 30:9–11. "Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits"**

President Ezra Taft Benson explained the following:

"How we respond to the words of a living prophet when he tells us what we need to know, but would rather not hear, is a test of our faithfulness" ("Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet" [Brigham Young University devotional, Feb. 26, 1980], 28; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu)).

## LESSON 124

# Isaiah 36–41

### Introduction

During the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, the Lord miraculously delivered Jerusalem from the Assyrian army. However, Isaiah prophesied that the kingdom of Judah would be conquered by the Babylonians, a

prophecy that was fulfilled many years later. Isaiah also prophesied of the coming of Jesus Christ and testified of His power and desire to strengthen His people.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 36–40

*The Lord is incomparably great, and He will come among His people and strengthen those who trust in Him*

Before class, write the following question on the board: *What are some situations you might face in which you will need to know that you can trust in the Lord?*

You may want to invite students to record their answers in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Or you could divide the class into groups and ask students to discuss the question within their groups. After students have had time to ponder or discuss this question, you may want to invite several students to report their answers to the entire class. Consider listing their responses on the board.

Invite students as they study Isaiah 36–41 to look for truths that can build their confidence and trust in the Lord.

Explain that Isaiah 36–39 includes another record of the material students have already studied in 2 Kings 18:13–20:19. Summarize chapters 36–39 by explaining that Isaiah told the people of Judah that if they trusted in the Lord, they would be saved from the Assyrian army. The people followed Isaiah’s counsel and were spared. However, Isaiah then prophesied that the Babylonians would eventually capture and plunder Jerusalem.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 40:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the purpose of Isaiah’s words to the people of Judah after he prophesied that they would be conquered by the Babylonians.

- What was the purpose of Isaiah’s words in these verses? (To comfort the Lord’s people.)

Explain that Isaiah comforted the people by prophesying of the coming of Jesus Christ. Ask a student to read Isaiah 40:3–5 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what these verses teach about the coming of Jesus Christ.

- What do verses 3–5 teach about the coming of Jesus Christ?

You may want to explain that the phrase “the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord” in verse 3 can refer to John the Baptist, who was sent to prepare the way for the mortal ministry of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 3:1–6). In the latter days, the Lord used a variation of this phrase to refer to His own voice (see D&C 88:66; 128:20). This phrase can also refer to those called by the Lord to preach the restored gospel (see D&C 33:10).

Explain that throughout the remainder of Isaiah 40, we read that Isaiah continued to comfort Israel by teaching about the greatness of the Lord. Isaiah used many images to emphasize how the Lord is different from man.

Write the following scripture references and questions on the board:

*Isaiah 40:6–8*

*Isaiah 40:10–11*

*Isaiah 40:12–15*

*Isaiah 40:22–25*

*What images did Isaiah use to represent the Lord and man?*

*How do these images illustrate the difference between the Lord and man?*

Divide the class into four groups, and assign each group to read one of the scripture passages referenced on the board. Ask students to then discuss the accompanying questions within their groups. After sufficient time, you may want to ask one representative from each group to share with the class what his or her group learned.

- What did you learn about the difference between God and man? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure they identify the following truth: **God is far greater than man.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)

Point out that some people falsely believe that God does not care about them. Ask a student to read aloud Isaiah 40:26–27 and footnote *a* of verse 27. Invite the class to follow along and look for phrases that indicate that some Israelites in Isaiah’s time did not believe God noticed them. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that Isaiah 40:28–31 contains Isaiah’s answer to those who failed to see and understand God’s incomparable power and great concern for each of His children. Ask several students to take turns reading aloud from these verses. Invite students to follow along and look for what the Lord will do for us.

- What phrases indicate what the Lord will do for His people?
- According to verse 31, what must we do to receive these blessings?
- What do you think it means to “wait upon the Lord”?

Add to the truth you wrote on the board so it reads as follows: *Because God is far greater than man, He can . . .* Invite students to complete the statement based on what they learned from Isaiah 40:28–31. After students respond, use students’ words to complete the statement so it conveys the following principle: **Because God is far greater than man, He can strengthen those who trust in Him.** You may want to suggest that students write this principle in their scriptures next to Isaiah 40:31.

## Isaiah 41

### *The Lord desires to strengthen Israel*

Summarize Isaiah 41 by explaining that this chapter can help us understand the Lord’s desire to help and strengthen His people and the blessings we can receive as we place our trust in Him. Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we place our trust in the Lord, then . . .*

Invite students to consider how they might complete this statement as they continue to study Isaiah’s words.

Explain that some of the Lord’s words in Isaiah 41 were set to music in the hymn “How Firm a Foundation” (*Hymns*, no. 85). As a class, sing or read together verses one, two, three, and seven of this hymn, and invite students to look for words or phrases that indicate what the Lord will do for us as we trust in Him. Then invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 41:10–14, 17. Ask the class to look for words or phrases in these verses that are similar to those of the hymn. (You may want to explain that the word *worm* in verse 14 refers to someone who is meek and humble [see footnote *a*].) Ask students to report what they find.

Invite students to complete the statement on the board based on what they learned from Isaiah 41:10–14, 17. Using students’ answers, finish the statement so it conveys a principle similar to the following: **If we place our trust in the Lord, then we need not fear.**

To help students understand this principle and feel its truth and importance, refer to the situations you discussed at the beginning of class.

- What are some examples of how the Lord can help us in these situations?
- When have you chosen to place your trust in the Lord and felt Him help you?

To further illustrate the principles on the board, you may want to briefly review again the events recorded in Isaiah 36–39. Explain that Isaiah 36–37 relates that King Hezekiah and the people of Judah trusted in the Lord as the Assyrian army was marching toward Jerusalem and threatening them with destruction. Hezekiah and the people of Judah

### **Define difficult words and phrases**

Defining difficult words and phrases can be an important step in understanding the content of the scriptures and identifying doctrines and principles. The words of the prophets, student manuals, dictionaries, and footnotes and other scripture study helps can often help students understand difficult words and phrases.

hearkened to Isaiah’s counsel to not surrender to the Assyrians, and a large part of the Assyrian army was destroyed by an angel in one night. Isaiah 38 records that Hezekiah’s life was miraculously prolonged for 15 years. Isaiah 39 contains Isaiah’s prophecy that the Babylonians would eventually capture and plunder Jerusalem.

- How do the events recorded in Isaiah 36–39 relate to the principles on the board?

You may want to share your testimony that the Lord can help us as we place our trust in Him. You may also want to share a personal experience that illustrates how the Lord has helped you in your life as you have trusted in Him.

Invite students to ponder what they can do to more fully trust in God. Invite them to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals any impressions they receive from the Spirit, and encourage them to act on these impressions.

### Scripture Mastery Review

*Note:* The following review activity could be used at the beginning or end of this lesson or on another day when you have extra time:

In this seminary course, students have studied 17 scripture mastery passages so far. To help review the content of these passages, write each of the 17 references on the board. Divide the class into two teams (or invite the class to compete against you). One student from each team (or you and a student) should stand facing the references on the board. Ask another student in the class to choose one of the scripture mastery passages and read aloud several words from the scripture mastery bookmark or from the text of the passage itself. The students standing at the board (or you and a student) then race to touch the correct reference. Ask the class to check the answer(s) and award a point to the first team to touch the correct reference. Rotate participants. At the end of the activity, ask each team to recite one of the passages from memory.

*Hint:* To help this activity be beneficial and engaging for everyone, minimize the competitive element of the activity, and encourage teamwork and good sportsmanship.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Isaiah 36–39. The Assyrian army invades Judah

To gain a deeper understanding of the Assyrian invasion, read the Commentary and Background Information for lesson 100, 2 Kings 18–20.

### Isaiah 40:3–5. “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness”

These verses have multiple applications. John the Baptist applied this passage to himself while acting as a forerunner of the Lord’s mortal ministry (see John 1:23; see also Matthew 3:1–3; Luke 3:2–6; 1 Nephi 10:7–9). John also fulfilled this prophecy when he appeared to Joseph Smith to restore the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood in preparation for the Lord’s Second Coming (see D&C 13).

President Joseph Fielding Smith further taught:

“The Lord declared . . . that before his second coming a messenger should be sent to prepare the way and make it straight. You may apply this to John, and it is true. . . .

“But I go farther and maintain that Joseph Smith was the messenger whom the Lord sent to prepare the way before him. He came, and under the direction of holy messengers laid the foundation for the kingdom of God . . . that the world might be prepared for the coming of the Lord” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:194–95).

Additionally, missionaries and Church leaders in this dispensation are sent as messengers crying, “Repent, repent, and prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight” (D&C 33:10).

# Isaiah 42–47

## Introduction

Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be a light to the Gentiles and free God’s children from the captivity of sin. He contrasted the Savior’s power to redeem His

people with the foolishness of trusting in false gods. Isaiah also prophesied of the destruction of Babylon.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 42–43

#### *The Messiah will be a light to the Gentiles and free the prisoners*

Invite a student to come to the front of the class and stand on a chair. Ask the student:

- If you were to fall backwards, whom would you trust to catch you? Why? (Do not actually have the student attempt this.)

Ask the student to be seated. Explain that the children of Israel were faced with a decision concerning whom they would trust: the Lord Jesus Christ or false gods that were represented by idols made of wood, clay, or metal. Write *Jesus Christ* and *False Gods* above two columns on the board. Point out that we also must decide whether we will trust in Jesus Christ or in false gods.

- What are some false gods that people put their trust in today? (Write students’ responses on the board under the heading “False Gods.” Answers could include such things as wealth, possessions, physical strength, appearance, popularity, and intelligence.)

Explain that Isaiah 42–47 records Isaiah’s efforts to help the people understand that they needed to place their trust in the Savior, Jesus Christ. Invite students as they study these chapters to look for truths that will help them understand why they should trust in the Savior.

Point out that in Isaiah 42, Isaiah spoke about the Messiah. The title *Messiah* means “the anointed” and is the Old Testament equivalent of the New Testament title of “Christ” (see Bible Dictionary, “Messiah”).

Invite a student to read Isaiah 42:5–7 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for what Isaiah said about the Messiah. Invite students to report what they find. Write their responses on the board under the heading “Jesus Christ.” Invite students to share how they think each phrase describes what the Messiah can do.

Point out the phrase “to bring out the prisoners from the prison” in verse 7, and explain that it refers to freeing those in spiritual captivity both on earth and in the spirit world. During Christ’s earthly ministry He taught the gospel, which would enable God’s children to become free from spiritual captivity through the Atonement. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, His spirit went to the spirit world, where He preached the gospel.

Invite a student to read aloud Doctrine and Covenants 138:18–19, 30–31. Ask students to look for what happened in the spirit world shortly after Jesus Christ died on the cross. (You may want to suggest that students write D&C 138:18–19, 30–31 as a cross-reference in their scriptures next to Isaiah 42:7.)

- What did Jesus Christ do in the spirit world?
- What truth can we learn from these passages? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ’s Atonement makes it possible for all, including those who have already died, to accept the gospel and become free from the captivity of sin.** Write this truth on the board under the heading “Jesus Christ.”)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 42:16–17 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for the results of trusting in the Savior versus trusting in false gods. Ask students to report what they find. Write their responses in the appropriate column on the board.

### Use cross-references

A cross-reference is a scripture reference that can provide additional information and insight about the passage you are studying. The cross-references you use as part of your lesson should enhance students’ understanding of a scripture passage and not merely restate truths that students have already identified.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 42:18 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Isaiah described those who depend on false gods. Invite students to report what they find. Write their answers under the heading “False Gods” on the board.

- In what ways are people blind and deaf when they depend on wealth, possessions, physical strength, appearance, popularity, or intelligence?

Summarize Isaiah 42:19–23 by explaining that Isaiah taught that only those who hearken to Jesus Christ can be healed of their spiritual blindness and deafness (see Joseph Smith Translation, Isaiah 42:19–23 [in the Bible appendix]).

Invite students to read Isaiah 43:1–5 silently, looking for more phrases that describe what the Savior said He would do for Israel. After sufficient time, invite students to come to the board and write these phrases on the board under the heading “Jesus Christ.”

Summarize the rest of Isaiah 43 by explaining that the Lord told the Israelites that they were witnesses of Him because of the great things He had done for them, and He emphasized that there is no Savior other than Him.

### Isaiah 44–46

*Isaiah contrasts the Lord’s power to save us with the foolishness of trusting in anything else*

Invite students to consider what problems young people are faced with today. Ask students to write a few of these problems on the board.

- Where do some people turn when they have problems like these?
- What makes some sources of help better than others?

Invite students as they study Isaiah 44–46 to look for doctrines and principles that will help them know where they should turn when they have problems.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 44:9–10, 14–20 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for why it is unwise to seek help from false gods or images. Explain that these verses describe gods and images that the people were making out of wood.

- What did the Lord say that wood could do for the people?
- According to verse 17, what did the people ask of their idols?
- What difficulties might people face when they seek deliverance from their problems by the false gods of wealth, possessions, physical strength, appearance, popularity, or intelligence?

Place the picture Jesus Christ (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 1; see also LDS.org) next to the heading “Jesus Christ” on the board. Divide the class into three groups, and assign each group one of the following references: Isaiah 44:21–24; Isaiah 45:5–8; Isaiah 45:12, 17–18, 20–22 (you may want to write these references on the board). Explain that in these verses, the Lord taught the children of Israel whom they should trust in for deliverance from their problems. Invite students to read their assigned verses, looking for what the Lord wanted the children of Israel to know about Him. After sufficient time, invite several students to report what they found.

Point out the phrase “I am the Lord, and there is none else” in Isaiah 45:5, 6, 18 and similar phrases in Isaiah 45:21, 22. Then ask:

- What truth can we learn about Jesus Christ from this repeated idea in the verses you read? (While your students may identify several correct truths, make sure they identify the following truth: **Jesus Christ is the Redeemer, the only one who can save us.** Write this truth on the board under the heading “Jesus Christ.”)
- What does it mean that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer?
- Why do you think the Lord would repeatedly emphasize that He is the only God who can save us?

Explain that in Isaiah’s day, many in Israel had turned to two false gods, Bel and Nebo, for help from their problems. Invite a student to read Isaiah 46:1–2 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for how ineffective these false gods were at helping the Israelites.



- What happened to these idols? (Explain that not only could Bel and Nebo not help the Israelites, but they also became a burden even to the animals that carried them into captivity. Write the phrase “becomes a burden” under the heading “False Gods.”)
- In what ways can trusting in modern idols—such as wealth, possessions, physical strength, appearance, popularity, or intellect—instead of trusting in the Savior become a burden?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 46:3–5 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Savior said He would do for the Israelites. (You may want to explain that the word *borne* means to carry, and the words *hoar hairs* refer to gray hairs of old age [see Isaiah 46:4, footnote *b*].)

- What does it mean that the Lord will carry us even to our old age and gray hairs? (The Lord will always be there for us throughout our entire lives, even to old age.)
- According to verse 4, what will the Savior do for those who trust and worship Him? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we trust in the Savior, He will carry and deliver us.** Write this principle on the board under the heading “Jesus Christ.”)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite students to listen for what it means to trust in Jesus Christ:



“This life is an experience in profound trust—trust in Jesus Christ, trust in his teachings, trust in our capacity as led by the Holy Spirit to obey those teachings now and for a purposeful, supremely happy eternal existence. To trust means to obey willingly without knowing the end from the beginning (see Prov. 3:5–7). To produce fruit, your trust in the Lord must be more powerful and enduring than your confidence in your own personal feelings and experience” (“Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- What can we do to show that we trust in the Savior? (Answers might include follow His teachings, repent of our sins, and follow the prophet.)

Invite students to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- How have I or someone I know been carried or delivered by the Savior?

After sufficient time, ask if any students would like to share a time when they were carried or delivered by the Savior, or when someone they know was delivered in this way. Consider sharing your testimony or an appropriate experience that has helped you know the truthfulness of this principle. Encourage students to consider what they can do to show their trust in the Savior so they can be carried and delivered.

## Isaiah 47

### *Isaiah prophesies of the destruction of Babylon*

Summarize Isaiah 47 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that Babylon and the Chaldeans (the inhabitants of Babylon) would be destroyed because of the sinfulness of the people. Point out that the kingdom of Babylon is frequently used in the scriptures to symbolize the world. Isaiah’s prophecy that the daughters of Babylon would be destroyed can be likened to anyone who revels in their sins and iniquities and refuses to repent.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Isaiah 24–47 (Unit 25)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Isaiah 24–47 (unit 25) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson to the students. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Isaiah 24–29)

In Isaiah 24–28 students learned that if we trust in the Lord and have hope in His promises, then we can receive His salvation and rejoice. As students studied Isaiah 29 they learned the following truths: During a period of great apostasy, people were without divine direction from living prophets and apostles. The Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, is a marvelous work that corrects false teachings and counters the wisdom of the world.

#### Day 2 (Isaiah 30–35)

As they studied Isaiah 30, students learned that if we rebel against God by rejecting the words of His prophets, then we will be weakened, and if we continue to reject the words of the prophets, we will be destroyed. In Isaiah 33 they learned that if we walk righteously, speak uprightly, and do not participate in evil, we will be worthy to dwell in God's presence. In their study of Isaiah 35, students identified that as we testify that the Lord will come to save and heal us, we can strengthen the faith of others.

#### Day 3 (Isaiah 36–41)

After reading about how the Lord delivered Judah from the Assyrian army in the days of King Hezekiah, students learned that God is far greater than man and that He can strengthen those who trust in Him. They also learned that if we place our trust in the Lord, then He will sustain and help us.

#### Day 4 (Isaiah 42–47)

In Isaiah 42, students learned that Jesus Christ's Atonement makes it possible for all, including those who have already died, to accept the gospel and become free from the captivity of sin. They also learned in Isaiah 44–46 that Jesus Christ, as our Redeemer, is the only one who can save us and that if we trust in the Savior, He will carry and deliver us.

### Introduction

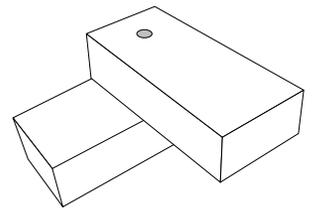
Isaiah prophesied of a period of great apostasy and the Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. He prophesied that the Book of Mormon would correct false doctrine and bless those who read and live by its teachings.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Isaiah 29:1–24

*Isaiah prophesies of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration*

Show students two wooden boards of equal length. Place one of the boards on top of the other, and nail them together at one end so the boards can swivel. (If you do not have boards and a nail, you could poke a single hole through two pieces of cardboard or paper and fasten a brad or a metal paper fastener in the hole so the two pieces can swivel.) Explain that the single nail represents the Bible, the bottom board represents the doctrine of Christ, and the top board represents how some people interpret the Bible. Move the top board to various positions.



- Why are there so many different Christian churches if they all believe in the Bible? (Christian denominations interpret the Bible and Christ's doctrine differently.)
- How can you know the Lord's true doctrine when there are so many ways to interpret the Bible?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Isaiah 29 that can help them know the Lord's true doctrine.

Summarize Isaiah 29:1–12 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied about the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred because of the wickedness of the people who lived there. Isaiah also prophesied of the Great Apostasy, which would occur after the deaths of the Savior and His Apostles.

Explain that over time, people changed many gospel principles and ordinances and altered the organization of the Savior's Church. Consequently, the Lord withdrew the authority and keys of His priesthood from the earth. Many of the "plain and precious" parts of the Bible were also corrupted or lost, and the people no longer had an accurate understanding of God (see 1 Nephi 13:26–29). Eventually many churches were established, but they did not have the authority to perform priesthood ordinances or to properly interpret the Bible. Isaiah also foretold the experience that Martin Harris would have with the learned professor Charles Anthon in New York.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said people would do during the Great Apostasy.

- What do you think it means that people “draw near [the Lord] with their mouth” but “have removed their heart far from [Him]”?

Explain that the phrase “their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men” means that people’s worship of God would be corrupted by false teachings.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would do to overcome the effects of the Apostasy.

- What did the Lord say He would do to overcome the effects of the Apostasy?
- From your study guide lesson for day 1, what did Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles say is the marvelous work and a wonder that Isaiah prophesied about?

If students do not remember what Elder Nelson taught, invite a student to read his statement:

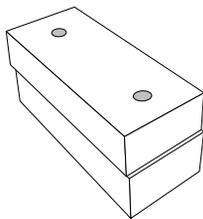
“Isaiah foresaw that God would do ‘a marvellous work and a wonder’ in the latter days (Isaiah 29:14). . . . That marvelous work would include the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration of the gospel” (“Scriptural Witnesses,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 46, endnote 26).

- According to verse 14, what effect will the Restoration and the Book of Mormon have on the wisdom of the world?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *The Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, is a marvelous work that . . .*

- According to Isaiah 29:13–14, how could we complete this truth? (Students may give many correct responses, but make sure they identify the following truth: **The Restoration of the gospel, including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, is a marvelous work that corrects false teachings and counters the wisdom of the world.** Using students’ words, complete the statement on the board.)

Show students a second nail, and explain that it represents the Book of Mormon. Align the boards, and hammer the nail into the end opposite the first nail. Show students that the boards no longer swivel.



Invite a student to read 2 Nephi 3:12. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the joining of the Bible and the Book of Mormon will do for us.

- How does the Book of Mormon help correct false doctrine and counter the wisdom of the world? (Share examples of how the Book of Mormon corrects false doctrine. For example, Moroni 8 corrects misunderstandings about infant baptism.)

Invite students to share with a partner some of the blessings they have received because of the Restoration of the gospel and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Summarize Isaiah 29:15–17 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that the Book of Mormon would come forth at a time when people would seek to hide their works from God and would not acknowledge the hand of God in their lives.

Show students a copy of the Book of Mormon.

- What would you say to someone to interest him or her in reading the Book of Mormon?

Write the following phrase on the board: *If we study the Book of Mormon, it can help us to . . .*

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:18–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Book of Mormon can do for those who study it with a sincere desire to understand its teachings. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What does Isaiah’s imagery in these verses teach about how the Book of Mormon can help us? (List students’ responses on the board to complete the principle.)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 29:22–24 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Isaiah prophesied the Book of Mormon would do for Jacob’s posterity. Explain that the phrase “house of Jacob” in verse 22 refers to the Lord’s covenant people.

- According to verses 23–24, what would the Book of Mormon do for Jacob’s posterity in the latter days? (List students’ responses on the board.)

Point out the phrase “fear the God of Israel” in verse 23, and explain that it means to have reverential awe and respect for God and His covenants. Ask students to ponder the responses that complete the principle about the Book of Mormon on the board.

- Which one of these promises would inspire you to read the Book of Mormon? Why?

You may want to write the following principle on the board: **If we study the Book of Mormon, it can help us to have joy, revere God, and understand true doctrine.**

Invite students to share with the class how the Book of Mormon has blessed their lives. You may also want to share an experience from your life.

Encourage students to make a commitment to read the Book of Mormon so they can receive these blessings in their lives. Consider encouraging them to give a copy of the Book of Mormon to a family member or friend and to explain the blessings Isaiah promised would come from studying this book.

### Next Unit (Isaiah 48–58)

Invite students to think about a time they felt alone because no one understood their struggles and challenges. Explain that in the next unit they will learn about the Savior’s Atonement and how He extends help and mercy to His people when they feel lonely, face challenges, and strive to overcome temptation and sin. Isaiah 53 contains some of the most tender words in scripture describing Jesus Christ’s humiliation and sufferings.

## LESSON 126

# Isaiah 48–50

### Introduction

The Lord invited the Israelites to return to Him and keep their covenants. He promised scattered Israel that He had not forgotten them and that He would restore them to

their covenant blessings and gather them back to their lands of inheritance through the efforts of His servants.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 48

#### *The Lord invites the Israelites to return to Him and keep their covenants*

Invite students to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals things that cause them to feel worried, stressed, or afraid. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share with the class what they wrote, if it is not too personal. Write their responses on the board.

- Do you think it is possible to have peace even if these difficulties are present in your life? Why or why not?

Invite students as they study Isaiah 48 to look for a principle that can help them have greater peace in their lives, even during times of trouble. Point out that Isaiah 48 is the first full chapter of Isaiah that the prophet Nephi quoted in the Book of Mormon (see 1 Nephi 20). Nephi stated that his reason for reading Isaiah to his brethren was so that he “might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer” (1 Nephi 19:23).

Explain that in Isaiah 48:1–8 we read that the Lord addressed the Israelites who broke their covenants and described their rebellious behavior. Invite a student to read Isaiah 48:1, 4–5, 8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words and phrases that show how the house of Israel had rebelled against the Lord. Invite students to report what they find. You may want to point out that the “waters of Judah” mentioned in verse 1 refer to baptism (see 1 Nephi 20:1).

Display a piece of metal that is difficult to bend. Ask students what they think it means for someone’s neck to be “an iron sinew” or for someone’s brow to be “brass” (Isaiah 48:4). Explain that a sinew is a tendon, which connects bone to muscle. Just as iron does not bend easily, prideful people will not bow their necks in humility.

- According to Isaiah 48:5, what did the Lord say about why He prophesied or declared events before they happened? (So the Israelites could not attribute the Lord’s acts to their graven images and idols.)

Summarize Isaiah 48:9–15 by explaining that the Lord told the people that despite their wickedness He would not abandon them.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 48:17–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the Israelites would have been blessed if they had kept the commandments.

- What blessings would the Israelites have received if they had been obedient to the Lord?
- How would you state a principle based on verse 18 using the words *if* and *then*? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **If we hearken to the Lord’s commandments, then we will have peace.**)
- Why do you think Isaiah used the image of a river as a symbol of peace? In what ways can righteousness be like “the waves of the sea”? (Isaiah 48:18).

Invite students to ponder times when hearkening to the Lord’s commandments has brought them peace. Consider inviting a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Invite students to read Isaiah 48:22 silently and look for what this verse teaches about peace.

- How does Isaiah’s teaching in verse 22 relate to the principle we identified in verse 18?

Ask students to ponder times when they may have lacked peace because of their own disobedience. You may want to testify that the Lord will bless us with peace as we obey His commandments. Invite students to consider one way they can choose to be more obedient to the Lord's commandments so they can feel greater peace.

## Isaiah 49

### *Through the efforts of His servants, the Messiah will gather Israel*

Invite a few students to share experiences they have had when they were forgotten or left behind and to describe how they felt as a result. After several students share their experiences, invite students to ponder how they would respond to a friend who felt like the Lord had forgotten him or her.

Explain that Isaiah warned the Israelites that because of their wickedness, they would be scattered. Invite a student to read Isaiah 49:14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for how the Israelites (referred to in this verse as "Zion") would feel in their scattered condition.

- How would the Israelites feel in their scattered condition?
- What are some reasons that people today may sometimes feel that the Lord has forgotten them?

Explain that Isaiah 49 records the words the Lord spoke to reassure the Israelites of His love for them. Invite a student to read Isaiah 49:15–16 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for truths that can help us when we may feel the Lord has forgotten us.

- According to verse 16, why will the Savior not forget any of Heavenly Father's children? (Because the Savior has "graven [us] upon the palms of [His] hands.")

Write the word *graven* on the board. Explain that to engrave is to cut or carve something into an object so the imprint remains there permanently.

- In what way have we been graven upon the palms of the Savior's hands?
- How might this demonstrate the Savior's love for us?
- What can we learn from these verses that can reassure us when we may be tempted to feel that the Lord has forgotten us? (Students may suggest many correct truths, but make sure it is clear that **the Lord loves us, and He will never forget us.** Using students' words, write this truth on the board.)
- What experiences have helped you know that the Lord loves you and has not forgotten you?

Summarize Isaiah 49:17–26 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied that in the latter days, the descendants of Israel will be gathered in great numbers. Isaiah 49:22–23 specifically refers to how the Gentiles, or non-Israelite people, will assist in this process. The Lord testified that the time will come when all people will know that He is the Savior and Redeemer of mankind.

## Isaiah 50

### *Isaiah speaks as the Messiah to the Israelites, who are in captivity as a result of their sins*

Invite students to list in their class notebooks or scripture study journals several items they own that have some value to them. Invite them to write next to each item the amount of money they would be willing to sell that item for. Invite a few students to explain to the class some of the items and amounts of money they listed.

- When something is sold, who becomes the owner? (The person who purchased the item.)

Invite students to write their names at the bottom of the lists they created.

- Who owns you? (Explain that through His atoning sacrifice, the Savior purchased our souls with His blood [see 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 1 Peter 1:18–19].)

Point out that when we sin we may feel like the Savior has sold us or that He may not want us anymore. Invite a student to read Isaiah 50:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said to those who felt they had been sold or abandoned by the Lord.

- What do you think the Lord meant when He said, “For your iniquities have ye sold yourselves”? (The Lord had not sold or forsaken His chosen people; they had sold themselves into the captivity of sin.)
- What principle can we learn from verse 1? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but be sure it is clear that **when we sin, we sell ourselves into captivity**.)
- What are some examples of how we might sell ourselves into captivity through sin?

To help students further understand this principle, read 3 Nephi 20:38 aloud. (You may want to suggest that students write 3 Nephi 20:38 in the margin of their scriptures near Isaiah 50:1.)

- What do you think it means that when we sin, we sell ourselves for naught? (By sinning we trade our freedom and happiness for that which is of no real value.)
- Once we have sinned and sold ourselves into captivity, what needs to happen in order for us to regain our freedom?

Write the word *redeem* on the board, and ask students to explain what they think it means. After they respond, explain that to redeem means to buy back or to deliver from captivity. Invite students to read Isaiah 50:2 silently and look for what the Savior said about His power and ability to redeem us, or buy us back, from the captivity of sin.

- What do you think the Savior meant when He asked, “Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?” (Students may give a variety of answers, but make sure it is clear that **the Savior has the power to redeem us because of His Atonement**. Using students’ words, write this truth on the board.)

Explain that in Isaiah 50:4–7 we read the Lord’s explanation of some of the things that would happen to Him as part of the Atonement. Invite a student to read Isaiah 50:4–7 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for words and phrases that describe what would happen to the Savior. Invite students to report what they find.

- How is the Savior’s willingness to endure the suffering involved with the Atonement evidence of His commitment to us?

Remind students that while the Savior performed the Atonement and therefore has the power to redeem us from the captivity of sin, each of us must choose to repent of our sins in order to be redeemed. Invite students to open their hymnbooks to “Redeemer of Israel” (*Hymns*, no. 6) and either sing as a class or silently read the verses. Encourage them to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their feelings about any verses or phrases of this hymn that stand out to them. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share with the class what they wrote.

Invite students to ponder whether they have any sins they need to repent of. Encourage them to allow the Lord to redeem them by choosing to repent.

### Music

Music, especially the hymns of the Church, can play a significant role in helping students feel the influence of the Holy Ghost in their gospel learning experience. Singing one or more verses of a hymn that directly relates to the lesson can help students prepare to study gospel principles or review principles they have learned.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Isaiah 49:16. “I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained a purpose of the Savior’s wounds:

“Even though the power of the Resurrection could have—and undoubtedly one day will have—completely restored and made new the wounds from the crucifixion, nevertheless Christ chose to retain those wounds for a purpose, including for his appearance in the last days when he will show those marks and reveal that he was wounded ‘in the house of [his] friends’ [Zechariah 13:6; see also D&C 45:52].

“The wounds in his hands, feet, and side are signs that in mortality painful things happen even to the pure and the perfect, signs that tribulation is *not* evidence that God does not love us. It is a significant and hopeful fact that it is the *wounded* Christ who comes to our rescue. He who bears the scars of sacrifice, the lesions of love, the emblems of humility and forgiveness is the Captain of our Soul. That evidence of pain in mortality is undoubtedly intended to give courage to others who are also hurt and wounded by life, perhaps even in the house of their friends” (*Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [1997], 258–59).

# Isaiah 51–52

## Introduction

The Lord invited His people to take comfort in His salvation and to awake and remove themselves from the

bands of their captivity. Isaiah then prophesied that the Lord would deliver captive Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 51:1–8

*The Lord calls Israel to take comfort in His salvation and righteousness*

Write the following statement on the board: *Sometimes it is hard to be righteous.*

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
- What are some of the challenges you have faced or you have seen others face when trying to be righteous?

Explain that in Isaiah 51, we read that the Lord, through Isaiah, addressed people who were trying to be righteous. Invite students as they study this chapter to look for principles that can help them in their efforts to be righteous.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 51:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord counseled those who are trying to be righteous to do. Before students read, remind them that Isaiah often repeated the same concept in different ways, as he did in verses 1 and 2.

- What did the Lord counsel those who are seeking to be righteous to do?

Explain that when the Lord said to look to Abraham and Sarah, He was calling on the people of Israel to remember and keep the covenants that He had established with Abraham and Sarah.

- What covenants or promises had the Lord made with Abraham and Sarah? (See Bible Dictionary, “Abraham, covenant of.”)

Write the following incomplete principle on the board: *As we remember our covenants and keep them . . .*

Invite a student to read Isaiah 51:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Lord called upon Israel to remember and keep their covenants.

- How did the Lord say He would bless those who would remember and keep the covenants He had made with Abraham and with them? (They would be blessed and comforted.)
- Based on what you learned from verse 3, how would you complete the principle on the board? (After students respond, complete the principle on the board so it conveys the following truth: **As we remember our covenants and keep them, the Lord will bless us and comfort us.**)
- What words and phrases did the Lord use to describe how His people would be comforted?
- How has the Lord comforted you (or people you know) during challenging times as you (or they) were faithful to Him through keeping covenants?

Summarize Isaiah 51:4–6 by explaining that the Lord taught Israel that they can have comfort in Him when they are faithful to their covenants because His redemptive power and righteousness are eternal.

To prepare students to identify another principle, invite them to ponder a time when they worried about what others thought of them because they were trying to be righteous.

- How might fearing others’ mockery or opinions affect our efforts to be righteous?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 51:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for who the Lord said did not need to fear the mockery or negative opinion of others. Explain that the words *reproach* and *revilings* refer to rebukes or mockery.

- According to verse 7, who should not fear what others say or do to them?
- What principle can we learn from this verse? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If the Lord’s law is in our hearts, then we have no need to fear the mockery of others.**)
- Why did the Lord say that those with His law in their hearts did not need to fear what others say or do to them? (Because the blessings of the Lord’s righteousness and salvation will endure forever, while those who revile against righteousness will no longer be able to hurt us in the next life.)
- What are some things we can do to invite the Lord to place His law in our hearts? (We must choose to love God’s laws and sincerely desire to live them. We must prayerfully open our hearts to God’s law and live the gospel with real intent.)

### Isaiah 51:9–52:6

#### *The Lord calls upon Zion to awake and remove themselves from the bands of their captivity*

Display an alarm clock or an alarm on a cell phone.

- Why do people use alarm clocks?

Invite students to look at Isaiah 51:9 and notice the first two words. Explain that in Isaiah 51:9–10, Isaiah wrote that the Lord’s people were pleading with the Lord to awake (or use His power) to help them as He had done in the past and to fulfill His promises.

Summarize Isaiah 51:11–23 by explaining that the Lord indicated that it was His people who needed to awake.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 52:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord invited Israel to do to awake from their spiritual sleep.

- What did the Lord invite Israel to do to awake from their spiritual sleep?

You may want to explain that the phrase instructing the people of Zion to “put on thy beautiful garments” (Isaiah 52:1) means that they should clothe themselves with inner purity and sanctity. It means to figuratively remove the clothes of their captivity to sin and instead wear clothes of righteousness and priesthood authority (see D&C 113:7–8).

- What does the phrase “shake thyself from the dust” (Isaiah 52:2) mean? (To get rid of the filth of sin and the influence of the world.)
- What do we need to do to rid ourselves from the effects of our sins?

Explain that the Lord said that His people had figuratively sold themselves when they turned away from Him and embraced the wickedness of the world. Invite a student to read Isaiah 52:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Israel received when they sold themselves through sin.

- What did Israel receive when they turned away from the Lord by sinning? What do we receive when we sin? (Nothing.)
- What do you think the phrase “ye shall be redeemed without money” (Isaiah 52:3) means?

Explain that although we are not redeemed from sin through money, the process of returning to the Lord does often have a price. We must be willing to offer Him a broken heart and a contrite spirit and put forth great effort to repent.

- What principle do these verses teach us concerning what we must do to be redeemed from our sins? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **When we repent and come unto the Lord, He will redeem us from our sins.**)
- How can this principle be a comfort to us when we sin?

Invite students to ponder in what ways they may be spiritually asleep and what they may need to do to awake, repent, and come to the Lord. Invite them to set a goal to act on any promptings they receive.

## Isaiah 52:7–15

### *Isaiah prophesies of the Lord delivering captive Israel*

Explain that anciently during times of war, people would anxiously await news from the battlefield. This news would have been brought by runners traveling on foot.

- How do you think these messengers were received when they brought news that the battle had been won and peace had been established? Why?

Explain that in Isaiah 52:7–8, Isaiah compared these battlefield messengers with Jesus Christ and the message of salvation that He gave and would give. The description of messengers given by Isaiah also includes those who would share the gospel message of peace and salvation and spread the joyful news that Jesus Christ has won the battle against sin and evil.

Invite students to read Isaiah 52:7–8 silently, looking for how those who share the message of salvation with others are described. Explain that *publish* means to proclaim or tell. Those who initially publish the message of salvation and the “watchmen” spoken of in verse 8 are prophets.

- What do you think it means that those who share the message of the gospel with others are considered to have “beautiful feet” by those who receive their message? (This is an expression of gratitude for those who bring them the gospel message, which fills them with joy and peace; see also Mosiah 15:15–18.)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 52:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how those who receive the gospel message will feel.

- How will those who receive the gospel message of redemption and salvation feel?
- What principles can we learn from these verses about sharing the gospel with others? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **when we share the message of the gospel, we offer joy to others.**)

Ask students what tools and methods are available for us today to publish the gospel and share it with our friends and family. List their responses on the board. Students may mention tools and methods such as text messages, social media, verbally sharing testimony, and pass-along cards.

- When have you used one of the tools or methods on the board to share the gospel with others? How did your sharing the gospel bring joy to them?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals the names of those with whom they have felt prompted to share the gospel. Invite students to set a goal to share the gospel with those on their list so those people can experience joy.

Remind students that Isaiah 51–52 records Isaiah’s words to the Lord’s covenant people, who had been asleep spiritually. He taught them that they needed to awake by repenting and coming unto the Lord to be redeemed from their sins. Invite a student to read Isaiah 52:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how these verses help us understand what we need to do to awake, repent, and come to the Lord. Before students read, explain that Babylon is a symbol for the wickedness of the world.

- According to verse 11, what do we need to do to be clean and to come unto the Lord so we can be redeemed from our sins?
- According to verse 12, what promise is given to those who seek to leave the wickedness of the world and be clean? (You may need to explain that the phrase “the God of Israel will be your rearward” refers to the protection God will give to those who come to Him.)
- Why would this promise be comforting to someone desiring to leave a lifestyle of sin?

Conclude with your testimony of the principles identified in the lesson today.

### ***Establish who is speaking to whom and why***

To help students better understand the context and content of the scriptures they are studying, periodically explain or remind students who is speaking, to whom this person is speaking, and why this person is speaking.

## LESSON 128

# Isaiah 53

### Introduction

Isaiah 53 contains a prophecy of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Isaiah taught that the Savior would be despised and rejected, smitten and afflicted; that

He would carry our sorrows; and that He would be wounded for our transgressions.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 53:1–12

#### *Isaiah prophesies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ*

Before class, write the following question on the board: *When might someone be tempted to say, “No one understands what I am going through”?* Ask students to respond to this question.

Invite students as they study Isaiah 53 to look for truths that can help them when they experience difficulties and when they feel that no one understands their thoughts, feelings, or challenges.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 53:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases that describe the difficulties Isaiah prophesied Jesus Christ would experience during His life, including the agonizing trials associated with His atoning sacrifice.

- What words or phrases describe the difficulties Jesus Christ experienced during His life?

As students respond to the preceding question, ask questions such as the following to help deepen their understanding of the words or phrases they mention:

- What might it mean that Jesus Christ grew up “as a root out of a dry ground”? (Isaiah 53:2). (One interpretation of the phrase “dry ground” is that it refers to the spiritual drought or apostasy that existed in Jesus’s day, which had resulted from the wickedness of Jewish leaders and their followers [see 2 Nephi 10:3–5].)
- What do you think it means that “he hath no form nor comeliness; and . . . there is no beauty that we should desire him”? (Isaiah 53:2).

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith, who explained what it means that Jesus had “no beauty that we should desire him”:



“There was nothing about [Jesus] to cause people to single him out. In appearance he was like men; and so it is expressed here by the prophet that he had no form or comeliness, that is, he was not so distinctive, so different from others that people would recognize him as the Son of God. He appeared as a mortal man” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:23).

- In what ways was Jesus Christ “despised and rejected of men” (verse 3) during His life? (You might remind students that Jesus Christ was rejected by His own people and was spat upon, smitten, scourged [or whipped], and mocked during His trials and Crucifixion [see Matthew 26:67–68; 27:22–43].)
- According to verse 4, whose griefs and sorrows did Jesus Christ bear? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board: **Jesus Christ bore our griefs and carried our sorrows.**)
- Why is it important to know that the Savior has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David. A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“There is no physical pain, no spiritual wound, no anguish of soul or heartache, no infirmity or weakness you or I ever confront in mortality that the Savior did not experience first. In a moment of weakness we may cry out, ‘No one knows what it is like. No one understands.’ But the Son of God perfectly knows and understands, for He has felt and borne



### Isaiah 53:3–5

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

our individual burdens. And because of His infinite and eternal sacrifice (see Alma 34:14), He has perfect empathy and can extend to us His arm of mercy. He can reach out, touch, succor, heal, and strengthen us” (“Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 90).

Ask students to ponder when they have felt the Savior comfort or strengthen them or help carry their griefs and sorrows. Invite a few of them to share their experiences with the class. (Remind students that they should not share any experiences that are too sacred or private.) You may also want to share an experience.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 53:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Jesus Christ suffered for us.

- In addition to our griefs and sorrows, what else did Jesus Christ suffer for us?

Display the picture Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 56; see also LDS.org). Explain that for every transgression or sin we commit, there is “a punishment affixed” (Alma 42:18). This punishment includes guilt, pain, misery, and separation from God (see 2 Nephi 9:7–9). The phrase “the chastisement of our peace was upon him” in verse 5 means that Jesus Christ suffered the punishment (the penalty) for our sins so we could experience forgiveness and peace. The phrase “with his stripes we are healed” (verse 5) means that because of Jesus Christ’s suffering we can be healed from the wounds of our sins and the consequences of the Fall of Adam and Eve, including spiritual and physical death.

- How would you summarize Isaiah’s teachings in verse 5? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ suffered for the transgressions and iniquities of all so that we can be forgiven and healed.** Using students’ words, write this doctrine on the board.)

To help students better understand the extent of the Savior’s suffering, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency:



“He suffered so much pain, ‘indescribable anguish,’ and ‘overpowering torture’ [John Taylor, *The Mediation and Atonement* (1882), 150] for our sake. His profound suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane . . . caused Him ‘to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit’ [D&C 19:18]. . . .

“. . . No one has ever suffered in any degree what He did” (“The Atonement: Our Greatest Hope,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 19).

To help students understand the truth and importance of the doctrine they identified, ask them to reread Isaiah 53:5–6. This time, invite them to study the verses silently and substitute their names for the words *our*, *we*, and *us*.

- What feelings do you have for the Savior as you consider that He suffered the penalty for your sins? Why?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 53:7–11. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases that help us further understand what Jesus Christ experienced as part of His Atonement.

- What else did the Savior experience as part of His Atonement?

You may want to explain that the phrase “cut off out of the land of the living” in verse 8 refers to Jesus Christ’s death. The phrase “it pleased the Lord to bruise him” in verse 10 means that Heavenly Father was pleased that Jesus Christ willingly offered Himself as a sacrifice for others’ sins (see 3 Nephi 11:7, 11; John 3:16).

- According to Isaiah 53:10, whom did Jesus Christ see as He accomplished the Atonement?

Explain that the phrase “his seed” refers to those who believe the testimony of the prophets concerning Jesus Christ’s mission as the Redeemer (see Mosiah 15:10–13).

Invite a student to read Isaiah 53:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Isaiah said Jesus Christ would receive as a result of accomplishing the Atonement.

- What would Jesus Christ receive as a result of accomplishing the Atonement? (Explain that “a portion” and “spoil” refer to the inheritance of eternal life that Jesus Christ has received from Heavenly Father.)
- With whom will Jesus Christ share His inheritance? (Those who are “strong,” meaning those who are obedient to the commandments and made perfect through His Atonement; see D&C 76:69.)



Remind students that to receive the full blessings of the Savior's Atonement, we must exercise faith in Him, repent, receive the ordinances of the gospel, and keep our covenants. If we do not repent, then we must suffer and pay the penalty for our own sins (see D&C 19:16–19).

Ask students to reflect on the truths discussed in this lesson. You may want to invite them to write their testimonies of Jesus Christ and His Atonement in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Invite students to share their testimonies of the Savior with the class if they are willing to do so.

Encourage students to ponder what they are currently doing and what else they can do to receive the blessings of the Atonement. Invite them to set a personal goal to do all they can to qualify to receive these blessings.

### Scripture Mastery—Isaiah 53:3–5

*Note:* The following teaching idea could be used as a part of this lesson or on another day when you have extra time in class.

Invite students to carry the scripture mastery card for Isaiah 53:3–5 with them throughout the day. (Or they could write the passage on a piece of paper.) Invite students to review these verses throughout the day to help them remember the Savior's sacrifice for them and to encourage them to make righteous choices.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Isaiah 53:1. "Who hath believed our report?"

Isaiah 53 begins with two questions. The first, "Who hath believed our report?" invites the reader to examine whether he or she believes in the testimony of the prophets concerning the redeeming mission of Jesus Christ. The second question, "And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" invites the reader to consider whether he or she has experienced the redemptive power of the Savior's Atonement.

### Isaiah 53:4–9. "He Was Wounded for Our Transgressions"

"Jesus suffered and was crucified for men's transgressions. 'But few details of the actual crucifixion are given us. We know however that our Lord was nailed to the cross by spikes driven through the hands and feet, as was the Roman method, and not bound only by cords as was the custom in inflicting this form of punishment among some other nations. Death by crucifixion was at once the most lingering and most painful of all forms of execution. The victim lived in ever increasing torture, generally for many hours, sometimes for days. The spikes so cruelly driven through hands and feet penetrated

and crushed sensitive nerves and quivering tendons, yet inflicted no mortal wound. The welcome relief of death came through the exhaustion caused by intense and unremitting pain, through localized inflammation and congestion of organs incident to the strained and unnatural posture of the body.' [James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. (1916), 655.]

"But it was not just on the cross Christ suffered. In the Garden of Gethsemane He began the suffering that allowed Him to take the sins of the world upon Himself, or as Isaiah says, to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows (see Isaiah 53:4). Speaking of this suffering and pain, Elder Talmage wrote:

"'Christ's agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause. . . .

"'In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world' [*Jesus the Christ*, 613–14]" (*Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 197–98).

# Isaiah 54–57

## Introduction

The Lord spoke of the latter-day gathering of Israel and of His mercy toward those who repent. The Lord also

taught that His ways are higher than man's ways and condemned the wickedness of the Israelites.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 54:1–56:8

#### *The Lord speaks of His mercy and of the gathering of Israel*

Read the following scenario, and ask students to think about how they would respond:

Your friend has committed some serious sins over the past several months and has stopped attending church. After several weeks, you tell him he is missed and needed at church. He says, "There is no way the Lord would want me back after what I have done."

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they would respond to this friend. After sufficient time, inform them that they will have an opportunity to share what they wrote later in the lesson. Invite students to look for truths as they study Isaiah 54–55 that can help individuals who question whether they can return to the Lord after they have sinned.

To provide context for Isaiah's teachings in Isaiah 54–57, you may want to invite students to refer to the handout "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance" (see lesson 102). Explain that during Isaiah's life, he witnessed the scattering of the Northern Kingdom of Israel because of the wickedness of its people. He also prophesied that because of the wickedness of the kingdom of Judah, it too would be conquered. Summarize Isaiah 54:1–3 by explaining that the Lord spoke of the growth of the house of Israel that would occur in the last days after being gathered from its scattered condition.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 54:4–5 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord said gathered Israel would forget.

- What would gathered Israel forget? (Its shame and reproach, or disgrace, caused by unfaithfulness to the Lord.)

Explain that "the shame of thy youth" and "the reproach of thy widowhood" describe Israel's condition of separation from her close covenant relationship with the Lord.

- How did the Lord describe His relationship with Israel? (As a marriage in which He is the husband and Israel is the wife.)
- Why would it be comforting for Israel to know that her "husband" is the Redeemer and God of the whole earth?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 54:7–10. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a truth that would give the Israelites hope while they experienced the consequences of their sins.

- What would the Lord do for the Israelites? What words reflect His goodness?
- What truth can we learn from these verses about what the Lord seeks to do for those who sin? (**The Lord is merciful and seeks to gather back to Him those who have sinned.** Write this truth on the board.)

To help students understand why the Lord is merciful and seeks to gather back to Him those who have sinned, display a piece of paper money that is wrinkled and dirty.

- What was this money like when it was first printed?
- Would you still be interested in having this money even though it is wrinkled and dirty? Why?
- How can this money be likened to us? Why would the Lord still be merciful and seek to gather us back to Him when we sin? (Because we are valuable to Him.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for additional insight about God’s merciful nature.

“Surely the thing God enjoys most about being God is the thrill of being merciful, especially to those who don’t expect it and often feel they don’t deserve it” (“The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 33).

Ask students to refer to the responses they wrote to the scenario earlier in the lesson.

- How does what you wrote compare to the truth written on the board? (Invite several students to share what they wrote.)
- How would understanding this truth help the young man in the scenario?

Summarize Isaiah 54:11–55:7 by explaining that the Lord spoke of additional blessings the Israelites would receive when they are gathered back to Him. Invite students to read Isaiah 54:17 silently, looking for one of the blessings the Lord promised. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 55:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the invitations the Lord extended. Explain that wine and milk were symbols of abundance.

- What did the Lord invite His people to do? (He invited them to come unto Him to enjoy the eternal blessings He freely offers rather than waste their effort in worldly pursuits that do not provide true satisfaction.)

Summarize Isaiah 55:4–5 by explaining that after being gathered, the Lord’s covenant people will lead others, and nations will come to them because the Lord has glorified them.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 55:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what we must do to receive the Lord’s mercy.

- What principle can we learn from these verses about what we must do to receive the Lord’s mercy? (Make sure students identify the following principle: **If we return to the Lord, then He will have mercy on us.** You may want to suggest that students mark phrases in verses 6–7 that teach this truth.)
- What do you think it means that the Lord “will abundantly pardon”? (Isaiah 55:7). (He will fully forgive.)
- What do you think it means to return to the Lord when we have sinned?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what Elder Andersen taught about returning to the Lord.

“When we sin, we turn away from God. When we repent, we turn back toward God.

“The invitation to repent is rarely a voice of chastisement but rather a loving appeal to turn around and to ‘re-turn’ toward God” (“Repent . . . That I May Heal You,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 40).

- According to Elder Andersen, what does it mean to return to the Lord when we have sinned?
- How is the invitation to repent a manifestation of the Lord’s everlasting kindness?

Ask students to reflect silently on times when they have repented and experienced the Lord’s mercy. Testify that if we repent, the Lord will have mercy on us.

Invite students to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- What is one thing you will do to return to or come closer to the Lord?

Encourage students to commit to do what they wrote.

To prepare students to identify an additional doctrine taught in Isaiah 55, write the following events on the board. (As an alternative, you could write these events on pieces of paper before class. Divide the class into three groups. Give each group one of the papers, and ask them to briefly act out their assigned event. Invite the other students to guess which Old Testament event is being depicted.)

*The Israelites crossing the Red Sea to be delivered from Egyptian bondage (see Exodus 14).*

*The walls of Jericho falling down and its inhabitants being conquered by Israel (see Joshua 6).*

*Gideon’s army defeating the Midianite army (see Judges 7).*

### **Acknowledge students’ responses in a positive manner**

When a student gives a response, acknowledge it in some positive way. This can be a simple “thank you” or a comment about the answer. Doing so will help students feel listened to and valued. This can help students feel more comfortable sharing answers, insights, and experiences in the future.

Ask students:

- In what unique ways did the Lord accomplish His purposes in these events?
- What are some ways the people involved in these events could have tried to bring about these same outcomes on their own?

Invite students to ponder whether they have ever thought about doing something differently than the way the Lord directed or if they have wondered why the Lord directs His children to do things in a certain way.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 55:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord taught about His ways compared to man’s ways.

- What did the Lord teach about His ways compared to man’s ways?
- What do you think it means that the Lord’s thoughts and ways are higher than man’s thoughts and ways?
- Why are the Lord’s thoughts and ways higher than man’s thoughts and ways? (Write the following truth on the board: **The Lord is all-knowing and His ways are perfect.**)

Remind students of the events listed on the board, and ask:

- How do these events show that the Lord is all-knowing and that His ways are perfect?

To help students understand how this doctrine and Isaiah’s teachings relate to their lives, divide students into groups of two or three. Provide each group with a copy of the following chart. Instruct them to work in their groups to list the Lord’s ways and man’s ways for each of the topics listed. (You could select different topics that are more relevant to your students.)

	The Lord’s Ways	Man’s Ways
Choosing entertainment and media		
Dating		
Language		

After sufficient time, invite several students to report what their group discussed.

- How can we use the knowledge that the Lord is all-knowing and that His ways are perfect to help us when we must decide between the Lord’s ways and man’s ways in these and other situations?
- What blessings come from trusting and following the Lord’s ways in these situations?
- What experiences have helped you learn that the Lord is all-knowing and that His ways are perfect?

Summarize Isaiah 55:10–56:8 by explaining that the Lord assured His people that His words would be fulfilled. He promised that He would also gather and bless individuals who were not members of the house of Israel but who would love and serve the Lord and take “hold of [His] covenant” (Isaiah 56:4, 6).

### Isaiah 56:9–57:21

#### *The Lord speaks against the wickedness of the people*

Explain that in Isaiah 56:9–57:21, the Lord spoke against the wickedness of the people. He also taught about blessings the righteous would receive.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 57:13–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessings that those who trust the Lord will enjoy. You may need to explain that the word *contrite* in verse 15 means sorrowful.

- What blessings will those who trust the Lord receive?
- What do you think it means that the Lord will “revive the spirit of the humble, and . . . the heart of the contrite”? (Isaiah 57:15).

Review and testify of the truths discussed in today’s lesson. Invite students to share any additional insights they might have.

## LESSON 130

# Isaiah 58

### Introduction

The Jews wondered why the Lord did not acknowledge their fasting. Through Isaiah, the Lord taught the people about proper fasting and Sabbath observance.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 58

#### *The Lord teaches about proper fasting and Sabbath observance*

Invite students to imagine themselves in the following situation:

One Sunday morning, you prepare breakfast and are about to start eating when you realize that it is fast Sunday.

- What are the first thoughts that enter your mind?

To ensure students have a basic understanding of fasting, ask:

- What is fasting? (When members of the Church “fast,” they voluntarily go without food and drink for about 24 hours in order to draw closer to the Lord and seek His blessings.)
- When do Church members usually fast? (We can fast at any time, but “the Church designates one Sunday each month, usually the first Sunday, as a day of fasting” [*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), 67].)

Ask students to reflect on their feelings about fasting. Explain that some people wonder why the Lord has directed us to fast. Invite students to look for principles in Isaiah 58 that can help them understand why we fast and how fasting can be a source of spiritual power.

Summarize Isaiah 58:1–2 by explaining that the Lord directed Isaiah to boldly declare to the house of Jacob (or Israel) their sins. These sins included outwardly performing religious practices without sincere intent and thus acting as if they were a righteous nation that had not forsaken the Lord.

Explain that one law these Israelites outwardly practiced was fasting. Invite a student to read Isaiah 58:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the people asked the Lord about their fasting.

- What did the people ask the Lord about their fasting? (They wondered why He did not acknowledge their fasting.)

Point out that verses 3–4 record the Lord’s response to the people. He taught that rather than seeking to be repentant and draw closer to Him while they fasted, they sought worldly pleasures and engaged in worldly activities. Instead of showing compassion to others, they forced others to work, and they were irritable and contentious. The Lord said that because their intentions and actions were improper while they fasted, He would not acknowledge their prayers.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 58:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord questioned about the people’s fasting. Explain that a *bulrush* is a tall, thin grass that droops and that *sackcloth* is coarse material sometimes made from goat’s hair. In biblical times people often wore sackcloth or sat on sackcloth and ashes to symbolize their humility or sorrow.

- What did the Lord question about the people’s fasting? (He questioned whether the outward appearances of fasting reflected the proper spirit of the fast that He intended.)
- How might we make similar mistakes when we fast?

Invite students to note the first question the Lord asked as recorded in Isaiah 58:6.

- How would you phrase the Lord’s question in your own words?

### Isaiah 58:6–7

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we fast as the Lord intends, . . .* (Students will complete this statement with three different phrases during the lesson.)

Invite a student to read Isaiah 58:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord taught about the intended purposes of fasting.

- If we fast as the Lord intends, what can we do for others and ourselves? (Students may suggest a variety of answers, such as the following principle: **If we fast as the Lord intends, then we can help relieve others' burdens and receive relief from our own burdens.** Write the second part of this principle on the board.)
- What difference can it make if we fast with a specific righteous purpose?
- What are some examples of “bands of wickedness,” “heavy burdens,” oppression, or yokes that can be relieved when we fast?
- When have you seen the Lord relieve your own or others' burdens through fasting?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 58:7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for another intended purpose of fasting.

- What is another intended purpose of fasting? (Students should identify the following principle: **If we fast as the Lord intends, then we will care for the poor and needy.** Write the second part of this principle on the board.)
- How can we help care for the hungry, poor, and naked through fasting? (One way is through contributing fast offerings.)

Display a Tithing and Other Offerings form, and review the process of donating fast offerings.

To help the class understand how fast offerings are used, consider inviting a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Fast offerings are used for one purpose only: to bless the lives of those in need. Every dollar given to the bishop as a fast offering goes to assist the poor. When donations exceed local needs, they are passed along to fulfill the needs elsewhere” (“The Law of the Fast,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 74).

- What amount should we give for a fast offering? (Generally, at least the value of the two meals not eaten. Prophets have encouraged us to be generous when possible.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 58:8–12. Ask the class to follow along, looking for blessings the Lord promised for fasting as He intends.

- In your own words, how would you summarize these promised blessings for fasting as the Lord intends? (Students should express a principle similar to the following: **If we fast as the Lord intends, then He can bless us with light, health, righteousness, protection, revelation, and guidance.** Write the second part of this principle on the board.)
- When have you or someone you know experienced blessings similar to those listed in these verses by fasting as the Lord intends?

Invite students to consider whether they fast as the Lord intends. Ask them to write on pieces of paper a goal for one way they can improve their fasting. Encourage them to put this goal in a place where they can see it often before the next fast Sunday.

Explain that the Lord next taught the people about another law they were improperly observing. Then ask:

- What days of the week or year bring you a lot of joy?

Invite students to scan Isaiah 58:13, looking for the day the Lord associates with being a “delight,” or a source of great joy. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that Isaiah 58:13–14 records that the Lord taught a principle about the Sabbath that can make that day a source of great joy for us and a means of obtaining other blessings from Him.

Write the word *If* on the board. Invite a student to read Isaiah 58:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord taught about how to keep the Sabbath day holy. (You may want to remind students that *holy* means set apart or sanctified for God's purposes.)

- What did the Lord teach about how to keep the Sabbath day holy?
- What do you think the phrase “turn away thy foot . . . from doing thy pleasure on my holy day” means for us?

### Isaiah 58:13–14

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage. For an explanation of scripture mastery and a list of additional activities to help students master these selected passages, see the appendix at the end of this manual.

- How would you summarize the Lord's instructions in Isaiah 58:13 using the word *if*? (Write students' responses on the board next to *If*. One way to summarize the Lord's instructions is *If we honor the Lord by keeping the Sabbath day holy, . . .*)

Write the word *then* on the board. Invite a student to read Isaiah 58:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the blessings the Lord promised for keeping the Sabbath day holy.

Explain that the phrase "the high places of the earth" in verse 14 can refer to sacred places where revelation can be received and God's presence can be felt, such as chapels and temples of the Lord. The phrase "the heritage of Jacob" refers to the blessings promised to Jacob and his posterity.

- How would you summarize the blessings listed in Isaiah 58:14? (Write students' responses on the board next to *then*. Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we honor the Lord by keeping the Sabbath day holy, then we will have joy in our relationship with the Lord and obtain both temporal and spiritual blessings.**)

Divide students into groups of two or three. Invite students to imagine that several friends ask them what they can do with their time on the Sabbath so they will not be doing their "own ways" or seeking their "own pleasure" (Isaiah 58:13). Invite students to work in their groups to create a list of activities that would help their friends honor the Lord by keeping the Sabbath day holy. (You may want to invite students to review "Sabbath Day Observance" in *For the Strength of Youth*, 30–31, for additional ideas.)

After sufficient time, invite one student from each group to write his or her group's responses on the board.

- Which of these activities have helped you to be able to "call the sabbath a delight"? (Isaiah 58:13). Why?
- In what ways have you experienced joy and temporal and spiritual blessings as a result of honoring the Lord by keeping the Sabbath day holy?

Invite students to reflect on how they spent their previous Sabbath day. Ask them to take the piece of paper on which they wrote their goal for fasting and add to it a goal for one way they will better keep the upcoming Sabbath day holy. Explain that you may follow up with students on what they experience as a result of applying their goals related to fasting and keeping the Sabbath day holy.

### Scripture Mastery—Isaiah 58:6–7

To help students memorize Isaiah 58:6–7, invite a student to come to the board and draw an image or write a word representing each statement in the verses. Ask the class to help the student with ideas of what to draw or write. For example, the student might draw an open jail cell to represent the phrase "let the oppressed go free" or a blanket to represent covering the naked. After the student finishes drawing or writing, invite students to recite this passage together twice while looking at the verses. Then invite students to recite it twice while looking only at the images or words on the board. Consider taking a picture of these images or words and giving copies to students during the next class to further help them memorize this passage.

### Scripture Mastery—Isaiah 58:13–14

To help students memorize Isaiah 58:13–14, consider using one of the ideas presented in the appendix of this manual.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Isaiah 48–58 (Unit 26)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Isaiah 48–58 (unit 26) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson to the students. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Isaiah 48–50)

As students studied Isaiah's words to scattered Israel, they learned that if we hearken to the Lord's commandments, then we will have peace and that the Lord loves us, and He will never forget us. Students also learned that when we sin, we sell ourselves into captivity, but the Savior has the power to redeem us through His Atonement.

#### Day 2 (Isaiah 51–53)

In these chapters students discovered the following truths: As we remember our covenants and keep them, the Lord will bless us and comfort us. If the Lord's law is in our hearts, then we have no need to fear the mockery of others. When we repent and come unto the Lord, He will redeem us from our sins. When we share the message of the gospel, we offer joy to others.

#### Day 3 (Isaiah 54–57)

While learning about the gathering of Israel, students identified the truth that the Lord is merciful and seeks to gather those who sin back to Him. They also learned that the Lord is all-knowing and His ways are perfect.

#### Day 4 (Isaiah 58)

As they studied Isaiah 58, students learned about the great blessings they can receive as they fast in the way the Lord intends and as they honor Him by keeping the Sabbath day holy.

### Introduction

Isaiah 53 contains a prophecy of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Isaiah taught that the Savior would be despised and rejected, smitten and afflicted; that He would carry our sorrows; and that He would be wounded for our transgressions.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Isaiah 53:1–12

##### *Isaiah prophesies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ*

Before class, write the following question on the board: *When might someone be tempted to say, "No one understands what I am going through"?* Ask students to respond to this question.

Invite students as they study Isaiah 53 to look for truths that can help them when they experience difficulties and when they feel that no one understands their thoughts, feelings, or challenges.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 53:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases that describe the difficulties Isaiah prophesied Jesus Christ would experience during His life, including the agonizing trials connected with His atoning sacrifice. (You may want to remind students that Isaiah 53:3–5 is a scripture mastery passage.)

- What words or phrases describe the difficulties Jesus Christ experienced during His life?

As students respond to the preceding question, ask questions such as the following to help deepen their understanding of the words or phrases they mention:

- What might it mean that Jesus Christ grew up "as a root out of a dry ground"? (Isaiah 53:2). (One interpretation of the phrase "dry ground" is that it refers to the spiritual drought or apostasy that existed in Jesus's day, which had resulted from the wickedness of Jewish leaders and their followers [see 2 Nephi 10:3–5].)
- What do you think it means that "he hath no form nor comeliness; and . . . there is no beauty that we should desire him"? (Isaiah 53:2).

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith, who explained what it means that Jesus had "no beauty that we should desire him":

“There was nothing about [Jesus] to cause people to single him out. In appearance he was like men; and so it is expressed here by the prophet that he had no form or comeliness, that is, he was not so distinctive, so different from others that people would recognize him as the Son of God. He appeared as a mortal man” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:23).

- In what ways was Jesus Christ “despised and rejected of men” (Isaiah 53:3) during His life? (You might remind students that Jesus Christ was rejected by His own people and was spat upon, smitten, scourged [or whipped], and mocked during His trials and Crucifixion [see Matthew 26:67–68; 27:22–43].)
- According to verse 4, whose griefs and sorrows did Jesus Christ bear? (After students respond, write the following doctrine on the board: **Jesus Christ bore our griefs and carried our sorrows.**)
- Why is it important to know that the Savior has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows?

Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“There is no physical pain, no spiritual wound, no anguish of soul or heartache, no infirmity or weakness you or I ever confront in mortality that the Savior did not experience first. In a moment of weakness we may cry out, ‘No one knows what it is like. No one understands.’ But the Son of God perfectly knows and understands, for He has felt and borne our individual burdens. And because of His infinite and eternal sacrifice . . . , He has perfect empathy and can extend to us His arm of mercy. He can reach out, touch, succor, heal, and strengthen us to be more than we could ever be and help us to do that which we could never do relying only upon our own power” (“Bear Up Their Burdens with Ease,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2014, 90).

Ask students to ponder when they have felt the Savior comfort or strengthen them or help carry their griefs and sorrows. Invite a few of them to share their experiences with the class. (Remind students that they should not share any experiences that are too sacred or private.) You may also want to share an experience.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 53:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what else Jesus Christ suffered for us.

- In addition to our griefs and sorrows, what else did Jesus Christ suffer for us?

Display the picture Jesus Praying in Gethsemane (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 56; see also LDS.org). Explain that for every transgression or sin we commit, there is “a punishment affixed” (Alma 42:18). This punishment includes guilt, pain, misery, and separation from God (see 2 Nephi 9:7–9). The phrase “the chastisement of our peace was upon him” in Isaiah 53:5 means that Jesus Christ suffered the punishment (the penalty) for our sins so we could experience forgiveness and peace. The phrase “with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5) means that because of Jesus Christ’s suffering, we can be healed from the wounds of our sins and the consequences of the Fall of Adam and Eve, including spiritual and physical death.

- How would you summarize Isaiah’s teachings in verse 5? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ suffered for the transgressions and iniquities of all so that we can be forgiven and healed.** Using students’ words, write this doctrine on the board.)

To help students better understand the extent of the Savior’s suffering, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency:

“No man knows the full weight of what our Savior bore, but by the power of the Holy Ghost we can know something of the supernal gift He gave us. . . .

“He suffered so much pain, ‘indescribable anguish,’ and ‘overpowering torture’ [John Taylor, *The Mediation and Atonement* (1882), 150] for our sake. His profound suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, where He took upon Himself all the sins of all other mortals, caused Him ‘to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit’ [D&C 19:18]. . . .

“Our Redeemer took upon Himself all the sins, pains, infirmities, and sicknesses of all who have ever lived and will ever live. No one has ever suffered in any degree what He did” (“The Atonement: Our Greatest Hope,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 19).

To help students understand the truth and importance of the doctrine they identified, ask them to reread Isaiah 53:5–6 silently and to substitute their names for the words *our*, *we*, and *us*.

- What feelings do you have for the Savior as you consider that He suffered the penalty for your sins?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Isaiah 53:7–12. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words or phrases that help us further understand what Jesus Christ experienced as part of His Atonement.

- What else did the Savior experience as part of His Atonement?
- According to verse 10, whom did Jesus Christ see as He accomplished the Atonement?

Explain that the phrase “his seed” refers to those who believe the testimony of the prophets concerning Jesus Christ’s mission as the Redeemer (see Mosiah 15:10–13).

Invite students to share their testimonies of the Savior with the class if they are willing to do so. You may want to add your testimony as well. Invite students to seek to receive the blessings of the Atonement in their lives.

### Next Unit (Isaiah 59–Jeremiah 33)

Ask students: What is the difference between a hunter and a fisher and the amount of food they can provide? Why does the Lord need hunters today? Ask students if they have ever wondered about their existence before they were born. What did God know about us before we came to earth? Explain that in their study of Isaiah 59–Jeremiah 33, they will learn truths about their premortal existence and the important tasks the Lord wants them to accomplish in this life.

# Isaiah 59–66

## Introduction

Isaiah taught the Israelites that their sins had separated them from God. Isaiah prophesied of the last days, the

role of the promised Messiah, the Second Coming, and the Millennium.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Isaiah 59

#### *Isaiah teaches that Israel's sins have separated them from God*

Read the following scenario: A young woman meets with her bishop and confesses that she has repeatedly broken the Word of Wisdom. She describes how she has lost the trust of her parents, was removed from a school club because her grades have become poor, and does not feel the influence of the Spirit in her life anymore. She adds, "I don't understand why God has made my life so hard and has abandoned me."

Ask students to ponder how they would respond to this young woman.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 59:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a principle that Isaiah taught the people about how their sins had affected them. You may need to explain that the phrase "the Lord's hand is not shortened" means that the Lord's power to save has not decreased.

- What principle did Isaiah teach about the effects of sin on a person's relationship with God? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **when we sin, we separate ourselves from God.**)

Invite a volunteer to come to the front of the class. Write the word *God* on the board, and ask the volunteer to stand facing it. Explain that in this position, this student represents people who honor their covenants and follow God.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 59:3–4, 7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the sins the people had committed. Ask the volunteer to turn away from and then take a step away from the board for each sin that is mentioned in answer to the following questions. The volunteer will remain standing and continue to take steps away from the board until students identify the principle for this section of the lesson.

- What sins had the people committed?
- Why do you think committing these sins would separate someone from God?
- Which of these sins are prevalent in our day?

Invite students to read Isaiah 59:8–10 silently, looking for effects of being separated from God.

- What did the Israelites experience because their sins had separated them from God? (You may want to explain that they were blindly groping or searching in the darkness for anything to help guide them, like a wall or a fence.)
- Why would being separated from God cause us to walk in darkness or to grope and stumble as if we had no sight?

Invite a student to read Isaiah 59:11–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the people would further recognize about the effects of their sins.

- What would the Israelites recognize about the effects of their sins? (Salvation was far from them, their sins testified against them, and by sinning they had departed from God. Point out the distance between the volunteer and the board.)

Remind students of the scenario presented at the beginning of the lesson and ask:

- How could recognizing that she had separated herself from God through sin help the young woman in the scenario?

### Use a variety of methods and approaches

Using a variety of teaching methods can help reach students who learn in different ways. Teaching methods or learning activities that require students to use a variety of senses, such as seeing, hearing, and touching, can help improve students' participation and recollection of what is taught.

Invite students to ponder whether they feel separated from God and what hope exists for us when we feel separated from Him.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 59:16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord saw that the people needed.

- What did the Lord see that His people needed? (An intercessor.)

Explain that an intercessor is someone who intervenes to help settle differences between two people or groups. When we sin, we disrupt our relationship with God, and a penalty must be paid to restore harmony and balance to the relationship. However, we are unable to pay the penalty ourselves and need someone to intercede on our behalf to satisfy the demands of God’s justice.

- According to verse 16, who became the intercessor? (The Lord. You may need to explain that the phrase “his arm brought salvation unto him” means the Lord brought salvation to man [see verse 16, footnote *d*].)

Invite a student to stand between the volunteer and the board. Have this student hold an image of Jesus Christ (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 1; see also LDS.org).

Summarize Isaiah 59:17–19 by explaining that Isaiah described how the Lord would punish His enemies.

Invite students to read Isaiah 59:20 silently, looking for the title Isaiah used for the Lord. Ask students to report what they find.

- How would you explain the Savior’s role as our Redeemer?
- What phrase from Isaiah 59:20 teaches what we need to do so the Lord can intercede for us and redeem us? What does the phrase “turn from transgression” mean?

Invite the first volunteer to turn back toward the board and return to it.

- How do these actions represent repentance?

Ask the volunteer to write the following incomplete principle on the board: *If we repent of our sins, . . .* Then ask the student holding the picture of the Savior to complete the principle on the board so it reads, **If we repent of our sins, then the Lord will intercede for us and redeem us.** Thank these students and invite them to return to their seats.

- Why do you think our repentance is needed for the Lord to intercede for us and redeem us?

Ask students to write a response to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals:

- If you could personally express your gratitude to the Savior for interceding for you and redeeming you, what would you tell Him?

Invite students who are willing to share what they wrote to do so. Ask students to ponder whether there is anything in their life they need to repent of. Encourage them to begin the process.

## Isaiah 60–61

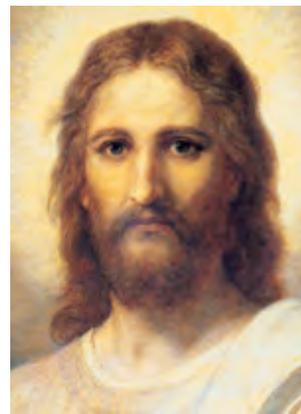
### *Isaiah prophecies of the last days and of the Messiah*

Summarize Isaiah 60 by explaining that Isaiah prophesied of events that would occur in the last days and during and after the Millennium.

Explain that in Isaiah 61, Isaiah spoke of the Savior’s mission. You may want to suggest that students write Luke 4:16–21 as a cross-reference in their scriptures next to Isaiah 61:1–2. These verses in Luke give an account of when the Savior read from Isaiah 61:1–2 during His mortal ministry and declared that the prophecy contained in those verses would be fulfilled in Him.

Invite a student to read Isaiah 61:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for different parts of the Savior’s mission. You might want to point out the phrase “the Lord hath anointed me,” and explain that the title *Messiah* means “anointed one,” referring to the one chosen by God to lead and deliver His people.

- What are some of the “good tidings,” or good news, the Savior preached and continues to preach?
- How did the Savior “bind up the brokenhearted” during His mortal ministry? How does He continue to do so in our day?



- How does the Savior bring “liberty to the captives” and open “the prison to them that are bound”? How can this relate to spirits in the postmortal spirit world? (see D&C 138:11–12, 15–18, 29–31).

Invite a student to read Isaiah 61:2–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Savior does for those who mourn. Explain that the “day of vengeance” refers to the day when God punishes the wicked and rewards the righteous.

- What does the Savior do for those who mourn?

Help students understand the phrase “beauty for ashes” (Isaiah 61:3) by explaining that the Israelites had a custom of pouring ashes on their heads when deeply saddened, as in times of ruin, hopelessness, death, and despair. God promised to replace the ashes with “beauty,” referring to a beautiful head covering or crown of beauty, and to replace mourning with “joy” and sadness with “praise.”

- Based on Isaiah 61:1–3, how would you summarize Jesus Christ’s mission as the promised Messiah in your own words? (Though students’ answers may vary, help them identify a truth similar to the following: **As the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ preaches hope, heals, liberates, and comforts.**)
- Which of these roles of the Savior have special meaning for you? Why?

Summarize the remainder of Isaiah 61 by explaining that Isaiah spoke of Zion being built up in the last days. Isaiah also spoke of the Lord making an everlasting covenant with him and with the people and clothing them in “the garments of salvation” (Isaiah 61:10).

## Isaiah 62–66

### *Isaiah prophecies of the Second Coming of the Savior and the Millennium*

Explain that the final chapters in the book of Isaiah contain Isaiah’s teachings and prophecies about the redemption of the Lord’s people in the last days, the Savior’s Second Coming, and the Millennium. As an example of a prophecy about the Second Coming, invite a student to read Isaiah 63:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to look for the color of the Savior’s clothing when He returns to the earth.

- What color will the Savior’s clothing be when He returns to the earth?

Inform students that the red color of the Savior’s garments represents the blood of the wicked who will be destroyed when justice is poured out upon them at the Second Coming. It can also remind the righteous of the blood Jesus shed on their behalf (see D&C 133:46–53).

Invite a student to read Isaiah 64:1–2. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord’s people will pray for in the last days. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that the Millennium will begin following the Second Coming. Assign half of the class to read Isaiah 65:17–20 silently and the other half to read Isaiah 65:21–25 silently. Ask them to look for what conditions on earth will be like for the Lord’s people during the Millennium. (You may want to explain that the Joseph Smith Translation provides the following clarification for Isaiah 65:20: “For the child shall not die, but shall live to be an hundred years old.”)

- How would you summarize what conditions will be like for the Lord’s people during the Millennium? (Students should identify the following truth: **During the Millennium the Lord’s people will enjoy happiness, peace, and prosperity.**)
- What are some things we can do to enjoy happiness, peace, and prosperity now?

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the goodness of the Lord in providing His people with happiness, peace, and prosperity.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Jeremiah

### Why study this book?

The book of Jeremiah contains the prophecies, warnings, and teachings that were part of the prophet Jeremiah's ministry to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Because many of Jerusalem's leaders and people rejected Jeremiah and other prophets and continued to sin, Jerusalem was destroyed and many Jews were taken captive to Babylon. This book illustrates that the covenant between God and Israel does not make God's people invincible. If they do not fulfill their part of the covenant and heed the Lord's word, they withdraw themselves from God's care and protection.

As students study this book, they will deepen their understanding of the covenant between the Lord and His people. By studying the Lord's work to restore His people and help them overcome the effects of their sins, students can learn of the Lord's power to save and bless us. Students can also learn from Jeremiah's example that each of us has God-given responsibilities to accomplish in this life and that the Lord will help us fulfill these responsibilities as we turn to Him, regardless of how difficult those responsibilities may be.

### Who wrote this book?

Jeremiah is responsible for much of the content of this book, but he likely used scribes to record his words as he dictated them (see Jeremiah 36:4). Jeremiah was born into a family of priests and preached to the Southern Kingdom of Judah for approximately 40 years, seeking to "stem . . . the tide of idolatry and immorality" (Bible Dictionary, "Jeremiah"). He was eventually imprisoned in Jerusalem (see Jeremiah 37:15; 1 Nephi 7:14), and "after the fall of Jerusalem [around 586 B.C.], the Jews who escaped into Egypt took Jeremiah with them (Jer. 43:5–6), where, according to tradition, they stoned him to death" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Jeremiah"; scriptures.lds.org).

### When and where was it written?

Jeremiah began his ministry in 626 B.C., the thirteenth year of the reign of King Josiah (see Jeremiah 1:1–2), and continued to preach until after the downfall of Jerusalem in approximately 586 B.C.

(see Bible Dictionary, "Jeremiah"). His preaching overlapped with the ministries of other prophets, including Lehi (see 1 Nephi 1:4, 18–20), Zephaniah (see Zephaniah 1:1), and Urijah (see Jeremiah 26:20–24). Some of Jeremiah's words were recorded before the destruction of Jerusalem (see Jeremiah 36:32).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Most prophetic books in the Old Testament focus primarily on the word of the Lord as revealed by the prophets but not on the lives of the prophets themselves. The book of Jeremiah is an exception. In addition to including Jeremiah's prophecies, the book contains biographical information about Jeremiah and insights into the emotional and mental anguish he sometimes experienced as he ministered in the midst of so much opposition (see Jeremiah 8:18–9:2; 15:15–18; 20:7–9; 26; 32; 37–38).

The book also addresses the doctrine of foreordination, which teaches that the Lord calls individuals to fulfill certain responsibilities and assignments in mortality. The Lord told Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee . . . and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5). Knowing that the Lord had intended him to be a prophet in difficult times may have given Jeremiah the strength and faith he needed to preach the Lord's word in the face of persecution.

A theme that runs throughout the book of Jeremiah is that just as the Lord had watched over His people as they experienced destruction, He would also gather, restore, and strengthen them (see Jeremiah 31:28). In one revelation recorded in the book of Jeremiah, the Lord said He would make "a new covenant" with His people, meaning the new and everlasting covenant of the gospel established by Jesus Christ during His ministry and restored in the latter days (Jeremiah 31:31–33; see also D&C 22:1; 66:2). Jeremiah also prophesied that in the latter days, the Lord would send forth fishers and hunters to gather Israel to Him, an event that would be more impressive to those who witnessed it than the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt (see Jeremiah 16:14–16).

Jeremiah "dwells much on the *inwardness* of the Lord's relation to the mind of His servants. External service is useless where there is no devotion of heart and life; superficial reforms were of no avail—a complete regeneration in the national life was required" (see Bible Dictionary, "Jeremiah").

### Outline

**Jeremiah 1–6** Jeremiah preaches during the reign of Josiah and prophesies that Jerusalem will be destroyed by a great and merciful nation.

**Jeremiah 7–20** Jeremiah preaches in various places in Jerusalem, including at the gate of the temple, using various metaphors to plead with the people to amend their ways.

**Jeremiah 21–38** Jeremiah preaches during the reign of King Zedekiah and prophesies that Babylon will conquer Jerusalem. Those who survive and are taken to Babylon will live in captivity there for 70 years. In the last days, the Messiah will return, reign, and gather His people unto Him.

**Jeremiah 39–44** Jerusalem is conquered, and many Jews are taken captive to Babylon. The Jews who remain in Judah reject Jeremiah's warnings and trust in Egypt.

**Jeremiah 45** Jeremiah promises Baruch, his scribe, that the Lord will preserve Baruch's life.

**Jeremiah 46–52** Jeremiah prophesies concerning the destruction of the Philistines, Moabites, Babylonians, and other foreign peoples.

# Jeremiah 1–6

## Introduction

During the reign of King Josiah, God called Jeremiah, explaining that he was foreordained to be a prophet to the nations of the world and to preach repentance to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The people had

forsaken the Lord and were worshipping other gods. Jeremiah prophesied that the people of Judah would suffer at the hands of an opposing nation as a punishment for their sins.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Jeremiah 1

#### *God calls Jeremiah as a prophet to preach repentance to the Southern Kingdom of Judah*

Before class, write the following question on the board: *What are some things you hope to do during your life?* Invite students to write their responses to this question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

After sufficient time, invite several students who are willing to report to the class what they wrote. Ask students to ponder whether there are specific tasks they are meant to accomplish in their lives. Explain that God revealed to a prophet named Jeremiah truths about his mission on the earth. Invite students to look for truths in Jeremiah 1 that can help them understand their purposes on the earth.

Summarize Jeremiah 1:1–3 by explaining that in the thirteenth year of the reign of King Josiah, who ruled over the Southern Kingdom of Judah, Jeremiah received a revelation from the Lord. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 1:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah learned about his relationship with God.

- What did Jeremiah learn about himself and his relationship with God?
- What can we learn about ourselves from the fact that God knew Jeremiah before he was born? (Students may use different words, but be sure it is clear that **before we were born, our Heavenly Father knew us and we existed as His spirit children.**)
- According to verse 5, when did the Lord appoint Jeremiah to be a prophet?

Explain that Jeremiah’s experience of being ordained before he was born is known as *foreordination*. To help students better understand what foreordination means, share the following statement:

“The doctrine of foreordination applies to all members of the Church, not just to the Savior and His prophets. Before the creation of the earth, faithful women were given certain responsibilities and faithful men were foreordained to certain priesthood duties. Although you do not remember that time, you surely agreed to fulfill significant tasks in the service of your Father. As you prove yourself worthy, you will be given opportunities to fulfill the assignments you then received” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 70).

Write the phrase *Before we were born, . . .* on the board.

- Based on what you have learned about foreordination, how would you complete this statement? (Students may use different words but should identify the following truth: **Before we were born, we were given specific responsibilities and duties to perform during mortality.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)
- What are some of the responsibilities and duties that the Lord may have ordained His children to do in this life?
- In what ways can we identify the specific duties or responsibilities we are to perform during mortality?

In response to the previous question, students may have mentioned receiving patriarchal blessings. You may want to invite students who have received patriarchal blessings to

### Jeremiah 1:4–5

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

describe what they felt as they learned about some of their foreordained responsibilities and duties. (Students should not share specific details from their patriarchal blessings in a public situation like a seminary classroom; however, they may share their feelings about their blessings.)

Encourage students who have not yet received their patriarchal blessings to ponder what they should do to prepare to receive theirs.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 1:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jeremiah responded when he learned God had foreordained him to be a prophet.

- How did Jeremiah respond to the Lord?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Jeremiah 1:7–10. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord promised to help Jeremiah.

- Which specific promises might have been comforting for Jeremiah to hear? How might these promises have helped him?
- According to verse 9, how did the Lord help Jeremiah overcome his concerns about speaking?
- What can we learn from this experience about what the Lord will do for those He calls to His work? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but make sure they understand the following truth: **When God calls us to do His work, He will help us do what He has asked.**)
- What are some examples of the work the Lord has called us to do? When has the Lord helped you do the work He has called you to do?

Summarize Jeremiah 1:11–16 by explaining that the Lord revealed to Jeremiah that a nation would come from the north and inflict judgments on the people in consequence of their wickedness.

Ask students to imagine they are in the prophet Jeremiah’s position. Invite them to read Jeremiah 1:17–19 silently, looking for additional ways the Lord promised to help Jeremiah. Ask students to discuss what they found with a partner.

## Jeremiah 2–3

### *The Lord declares the wickedness of Judah and Israel*

Invite students to look at the chart “The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance” at the end of lesson 102 and find “Jeremiah.”

- Who else was preaching around the same time as Jeremiah?

Explain that Jeremiah, Lehi, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk were some of the prophets commanded to tell the Jews that they must repent of their wickedness or be conquered by another nation. Summarize Jeremiah 2:1–12 by explaining that the Lord declared through Jeremiah that His people had loved Him when He had delivered them out of Egypt and given them a promised land. Now, however, the people had gone astray by worshipping idols and had defiled the land.

Explain that the Lord then taught about the people’s spiritual condition using the image of a water container. Bring to class two containers that can store water, and ensure that one has a very large hole in the bottom. Hold up these two containers.

- If you were going to store water, which of these would be more useful? Why?

Explain that the Lord referred to cisterns, or large containers that hold water, as He taught Jeremiah about the people’s weakened spiritual condition. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 2:13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the two evils the people had committed.

- What two evils had the people committed?
- Whom does “the fountain of living waters” represent? (Jesus Christ.)
- In what ways is the Lord like a “fountain of living waters”?

Explain that the broken cisterns represented the false gods the Israelites had chosen to worship instead of the Lord.

- What did the Lord teach about false gods by comparing them to broken cisterns that cannot hold water? (False gods do not have the power to help us or to satisfy our needs and desires.)
- What can we learn from this analogy?

Explain that Jeremiah 2:14–3:5 records that the Lord taught that the people’s wickedness would bring them great sorrow and that the false gods they had chosen would not save or help them (see Jeremiah 2:28).

Summarize Jeremiah 3:6–11 by explaining that the Lord compared the kingdoms of Israel and Judah to two sisters. One sister (Judah) watched the other sister (Israel) refuse to listen to the prophets and saw her ultimately reject the Lord. As a result of this rejection, the Northern Kingdom of Israel had been destroyed by the Assyrians in the century before Jeremiah was born, and the Southern Kingdom of Judah had witnessed it. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 3:10 aloud. Ask the class to look for how the Lord described what Judah did after the destruction of Israel.

- How did Judah respond after seeing Israel suffer for not turning to the Lord?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 3:12–13, 22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord invited His people to do. (You may need to explain that the word *backsliding* refers to reverting to faithlessness, sinfulness, or slothfulness.)

- According to verse 12, what did the Lord invite His people to do?
- What doctrine of the gospel involves returning to the Lord from a sinful condition?
- According to verse 22, what did the Lord promise those who repent and come unto Him? (Although students may use different words, be sure it is clear that **if we repent and come unto the Lord with our whole hearts, He will heal our waywardness.**)
- How does the Lord heal us and help us resist temptations?

To help students feel the truth and importance of this principle, testify that as we turn to the Lord with our whole hearts, He will help us to change and not repeat sins of the past. Invite students to consider sins in their lives they may need to be healed of, and encourage them to turn to the Lord.

## Jeremiah 4–6

### *Judah will suffer at the hands of another nation for failing to repent*

Summarize Jeremiah 4–6 by explaining that Jeremiah pled with the people to repent. He warned them about the consequences they would experience if they did not repent. Ask students to silently read the chapter headings for Jeremiah 5 and 6, as well as Jeremiah 5:25, looking for some of these consequences. Invite them to report what they find.

Explain that although God loves us and wants to spare us unnecessary pain, we bring pain upon ourselves when we sin. The Lord allowed the Israelites to suffer many of the consequences of their wickedness (see Jeremiah 2:17; 4:18; 7:19). However, He also promised that He would not allow the people to be completely destroyed (see Jeremiah 5:10, 18).

### Scripture Mastery—Jeremiah 1:4–5

To help students memorize Jeremiah 1:4–5, use the One-Word Race idea from the appendix. Challenge the class to say both verses of Jeremiah 1:4–5, one word per student at a time. Time the class, and give them multiple tries to achieve a target time. You may choose to repeat this activity several times during the week. After students have become familiar with the verses, invite them to recite the passage aloud. Remember that one key to memorization and scripture mastery is repetition.

## LESSON 133

# Jeremiah 7–16

### Introduction

God commanded Jeremiah to stand at the gate of the temple and tell the people of Judah to repent. Jeremiah prophesied that they would suffer at the hands of a

conquering nation but that the day would come that Israel would be gathered and again become the Lord's people.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Jeremiah 7:1–16:13

#### *Jeremiah stands at the gate of the temple and calls the people to repentance*

Provide students with copies of the following statements, or write them on the board. Ask students to read each statement carefully and determine whether the statement is true, partly true, or false. Invite them to record their answers on pieces of paper.

\_\_\_\_\_ If I go to Church, pay my tithing, and do baptisms for the dead with my ward, then I will be ready for the Savior's Second Coming.

\_\_\_\_\_ Partaking of the sacrament automatically cleanses me from sin each week.

Explain that you will discuss students' responses to these statements later in the lesson. Invite students to look for principles as they study Jeremiah 7–16 that can give them greater insight into these statements.

Remind students that God had called Jeremiah as a prophet to warn the people of Judah that unless they repented, they would be conquered by another nation. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 7:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for where the Lord told Jeremiah to stand while declaring the Lord's message.

- Where was Jeremiah told to preach?

Invite a student to stand and read Jeremiah 7:3–11 as though he or she were Jeremiah, delivering the Lord's message to a multitude of people at the temple gate. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord told the people through Jeremiah.

- According to verse 3, what did the Lord say to those who were coming to the temple? What does it mean to "amend your ways and your doings"?
- According to verses 8–11, what sins were the Jews committing?
- Based on the Lord's words in verses 3–11, how would you describe the spiritual condition of the people, even though they were coming to offer sacrifice at the temple?

Explain that many of the Jews in Jeremiah's day behaved as though worshipping at the temple made them righteous, regardless of whatever else they did.

- According to verse 7, what did the Lord promise the people if they would amend their ways? (They could remain in the promised land.)

Summarize Jeremiah 7:12–20 by explaining that the Lord reminded the people that the tabernacle in Shiloh had been destroyed and that the people of the Northern Kingdom had been taken away captive. The Lord then warned that the temple in Jerusalem would not protect the people of Judah from destruction if they did not repent.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 7:21–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord said was more important than the sacrifices the people offered at the temple.

- What is more important to the Lord than sacrifices? What did He promise the people if they would obey His voice and walk in His ways?
- What principles can we learn from the Lord's words that Jeremiah delivered at the gate of the temple? (Students may identify principles such as the following: **Religious**

### *Allow students to identify a variety of doctrines and principles*

Learning to identify gospel doctrines and principles found in the scriptures takes thoughtful effort and practice. Teachers should diligently help students acquire the ability to identify doctrines and principles on their own. In order to help students phrase these doctrines and principles, you might give students time to write down those that they identify before they report what they have found.

**worship and practices alone cannot save us if we do not keep God’s commandments; if we repent and obey God’s voice, then He will be our God and we will be His people; if we strive to walk in all of God’s ways, then it will be well with us.**

(Consider writing students’ responses on the board.)

- What is the danger in believing that we can obey the Lord’s voice in some things but willfully disobey in others?

Review the statements students evaluated at the beginning of the lesson.

- What have you learned that gives insight into these statements? (Help students understand that each of the statements can be only partly true. In each case, outward observance of only some commandments is insufficient. Salvation comes through inward conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ, faith in His Atonement, and sincerely striving to obey all of His commandments.)

Write the following references on the board, and assign students to read one or more of the referenced scripture passages so that each passage is read. Ask students to look for several ways the people were choosing to disobey God’s commandments.

*Jeremiah 7:24–26, 30–31*

*Jeremiah 8:5–6, 12*

*Jeremiah 9:3–6*

*Jeremiah 11:9–10*

*Jeremiah 12:10–11; 13:27* (Explain that the term *pastors* in this passage refers to false prophets and that the phrase “layeth it to heart” means “pays attention” [Jeremiah 12:11, footnote *a*].)

After students have finished reading, invite a few students to report what they learned.

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *If we refuse to walk in God’s ways,*

*then . . .* Write the following references on the board. Ask students to choose one of the passages and read it silently, looking for the consequences that Jeremiah prophesied would come to the people because they disobeyed the Lord.

*Jeremiah 9:13–16*

*Jeremiah 15:5–7* (Explain that the phrase “fan them” means the Lord would scatter them [see Jeremiah 15:7, footnote *a*].)

*Jeremiah 16:13*

Invite students to report what they found. Explain that the results of our sins are not always temporal, but sin always brings us spiritual harm. Then ask students how they would complete the statement on the board using what they learned in these verses. Use their responses to complete the principle on the board. One way to complete the principle is **if we refuse to walk in God’s ways, then we will bring serious consequences on ourselves.**

To prepare students to identify another principle in Jeremiah 9, list the words *worldly wisdom*, *strength*, and *riches* on the board. Ask students to explain why people may love and seek for these things.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 9:23–24 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord wants His people to “glory in,” or seek for and value.

- Instead of worldly wisdom, strength, or riches, what did the Lord want His people to glory in? (Understanding and knowing the Lord and His attributes.)
- What truth can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify something similar to the following principle: **It is more valuable to know the Lord and understand His attributes than to pursue worldly interests.**)
- Why do you think it is more valuable to know the Lord and understand His attributes than to pursue worldly interests?

If possible, provide students with copies of the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask a student to read it aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for reasons why knowing Jesus Christ is a great treasure.

“The more we know of Jesus, the more we will love Him. The more we know of Jesus, the more we will trust Him. The more we know of Jesus, the more we will want to be like Him

and to be with Him by becoming the manner of men and women that He wishes us to be (see 3 Ne. 27:27)” (“Plow in Hope,” *Ensign*, May 2001, 60).

You may want to point out that the opposite is also true: the less we know of Jesus Christ, the less we will love Him, trust Him, and want to be like Him. The wicked people of Jeremiah’s time were a poignant example of this as they refused to know the Lord (see Jeremiah 9:3, 6).

- In what ways are you seeking to better know the Savior and understand His attributes?

### Jeremiah 16:14–21

#### *Jeremiah prophesies of the gathering of the house of Israel in the last days*

Show a picture of Moses parting the Red Sea, or describe this event to students.

- What thoughts might you have had if you had been there to experience the parting of the Red Sea?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 16:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what event people would witness in the latter days that would be as miraculous as the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.

- What did Jeremiah prophesy that the Lord would do in the latter days? (You may need to explain that bringing up the children of Israel from the north and from other lands means that the Lord will gather the descendants of Israel, bringing them to the knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to membership in His Church. Jeremiah also prophesied that in the last days the Gentiles would seek to know the truth about God and would be gathered along with the descendants of Israel [see Jeremiah 16:19–21].)

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 16:16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for whom the Lord said He would use to help gather the house of Israel.

- Whom did the Lord say He would use to help gather Israel? (After students respond, write *Fishers and Hunters* on the board.)
- Who do you think the words *fishers* and *hunters* refer to? (They refer to those who help gather Israel through missionary work. As we perform missionary work, these words can refer to us.)

To help students understand how missionaries are like fishers and hunters, explain how fishers use nets.

- What skills or characteristics do fishers and hunters need to be successful? (Write students’ responses to these questions on the board under *Fishers and Hunters*. As students respond, you may want to ask them to explain why the skills and characteristics they mention are important.)
- How are the skills and characteristics needed to fish and hunt similar to the skills and characteristics we need to be successful in missionary work?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 16:21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the outcome of this great missionary effort. Ask students to report what they find.

- From this prophecy, what can we learn about our efforts to help others come to know the Lord? (After students respond, write the following on the board: **As we labor diligently to share the gospel with others, we can help them come to know the power of the true and living God.**)
- What are some examples of ways we can diligently seek to share the gospel with others?

Invite students to relate experiences when they have shared the gospel with someone. You might also share a personal experience and testify of this principle.

Invite students to make diligent efforts to share the gospel and their testimonies of the Savior with others.



# Jeremiah 17–29

## Introduction

The Lord commanded Jeremiah to warn the people in Jerusalem that unless they repented, the city would be destroyed. Because of this preaching, Jeremiah was

smitten and imprisoned by the people. He wrote a letter to the captives already in Babylon, warning them against false prophets and offering encouragement.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Jeremiah 17

*Jeremiah stands in the entrance of the city and warns the people to heed the Sabbath day*

Before class, draw or display pictures of two landscapes on the board, one dry and parched and the other fertile with a river.



- If you were to live in one of these locations, which would you choose? Why?

Explain that these landscapes could represent the spiritual condition of our lives. Invite students to consider whether the spiritual condition of their lives is more like a desert or a fertile valley or somewhere in between.

Invite students to look for principles in Jeremiah 17–29 that can make their lives richer and more fruitful, like the fertile landscape.

Summarize Jeremiah 17:1–4 by explaining that through Jeremiah the Lord told the people of Judah that they would be forced out of the promised land to serve their enemies elsewhere.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 17:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Jews would be cursed. Explain that a *heath* is a small, scraggly tree with a gnarled stem and needlelike leaves. Jeremiah used this gloomy-looking tree to make his point.

- According to verse 5, what actions would bring about the curse of being like a scraggly tree in the desert? (Write students' responses on the board under the image of the desert landscape.)
- What are some examples of the behaviors listed in verse 5? How might doing these things be similar to living in a desert?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 17:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's description of those who trust in Him rather than in man.

- How did the Lord describe those who trust in Him?
- What could the waters represent in this imagery?

Summarize Jeremiah 17:9–20 by explaining that Jeremiah prayed, expressing his hope in the Lord. The Lord told Jeremiah to stand at the gates of Jerusalem and preach to the inhabitants of the city. You may want to explain that in ancient times, the gates of a city were places where business was transacted and where laws were made and enforced.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 17:21–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah was commanded to tell the people at the gates of Jerusalem.

- What did the Lord command Jeremiah to tell the people?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 17:24–25 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what would happen if the Jews kept the Sabbath day holy.

- What did the Lord promise the Jews if they kept the Sabbath day holy? (He would preserve them and help them prosper.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about keeping the Sabbath day holy? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we keep the Sabbath day holy, then the Lord will preserve us and help us prosper.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board under the image of the fertile landscape.)

Ask students to read Jeremiah 17:27 silently, looking for what would happen if the Jews continued to break the Sabbath. Invite students to report what they find.

- Why do you think honoring the Sabbath day in particular was so important for Jeremiah to teach to the Jews?

### Jeremiah 18:1–19:13

#### *God uses the art of making pottery to teach Jeremiah that the Israelites can repent and avoid destruction*

Bring to class a lump of soft clay. Invite a student to quickly form a pot out of the clay in front of the class. If you do not have clay, ask students to imagine they are creating a pot out of soft clay.

- What can you do if you do not like the look of the pot you have just made?

Ask the student to start over and form another pot. Explain that the Lord used the art of making pottery to teach Jeremiah about the house of Israel. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Jeremiah 18:1–6. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God taught Jeremiah.

- Using the art of making pottery, what did God teach Jeremiah about the house of Israel?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 18:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews needed to do so that God would reshape them into a mighty nation. You may want to draw students' attention to verse 8, footnote *b*, and explain that God was not repenting; He was revoking the punishment.

- If the Lord has warned a nation that it will be destroyed, what can the people do to be spared and reshaped by Him instead?
- If we liken ourselves to the Israelites, what can we do to allow God to mold or reshape our lives? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we choose to repent, the Lord can mold and reshape our lives.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board under the image of the fertile landscape.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Hugh W. Pinnock of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for phrases that give them hope in the Savior's ability to help them change for the better.



"The Lord explained to Jeremiah that when we make mistakes, as ancient Israel was making, we can take what we have marred and begin again. The potter did not give up and throw the clay away, just because he had made a mistake. And we are not to feel hopeless and reject ourselves. Yes, our task is to overcome our problems, take what we have and are, and start again.

"Some of you who are listening have sinned in ways that are significant, embarrassing, and destructive. Yet, by following the simple instruction given by the Master, you can talk with your bishop, when necessary, and begin again as a renewed person" ("Beginning Again," *Ensign*, May 1982, 12).

- Which teachings from Elder Pinnock offer hope that we can overcome our mistakes and change for the better?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 18:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Jews' response to Jeremiah's message of hope.

- How did the Jews respond to Jeremiah's message of hope?

Summarize Jeremiah 18:13–23 by explaining that because the people rejected the words of the Lord, He said that they would suffer and be scattered. The Jews then plotted to harm

#### *Using objects*

Objects can help students visualize and understand the scriptures, especially when you use them to stimulate a discussion. They can also add variety to the lesson.

Jeremiah. Though he mourned over their wickedness, Jeremiah asked the Lord to let the Jews suffer for their sins.

Display a hardened clay pot. If you do not have one, draw one on the board.

Explain that as recorded in Jeremiah 19:1–9, the Lord told Jeremiah to take a hardened clay pot to the valley of Hinnom, which was just outside of the walls of Jerusalem. In this valley was a place called Tophet, which means the place of burning. There some of the Israelites had built altars and sacrificed their children as burnt offerings to false gods.



Invite a student to read Jeremiah 19:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah was told to do in this valley.

- What was the Lord trying to teach the Israelites by having Jeremiah break the clay pot?

### Jeremiah 19:14–28:17

#### *Jeremiah prophesies of false prophets and Judah's coming destruction*

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever felt like others wanted them to change their standards or to stop talking about the gospel.

Summarize Jeremiah 19:14–20:6 by explaining that after Jeremiah preached in the valley of Hinnom, he declared his warnings in the court of the temple. The chief governor of the house of the Lord, Pashur, was angry with Jeremiah because of his message. Pashur smote him and imprisoned him by putting him into the stocks until the next day, but Jeremiah continued to warn about the Lord's impending judgments.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 20:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Jeremiah's feelings during this time. You may want to explain that the word *deceived* in verse 7 means "persuaded" (see verse 7, footnote *a*).

- Why did Jeremiah refuse to be silent even though at one time he wanted to stop declaring the Lord's message?
- What does it mean that the Lord's word was like a "burning fire shut up in [Jeremiah's] bones" (verse 9)?
- What can we learn from Jeremiah's example that can help us declare the gospel even when it is difficult? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **as our testimonies of the gospel deepen, our desire to do the Lord's will increases**. Using students' words, write this principle on the board.)

Invite students to consider people they know who feel the Lord's word like a fire in their bones. You may want to ask a few students to share how the people they thought of demonstrate this fire or testimony.

- What can you do to gain this kind of testimony?
- In what ways might this depth of testimony help you in the future as a missionary, parent, or Church leader?

Encourage students to act on the promptings of the Holy Ghost as they seek to deepen their testimonies.

Explain that as Jeremiah continued to preach to the people as recorded in Jeremiah 20–28, he specifically warned them about teachers and false prophets who told the wicked what they wanted to hear.

### Jeremiah 29

#### *Jeremiah writes a letter to the Israelite captives in Babylon*

Explain that during Jeremiah's day, in about 606 B.C., a select group of Jews was carried away captive to Babylon. In chapter 29, Jeremiah promised these captives that if they searched after God with all their hearts, they would find Him, and the Lord would hearken unto them (see Jeremiah 29:11–14).

Draw students' attention to the images of the landscapes on the board. Encourage them to act on any promptings they may have received during the lesson and to follow the principles that will help them lead rich, fruitful lives.

## LESSON 135

# Jeremiah 30–33

### Introduction

The Lord revealed to Jeremiah that He would gather the house of Israel and make a new covenant with them. He

instructed Jeremiah to purchase property in the promised land to symbolize the return of scattered Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Jeremiah 30–31

*In the last days, the house of Israel will be gathered and enter into a new and everlasting covenant with the Lord*

Ask students if they prefer happy or sad endings in stories.

- Have you ever wondered if your life will have a happy or a sad ending?
- What would be a happy ending to your life? A sad ending?

Explain that the Lord sent the prophet Jeremiah to call Judah to repentance just before Babylon conquered Jerusalem and carried many of the Jews to Babylon. As a result, his warnings and prophecies often have a tone of impending doom. However, Jeremiah also knew what the future held for the Jews. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 31:17 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah said the ending for the Jews in his day would be.

- What does the phrase “there is hope in thine end” mean? (It means that there is hope for you in the future [see verse 17, footnote *a*].)

Invite students to look for truths in Jeremiah 30–31 that can give them hope for their future even if they experience trouble or gloom.

Explain that when the Israelites kept their covenants, the Lord blessed them in many ways, including giving them a promised land. However, when they broke their covenants, the Lord took these blessings away, and the people became separated from their promised land, or scattered.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 30:12 aloud using the Joseph Smith Translation in footnote *a*.

- What does the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse reveal about Israel’s condition? (While Israel’s condition of spiritual decay and physical bondage is grievous and difficult, it is not incurable or hopeless.)

Write the following verses on the board: *Jeremiah 30:3, 7, 8, 10, 17; 31:3, 8, 9, 13*. Divide students into pairs. Invite them to alternate reading these verses aloud with their partners, looking for what the Lord would do that would give the Israelites hope for their future.

- What would the Lord do for scattered Israel? (Gather them back to their lands of promise.)
- Do you think gathering to a certain geographical location is all the Jews would need to do to be healed from their spiritual wounds? Why or why not?

Explain that while Jeremiah referred to a physical gathering in the land of promise after the Jews’ exile in Babylon, there is another, even more important component of the gathering that he taught. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 31:31–34 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord would do as part of the gathering of Israel.

- According to verse 31, what did the Lord say He would make with the house of Israel? (A new covenant with them.)

Explain that the word *new* in this context means that God’s covenant—the fulness of the gospel—would be revealed anew to the house of Israel. While God had previously established His covenant with their fathers, the patriarchs, over time some of the components of this covenant had been lost, such as the Melchizedek Priesthood, the higher law, and the

fulness of temple ordinances. Jeremiah foresaw the day when the house of Israel would at last accept God's new and everlasting covenant (see *History of the Church*, 1:313–14).

- According to verse 33, what relationship will the house of Israel be in when they accept God's new and everlasting covenant? (Jehovah will be their God, and they will be His people.)

Explain that anciently, the Israelites struggled with keeping God's covenant and living His laws with all their hearts. Invite students to reread verse 33, looking for words or phrases that describe what would have helped Israel to live God's laws.

- What do you think it means to have God's law "in [our] inward parts" and written in our hearts (verse 33)?

Explain that when God's law is written in our hearts, we desire to live the gospel with all our hearts and are truly converted to it. We obey God because we love Him, rather than for external reasons like wanting others to think we are righteous.

- According to verse 34, what is a result of living the gospel with all our hearts? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **If we keep our covenants and live the gospel with all our hearts, we will come to know God.**)
- How has living the gospel of Jesus Christ helped you come to know Him better?

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what Elder Nelson taught about living the gospel and keeping our covenants.



"When we realize that we are children of the covenant, we know who we are and what God expects of us. His law is written in our hearts. He is our God and we are His people. Committed children of the covenant remain steadfast, even in the midst of adversity. . . .

"The greatest compliment that can be earned here in this life is to be known as a covenant keeper. The rewards for a covenant keeper will be realized both here and hereafter" ("Covenants," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 88).

- According to Elder Nelson, what do people who have covenanted with God do in the midst of adversity? (Remain steadfast.)
- How are the rewards of keeping your covenants related to your future and having a happy or sad ending?

Ask students to ponder how they can better keep their covenants and live the gospel with all their hearts. Invite them to make any corrections or adjustments that will help them live the gospel in this way.

### Jeremiah 32–33

#### *Jeremiah purchases property in the promised land to symbolize the return of scattered Israel*

Ask students to ponder whether they have ever said, "It is just too hard." Consider inviting a few students to share why they have felt that way.

Invite students to look for a principle in Jeremiah 32–33 that can help them if they ever feel discouraged.

Summarize Jeremiah 32:1–15 by explaining that King Zedekiah had Jeremiah put in prison because Jeremiah prophesied that the king would be taken captive and Jerusalem would be conquered by the king of Babylon. While Jeremiah was in prison, his cousin came to him and asked him to buy property in their family's ancestral homeland, which was near Jerusalem. The Lord revealed to Jeremiah that purchasing this land was a symbolic witness that the Jews would someday return from captivity and possess the promised land once again (see Jeremiah 32:15, 43–44).

Summarize Jeremiah 32:16–44 by explaining that as recorded in verses 16–25, Jeremiah prayed to God and recounted many of the miracles He had performed in giving the promised land to the children of Israel. Verses 26–44 record the Lord's response to this prayer. Invite students to silently read Jeremiah 32:17, 27 and compare the way in which Jeremiah began his prayer with the way in which the Lord began His reply. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- Why might it have been comforting for Jeremiah to receive confirmation that nothing is too difficult for the Lord? (Help students understand that Jeremiah may not have known how the Lord would restore the Jews to their homeland, but since he had a testimony that nothing is too difficult for the Lord, he knew it could be done.)

Point out that there are people today who feel lost spiritually and believe it would be too difficult for them to ever return to Heavenly Father and experience a happy ending.

Write the following phrase on the board: *Regardless of what we have done or how lost we may feel, the Lord can . . .*

Explain that the Lord described what He would do for Israel. Divide the class in half, and assign one half to read Jeremiah 32:37–42 and the other half to read Jeremiah 33:6–8.

Invite them to look for phrases that describe what the Lord would do for scattered Israel. (You may need to explain that the phrase “I will cause the captivity of Judah and . . . Israel to return” [Jeremiah 33:7] means that God will gather the house of Israel.)

After sufficient time, invite students to write on the board the phrases they found, along with the verses in which they appear. Some phrases they may find are:

“Gather them” (Jeremiah 32:37)

“Cause them to dwell safely” (Jeremiah 32:37)

“Bring upon them all the good that [He has] promised them” (Jeremiah 32:42)

“Cure them” (Jeremiah 33:6)

“Build them” (Jeremiah 33:7)

“Cleanse them from all their iniquity” (Jeremiah 33:8)

“Pardon all their iniquities” (Jeremiah 33:8)

Invite students to select one or two of these phrases and use them to complete the partial phrase on the board in their own words. For example, they could adapt the phrase “cure them” to write the following truth: **Regardless of what we have done or how lost we may feel, Jesus Christ can heal us.** Or they could adapt the phrase “cleanse them from all iniquity” to write the following truth: **Regardless of what we have done, Jesus Christ can cleanse us.** Suggest that students write their statements in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Invite a few students to share with the class why the truth they wrote is meaningful to them if their feelings are not too personal.

Point out that the phrases on the board describe what the Lord *can* do for each of us.

- What do we need to do so that Jesus Christ *will* do these things for us? (Help students understand that the Savior is able to do these things for us as we repent and come unto Him by living His gospel.)

Ask students to ponder how they may need to repent or more fully live the gospel of Jesus Christ. Invite them to act on the promptings they receive so the Savior can give them hope in their future and help them be happy. Consider sharing your testimony of the Savior’s desire and ability to build, cleanse, heal, and pardon us.

Conclude by reading Jeremiah 33:10–11, 14 aloud. Invite students to follow along, looking for words and phrases that confirm how the story will end for the house of Israel. Consider sharing your testimony about the principles discussed in this lesson.

### Invite students to ponder

Pondering means to think deeply about something and can often be enhanced by prayer. As students learn to ponder, the Spirit will often reveal truth to them and teach them how to become more like Jesus Christ.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Jeremiah 31:9. “Ephraim is my firstborn”

President Joseph Fielding Smith explained that Ephraim became the birthright son of Joseph:

“It is well understood by Latter-day Saints that the birthright . . . was placed upon the head of Joseph by divine revelation. Joseph was the eldest son of Rachel and . . . the most worthy son of Jacob. . . .

“For reasons which we do not understand for the history of those events is very brief, this authority came down through the lineage of Joseph’s second son, Ephraim. It was Ephraim who was called to occupy the position held by his father, and he is spoken of in the scriptures as the firstborn in Israel” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:162).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Isaiah 59–66; Jeremiah 1–33 (Unit 27)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Isaiah 59–Jeremiah 33 (unit 27) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Isaiah 59–66)

As students continued to study Isaiah’s teachings, they learned that sin separates us from God, but if we repent the Lord can redeem us. Students also learned about Jesus Christ’s role as the Messiah and the blessings the Lord’s people will enjoy during the Millennium.

#### Day 2 (Jeremiah 1–6)

While learning about Jeremiah’s call as a prophet, students discovered that before we were born our Heavenly Father knew us and gave us specific responsibilities and duties to perform during mortality. Students also identified the following truths: When God calls us to do His work, He will help us do what He has asked. If we repent and come unto the Lord with our whole heart, He will heal our waywardness.

#### Day 3 (Jeremiah 7–29)

From Jeremiah’s teachings, students learned that religious worship and practices alone cannot save us if we do not keep God’s commandments. Students also discovered truths about sharing the gospel, keeping the Sabbath day holy, and doing God’s will.

#### Day 4 (Jeremiah 30–33)

As they studied the gathering of Israel, students learned that if we keep our covenants and live the gospel with all our hearts, we will come to know God. They also learned that regardless of what we have done or how lost we may feel, Jesus Christ can heal us.

### Introduction

The Lord commanded Jeremiah to warn the people in Jerusalem that unless they repented, the city would be destroyed. Because of his preaching, Jeremiah was smitten and imprisoned by the people. He wrote a letter to the captives already in Babylon, warning them against false prophets and offering encouragement.

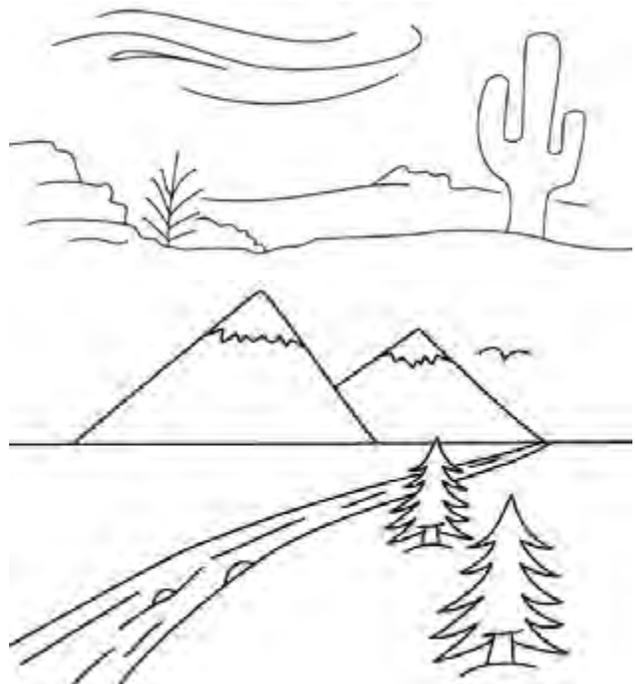
### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* This week students studied the scripture mastery passage in Jeremiah 1:4–5. You may want to invite students to recite it together at the beginning of class.

#### Jeremiah 17

*Jeremiah stands in the entrance of the city and warns the people to heed the Sabbath day*

Before class, draw or display pictures of two landscapes on the board: one of an area that is dry and parched and the other of a fertile area with a river.



- If you were to live in one of these locations, which would you choose? Why?

Explain that these landscapes could represent the spiritual condition of our lives. Invite students to consider whether the spiritual

condition of their lives is more like a desert or a fertile valley or if it is somewhere in between.

Invite students to look for principles in Jeremiah 17–18 that can help make their lives richer and more fruitful, like the fertile landscape.

Summarize Jeremiah 17:1–4 by explaining that through Jeremiah the Lord told the people of Judah that they would be forced out of the promised land to serve their enemies elsewhere. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 17:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the Jews would be cursed. Explain that a *heath* is a small, scraggly tree with a gnarled stem and needlelike leaves. Jeremiah used this uninviting tree to make his point.

- According to verse 5, what actions would bring about the curse of being like a scraggly tree in the desert? (Write students' responses on the board under the image of the desert landscape.)
- What are some examples of the behaviors listed in verse 5?
- How might doing these things be similar to living in a desert?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 17:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's description of those who trust in Him rather than in man.

- How does the Lord describe those who trust in Him?
- What could the waters represent in this description?

### Jeremiah 18:1–19:13

*God uses the art of making pottery to teach Jeremiah that the Israelites can repent and avoid destruction*

If possible, bring a lump of soft clay to class. Invite a student to quickly form a pot out of the clay in front of the class. If you do not have clay, ask students to imagine they are creating a pot out of soft clay.

- What can you do if you do not like the look of the pot you have just made?

Ask the student to start over and form another pot. Explain that God used the art of making pottery to teach Jeremiah about the house of Israel. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Jeremiah 18:1–6. Ask the rest of the class to follow along, looking for what God taught Jeremiah.

- Using the art of making pottery, what did God teach Jeremiah about the house of Israel? (Even though the Israelites had been marred by sin, the Lord could reshape them into a mighty nation again.)

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 18:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews needed to do so that God would reshape them into a mighty nation. You may want

to draw students' attention to verse 8, footnote *b*, and explain that God was not repenting; He was revoking the punishment.

- If the Lord has warned a nation that it will be destroyed, what can the people do to be spared and reshaped by Him instead?
- If we liken ourselves to the Israelites, what can we do to allow God to mold or reshape our lives? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we choose to repent, the Lord can mold and reshape our lives.** Using students' words, write this principle on the board under the image of the fertile landscape.)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Hugh W. Pinnock of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for phrases that give them hope in the Savior's ability to help them change for the better.

"The Lord explained to Jeremiah that when we make mistakes, as ancient Israel was making, we can take what we have marred and begin again. The potter did not give up and throw the clay away, just because he had made a mistake. And we are not to feel hopeless and reject ourselves. Yes, our task is to overcome our problems, take what we have and are, and start again.

"Some of you who are listening have sinned in ways that are significant, embarrassing, and destructive. Yet, by following the simple instruction given by the Master, you can talk with your bishop, when necessary, and begin again as a renewed person" ("Beginning Again," *Ensign*, May 1982, 12).

- Which teachings from Elder Pinnock offer hope that we can overcome our mistakes and change for the better?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 18:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Jews' response to Jeremiah's message of hope.

- How did the Jews respond to Jeremiah's message of hope?

Summarize Jeremiah 18:13–23 by explaining that because the people rejected the words of the Lord, He said that they would suffer and be scattered. The Jews then plotted to harm Jeremiah. Though he mourned over their wickedness, Jeremiah asked the Lord to let the Jews suffer for their sins.

### Next Unit (Jeremiah 34–Ezekiel 32)

Ask students the following questions: What is the purpose of a watchman on a tower? How are prophets like watchmen on a tower? Then explain that Ezekiel used objects and physical symbols to teach the people in ways that would help them understand and remember God's teachings. Ask students if they have ever had the chance to explain their belief in living prophets to someone. Explain that in the coming unit, students will have the opportunity to learn more about the important role of prophets.

# Jeremiah 34–41

## Introduction

Jeremiah prophesied to King Zedekiah that if the people of Judah surrendered to Babylon, they would not be destroyed. Previous to this, Jeremiah's prophecies of the captivity of Judah were read to King Jehoiakim,

who cut them up and burned them. Jeremiah had these prophecies written down again and added to them. Both Jehoiakim and Zedekiah refused to hearken to Jeremiah, and Judah was conquered.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Jeremiah 34–36

#### *Jeremiah prophesies of the captivity of Judah; Jehoiakim burns Jeremiah's prophecies*

Ask students to think of a time when someone told them something that they needed to hear but did not want to hear.

- What are some ways people might respond in this type of situation?
- What if a prophet were to teach something you did not necessarily want to hear? What should you do?

Explain that in Jeremiah 34–41 we read that a prophet told the Jews things they needed but did not want to hear. Invite students to look as they study these chapters for how the Jews responded to the prophet and what we can learn from their actions.

Summarize Jeremiah 34–36 by explaining that chapter 34 records that Zedekiah, the king of Judah, and his people broke a covenant they had made to free all their servants, as they had been commanded in the law of Moses (see Deuteronomy 15:12). As a result, the Lord told Jeremiah that the people and their king would be put into bondage. Jeremiah 35–36 refers back to experiences Jeremiah had during the reign of Jehoiakim, who was king before Zedekiah.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 36:1–3 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for what the Lord told Jeremiah to do in the days of Jehoiakim.

- What did the Lord command Jeremiah to write in this book?
- According to verse 3, why did the Lord want Judah to hear His words?

Invite students to write down on a piece of paper what the current weather is. After they have written this down, pass around a garbage can and invite them to tear up the piece of paper and throw it away.

- What effect will throwing the piece of paper away have on the weather conditions? (Ensure that students understand that this action will have no effect on the weather.)

Explain that in Jeremiah 36:4–19 we read that Jeremiah instructed his scribe, Baruch, to write down the words of the Lord as Jeremiah dictated them and then to go to the temple and read the words to the people. Baruch did so, and news of the reading reached several princes of Judah at the royal palace. They sent for Baruch and had him read Jeremiah's prophecies to them. When they heard these prophecies, they became afraid and informed King Jehoiakim about them. The king had the scroll brought and read to him. Invite a student to read Jeremiah 36:22–23 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for how the king reacted. Invite students to report what they find.

- What might the king have been trying to show by cutting up and burning Jeremiah's prophecies?
- What effect would doing this have had on the fulfillment of the prophecies?

Explain that after the king burned Jeremiah's prophecies, he ordered that Jeremiah and Baruch be arrested, but the Lord helped them avoid capture. Invite a student to read

Jeremiah 36:27–28, 32 aloud. Ask the class to look for what the Lord then commanded Jeremiah and Baruch to do.

- What did the Lord command Jeremiah and Baruch to do?

Explain that the Lord also told Jeremiah to prophesy to King Jehoiakim that Babylon would attack Jerusalem and that the king's dead body would be cast out of the city (see Jeremiah 22:18–19; 36:30). Following Jehoiakim's death, the Babylonians eventually made Zedekiah king of Judah.

- What can we learn about the Lord's words from this account? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify a truth similar to the following: **The Lord's words will be fulfilled regardless of whether we believe in them.**)

Consider inviting a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 1:37–38 aloud and then asking students to look for what the Lord teaches us about His words being fulfilled.

## Jeremiah 37–39

### *Jeremiah prophesies that if the Jews surrender to Babylon, they will not be destroyed*

Ask students the following questions:

- Why do people sometimes choose to do things that are contrary to what God wants them to do?
- What are some ways that fear might influence some people to go against what they know is right?

Invite students to look for how fear influenced King Zedekiah's decisions and what the consequences were.

Help students understand the context and content of Jeremiah 37–38 by explaining that the Babylonian army again besieged Jerusalem but temporarily withdrew because of an approaching Egyptian army. Many Jews therefore wanted King Zedekiah to make an alliance with the Egyptians and rely on the Egyptian army to deliver them from the Babylonians. However, Jeremiah prophesied that the Egyptians would not save the Jews. Later, he was accused of deserting to the Babylonians and was thrown into a dungeon. Zedekiah had him removed and put in the palace prison. Jeremiah prophesied that if the Jews surrendered to the Babylonians, they would not be destroyed. This prophecy angered the Jewish princes.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 38:4 aloud. Ask students to follow along and look for what the Jewish princes wanted to do with Jeremiah and why.

- What did these princes want King Zedekiah to do with Jeremiah?
- According to this verse, why did they want Jeremiah put to death? (They thought he was influencing Jerusalem's soldiers to not fight against the Babylonians.)

Invite students to read Jeremiah 38:5–6 silently and look for what the princes did to Jeremiah instead. Ask students to report what they find.

Summarize Jeremiah 38:7–16 by explaining that Zedekiah secretly had some of his men remove Jeremiah from the mire pit and put him back in the palace prison. Zedekiah then sought counsel from Jeremiah in secret. After the king promised not to kill him, Jeremiah spoke the word of the Lord.

Write the following words on the board:

*If . . .*

*Then . . .*

*If . . .*

*Then . . .*

Invite students to read Jeremiah 38:17–20 and look for two sets of "if-then" statements. Explain that the phrase "if thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes" (verse 17) refers to Zedekiah and the Jews submitting to the Babylonians rather than fighting against them.

- What would the result be if Zedekiah hearkened to Jeremiah's words? What would the result be if he didn't? (As students share their answers, complete the "if-then" statements on the board using their words.)

#### **Historical setting**

Understanding the context of a passage of scripture can help students better understand its content. Context includes background information that describes or clarifies the settings of the stories, teachings, doctrines, and principles in the text. Understanding the context of the historical settings of stories and accounts in the Old Testament can prepare students to identify the doctrines and principles contained therein.

- What lesson can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of principles, but make sure it is clear that **if we obey the word of the Lord given through His servants, we will prosper spiritually.**)

To help students understand how obeying the prophet's words can help us prosper, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Invite students to listen for the blessings that come from following the prophet:



"It is no small thing, my brothers and sisters, to have a prophet of God in our midst. . . . When we hear the counsel of the Lord expressed through the words of the President of the Church, our response should be positive and prompt. History has shown that there is safety, peace, prosperity, and happiness in responding to prophetic counsel" ("His Word Ye Shall Receive," *Ensign*, May 2001, 65).

- What are some blessings that come from following the prophet?

Invite a student to reread Jeremiah 38:19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how King Zedekiah responded to Jeremiah.

- What was Zedekiah afraid of? (Being mocked or hurt by Jews who had joined or been captured by the Babylonians.)

Summarize Jeremiah 38:21–28 by explaining that Jeremiah again told King Zedekiah what would happen if he chose not to hearken to the word of the Lord that Jeremiah had given him. Explain that Zedekiah chose not to hearken to the Lord's prophet and hearkened instead to those who wanted to rebel against the Babylonians. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Jeremiah 39:1–7. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened to Zedekiah and the people of Judah.

- What were the consequences of Zedekiah's decision?
- What principle can we learn from this account? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we give in to fear and follow the world instead of the Lord's prophet, we will perish spiritually.** Write this principle on the board.)
- In what ways will we perish if we follow the ways of the world rather than the Lord's prophet?
- How do you think fear can prevent someone from following the Lord's prophet today?
- What has helped you choose to follow the prophet even when others are pressuring you to do something else?

Ask students if they remember any counsel or warnings extended by the prophet in the most recent general conference. (You should come prepared to share several examples if needed.) List them on the board. Invite students to choose an item of counsel or warning listed on the board and write a goal that will help them obey it.

You may also want to explain that we know from the Book of Mormon that one of King Zedekiah's sons escaped being killed. Mulek was a son of Zedekiah, and he escaped and was led to the Americas. His people, called the Mulekites, eventually became the people of Zarahemla. They were later joined by the Nephites led by Mosiah (see Helaman 6:10; 8:21; see also Omni 1:12–19).

## Jeremiah 40–41

### *Jeremiah stays in Judah with a remnant of the Jews*

Summarize Jeremiah 40–41 by explaining that after King Zedekiah and the majority of the Jews were carried away into Babylon, the king of Babylon appointed a governor over those who remained in the land of Judah. The Babylonians also freed Jeremiah from prison, and he continued to reveal the word of the Lord to the Jews who still remained. After a group of Jews killed Gedaliah, the governor appointed by the Babylonians, the remnant of the Jews feared reprisals from Babylon and contemplated moving to Egypt.

Consider concluding the lesson by inviting students to act on the thoughts and impressions that came to them throughout the lesson.

## LESSON 137

# Jeremiah 42–52

### Introduction

The remnant of the people of Judah, who were not taken captive by the Babylonian army, sought the Lord's counsel concerning whether they should go to Egypt. At their request, Jeremiah prayed to know the Lord's will for them, and the Lord promised that the remnant would be safe if they stayed in the land of

Judah. Jeremiah further prophesied that if the people disobeyed the Lord and went to Egypt, they would be destroyed. Jeremiah foretold the destruction of many nations, including Babylon. He also testified of the Redeemer's strength to deliver them.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Jeremiah 42–44

#### *Jeremiah warns the remnant of Judah not to go to Egypt*

To prepare students to study Jeremiah 42–44, write the following question on the board:  
*What are some specific things prophets have directed the youth of the Church to do to protect themselves from the evil influences of the world?*

Invite students to respond to the question. You might invite a student to list responses on the board, or you may write them.

Ask students to ponder ways in which they might be tempted to disobey the Lord's counsel given to them through prophets. Invite students to look as they study Jeremiah 42–44 for principles that will help them understand the consequences of choosing either to obey or to disobey the prophets' counsel.

Explain that after the Babylonian army came a second time against Jerusalem, they carried most of the Jews away with them to Babylon. The small group of Jews who remained in Jerusalem were called a "remnant," meaning those left behind. Several of the remnant believed that if they went to Egypt they would be spared from further abuse from the Babylonian army.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 42:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews who were left in Jerusalem did.

- What did the Jews who were left in Jerusalem do?
- According to verse 3, why did they ask Jeremiah to pray to the Lord?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 42:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Jeremiah's response.

- What do you think Jeremiah meant when he said that he would keep nothing back as he declared God's word to the Jews? (He would boldly tell the people God's will.)

Invite students to read Jeremiah 42:5–6 silently, looking for how the people responded to Jeremiah. Point out the phrase "whether it be evil" in verse 6, and explain that in this case, "evil" refers to something the people didn't want to do, rather than something bad.

- What did the people promise to do when Jeremiah revealed God's will?
- What did the people say would happen to them if they obeyed the Lord's counsel given through His prophets?
- What do you think the phrase "it may be well with us" means?

To help students understand some ways it will be well with us when we obey the Lord's counsel given through His prophets, invite a student to read aloud the following statement from the First Presidency, found in *For the Strength of Youth*:

"We promise that as you keep the covenants you have made and these standards, you will be blessed with the companionship of the Holy Ghost, your faith and testimony will grow stronger, and you will enjoy increasing happiness" (*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], ii).

Summarize Jeremiah 42:7–8 by explaining that after 10 days Jeremiah called the people together to reveal God’s will about whether or not they should go to Egypt.

Divide students into pairs. Invite the pairs to read Jeremiah 42:9–12 together, looking for how it would be well with the people if they listened to the counsel Jeremiah gave them. Ask them to discuss answers to the following questions (you may want to write the questions on the board):

- What counsel did Jeremiah give? (The people should stay in the land of Judah.)
- How would it be well with the people if they obeyed the prophet’s counsel and stayed in the land of Judah?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Jeremiah 42:13–17. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the warning Jeremiah gave the Jews of what would happen if they did not obey the Lord’s counsel.

- What warning did Jeremiah give the Jews?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about what happens to us when we disregard the Lord’s counsel given through His prophets? (Students may give a variety of answers, but make sure it is clear that **when we disregard the Lord’s counsel given through His prophets, we bring negative consequences upon ourselves.** Write this principle on the board.)

### Likening the scriptures

Likening the scriptures to a modern context helps students better understand what the principles and doctrines mean for their lives.

Draw students’ attention to the list on the board of ways that prophets have directed the youth of the Church to remain spiritually clean and protect themselves from evil.

- What consequences might people bring upon themselves if they disregard the Lord’s counsel given through prophets?
- In contrast, what blessings have you seen as you or others have obeyed the Lord’s counsel given through prophets?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 42:19–22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah told the people after he told them to stay in the land of Judah. (You may need to explain that the phrase “ye dissembled in your hearts” in verse 20 means the people lied when they told Jeremiah they would obey the Lord’s words.)

- According to verse 22, what did Jeremiah say the consequences would be for disregarding the counsel of the Lord?
- Why do you think people sometimes choose to disregard the counsel of the Lord given through His prophets even though they have been warned of the consequences?

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 43:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people responded to Jeremiah.

- According to verses 2–3, what excuse did the proud men give for disobeying Jeremiah’s words? (They claimed that Jeremiah was not speaking for God.)
- What excuses do the proud give for disobeying the prophets’ words in our day?

Invite students to ponder the following questions: Am I disobeying any counsel from the Lord given through His prophets? If so, what counsel am I disobeying?

Encourage students to make a goal concerning what they will do to better follow the counsel of the Lord given through His prophets.

Summarize Jeremiah 43:5–13 by explaining that the remnant of the Jews not only disobeyed the Lord and went to Egypt, but they also took Jeremiah with them. After they arrived in Egypt, Jeremiah prophesied that when the Babylonian army destroyed Egypt, the king of Babylon would make his throne there.

Invite a student to read the chapter summary for Jeremiah 44 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah prophesied about the Jews who were living in Egypt. Ask students to report what they find.

Summarize verses 15–19 by explaining that the Jews in Egypt refused to listen to Jeremiah and told him they felt more blessed when they worshipped the false gods of Egypt than when they stopped worshipping them.

Invite a student to read Jeremiah 44:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah told the Jews in Egypt. You may need to explain that the phrase “ye have burned incense” refers to worshipping false gods.

- What does the phrase “this evil happened unto you” in verse 23 mean? (It refers to the destruction of Jerusalem described in verse 22.)
- How does Jeremiah’s message in verses 22–23 illustrate the principle written on the board?

## Jeremiah 45–52

### *Jeremiah prophesies of the destruction of several nations but also testifies of the strength of the Redeemer to deliver the people*

Ask students to think of a time when they felt discouraged because of opposition they experienced when they tried to do the right thing.

- What gave you hope during your time of discouragement?

Summarize Jeremiah 45 by explaining that Jeremiah’s scribe, Baruch, felt discouraged, and the Lord sent him a message of encouragement through Jeremiah.

Explain that in Jeremiah 46–52 we read that Jeremiah prophesied of the destruction of several nations, but he also shared messages of hope. Invite students as they study Jeremiah 46–52 to look for a truth that would help bring hope during times of discouragement.

Write the following references on the board: *Jeremiah 46:27–28; Jeremiah 50:17–20; Jeremiah 50:33–34*. Invite students to read these verses silently, looking for messages of hope. You may want to suggest that students mark in their scriptures words or phrases they find that reflect messages of hope.

- What were the messages of hope for scattered Israel? (Write students’ responses on the board.)
- What truths can we learn about the Redeemer from these messages? (Students may give a variety of answers, but make sure it is clear that **through the strength of our Redeemer, we can be delivered from physical and spiritual bondage.**)
- What are some things the Lord can deliver us from?

Invite students to answer the following question in their scripture study journals or class notebooks: When has the Lord delivered you? After sufficient time, ask students to share what they wrote. Remind them not to share anything too personal.

Explain that Jeremiah 52 records Babylon’s capture of Jerusalem. Summarize this chapter by explaining that the Babylonians took King Zedekiah captive and killed all of his sons except Mulek, who escaped to the Americas (see Omni 1:15; Helaman 6:10; 8:21). Many of the Jews in Jerusalem were either killed or taken captive and carried to Babylon.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Jeremiah 42:4. “I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that the prophets reveal God’s word even if it is not popular:

“Why do prophets proclaim unpopular commandments and call society to repentance for rejecting, modifying, and even ignoring the commandments? The reason is very simple. Upon receiving revelation, prophets have no choice but to proclaim and reaffirm that which God has given them to tell the world. Prophets do this knowing full well the price they may have to pay. Some who choose not to live the commandments make every effort to defame the character of the prophets and demean their personal integrity and reputation. In response, the prophets remain silent and merely turn the other cheek.

The world may see this as weakness, but it is one of the greatest strengths a [person] can have—to be faithful, unyielding, and unwavering to that which he [or she] knows to be true, accepting whatever consequences may follow” (“If Thou Wilt Enter into Life, Keep the Commandments,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 37).

### Jeremiah 43:2. “All the proud men”

President Ezra Taft Benson taught why the proud have a difficult time accepting counsel from God’s prophets:

“The proud cannot accept the authority of God giving direction to their lives. (See Hel. 12:6) . . .

“. . . The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren’t interested in changing their opinions to agree with God’s” (“Beware of Pride,” *Ensign*, May 1989, 4).

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Lamentations

### Why study this book?

The book of Lamentations reveals Judah's pathetic condition following the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem, which occurred as a result of the people's sins and disregard for prophetic warnings. By studying Lamentations students can gain insight into the sorrow, remorse, and consequences that can accompany sin. Students will also learn about the compassion and mercy the Lord extends to those who turn to Him in their sorrows.

### Who wrote this book?

The book of Lamentations was written by Jeremiah (see "Bible Dictionary, "Lamentations, book of"). Lamentations contains sorrowful reactions to the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in about 586 B.C., which took place during Jeremiah's lifetime.

### When and where was it written?

Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations sometime after the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem. We do not know where Jeremiah was when he wrote this book, but he may have been in either Jerusalem or Egypt (see Jeremiah 43:6–7).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The entire book of Lamentations is written in carefully constructed poetry. The first

four chapters form acrostics. An acrostic is a poetic form in which the first letters of each line or verse form a meaningful sequence. The book of Lamentations contains acrostic compositions that are based on the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Lamentations 1, 2, and 4 each contain 22 verses, each of which begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in alphabetical order. Lamentations 3 contains 66 verses. In this chapter the first three verses each begin with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the next three verses each begin with the second letter, and so on. Lamentations 5 contains 22 verses but is not acrostic. (See Bible Dictionary, "Lamentations, book of.")

Poetically, the use of acrostics gives structure and sequence to the expression of Judah's overwhelming grief in circumstances that must have seemed chaotic, senseless, and devoid of any order. The use of this literary device also reflects the thoughtful use of language in crying out to God.

In its poetic expression of the people's grief, shock, and suffering, Lamentations resembles other poetic books in the Old Testament, such as Job and Psalms (see Psalms 74; 79). However, unlike many books in the Old Testament, Lamentations does not contain any responses from the Lord; it captures only the suffering and longing that the people experienced before the Lord showed mercy to them.

### Outline

**Lamentations 1–2** Jeremiah laments the desolate state of Jerusalem following its destruction by the Babylonians. He acknowledges that Jerusalem was destroyed because the people rebelled against the commandments of the Lord.

**Lamentations 3** Jeremiah prays for Judah's deliverance and expresses hope in the Lord, whose mercy is upon those who trust in Him.

**Lamentations 4** Jeremiah compares the conditions of the Jews before and after the destruction of Jerusalem. He sorrows as he considers the pitiful state of the people and acknowledges that these conditions are the result of sin.

**Lamentations 5** Jeremiah prays for those who survived the destruction of Jerusalem, pleading for God to notice their desolation, forgive them, and allow them to return to the Lord and be restored as a people.

## LESSON 138

# Lamentations

### Introduction

Jeremiah lamented the destruction of Jerusalem and the affliction of its people. But even in his grief, Jeremiah testified of the Lord's compassion. Jeremiah compared the lives of the people when they were righteous to

their lives when they were wicked. Jeremiah pled with the Lord to forgive the people of Judah and turn them back to Him.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Lamentations 1

#### *Jeremiah speaks of the sorrow and affliction that result from sin*

Invite students to imagine that a young man has some friends who try to convince him to break a commandment. Ask students to describe what this young man's peers might say to convince him to break a commandment. Write students' responses on the board.

- What would you tell your friends to convince them that they should not commit sin?

Invite students to look for truths as they study Lamentations 1 that can help them understand why we should not sin.

Remind students that because the people of Judah chose to ignore the warnings of Jeremiah and other prophets and disobey their teachings, choosing wickedness instead, the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem. Sometime after Jerusalem was destroyed, Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations. The term *lamentation* refers to words that express deep sorrow or grief.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Lamentations 1:1–5. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jeremiah lamented. Explain that the terms *she* and *her* in these verses refer to Jerusalem.

- How did Jeremiah describe Jerusalem, according to verse 1?

Point out the phrases "how is she become as a widow" in verse 1 and "she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her" in verse 2.

- What do these phrases mean? (If necessary, explain that these phrases imply that Jerusalem was abandoned and alone.)

Invite students to review Lamentations 1:1–5, looking for words or phrases that help us identify some of the consequences of sin. Consider inviting students to mark these words or phrases. Invite students to report what they find. Write students' responses on the board.

Explain that in Lamentations 1:6–11 we read that Jeremiah continued to lament the destruction of Jerusalem. Lamentations 1:12–22 includes lamentations written from Jerusalem's perspective, as though the city itself were speaking. Invite a student to read Lamentations 1:16, 18, 20, and 22 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional consequences of sin.

Point out that the phrase "my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity" in verse 18 refers to the loss of the rising generation. The phrase "my bowels are troubled" in verse 20 refers to the mental and spiritual anguish we experience when we commit sin.

- What words or phrases from verses 16, 18, 20, and 22 can help us understand what can happen when we commit sin? (Add students' responses to the list on the board. Consider inviting students to mark these words or phrases.)

Refer to the list on the board. Invite students to use what they learned from Lamentations 1 to write a principle that summarizes the results of committing sin. After sufficient time, invite students to share what they wrote with one of their classmates. Then ask several students to report to the class what they wrote. After they report, write the following principle on the board: **When we sin, we will feel troubled.** Explain that this is only one of the many possible principles we can learn from Lamentations 1.

- Why do you think we feel troubled or distressed when we commit sin?

To help students better understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:



“You cannot do wrong and feel right. It is impossible! Years of happiness can be lost in the foolish gratification of a momentary desire for pleasure. Satan would have you believe that happiness comes only as you surrender to his enticements, but one only needs to look at the shattered lives of those who violate God’s laws to know why Satan is called the Father of Lies” (“A Message to the Rising Generation,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 30).

- How might this truth help someone who is tempted to commit sin?

Ask students to ponder a time when they have felt troubled after committing a sin. Invite students to avoid sin so they do not have to experience these consequences.

### Lamentations 2–3

#### *Jeremiah trusts that the Lord will show Israel compassion*

Invite students to look as they study Lamentations 2–3 for principles that can help us when we feel troubled or distressed after committing sin.

Explain that in Lamentations 2 we read Jeremiah’s record of the misery and sorrow that the people of Jerusalem felt after their city was destroyed.

Explain that Lamentations 3 records that Jeremiah lamented the destruction of Jerusalem from the perspective of the people of Judah. Lamentations 3:1–18 describes the wicked people of Judah and their relationship with God. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Lamentations 3:1, 3, 7–9, 11, and 18. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people’s sins had affected their relationship with God.

- How had the people’s sins affected their relationship with God? (Help students understand that in their sinful state the people felt that the Lord had abandoned them. In reality, the people had moved away from God.)

Explain that because the people had damaged their relationship with God, they felt deep despair. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Lamentations 3:19–26. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a truth that might have helped the people of Judah.

Explain that the phrase “the wormwood and the gall” in verse 19 refers to bitter suffering.

- What reasons did Jeremiah give to explain why the people could still have hope even after they had experienced great despair?
- According to verse 25, whom does the Lord help?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about why we can have hope even after we have sinned? (Students may suggest a variety of principles, but make sure they identify the following truth: **Because the Lord is compassionate, we can find hope in knowing He will help us if we seek Him.** Write this principle on the board.)

Underline the following words in the statement on the board: *compassionate*, *hope*, and *help*. Ask students to explain what they think each of these words means.

- How might understanding this principle help someone who feels despair or is troubled because of his or her sins?

Summarize Lamentations 3:31–39 by explaining that Jeremiah explained that the Lord does not take pleasure in punishing people. Invite a student to read Lamentations 3:40–41 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the afflictions we experience as a result of sin might inspire us to do.

- What could the afflictions we experience as a result of sin inspire us to do? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **the afflictions we experience as a result of sin can help motivate us to turn again to the Lord.** Consider writing this truth on the board.)
- In what ways do you think the afflictions we experience as a result of sin can help inspire us to turn to the Lord?

Explain that in Lamentations 3:42–66 we learn that Jeremiah continued to lament the state of Judah but again recognized that the Lord will draw near to those who call upon Him.

## Lamentations 4

### *Jeremiah compares the lives of the people when they were righteous to their lives in captivity*

Ask students if they have ever wondered how their lives might be different if they chose to be wicked instead of righteous.

- How do you think your life would be different?

Explain that in Lamentations 4 we read that Jeremiah compared the lives of the righteous people who had lived in Judah in the past to the lives of the wicked people of Judah who lived during his own time.

Invite a student to read Lamentations 4:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jeremiah described the people when they were righteous as opposed to when they were wicked.

- How did Jeremiah describe the people when they were righteous and when they were wicked?

In Lamentations 4:3–10, Jeremiah made more statements comparing the state of the people when they were righteous to their state when they were wicked. For example, he said that when they were righteous they had had enough to eat, lived comfortably, and enjoyed good health. Jeremiah said that when they were wicked they faced starvation, did not have homes to live in, and were sickly.

- What had caused these changes in the lives of the people? (The people’s wickedness, which had resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem.)
- What principle can we learn from these verses about what happens when we live righteously instead of choosing to commit sin? (Students may give a variety of answers, but make sure they identify that **when we live righteously, our lives will be better than they would be if we chose to sin.**)
- How do you think people’s lives will be better when they live righteously?

Invite students to share examples of people from the scriptures whose lives were better because they chose to live righteously. Point out that being righteous does not mean that we will not experience trials and sorrow in our lives. It also does not mean that all who experience trials somehow deserve those trials because of unrighteousness. However, when we are righteous the Lord gives us strength, peace, and blessings to help us both temporally and spiritually (see Mosiah 2:41).

Summarize the rest of Lamentations 4 by explaining that Jeremiah continued to describe the pitiful condition of those who chose to be wicked.

## Lamentations 5

### *Jeremiah pleads with the Lord to forgive Israel and turn them back to Him*

Explain that Lamentations 5 records one of Jeremiah’s prayers to the Lord. Summarize Lamentations 5:1–18 by explaining that in Jeremiah’s prayer he acknowledged the sins of the people and the consequences they had suffered because of their sins.

Invite a student to read Lamentations 5:19–21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what else Jeremiah prayed for.

- What stands out to you about Jeremiah’s prayer?

Point out the phrase “renew our days as of old” (verse 21), and explain that Jeremiah pled that the Lord would forgive the people and make them clean, as they had been in former times.

Invite students to ponder what they can do to turn themselves more fully to the Lord so they can be renewed.

### **Look for the intent of the writer or speaker**

A passage of scripture or a principle of the gospel can often be clarified when the intent of the author is clear. In this instance, you might help students analyze what message Jeremiah was trying to teach by comparing the lives of the righteous to the lives of the wicked.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Ezekiel

### Why study this book?

The book of Ezekiel contains the visions and prophecies of Ezekiel, whom the Lord called to minister to the Jewish captives in Babylon. This book shows that the Lord is mindful of His people wherever they are. As students study this book, they can learn that God calls prophets as watchmen to warn His children of danger.

Despite being set at a time when Jerusalem was being destroyed, the book of Ezekiel is full of hope. The prophet Ezekiel saw beyond the tragedies of his era to a future time of renewal when the Lord would gather His people, give them “a new heart” and “a new spirit,” and help them live His laws (see Ezekiel 36:21, 24–28). Studying Ezekiel can strengthen students’ faith in the Lord’s power to transform individuals and nations. Students can learn that all who repent of their iniquities will receive God’s mercy, love, and forgiveness.

### Who wrote this book?

The prophet Ezekiel is the author of the book of Ezekiel. Writing from a first-person perspective, Ezekiel recorded the visions and revelations he received from the Lord. Ezekiel was a priest who was among the Jewish captives carried away to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar in approximately 597 B.C. (see Ezekiel 1:3). According to the account in 2 Kings 24:14–16, the Babylonians took captive mostly the chief men of the land at that time. Therefore, it is possible that Ezekiel came from a prominent and influential family (see Bible Dictionary, “Ezekiel”). Ezekiel prophesied and delivered the Lord’s words to the Jewish exiles in Babylon at about the same time that Jeremiah was prophesying in Judah

and Daniel was prophesying in the Babylonian court.

### When and where was it written?

The book of Ezekiel was written during Ezekiel’s captivity in Babylon. He prophesied from about 592 to 570 B.C. (see Bible Dictionary, “Ezekiel”). After being taken captive, Ezekiel settled with other Jews in a place called Tel Abib on the Chebar River (see Ezekiel 1:1–3; Bible Dictionary, “Ezekiel”). It was there that Ezekiel recorded that the heavens were opened to him and he saw the visions of God (see Ezekiel 1:1).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

More than once in the book of Ezekiel we read that the Lord compared His prophet to a watchman on a tower (see Ezekiel 3:17; 33:1–9). Through this comparison, the Lord emphasized both the responsibility of prophets to warn His people of impending danger and the responsibility of the people to respond to the watchman’s alarm. Additionally, we learn that all of us are responsible for our own actions and will be punished or rewarded based on the choices we make (see Ezekiel 18; 33).

The book of Ezekiel is rich with accounts of visions and prophecies. For example, the Lord showed Ezekiel a vision of the resurrection of the house of Israel, affirming that the Lord’s covenant people would eventually be gathered to the lands of their inheritance (see Ezekiel 37:1–14). The Lord also described the latter-day gathering of Israel by comparing it to the uniting of the stick of Joseph (the Book of Mormon) with the stick of Judah (the Bible) (see Ezekiel

37:15–28). The book of Ezekiel includes a prophecy of a great battle that will precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (see Ezekiel 38–39). Additionally, Ezekiel 40–48 contains a description of a temple that will be built in Jerusalem in the latter days.

### Outline

**Ezekiel 1–3** Ezekiel sees the Lord and His glory. He is called as a watchman to the house of Israel to warn, reprove, and call them to repentance.

**Ezekiel 4–24** The Lord instructs Ezekiel to use symbols to represent the wickedness of Israel and the destruction of Jerusalem. Ezekiel prophesies of the Lord’s judgments on Jerusalem and explains why famine, desolation, war, and pestilence will sweep the land of Israel.

**Ezekiel 25–32** The Lord commands Ezekiel to declare the wickedness of the nations surrounding Israel and prophesy of their destruction.

**Ezekiel 33–48** The Lord reproves the leaders of Israel for being poor shepherds over their people. The Lord will be a true shepherd to Israel. Ezekiel records his vision of Israel’s restoration after the exile and in the latter days. The Lord promises to gather the Israelites from captivity, return them to their promised lands, renew His covenant with them, and reunite the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

## LESSON 139

# Ezekiel 1–3

### Introduction

Ezekiel was a priest numbered among the Jewish captives carried away to Babylon by King Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C. (see 2 Kings 24:11–16; Ezekiel 1:1–2). In his fifth year of captivity, Ezekiel saw a vision and beheld God’s

glory. The Lord called Ezekiel to be a prophet and serve as a watchman who would warn, reprove, and call the house of Israel to repentance (see Ezekiel 2:3–7; 3:17).

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ezekiel 1

#### *Ezekiel sees the glory of God in vision*

Invite a student to read aloud the following situation described by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



“On December 26, 2004, a powerful earthquake struck off the coast of Indonesia, creating a deadly tsunami that killed more than 200,000 people. It was a terrible tragedy. In one day, millions of lives were forever changed.

“But there was one group of people who, although their village was destroyed, did not suffer a single casualty.

“The reason?

“They knew a tsunami was coming.

“The Moken people live in villages on islands off the coast of Thailand and Burma (Myanmar). A society of fishermen, their lives depend on the sea. For hundreds and perhaps thousands of years, their ancestors have studied the ocean, and they have passed their knowledge down from father to son.

“One thing in particular they were careful to teach was what to do when the ocean receded. According to their traditions, when that happened, the ‘Laboon’—a wave that eats people—would arrive soon after.

“When the elders of the village saw the dreaded signs, they shouted to everyone to run to high ground.

“Not everyone listened.

“One elderly fisherman said, ‘None of the kids believed me.’ In fact, his own daughter called him a liar. But the old fisherman would not relent until all had left the village and climbed to higher ground” (“Journey to Higher Ground,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 16).

- Why do you think some people disbelieved the village elders’ warnings?
- How do you think the people who disbelieved the warnings at first may have felt toward the village elders after the tsunami?

Explain that there are unseen dangers in the world that threaten our spiritual safety. Invite students to look as they study Ezekiel 1–3 for a principle that teaches how the Lord will warn us of dangers and keep us safe.

Explain that Ezekiel was a priest who was carried away captive into Babylon with other Jews by King Nebuchadnezzar. Invite a student to read Ezekiel 1:1, 3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ezekiel saw and experienced while in captivity.

- What did Ezekiel see and experience while in captivity?

Summarize Ezekiel 1:4–25 by explaining that Ezekiel described four heavenly creatures and their manner of movement. He also saw four wheels that moved with the creatures. While some have attempted to explain what these figures and objects represent, the full meaning of Ezekiel’s vision has not yet been revealed to us by the Lord.

### Focus on converting principles

When determining what to teach in a scripture block, teachers should avoid speculation and instead focus on truths that will help students come closer to Heavenly Father and the Savior. President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency counseled: “As you prepare a lesson, look in it for converting principles. . . . A converting principle is one that leads to obedience to the will of God” (“Converting Principles” [evening with Elder L. Tom Perry, Feb. 2, 1996], 1; *si.lds.org*).

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 1:26–28. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ezekiel saw in the expanse above the heavenly creatures. Ask students to report what they find.

- What words and phrases did Ezekiel use to describe the Lord and the throne He was sitting on?
- Why do you think Ezekiel fell upon his face when He saw the Lord on His throne?

### Ezekiel 2–3

#### *The Lord calls Ezekiel to warn the Israelites in exile*

Explain that Ezekiel 2–3 describes what Ezekiel saw next in his vision. Invite a student to read Ezekiel 2:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what helped Ezekiel hear the Lord’s words. Point out that Ezekiel 2:1, footnote *a*, clarifies the meaning of the phrase “son of man” as it is used in this verse.

- According to verse 2, what entered into Ezekiel that helped him hear the Lord’s words?
- What is the Spirit’s role in helping us hear and understand the Lord’s words?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 2:3–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jehovah called Ezekiel to do. Explain that the words *impudent* and *stiffhearted* in verse 4 imply stubbornness and an unwillingness to change. The word *forbear* in verse 5 means to refrain from.

- According to verses 3–5, what did the Lord call Ezekiel to do?
- Based on the description of the children of Israel in verses 3–7, what challenges would Ezekiel face as he taught them? (You may want to explain that the briars, thorns, and scorpions mentioned in verse 6 symbolize the difficulties Ezekiel would face as he taught the people.)
- What can we learn from verse 7 about the role of a prophet? (Students may suggest a variety of truths, but make sure it is clear that **prophets speak and teach the words the Lord has given them.**)
- How might understanding that prophets seek to teach the words the Lord has given them influence your attitude toward their counsel and teachings?

Summarize Ezekiel 2:9–10 by explaining that the Lord gave Ezekiel a “roll of a book” (Ezekiel 2:9), which was a scroll with writing on both the front and back. This scroll contained the words the Lord wanted Ezekiel to speak to Israel, which included “lamentations, and mourning, and woe” (Ezekiel 2:10) for their rebelliousness.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 3:1–3. (You may want to explain that the word *roll* means scroll.) Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Ezekiel to do with the scroll. Invite students to report what they find.

- What do you think eating the scroll represents? (One possible explanation is that eating the scroll represents Ezekiel internalizing the word of God and making it a part of his life [see Ezekiel 3:10].)
- How did Ezekiel describe the taste of the scroll?
- Why do you think he would describe the scroll with God’s word written on it as sweet when it contained “lamentations, and mourning, and woe” (Ezekiel 2:10)?

Summarize Ezekiel 3:4–14 by explaining that the Lord commanded Ezekiel to speak His words to the people. Though Ezekiel would face opposition, the Lord had strengthened Ezekiel’s resolve to teach the rebellious children of Israel.

Explain that the Lord used an analogy to help Ezekiel understand his mission and role as a prophet. To help students understand this analogy, invite them to imagine they live in an ancient city. Divide students into groups of two or three, and invite each group to make a list of ways they would fortify their city against enemy attacks. Ask a few students to share their lists with the class.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 3:17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord likened Ezekiel to.

- What did the Lord liken Ezekiel to?



Anciently, some writings were recorded on paper, parchment, or other materials and rolled up like this scroll.

Show students a picture of a watchman on a tower, or draw a simple illustration of one on the board. Explain that in Ezekiel’s day, a watchman on a wall or tower had the responsibility to warn the people of impending danger from enemy attacks (see Ezekiel 33:1–6). Display a picture of the current President of the Church.



- How are the responsibilities of a prophet similar to those of a watchman?
- How might prophets be like watchmen for us? (Students may use different words, but help them identify a principle similar to the following: **If we heed the warnings of prophets, we can be prepared to face challenges and dangers that threaten us.** Consider writing this principle on the board and inviting students to write it in their scriptures next to Ezekiel 3:17.)

To help students understand the importance of giving heed to prophetic warnings, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:

“Because the Lord is kind, He calls servants to warn people of danger. That call to warn is made harder and more important by the fact that the warnings of most worth are about dangers that people don’t yet think are real” (“A Voice of Warning,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 32).

- According to President Eyring, why are prophetic warnings so important for us to follow today?
- What are some warnings prophets have given us recently? (List students’ responses on the board. Also consider sharing a few statements of warning delivered by prophets at recent general conferences.)

Ask students to pick a warning listed on the board. Invite them to ponder and then respond to the following question:

- How can following this prophetic warning protect you from danger?

Invite students to review at home the most recent addresses from the President of the Church and sections of the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet. Encourage them to follow the warnings and counsel they find.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 3:18–21. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the consequences Ezekiel would suffer if he failed to warn the people by calling them to repentance.

- What did the Lord say would happen to Ezekiel if he failed to warn the people? (Explain that the word *blood* in verses 18 and 20 refers to sins.)
- According to these verses, what truth did the Lord emphasize to Ezekiel? (Students may use different words, but be sure it is clear that **the Lord holds us accountable to fulfill the responsibilities He gives us.**)

Summarize Ezekiel 3:22–27 by explaining that the Lord promised to help Ezekiel know when he should teach the people and what he should say to them. The Lord instructed Ezekiel to tell the people he would prophesy regardless of whether they listened to his message.

Conclude by testifying of the role of the Lord’s prophets as watchmen and the blessings that come from heeding their warnings and counsel.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Ezekiel 2:7; 3:4. “Thou shalt speak my words unto them”

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught how modern prophets seek the guidance of the Lord:

“[General] conferences are always under the direction of the Lord, guided by His Spirit [D&C 46:2]. We are not assigned specific topics. Over weeks and months, often through sleepless nights, we wait upon the Lord. Through fasting, praying, studying, and pondering, we learn the message that *He* wants us to give” (“General Conference: Strengthening Faith and Testimony,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2013, 6).

# Ezekiel 4–32

## Introduction

Jesus Christ commanded Ezekiel to teach the Jews in captivity by using examples that symbolized God’s judgment of the city of Jerusalem. Through Ezekiel, the Lord reproved the wayward Israelites and pleaded with

them to repent of their wicked ways. Ezekiel also spoke against the wickedness of nations surrounding Israel and prophesied of their destruction.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ezekiel 4–17, 19–24

#### *Ezekiel prophesies of the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering and gathering of Israel*

Invite students to think of someone they have a good relationship with.

- What has helped make that relationship strong?
- Is it possible to have a strong relationship with someone you do not know well? Why or why not?

Ask students to consider what their relationships with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are currently like. Invite students to look as they study Ezekiel 4–24 for how Jesus Christ helps us strengthen our relationships with Him.

Explain that the Lord showed Ezekiel in a vision how the children of Israel had separated themselves from Him through their idolatry and wickedness. Ezekiel prophesied about what would happen to Israel in the future.

Provide students with copies of the following chart, or write it on the board.

Scripture reference	What would happen to the Israelites?	What would the Israelites learn as a result?
Ezekiel 6:1–7		
Ezekiel 6:8–10		
Ezekiel 12:15–20		
Ezekiel 16:60–63		
Ezekiel 20:41–44		

### Small group activities

During small group activities, students can become distracted from the purpose of the assignment, visit with each other, or become casual in their efforts to learn. By moving from group to group and monitoring the learning activity, you can help students stay on task and gain more from the assignment.

Divide students into five groups, and assign each group one of the scripture blocks. (If your class is small, you may want to divide students into fewer groups and assign each group more than one scripture block.) Invite students to read their assigned scriptures in their groups, looking for what would happen to the Israelites and what the Israelites would learn as a result. Ask students to record what they find on their charts. After sufficient time, invite one student from each group to report to the class what they found. Ask students to fill in the rest of their charts or complete the chart together on the board as students report.

- How would you summarize what Jehovah wanted the Israelites to know as a result of what would happen to them? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board:

**The Lord provides opportunities for us to know that He is the only true God.)**

Explain that the phrase “ye shall know that I am the Lord” or variations of it are mentioned more than 45 times in Ezekiel 4–32.

- Why do you think it was important that the people recognize the Lord as the only true God?

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 14:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for one of Jehovah’s purposes for punishing Israel.

- According to verse 11, what was one of the Lord’s purposes for punishing Israel? (After students respond, add to the truth on the board so that it reads: **The Lord provides opportunities for us to come to know that He is the only true God and to draw closer to Him.**)
- What has helped strengthen your testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?
- What has helped you draw closer to Them?

## Ezekiel 18

### *Jesus Christ teaches Ezekiel that all people will be punished for their own sins*

Invite students to imagine that they are talking to two of their friends. One friend says to the other, “If I had parents like yours who were active and strong in the Church, I would probably be a better person and not do some of the stuff I do. But my parents aren’t active and don’t expect me to live all the standards, so I don’t.”

- What would you say to this friend?

Invite students to look for principles as they study Ezekiel 18 that can help them better understand Heavenly Father’s expectations of them, regardless of their family’s level of activity in the Church.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 18:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for an Israelite proverb Jesus Christ referred to.

- According to verse 2, what proverb did Jesus Christ refer to?

Explain that the reference to fathers eating sour grapes and the children’s teeth being set on edge refers to the Israelites’ belief that their punishments had resulted from their fathers’ sins, which were symbolized by the sour grapes. The children of Israel excused their sins by claiming that their parents had not properly taught them the ways of God or established an environment where they could be faithful to His commandments.

- According to verse 3, what did the Lord say to Israel about this excuse?

Explain that in Ezekiel 18:4–18 we read that the Lord used a scenario involving a man, his son, and his grandson that illustrates why the Israelites could not blame their sins on their parents. Summarize verses 4–8 by explaining that the Lord described a just and righteous man.

Invite students to scan Ezekiel 18:9 silently, looking for what the Lord said would happen to this righteous man.

- What did the Lord say would happen to this man? (Explain that the phrase “he shall surely live” refers to eventually living in God’s presence.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 18:10–13. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a description of the righteous man’s son.

- What kind of man was the son? (Explain that in verse 13 the phrase “he shall surely die” refers to being shut out of God’s presence, and the reference to blood refers to responsibility for the man’s sins.)
- What do you think the Lord meant when He said, “His blood shall be upon him”?
- What are some examples from the scriptures of people who were wicked despite having righteous parents? (Possible answers may include Cain, Laman, and Lemuel.)

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 18:14–18. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Jehovah described the wicked man’s son.

- How did Jehovah describe the wicked man’s son?
- What are some examples from the scriptures of people who lived righteously despite having unrighteous parents? (Possible answers may include Abraham, King Hezekiah, and King Limhi.)
- What principle can we learn from the wicked man’s son? (Students may use different words, but help them identify a principle similar to the following: **We can choose to live**

**righteously regardless of our circumstances and the choices of those around us.**

Using students' words, write this truth on the board. Invite students to consider writing it in their scriptures.)

Invite students to read Ezekiel 18:19–20 silently, looking for an additional principle Israel could learn from this parable.

- What do you think is meant by the phrase “the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son” (verse 20)? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **God will hold us accountable for our own choices.** Write this truth on the board.)
- Why do you think the children of Israel needed to understand this truth?

To help students understand the truths they identified in Ezekiel 18, invite a student to read aloud the following statement from *For the Strength of Youth*:

“Heavenly Father has given you agency, the ability to choose right from wrong and to act for yourself. Next to the bestowal of life itself, the right to direct your life is one of God’s greatest gifts to you. While here on earth, you are being proven to see if you will use your agency to show your love for God by keeping His commandments. . . .

“You are responsible for the choices you make. God is mindful of you and will help you make good choices, even if your family and friends use their agency in ways that are not right. Have the moral courage to stand firm in obeying God’s will, even if you have to stand alone. As you do this, you set an example for others to follow” ([booklet, 2011], 2).

- What has God given to us that can help guide us to make good choices?
- How has God helped you or someone you know make good choices even when family and friends have used their agency in ways that are not right?

Consider sharing your testimony that God will hold us accountable for our own choices and that regardless of our circumstances and the choices of others, we can choose to live righteously.

Write the following question on the board: *What choices can I make in my life now that will help me live righteously even when those around me do not?* Ask students to respond to this question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. After sufficient time, invite a few students to share what they wrote with the class.

Ask students to read Ezekiel 18:21–22 silently, looking for the Lord’s message to those who turn from their wickedness.

- What is the Lord’s message to those who turn from their wickedness?

Summarize Ezekiel 18:24–32 by explaining that Jehovah taught that the righteous who turn away from Him and commit sin without repenting will not be saved. Jehovah called on His people to cast away their sins and “make . . . a new heart and a new spirit” (Ezekiel 18:31).

(*Note:* Many of the teachings in Ezekiel 18:21–32 are repeated in Ezekiel 33:10–20 and will be covered in more detail in the next lesson.)

**Ezekiel 25–32*****Ezekiel prophesies of the destruction of foreign nations***

Summarize Ezekiel 25–32 by explaining that Ezekiel prophesied of the destruction of wicked nations that surrounded Israel.

Conclude by inviting students to testify of the truths from this lesson that are most meaningful to them.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Jeremiah 34–52; Lamentations; Ezekiel 1–32 (Unit 28)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Jeremiah 34–Ezekiel 32 (unit 28) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Jeremiah 34–41)

As students read how the kings of Judah rejected the prophet Jeremiah's counsel, they learned that the Lord's words will be fulfilled regardless of whether we believe in them. They also learned that if we obey the word of the Lord given through His servants, we will prosper spiritually. However, if we give in to fear and follow the world instead of the Lord's prophet, we will perish spiritually.

#### Day 2 (Jeremiah 42–52)

As students studied Jeremiah's counsel to the remnant of the Jews not taken into captivity, they learned that when we disregard the Lord's counsel given through His prophets, we bring negative consequences upon ourselves. They also discovered that through the strength of our Redeemer, we can be delivered from physical and spiritual bondage.

#### Day 3 (Lamentations)

Students learned the following truths from the book of Lamentations: When we sin, we will feel troubled. Because the Lord is compassionate, we can find hope in knowing He will help us if we seek Him. The afflictions we experience as a result of sin can help motivate us to turn again to the Lord. When we live righteously, our lives will be better than they would be if we chose to sin.

#### Day 4 (Ezekiel 1–32)

In their study of Ezekiel 1–32, students learned that if we heed the warnings of prophets, we will be doing what the Lord wants us to do, and we can be prepared to face challenges and dangers that threaten us. They also learned that the Lord holds us accountable to fulfill the responsibilities He gives us. Students also discovered that the Lord provides opportunities for us to come to know that He is the only true God and to draw closer to Him and that we can choose to live righteously regardless of our circumstances and the choices of those around us.

### Introduction

This lesson can help students understand the role of prophets and why it is important for them to give heed to their counsel.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Ezekiel 2–3

##### *The Lord calls Ezekiel to warn the Israelites in exile*

Invite a student to read aloud the following situation described by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"On December 26, 2004, a powerful earthquake struck off the coast of Indonesia, creating a deadly tsunami that killed more than 200,000 people. It was a terrible tragedy. In one day, millions of lives were forever changed.

"But there was one group of people who, although their village was destroyed, did not suffer a single casualty.

"The reason?

"They knew a tsunami was coming.

"The Moken people live in villages on islands off the coast of Thailand and Burma (Myanmar). A society of fishermen, their lives depend on the sea. For hundreds and perhaps thousands of years, their ancestors have studied the ocean, and they have passed their knowledge down from father to son.

"One thing in particular they were careful to teach was what to do when the ocean receded. According to their traditions, when that happened, the 'Laboon'—a wave that eats people—would arrive soon after.

"When the elders of the village saw the dreaded signs, they shouted to everyone to run to high ground.

"Not everyone listened.

"One elderly fisherman said, 'None of the kids believed me.' In fact, his own daughter called him a liar. But the old fisherman would not relent until all had left the village and climbed to higher ground" ("Journey to Higher Ground," *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2005, 16).

- Why do you think some people disbelieved the village elders' warnings?
- How do you think the people who disbelieved the warnings at first may have felt toward the village elders after the tsunami destroyed their village?

Explain that there are unseen dangers in the world that threaten our spiritual safety. Invite students to look as they study Ezekiel 2–3 for a principle that teaches how the Lord will warn us of dangers and keep us safe.

Remind students that while he was in captivity in Babylon, Ezekiel saw a vision of the heavens open and beheld the glory of God.

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 2:3–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jehovah

called Ezekiel to do. Explain that the words *impudent* and *stiffhearted* in verse 4 imply stubbornness and an unwillingness to change.

- According to verses 3–5, what did the Lord call Ezekiel to do?
- Based on how the Lord described the children of Israel, what challenges would Ezekiel face as he taught them? (You may want to explain that the briars, thorns, and scorpions mentioned in verse 6 symbolize the difficulties Ezekiel would face as he taught the people.)
- What can we learn from verse 7 about the role of a prophet? (Students may suggest a variety of truths, but make sure it is clear that **prophets speak and teach the words the Lord has given them.**)
- How might understanding that prophets seek to teach the words the Lord has given them influence your attitude toward their counsel and teachings?

Summarize Ezekiel 2:9–10 by explaining that the Lord gave Ezekiel “a roll of a book” (Ezekiel 2:9), which was a scroll with writing on both the front and back. (Anciently, some writings were recorded on paper, parchment, or other materials and rolled up.) This scroll contained the words the Lord wanted Ezekiel to speak to Israel, which included “lamentations, and mourning, and woe” (Ezekiel 2:10) for their rebelliousness.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 3:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Ezekiel to do with the scroll. Invite students to report what they find.

- What do you think eating the scroll represents? (One possible explanation is that eating the scroll represents Ezekiel internalizing the word of God and making it a part of his life [see Ezekiel 3:10]. This would prepare him to teach the Lord’s word to the people.)
- How did Ezekiel describe the taste of the scroll?
- Why do you think he would describe the scroll with God’s word written on it as sweet when it contained “lamentations, and mourning, and woe” (Ezekiel 2:10)?

Summarize Ezekiel 3:4–14 by explaining that the Lord commanded Ezekiel to speak His words to the people. Though Ezekiel would face opposition, the Lord had strengthened Ezekiel’s resolve to teach the rebellious children of Israel.

Explain that the Lord used an analogy to help Ezekiel understand his mission and role as a prophet. Invite a student to read Ezekiel 3:17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord likened Ezekiel to.

- What did the Lord liken Ezekiel to?

Show students a picture of a watchman on a tower, or draw a simple illustration of one on the board.

Explain that in Ezekiel’s day, a watchman on a wall or tower had the responsibility to warn the people of impending danger from enemy attacks (see Ezekiel 33:1–6).

Display a picture of the current President of the Church.

- How are the responsibilities of a prophet similar to those of a watchman?
- How might prophets be like watchmen for us? (Students may use different words, but help them identify a principle similar to the following: **If we heed the warnings of prophets, we can be prepared to face challenges and dangers that threaten us.** Consider writing this principle on the board and inviting students to write it in their scriptures next to Ezekiel 3:17. Point out that today Church members sustain the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators.)
- What are some warnings prophets have given us recently? (List students’ responses on the board. Also consider sharing a few statements of warning delivered by members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles during recent general conferences.)

Ask students to select a warning listed on the board. Invite them to ponder and then respond to the following question: How can following this prophetic warning protect you from danger?

Invite students to review at home the most recent addresses from the President of the Church and sections of the *For the Strength of Youth* booklet. Encourage them to follow the warnings and counsel they find.

Summarize Ezekiel 3:18–27 by explaining that the Lord told Ezekiel that He would hold him accountable if he failed to raise a warning voice and call Israel to repentance.

Conclude the lesson by testifying of the role of the Lord’s prophets as watchmen and the blessings that come from heeding their warnings and counsel.

## Next Unit (Ezekiel 33–Daniel 2)

Ask students to ponder the following questions: How difficult is it to obey the Word of Wisdom today? Would you obey that commandment if your life were threatened? Explain that they will learn about the courage of Daniel and his friends, who were taken captive into Babylon and were pressured to disobey a similar commandment from the Lord. Invite students to think of different ways God reveals truth to His children. Explain that they will also study how God revealed truths about the last days through visions to the prophet Ezekiel and through the prophet Daniel’s interpretations of the dreams of King Nebuchadnezzar. Ask them to note whom Daniel gave the credit to for the gift of being able to interpret dreams.

## LESSON 141

# Ezekiel 33–36

### Introduction

Through Ezekiel, Jehovah warned the Jews in Babylon of the consequences of continuing in their sins. After He condemned some of the leaders of the Israelites for not caring for the people as they should, Jehovah compared

Himself to a good shepherd who loves and protects His flock. The Lord promised His people that their enemies would be destroyed and, after returning to Him, His people would be restored to their land.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ezekiel 33

*As a watchman, Ezekiel warns the people against continuing to live sinfully*

Draw the following diagram on the board. Read aloud the following statement, and invite students to explain whether they believe it is true: “As long as you perform more righteous acts than sins during your life, you will certainly return to live with Heavenly Father forever.”

Sins	Righteous Acts
⋈	⋈⋈⋈

Invite students to look for truths as they study Ezekiel 33 that indicate how Jesus Christ will judge us and what we must do to qualify to live with Heavenly Father forever.

To help students understand who is speaking in this chapter, you may want to remind them that in both ancient times and today, Heavenly Father appointed Jesus Christ, or Jehovah, to speak for Him to the prophets. Jehovah, “usually identified in the Old Testament as LORD (in small capitals), is the Son, known as Jesus Christ, and . . . is also a God. Jesus works under the direction of the Father and is in complete harmony with Him” (Bible Dictionary, “God”).

Summarize Ezekiel 33:1–9 by explaining that Jesus Christ reiterated that the role of a prophet is similar to the role of a watchman. A watchman is responsible to warn people of unforeseen danger (see Ezekiel 3:17–21). Remind students that Ezekiel was called to preach to Israelites who had previously ignored the warnings of prophets and were now suffering the consequences of their sins while living as captives in Babylon.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 33:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a question that the Lord said the Israelites had asked. Explain that to “pine away” in their sins means the people felt they were wasting away in their sins. The word *live* in this verse can mean to enjoy peace and happiness in this life and eventually live in Heavenly Father’s presence.

- According to verse 10, what was the people’s concern?

Ask a student to read Ezekiel 33:11 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for Jehovah’s response to the Israelites’ concern.

- What message about Himself did Jehovah instruct Ezekiel to communicate to the Israelites?
- What did Jehovah instruct the Israelites to do?

Explain that as recorded in Ezekiel 33:12–16, the Lord gave two examples to help the Israelites understand the importance of turning from their sins and living righteously.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 33:12–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Jehovah taught about our righteousness.

- What does it mean that our righteous acts will “not be remembered” if we turn to iniquity (verse 13)?

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 33:14–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happens to the wicked who turn from their sins.

- What happens to the wicked who turn from their sins?
- What does it mean in verse 16 that none of the sins of a wicked person who turns away from his sins “shall be mentioned unto him”? (The Lord will not take those sins into account at the Final Judgment [see D&C 58:42].)

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 33:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, with half of the class looking for what the people said about the way of the Lord, or the way He will judge us, and the other half of the class looking for the Lord’s response to the people. (You may want to explain that the word *equal* in these verses means just or fair [see verse 17, footnote *b*].)

- What did the people say about the way of the Lord?
- How did Jehovah respond to the claim that His judgment is not fair?
- How would you explain why Jesus Christ’s method of judging us is fair?

To help students better understand how Jesus Christ will judge us, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.



“The Final Judgment is not just an evaluation of a sum total of good and evil acts—what we have *done*. It is an acknowledgment of the final effect of our acts and thoughts—what we have *become*. It is not enough for anyone just to go through the motions. The commandments, ordinances, and covenants of the gospel are not a list of deposits required to be made in some heavenly account. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a plan that shows us how to become what our Heavenly Father desires us to become” (“The Challenge to Become,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 32).

- Based on what you have learned from Ezekiel 33 and the statement by Elder Oaks, how would you summarize the Lord’s manner of judging us? (Students may provide a variety of answers, but make sure it is clear that **Jesus Christ will judge us by the person we have become as the result of our thoughts and actions.**)

Reread the statement from the beginning of the lesson. Invite students to explain why the statement is untrue. You may want to point out that if someone performs many righteous acts but then sins and turns away from righteousness, that person has not truly become righteous. On the other hand, if someone who has committed many sins chooses to turn to the Lord and repent, that person is no longer wicked.

- Why do you think it is important to understand that Jesus Christ will judge us by what we have become as the result of our thoughts and actions?

Summarize Ezekiel 33:21–33 by explaining that Ezekiel learned that Jerusalem had been destroyed. Ezekiel prophesied that those who remained in or moved into the land of Israel and rejoiced in the destruction of Jerusalem would also be destroyed. The Lord also told Ezekiel that the Israelites “hear thy words, but they do them not” (Ezekiel 33:32).

## Ezekiel 34

### *The Lord will take care of His flock like a good shepherd*

Display or draw a picture of a shepherd on the board.

- What are characteristics of a good shepherd?

Explain that Ezekiel 34:1–8 records that the Lord compared the leaders of Israel to shepherds and the people to sheep. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 34:1–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said about the leaders of Israel and their treatment of the people.

- What did the Lord say about the shepherds of Israel?

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *Jesus Christ is like a shepherd to His people because He . . .*

Invite students to read Ezekiel 34:11–16 silently, looking for what Jesus Christ will do as a shepherd for His people. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

Invite students to identify ways that Jesus Christ is like a shepherd to His people. Record their answers on the board. (Students may identify a variety of ways, including that Jesus Christ gathers His people and gives them security, their own land, nourishment, rest, and healing.)

- What are examples of how the Savior provides for the spiritual needs of His sheep?
- What do we need to do to receive these blessings from Him?
- How would you summarize as a principle what Jesus Christ will do for us if we follow Him? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we follow Jesus Christ, then He will bless us temporally and spiritually.**)
- When has the Savior been like a good shepherd to you by providing one of the blessings listed on the board?

Summarize Ezekiel 34:17–31 by explaining that Ezekiel prophesied that the Lord would deliver His people from their oppressors. This prophecy also refers to the time when the Lord will come to the earth in the latter days and gather the lost sheep of Israel through covenants. They will live with Him in safety, never to be scattered again.

## Ezekiel 35–36

### *The Lord pronounces judgments and promises on Edom and Israel*

Summarize Ezekiel 35:1–36:7 by explaining that after Jerusalem was destroyed and many of the Jews were taken captive to Babylon, the people of Edom, a neighboring nation of Israel and Judah, planned to take over the land that was now left desolate. Jehovah promised that because the people of Edom rejoiced in the destruction of Israel, they would also be destroyed and their land would be left desolate. As recorded in Ezekiel 36:8–38, the Lord then promised that He would bless the land to be fruitful and would gather all of Israel to rejoice in it. This prophecy, like the prophecy in Ezekiel 34:17–31, refers to Ezekiel’s day as well as to the last days.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 36:24–28. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what God promised to do for those who choose to follow Him in the last days.

- What does it mean to have a “stony heart” (verse 26)? How might having a stony heart affect someone?
- According to verse 26, what did the Lord promise to do for those who follow Him? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we follow Jesus Christ, He can change our hearts.**)

To help students understand what it means to have a new heart, or a change of heart, consider asking them to read Mosiah 5:2 silently. You may want to invite them to write this reference in the margin next to Ezekiel 36:26.

- What does it mean to have a change of heart?

You may want to share your testimony that each of us can receive a change of heart if we seek it by following Jesus Christ. Write the following questions on the board:

1. *In what ways do I need a change of heart?*
2. *What will I do in the coming week to invite the Holy Ghost to help me receive a change of heart?*

Invite students to write their responses to these questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Explain that you will not ask them to share what they wrote with the class.

After sufficient time, encourage students to seek a change of heart in the ways they have identified.

### **Writing exercises**

Inviting students to respond to thought-provoking questions in writing can help deepen and clarify their thoughts. Responding to a question in writing gives students the opportunity to formulate their ideas and receive impressions from the Holy Ghost.

# Ezekiel 37

## Introduction

Ezekiel described his symbolic vision of the resurrection of dry bones. The multiple meanings of this vision include a depiction of the resurrection of the dead as well as the restoration of the house of Israel. The Lord also directed Ezekiel to join two sticks together to represent

the union of the Bible and the Book of Mormon and the unification of the tribes of Ephraim and Judah. Through Ezekiel, the Lord spoke of the covenant He would establish with gathered Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ezekiel 37:1–14

*Ezekiel is shown examples of restoration—the Resurrection and the gathering of the house of Israel*

If possible, display a pair of worn-out shoes, a broken toy, and a melted candle. (You could also display pictures of these objects.) Ask students to consider what these objects have in common.

- How has the condition of each object changed over time?
- How might these objects represent what can happen to us physically or spiritually over time?

Invite students to look for doctrines and principles in Ezekiel 37 that can help us understand how God can restore us physically and spiritually.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 37:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ezekiel saw in a vision.

- What did Ezekiel see in the middle of the valley?

Invite students to imagine themselves in Ezekiel’s position and visualize this valley of bones. Explain that the fact that the bones were “very dry” (verse 2) implies that the bodies in the valley had been there for a significant period of time.

- What questions would you have if you were in the midst of the valley of dry bones?

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 37:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord asked Ezekiel. Invite students to report what they find. Write the following question on the board: *Can these bones live?* Invite a student to read Ezekiel 37:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord’s response to the question He asked.

- What did the Lord say He would do with the bones?

Explain that the word *breath* in verse 5 refers to the “breath of life” (Ezekiel 37:5, footnote *a*; Genesis 2:7), or our spirits, which God placed in our physical bodies. In other words, Ezekiel was referring to the reuniting of our bodies and spirits.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 37:7–10. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to the bones Ezekiel saw.

- What happened to the bones Ezekiel saw?

Explain that Ezekiel saw in vision the resurrection of many people. Resurrection is the reuniting of the spirit with the body in a perfect, immortal state. A resurrected body is no longer subject to death, so the body and the spirit will never again be separated (see Alma 11:43–45).

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 37:11–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would do for the house of Israel.

- What did the Lord say He would do for the house of Israel? (He would restore the tribes of Israel from their scattered condition and give them life.)

- What doctrines about resurrection can we learn from these verses? (Students may identify a variety of doctrines, such as **Jesus Christ has the power to resurrect us and when we are resurrected, our bodies will be made whole again.**)

To help students understand the importance of these doctrines, invite them to think of someone they love who has passed away. Ask a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Shayne M. Bowen of the Seventy:



“Remember as you attended the funeral of your loved one the feelings in your heart as you drove away from the cemetery and looked back to see that solitary casket—wondering if your heart would break.

“I testify that because of Him, even our Savior, Jesus Christ, those feelings of sorrow, loneliness, and despair will one day be swallowed up in a fulness of joy. I testify that we can depend on Him and when He said:

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

“‘Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also’ [John 14:18–19]. . . .

“I testify that on that bright, glorious morning of the First Resurrection, your loved ones and mine will come forth from the grave as promised by the Lord Himself and we will have a fulness of joy. Because He lives, they and we shall live also” (“Because I Live, Ye Shall Live Also,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 17).

Point to the question on the board. Invite students to answer this question by writing in their class notebooks or scripture study journals their testimonies of Jesus Christ and His power to resurrect us. Ask a few students who are willing to share their testimonies with the class. You may also want to share your testimony of the Savior.

## Ezekiel 37:15–28

### *Ezekiel prophesies that the sticks of Judah and Joseph will be joined together*

Invite two students to come to the front of the class, and give each of them a small stick. Ask students to think of ways in which these two sticks could bless people’s lives. You may want to ask the rest of the class to add their insights. Invite the two students to return to their seats.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 37:15–17. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the two sticks that would bless many lives forever.

- What did the Lord call the two sticks?

You may want to suggest that students mark verse 16, footnote *a*, to help them understand that these sticks can refer either to wooden tablets or to scrolls, which anciently were rolled around sticks (see Boyd K. Packer, “Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 51).

- What is the stick of Judah? (The Bible. Hold up a Bible with one hand, and explain that the Bible was preserved primarily through the Jews, many of whom were of the tribe of Judah.)
- What is the stick of Joseph? (The Book of Mormon. Hold up a copy of the Book of Mormon with your other hand, and explain that Lehi and his descendants, some of whom kept the records now contained in the Book of Mormon, were descendants of Joseph.)
- What do you think it means that these two sticks or books of scripture “shall become one in thine hand” (verse 17)? (As students respond, hold up a Bible and a copy of the Book of Mormon together in one hand.)

Invite a student to read 1 Nephi 13:40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Book of Mormon (described in this verse as part of the “last records”) and the Bible (described as the “first [records]”) together would make known among all people.

- Based on what you have learned from Ezekiel 37:15–17 and 1 Nephi 13:40, what is the purpose of bringing together the Bible and the Book of Mormon? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **the Bible and the Book of Mormon come together as witnesses that Jesus Christ is our Savior.**)

### Ezekiel 37:15–17

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

To help students further understand the importance of this principle, divide them into small groups and invite them to complete the following study guide:

### Ezekiel 37:17. “They shall become one in thine hand”

Some people say they believe in the Bible but do not see a need for the Book of Mormon. Discuss your answers to the following question: Why is it important to have more than one book of scripture that testifies of Jesus Christ?

One way the Bible and the Book of Mormon are united is by the LDS footnotes that provide cross-references between the two books. Find a verse in the Book of Mormon that testifies of Jesus Christ (such as Helaman 5:12). Look in the footnotes of the verse you found, and identify a verse in the Bible that testifies of Jesus Christ.

Read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who spoke of the blessings available because you can study the Bible and the Book of Mormon together.



Anciently, some writings were recorded on paper, parchment, or other materials and rolled up like this scroll.



“The stick or record of Judah . . . and the stick or record of Ephraim . . . are now woven together in such a way that as you pore over one you are drawn to the other; as you learn from one you are enlightened by the other. They are indeed one in our hands. Ezekiel’s prophecy now stands fulfilled.

“With the passing of years, these scriptures will produce successive generations of faithful Christians who know the Lord Jesus Christ and are disposed to obey His will. . . . The revelations will be opened to them as to no other in the history of the world. Into their hands now are placed the sticks of Joseph and of Judah. They will develop a gospel scholarship beyond that which their forebears could achieve. They will have the testimony that Jesus is the Christ and be competent to proclaim Him and to defend Him” (“Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).

Discuss your answers to the following question: How has studying both the Bible and the Book of Mormon helped you to feel prepared to proclaim and defend your testimony of Jesus Christ?

Ask students to ponder what they will do to use both the Book of Mormon and the Bible to strengthen their testimonies of and faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Invite them to act on the promptings they receive.

Summarize Ezekiel 37:21–28 by explaining that the union of the sticks of Judah and Joseph also symbolizes the reuniting of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. The reunited house of Israel will be led by their Shepherd and King, Jehovah. The Lord promised He would renew His covenant with the house of Israel and sanctify them.

Conclude by sharing how the Bible and the Book of Mormon have strengthened your testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

### Scripture Mastery—Ezekiel 37:15–17

To help students memorize Ezekiel 37:15–17, give each student a piece of paper that contains a phrase from Ezekiel 37:15–17. Hand the papers out in random order, and invite students to stand in a circle so they can see all of the papers. Ask students to organize themselves so that the phrases from Ezekiel 37:15–17 are in the correct order. (Explain that they may refer to their scriptures for help.) Once the phrases are in order, invite the class to recite the verses aloud in unison. Invite students to trade papers and repeat the activity. Students should be able to complete the activity more quickly each time and eventually do it without using the scriptures.

# Ezekiel 38–48

## Introduction

Ezekiel saw in vision a great battle that will precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. He also saw in vision a latter-day temple that will be built in Jerusalem. He saw water flowing from this temple through the surrounding

land and into the waters of the Dead Sea, which were then healed. Many of the details regarding these prophecies have not yet been revealed.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Ezekiel 38–39

#### *Ezekiel prophesies of the battle that will precede the Second Coming*

- If you could pick two things that you would like the world to know about Jesus Christ, what would they be? Why?

As students study the prophecies of Ezekiel in Ezekiel 38–48, ask them to look for what the Lord will make sure everyone knows about Him as part of His Second Coming.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 38:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom the Lord declared He was against.

Explain that Gog was the king (or chief prince) of a land called Magog, located north of Jerusalem. Ezekiel used Gog symbolically to represent a wicked leader or leaders who will seek to destroy God’s people in the last days. Write the word *Jerusalem* in the center of the board. Write *Gog of Magog* above the word *Jerusalem*.

Summarize Ezekiel 38:4–6 by explaining that Ezekiel prophesied that Gog would assemble a great army from many nations. Ask students to look in verse 5 for three countries that would gather.

- What countries gathered to Gog?

Explain that ancient Persia was east of Jerusalem, ancient Ethiopia was south of Jerusalem, and ancient Libya was west of Jerusalem. Explain that Ezekiel may have used these countries symbolically to illustrate that this army would come from many surrounding nations. Write the names of these countries on the board, and draw arrows from them to Gog.

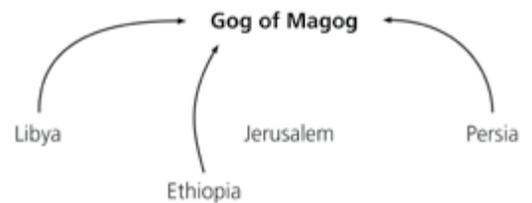
Summarize Ezekiel 38:7–14 by explaining that after the army of Gog gathers, their purpose will be to attack what they perceive to be the defenseless kingdom of Israel. This prophecy refers to the great battle commonly referred to as the battle of Armageddon, which will precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. (*Note:* The battle at the end of the Millennium described by John is also referred to as the battle of Gog and Magog. See Revelation 20:7–9.) The army of Gog symbolizes the great army that will attack Jerusalem. Add a large arrow pointing down from Gog of Magog to Jerusalem to represent this attack.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 38:15–16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord’s purpose in allowing the army of Gog to attack the people in Jerusalem in the latter days.

- What does the Lord say is His purpose in allowing Gog to battle the people of Israel? You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “that the heathen may know me” in verse 16. You may want to explain that the word *heathen* refers to people who do not know the Lord. Further explain that the phrase “I shall be sanctified in thee” in verse 16 means that the Lord will manifest Himself as He sustains the people of Israel against the army of Gog.

### Writing on the board

Effective use of the board during the lesson can prepare students to learn and can invite meaningful participation, especially for those who tend to learn visually. On the board, you can outline the major points or principles of the lesson, diagram a doctrine or event, draw maps, develop flow charts, display or draw pictures of things found in the scriptures, or do a multitude of other activities that will enhance learning.



Divide students into groups of two or three and invite them to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 38:18–23, looking for how the Lord will demonstrate His power against the army of Gog.

- How will the Lord demonstrate His power against Gog?
- According to verse 23, what will many nations come to know as they witness the destruction of Gog?

Summarize Ezekiel 39:1–29 by explaining that after most of the army of Gog is destroyed, it will take seven months for the house of Israel to bury the dead and seven years to clean up after the battle. Sometimes in the scriptures, writers use numbers to convey symbolic meaning beyond the literal understanding. Thus, the number seven may refer to a long time or to the land becoming complete and whole again.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 39:7, 21–22 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what the children of Israel would know after this battle. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What will the children of Israel know after this battle?
- According to Ezekiel 39:7, what name or title does the Lord use to refer to Himself?
- What truth will all people, including the entire house of Israel, eventually know as a result of this battle? (Students may use different words, but they should identify something similar to the following truth: **All people will know that Jesus Christ is the Lord.**)

### Ezekiel 40–43

*The Lord shows Ezekiel a temple that will be built in Jerusalem in the latter days*

Explain that in Ezekiel 40–43 we read that an angel guided Ezekiel through another vision pertaining to the last days.

Invite students to read the chapter summaries for Ezekiel 40–43 silently, looking for what Ezekiel saw.

- What did Ezekiel see in vision?

Explain that the temple Ezekiel saw is a temple that will be built in Jerusalem in the last days.

### Ezekiel 44–48

*The Lord reveals details concerning the temple Ezekiel saw*

Show students a picture of a temple.

- Why are temples sacred, or holy, places?

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 44:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord told Ezekiel to do to maintain the holy nature of the temple.

- What do you think it means to “mark well the entering in of the house”?
- How do priesthood leaders fulfill a similar responsibility today?

Summarize Ezekiel 44:6–8 by explaining that the Lord condemned Israel for failing to maintain the sacredness of His holy house. Invite a student to read Ezekiel 44:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for whom the Lord did not permit to enter His temple.

- Whom did the Lord not permit to enter His temple?

Explain that the phrase “stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh” in verse 9 refers to non-Israelites who had not made covenants to follow the Lord.

- Based on these verses, what principle can we learn about who can enter the house of the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we make and keep covenants with the Lord, He will permit us to enter His holy house.**)
- Why do you think the Lord has standards that we must meet before we enter His house?
- What standards do we need to live to be worthy to worship in the temple?

Invite students to imagine that they have dressed up in their Church clothes and are on the temple grounds. They walk to the front doors of the temple and enter. Invite them to imagine how they might feel knowing that they are worthy to enter.

Ask students to ponder the following questions:

- Are you currently worthy to enter the Lord’s house?
- What changes can you make to be better prepared to enter the Lord’s house?

Encourage students to follow any promptings they receive to help them be worthy to enter the Lord’s house.

Summarize Ezekiel 44:10–46:24 by explaining that the messenger showed Ezekiel how priests were to prepare for and properly perform their duties in the temple.

Explain that in Ezekiel 47 we read that Ezekiel was brought to the door of the temple, where he saw in vision an event that the Prophet Joseph Smith taught would occur before the Savior’s Second Coming (see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 252). This vision is also a symbolic representation of the blessings that come to all who live worthy to worship in the temple.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 47:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Ezekiel saw as he stood at the door of the temple.

- What did Ezekiel see?

Explain that Ezekiel then saw a man with a measuring line who measured the water flowing farther away from the temple. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Ezekiel 47:3–5. Ask the class to follow along and look for what happened to the water as it flowed away from the temple.

- What did Ezekiel notice about the water as it flowed farther and farther away from the temple?

Summarize Ezekiel 47:6–7 by explaining that the messenger brought Ezekiel to the bank of the river, where he noticed many trees along both sides of the river.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 47:8 aloud. Ask the class to look for where the water went.

- Where did the water go?

Direct students to the picture “Judean Wilderness” (Bible Photographs, no. 3) in the Bible appendix, and explain that in Ezekiel’s vision, this was the area through which the water ran. Point out that the sea Ezekiel saw was the Dead Sea, so named because of its inability to sustain animal or plant life.

Invite a student to read Ezekiel 47:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the water would do to everything it touched.

- What would the water do to everything it touched?
- What can Ezekiel’s vision teach us about the blessings we can experience through temple worship? (**The blessings of the temple heal and give life to those who keep the sacred covenants they make in the temple.**)
- What are some of the blessings of the temple that can heal or give life?
- When have you experienced blessings from the temple that could be like healing water?

Invite a student to read aloud Ezekiel 47:12. Ask the class to look for how Ezekiel described the trees on the banks of the river.

- How can the description of the trees on the banks of this river be like individuals who experience the blessings of the temple? (Those individuals can have eternal life and help nourish and heal others.)

Testify that by worshipping Heavenly Father in the temple, we can experience the greatest blessings available to us through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, including eternal life. As illustrated in Ezekiel’s vision, we can be healed and changed.

Summarize Ezekiel 47:13–48:35 by explaining that Ezekiel heard the voice of the Lord and saw how the promised land would be divided among the house of Israel. Ezekiel concluded his record by explaining what Jerusalem will be called after the Lord’s Second Coming (see Ezekiel 48:35). According to the Joseph Smith Translation, “the name of the city from that day shall be called, Holy; for the Lord shall be there” (in Ezekiel 48:35, footnote *a*).

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Daniel

### Why study this book?

The book of Daniel provides an account of the experiences of Daniel and other faithful Jews who were taken captive to Babylon. As students study the book of Daniel, they can learn the importance of remaining faithful to God and qualifying to receive the blessings He gives to those who are faithful to Him (see Bible Dictionary, "Daniel, book of"). It also contains the interpretation of an important dream that King Nebuchadnezzar had about the kingdom of God in the last days.

### Who wrote this book?

The prophet Daniel is the author of this book (see Daniel 8:1; 9:2, 20; 10:2). Daniel's name means "a judge (is) God" (Bible Dictionary, "Daniel"). "Nothing is known of his parentage, though he appears to have been of royal descent (Dan. 1:3); he was taken captive to Babylon [as part of the first deportation of the Jews in approximately 605 B.C.] and received the name of Belteshazzar (1:6–7)" (Bible Dictionary, "Daniel"). Daniel was selected as one of the choicest Jewish youths to be trained for service in King Nebuchadnezzar's court. God blessed Daniel with the gift of interpreting dreams, and he rose to leadership positions within the Babylonian and Persian governments. In many ways his life was similar to the life of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt. (See Bible Dictionary, "Daniel.")

### When and where was it written?

The book of Daniel was likely written around 530 B.C. while Daniel was living in Babylon. Assuming he was a teenager when he was taken to Babylon, Daniel may have been around 90 years old when he wrote his book. (See Gleason L. Archer Jr., "Daniel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, 12 vols. [1976–1992], 7:6.)

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

"The book has two divisions: Dan. 1–6 contains narratives regarding Daniel and his three companions; Dan. 7–12 contains prophetic visions seen by Daniel and reported in his own name" (Bible Dictionary, "Daniel, book of"). Some of these visions relate to the last days and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

"A major contribution of the book is the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. In the dream, the kingdom of God in the last days is depicted as a stone that is cut out of a mountain. The stone will roll forth until it fills the whole earth (Dan. 2; see also D&C 65:2)" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Daniel"; scriptures.lds.org).

The divine protection of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace and later of Daniel in the lion's den demonstrates how God delivers the faithful who honor Him at all times and in all circumstances.

### Outline

**Daniel 1** Daniel and his companions are faithful to the law of Moses, and God blesses them with knowledge and wisdom. They receive positions of service in King Nebuchadnezzar's court.

**Daniel 2** By revelation Daniel interprets King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which concerns the destinies of kingdoms of the earth and the kingdom of God in the last days.

**Daniel 3** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to worship King Nebuchadnezzar's golden idol and are cast into a fiery furnace, but the Lord delivers them.

**Daniel 4–5** Daniel interprets another dream of King Nebuchadnezzar's and later interprets writing on a wall regarding Babylon's impending fall to the Medes and Persians.

**Daniel 6** Daniel is delivered from a den of lions. He was cast into the den for praying to the Lord rather than obeying King Darius's decree forbidding petitioning any god or man other than the king.

**Daniel 7–12** Daniel has prophetic visions of events from soon after his time through the last days. These events include conquests of kingdoms of the earth, the coming of the Messiah, the distress and deliverance of God's people in the last days, and the Resurrection of the dead.

## LESSON 144

# Daniel 1

### Introduction

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were among the first group of Jews taken captive to Babylon and were selected to be trained for service in King Nebuchadnezzar's household. While obtaining their

education, Daniel and his friends kept the Lord's laws by refusing wine and certain foods from the king. The Lord blessed them physically, mentally, and spiritually, and they excelled in wisdom above other servants of the king.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Daniel 1

*Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego keep the Lord's law by refusing the king's food*

Read aloud the following true account, and invite students to consider what they would have done in this situation:

Creed Haymond, a member of the Church, was captain of his college track team. The night before a large track meet, Creed's coach offered him some wine to refresh himself. When Creed twice refused to drink the wine, his coach responded, "Remember, Creed, you're captain of the team and our best point winner; fourteen thousand students are looking to you personally to win this meet. If you fail us we'll lose. I ought to know what is good for you" (in Joseph J. Cannon, "Speed and the Spirit," *Improvement Era*, Oct. 1928, 1002).

- Why might it have been difficult for Creed to keep the Word of Wisdom in this situation?
- What are some other situations in which people might be pressured to break the Word of Wisdom?

Invite students to look for principles as they study Daniel 1 that can help them be faithful to the Lord when they are pressured to break His commandments.

Summarize Daniel 1:1–4 by explaining that in approximately 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar took items from the temple and a select group of Jews back to Babylon (see 2 Kings 20:14–18). He commanded an official in his palace to take certain captive Israelite youth and train them for service in his household.

Invite a student to read Daniel 1:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for characteristics Nebuchadnezzar desired the youth to have and what he provided for them.

- What characteristics did these youth need to have?
- What did the king provide these youth? (Explain that the word *meat* refers to delicacies [see Daniel 1:5, footnote *b*].)

Invite a student to read Daniel 1:6–7 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for the names of some of the Jewish young men who were selected to be trained for the king's service.

Invite a student to read Daniel 1:8 aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for how Daniel responded when wine and certain foods were provided by the king.

- What request did Daniel make regarding the food and wine that were provided? Why?

To help students understand what *defile* means, invite a student to draw a car on the board.

- What liquids do cars require to properly function?

Show students a soft drink.

- What would happen if we poured a soft drink into the gas tank of a car? (Adding the soft drink would make the existing gasoline impure and would harm the engine of the car.)

Explain that *defile* means to desecrate or make impure or unclean. Daniel may have considered that partaking of the food and wine would defile him because, according to custom, a portion of these items might have first been offered as sacrifices to Babylonian gods. To consume such food would have been considered participating in the worship of false gods.

Some of the food may also have been forbidden by the law of Moses (see Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14:3–21) or not prepared in accordance with the law (see Leviticus 17:13–14; Deuteronomy 12:15–16).

Explain that the law of Moses included the Lord’s dietary laws for people in Daniel’s day, similar to how the Word of Wisdom represents the Lord’s law of health for our day.

- If Daniel lived in our day, what would he refuse to take into his body to avoid defiling himself? (If students need help, you could invite them to review D&C 89:5, 7–9 and “Physical and Emotional Health” in *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 25–27.)
- How can consuming such items be like putting soda in the gas tank of a car? (It defiles us spiritually and can also defile us physically.)

Ask students to think about the pressures Daniel faced when he made the request not to eat the king’s food and wine.

- What factors might have made it difficult for Daniel to be faithful to the laws the Lord had given?

Consider inviting a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David R. Stone of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for Elder Stone’s summary of the circumstances Daniel and his friends were placed in:

“Let us clearly understand the pressures that the four young men were under. They had been carried away as captives by a conquering power and were in the household of a king who held the power of life or death over them. And yet Daniel and his brothers refused to do that which they believed to be wrong” (“Zion in the Midst of Babylon,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2006, 92).

- What can we learn from Daniel’s example in this moment? (Write the following statement on the board: *We can be faithful to the Lord in all circumstances.*)

Explain that at the end of Daniel 1, students will see what the Lord can do for those who are faithful to Him in all circumstances.

Invite a student to read Daniel 1:9–10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for why the prince of the palace eunuchs, or officers, was concerned about Daniel’s request.

- What was the concern of the prince of the eunuchs?

Invite a student to read Daniel 1:11–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel suggested. Explain that the word *pulse* (verse 12) refers to food grown or made from seeds or grains. You may also need to explain that the word *countenance* (verse 13) refers to a person’s appearance.

- What proposal did Daniel make?
- If Daniel lived in our day, what would he likely choose to take into his body to comply with the Lord’s law of health? (See D&C 89:10–17 and “Physical and Emotional Health” in *For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], 25–27.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Daniel 1:14–17. Ask the class to follow along and look for the results of Daniel’s and his friends’ decision to be faithful to the Lord’s laws.

- How did their countenances compare to those of the other youth? (Daniel and his friends looked better and healthier.)
- According to Daniel 1:17, in what other ways did the Lord bless them?
- What principle can we learn from their experience? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we keep the Lord’s laws, then He will bless us physically and spiritually.**)

It is important to remember that the physical blessings for keeping the Lord’s laws, particularly the Word of Wisdom, do not always include protection from poor health, but they can include other physical blessings.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask the class to listen for what he taught about the purposes of the Word of Wisdom:

“I have come to know . . . that a fundamental purpose of the Word of Wisdom has to do with revelation. . . .

“If someone ‘under the influence’ can hardly listen to plain talk, how can they respond to spiritual promptings that touch their most delicate feelings?”

“As valuable as the Word of Wisdom is as a law of health, it may be much more valuable to you spiritually than it is physically” (“Prayers and Answers,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 20).

- In what ways might the Word of Wisdom be much more valuable to us spiritually than it is physically?

Invite a student to read the following summary of the conclusion of Creed Haymond’s experience. Ask the class to listen for how Creed was blessed by keeping the Lord’s law of health.

After Creed’s coach left, Creed worried that his refusal to drink the wine would cause him to lose the track meet for his school. He knelt and asked the Lord to give him a testimony regarding the source of the Word of Wisdom.

The next morning, all of the boys on his team were sick. They underperformed in their events, and one teammate was even too sick to participate. Despite falling at the beginning of the 100-yard (91-meter) dash, Creed caught up and won the race. Later in the day, he was forced to begin the 220-yard (201-meter) final despite having had only five minutes to rest following the semifinal. He won that race as well, finishing in the fastest time that race had ever been run.

That night, the question he asked the Lord about the Word of Wisdom came back into his mind. As he lay in bed contemplating on the events of the day, he received the assurance that the Word of Wisdom was from God (see Joseph J. Cannon, “Speed and the Spirit,” *Improvement Era*, Oct. 1928, 1001–7).

- How was Creed Haymond blessed for keeping the Lord’s law of health?
- When have you or someone you know chosen to keep the Lord’s law of health in the face of an opportunity or pressure to break it?
- What are some of the physical and spiritual blessings you have experienced by keeping the Lord’s law of health?

Consider sharing a personal experience that has influenced your testimony of the importance of keeping the Lord’s law of health. Encourage students to set a goal to keep this law.

Invite a student to read Daniel 1:18–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the Lord blessed Daniel and his friends for being faithful to Him.

- How did the Lord bless Daniel and his friends for being faithful to Him? (You may need to explain that the phrase “stood they before the king” [verse 19] means they entered the service of the king.)
- From the example of Daniel and his friends, what principle can we learn about how the Lord will bless us if we are faithful to Him? (Adjust the statement written on the board earlier in the lesson so that it reads as follows: **If we are faithful to the Lord in all circumstances, then He will magnify us.**)
- What do you think it means to be magnified by the Lord?

Conclude by encouraging students, in their study of the remainder of the book of Daniel, to look for additional examples of how the Lord magnified Daniel and his friends because they were faithful to Him regardless of their circumstances.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Daniel 1. Video Presentation—“God Gave Them Knowledge”

The video “God Gave Them Knowledge” (13:42) depicts events in Daniel 1–2. In place of reading Daniel 1:4–7, consider showing the portion of the video depicting Daniel’s refusal of the king’s meat and wine (time code 0:52–3:49). After showing this portion, return to the suggested teaching ideas beginning with inviting a student to read Daniel 1:8 aloud. Later, in place of reading Daniel 1:11–17, you could show another portion of the

video depicting Daniel’s proposal and the outcomes (time codes 3:50–5:15 and 5:46–6:15). After showing these portions of the video, ask the questions associated with these verses as provided in the manual to help ensure that students understand the content. Continue the lesson by identifying the principle taught in the experience of Daniel and his friends. This video is available on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on [LDS.org](http://LDS.org). (Note: Depictions of King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in this video will be included in the lesson for Daniel 2.)

# Daniel 2

## Introduction

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a dream that troubled him. He ordered all the wise men in Babylon to be killed unless they could reveal the dream and its

meaning. Heavenly Father revealed to Daniel the dream and the interpretation of it, which included a description of the kingdom of God upon the earth in the latter days.

## Suggestions for Teaching

 If you did not use the video “God Gave Them Knowledge” (13:49) in the previous lesson, you may want to begin today’s class by showing students the first segment (0:00–6:16) of this video to review Daniel 1. This video is available on *Old Testament Visual Resource DVDs* and on LDS.org.

### Daniel 2:1–23

*Daniel prays about King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, and Heavenly Father reveals it to him*

Invite students to respond to the following question in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. (Explain that you will not ask them to share their responses with the class.)

- What is an aspect of your life in which you need Heavenly Father’s help?

Invite students to look for truths in Daniel 2 that can guide their efforts to seek and receive Heavenly Father’s help.

Remind students that Daniel and his friends served in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Invite a student to read Daniel 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what troubled Nebuchadnezzar.

- What troubled Nebuchadnezzar?
- What did he ask his wise men to do?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Daniel 2:4–11. Ask the class to follow along and identify why the wise men were troubled by the king’s request.

- Why were the wise men troubled by the king’s request?
- Why did the king not reveal the dream to his wise men? (He wanted to test them so he could trust that their interpretation was accurate.)

Point out the phrases “there is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king’s matter” (verse 10) and “there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods” (verse 11). Ask students to summarize in their own words what the king’s wise men meant by these phrases.

Invite students to read Daniel 2:12–13 silently, looking for how the king responded to the wise men.

- How did the king respond to the wise men?
- If you were in Daniel’s position, what would you do?

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:14–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Daniel’s response when he heard about King Nebuchadnezzar’s decree.

- What did Daniel and his friends do? (You may want to explain that to “desire mercies of the God of heaven” [verse 18] means to seek Heavenly Father’s help.)
- According to verse 19, what happened after Daniel and his friends sought Heavenly Father’s help?

 Instead of using the above ideas for teaching Daniel 2:4–23, you could show a portion of the video “God Gave Them Knowledge” (6:17–13:49). As students watch the video, invite them to look for what Daniel did when he needed wisdom and guidance. To ensure that students understand what is taking place in the video, you may want to pause it

periodically and allow students to review corresponding passages from Daniel 2. After the video, ask the following questions. (If you do not show the video, you may use the same questions to continue the lesson.)

- What principle can we learn from Daniel and his friends about receiving the wisdom and help we need from God? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we seek Heavenly Father's help, we can receive the wisdom and direction we need.**)
- Why is it important for us to seek Heavenly Father's help before we can receive wisdom and direction from Him?

Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals several ways we can seek Heavenly Father's help. After sufficient time, invite several students to share what they wrote. Then ask:

- When have you or someone you know sought Heavenly Father's help and received needed wisdom and direction?

After one or two students have responded, encourage the class to continue to seek Heavenly Father's help so they can receive the wisdom and direction they need.

Invite students to scan Daniel 2:20–23, looking for what Daniel did after Heavenly Father revealed the dream to him.

- What stands out to you about what Daniel did after Heavenly Father revealed the dream to him?

## Daniel 2:24–49

### *Daniel reveals to King Nebuchadnezzar the dream and its interpretation*

Summarize Daniel 2:24–25 by explaining that when Daniel told the king's servant that he could reveal the king's dream to him, the servant immediately brought Daniel to the king.

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:26–30 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel told the king about God and the latter days. Explain that the word *secret* in these verses refers to truth or knowledge (see verse 28, footnote *b*).

- How does what Daniel told the king compare to what the wise men had told the king (see verses 10–11)?
- Based on what Daniel told the king (see verse 30), what is one reason why Heavenly Father reveals truth to His prophets? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **Heavenly Father reveals truth to His prophets in order to bless His children.**)

Explain that Daniel 2:31–35 records Daniel's description of the details of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Invite a student to read Daniel 2:31–35 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify the different elements of the dream. Invite a student to draw on the board the image and the stone Daniel described. (As the lesson continues, add labels to the drawing as shown in the accompanying diagram.)

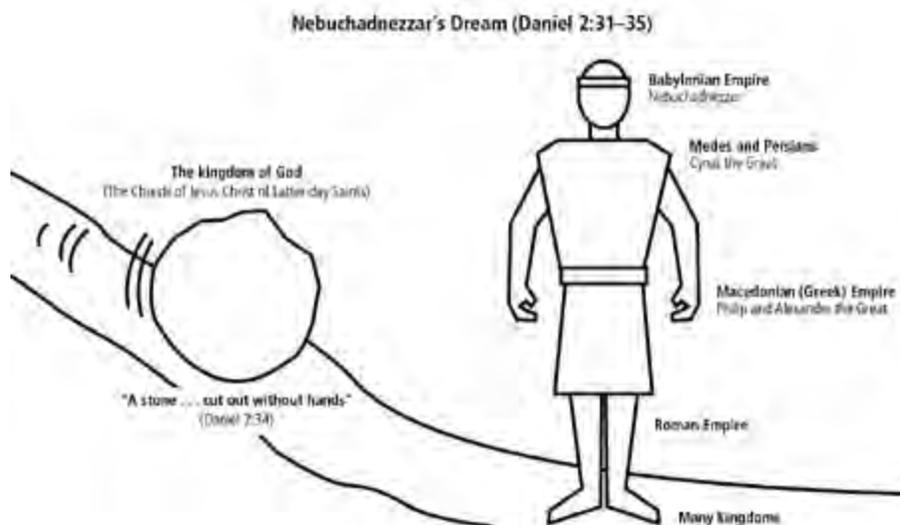
- What did the stone do to the image?  
What did the stone become?

Explain that Daniel 2:36–45 records that Daniel revealed to King Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of his dream. Invite a student to read Daniel 2:37–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel revealed about the head of the image from the dream.

- Who did Daniel say the head represented? (Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire.)

You may want to suggest that students write *Babylonian Empire* in the margin next to verse 38.

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:39 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the additional truths Daniel revealed.



- What else did Daniel reveal about the king's dream? (The different sections of the image represented kingdoms that would rise after Babylon falls.)

Explain that the image's breast and arms made of silver represent the empire of the *Medes and Persians*, and the belly and thighs of brass represent the *Macedonian (Greek) Empire*. You may want to suggest that students write these interpretations in the margin next to verse 39.

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:40 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel revealed about the legs of iron.

- What did Daniel reveal about the legs of iron? (They represented a fourth kingdom that would follow the Greek empire.)

Explain that the image's legs of iron represent the Roman Empire. You may want to suggest that students write *Roman Empire* in the margin next to verse 40.

Summarize Daniel 2:41–43 by explaining that Daniel revealed that the toes of the image represented both strong and weak kingdoms. Explain that these represent the many kingdoms that arose after the fall of the Roman Empire. You may want to suggest that students write *Many kingdoms* in the margin next to verses 41–43. Point out that the time of many kingdoms includes the latter days.

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:44–45 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel revealed about what God would do during the time of many kingdoms.

- According to verse 44, what did Daniel prophesy that God would do during the time of many kingdoms?

To help students understand what the stone cut out of the mountain without hands represents (see Daniel 2:34–35), invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 65:2 aloud.

- What does the stone cut out of the mountain without hands represent? (Explain that in this verse the phrase “kingdom of God” refers to the kingdom of God on the earth—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.)
- What has the Lord “committed unto man” that enables the gospel to fill the whole earth? (Remind students that the phrase “keys of the kingdom” refers to the priesthood authority to preside in the Church.)

You may want to suggest that students write *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* in the margin next to verses 44–45.

- What might the phrase “cut out of the mountain without hands” mean in verse 45? (The kingdom was established by God, not by man.)
- Why is it important to understand that the Church was established by God and not by man?
- What do you think the phrase “it shall stand for ever” means in verse 44?
- What does Daniel's prophecy teach us about the Church? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The Lord established His Church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—and it will continue to grow until it fills the whole earth.**)
- Why is it important for us to remember that we are part of God's kingdom on earth?
- How can knowing that the Lord leads His kingdom today help us when we face opposition or when our faith is challenged?

You may want to share your testimony about why it is important to you to be a part of God's kingdom on earth. Invite students to consider what they can do to help the kingdom of God to continue rolling forth to fill the earth.

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:46–49 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for King Nebuchadnezzar's response to the interpretation of his dream.

- What did Nebuchadnezzar do for Daniel and his friends?

Remind students that Daniel and his friends received these blessings because they sought Heavenly Father's help. Invite students to ponder the truths they have learned while studying Daniel 2 and to follow any promptings they may have received from the Holy Ghost to act on these truths.



- What did the stone do to the image?
- What did the stone become?

Explain that Daniel 2:36–45 records that Daniel revealed to King Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of his dream. Invite a student to read Daniel 2:37–38 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel revealed about the head of the image from the dream.

- Who did Daniel say the head represented? (Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire.)

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:39–43 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the additional truths Daniel revealed.

- What else did Daniel reveal about the king’s dream? (The different sections of the image represented kingdoms that would rise after Babylon falls.)

Remind students that the image’s breast and arms made of silver represent the Mede and Persian empires, and the belly and thighs of brass represent the Macedonian (Greek) empire. The image’s legs of iron represent the Roman Empire, and the toes represent both strong and weak kingdoms, or the many kingdoms that arose after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Invite a student to read Daniel 2:44–45 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel revealed about what God would do during the time of the many kingdoms in the latter days.

- According to verse 44, what did Daniel prophesy that God would do during the time of the many kingdoms?

To help students understand what the stone cut out of the mountain without hands represents, invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 65:2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along.

- What does the stone cut out of the mountain without hands represent? (The kingdom of God. Explain that in this verse the phrase “kingdom of God” refers to the kingdom of God on the earth—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.)
- Why is it important to understand that this Church was established by God and not by man?
- What does Daniel’s prophecy teach us about the Church? (After students respond, write the following truth on the board: **The Lord established His Church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—and it will continue to grow until it fills the whole earth.**)

To help students understand the growth of the Church in the latter days, you may want to display the following table on the board or as a handout:

	April 6, 1830	1880	1930	1980	1990	2000	2010
Members of the Church	6	133,628	670,017	4,639,822	7,761,207	11,068,861	14,131,467
Stakes	0	23	104	1,218	1,784	2,581	2,896
Missions	0	10	30	188	256	334	340
Temples in Operation	0	1	7	19	44	102	134

For variety, consider leaving the first column of the table blank and letting students guess what each category represents. You could also invite students to guess what the figures are for the current year. They could check their answers by referring to the statistical report printed each May in the *Ensign* or *Liahona*.

- What thoughts do you have when you consider how much the Church has grown since it was organized in 1830?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“The little stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands as seen in Daniel’s vision is rolling forth to fill the whole earth (see Dan. 2:44–45). No force under the heavens can stop it if we will walk in righteousness and be faithful and true. The Almighty Himself is at our head” (“This Is the Work of the Master,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 71).

- Why is it important for us to remember that we are part of God’s kingdom on earth?
- How can knowing that the Lord leads His kingdom today help us when we face opposition or when our faith is challenged?

Invite students to consider what they can do to help the kingdom of God to continue rolling forth to fill the earth. Summarize Daniel 2:46–49 by explaining that after Daniel revealed the dream and its interpretation, Nebuchadnezzar praised God and gave positions of honor to Daniel and his three friends.

### Next Unit (Daniel 3–Amos 7)

Invite students to imagine what it would be like to be thrown in a lion’s den. Ask: Would you have acted like Daniel in this situation? When the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith, he quoted Joel 2:28–32 and said that those events were not yet fulfilled but soon would be. Explain that as students study Daniel 3–12, Hosea, Joel, and Amos, they will learn about Daniel and the lion’s den and marvelous prophecies about the latter days.

# Daniel 3–5

## Introduction

Because Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to worship a golden image made by King Nebuchadnezzar, they were cast into a fiery furnace. The Lord miraculously delivered them from harm. Daniel interpreted

Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of a great tree and many years later, under King Belshazzar, interpreted divine writing on a wall concerning the conquering of the Babylonian kingdom by the Medes and the Persians.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Daniel 3

*The Lord miraculously delivers Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace*

To prepare students to see the relevance of the truths they will learn today, divide them into groups of two or three, and give each group a copy of the following chart (or copy it on the board). Invite students to write positive consequences and negative consequences that could result from each choice.

Choice	Positive Consequence	Negative Consequence
Not joining with your peers when they invite you to cheat on a school assignment		
Not adopting a popular fashion trend that goes against the Lord’s standards		
Walking out of a movie with inappropriate content		

### Establish relevance and purpose

Beginning a lesson with a relevant question, situation, or problem can lead students to search the scriptures for gospel principles and doctrines that give them guidance and direction. If needed, you can make this lesson more meaningful for your students by replacing some of the choices in the accompanying chart with choices that reflect specific challenges your students encounter.

After students have had a few minutes to complete their charts, invite several students to report what their groups wrote.

- How might thinking about possible consequences influence your choices?

Invite the class to look for truths as they study Daniel 3 that can help them choose to obey the Lord, regardless of the outcome.

Summarize Daniel 3:1–5 by explaining that King Nebuchadnezzar had a large golden image or statue made that was approximately 90 feet (27.4 meters) high and 9 feet (2.74 meters) wide. The king then gathered leaders from his kingdom for the dedication of the image. At the dedication, a command was announced that when music sounded, everyone was to fall down and worship the golden image.

Invite a student to read Daniel 3:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for the consequence for not worshipping the golden image as commanded.

- What was the consequence for not worshipping the golden image?

Ask five volunteers to come to the front of the class. Assign one the role of a prominent Babylonian, one the role of Nebuchadnezzar, and the remaining three the roles of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Summarize Daniel 3:8–11 by explaining that a group of prominent Babylonians came to Nebuchadnezzar to report something they observed. Ask the student acting as the prominent Babylonian to read Daniel 3:12 in an accusing tone while addressing the student acting as Nebuchadnezzar.

- What did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to do when the music sounded?

- What do you imagine less faithful Jews might have said to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego for refusing to fall down and worship the image?

Read Daniel 3:13 and the beginning of Daniel 3:14 aloud, and ask the student acting as Nebuchadnezzar to read the remainder of Daniel 3:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Nebuchadnezzar said to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

- What choice did Nebuchadnezzar give to these three Jewish men?
- What did he ask about their God?

Invite the students acting as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to each read aloud a verse from Daniel 3:16–18. (You could read the beginning of Daniel 3:16.) Ask the class to follow along, looking for significant statements in the men’s response to the king.

You may want to explain that the response “we are not careful to answer thee in this matter” (Daniel 3:16) could also be interpreted as “we have no need to discuss this matter” because they were completely resolved not to worship the image. After the student volunteers have finished reading, invite them to return to their seats.

- What were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego confident about? (God *could* save them from death.)
- What did they not know? (They did not know if God *would* save them. You may want to suggest that students mark the phrase “But if not” in verse 18.)
- How would you summarize their response to the king in verses 17–18?
- What stands out to you about their faith in the Lord?

Ask students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals a principle they learn from the example of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. After sufficient time, invite several students to report what they wrote. Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **We show our faith in the Lord by choosing to obey Him, regardless of the consequences.**

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Dennis E. Simmons of the Seventy. Ask the class to listen for how the faith shown by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego relates to our lives:



“Our scriptures and our history are replete with accounts of God’s great men and women who believed that He would deliver them, *but if not*, they demonstrated that they would trust and be true.

“He has the power, but it’s our test.

“What does the Lord expect of us with respect to our challenges? He expects us to do all we can do. . . .

“We must have the same faith as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

“Our God will deliver us from ridicule and persecution, *but if not*. . . . Our God will deliver us from sickness and disease, *but if not*. . . . He will deliver us from loneliness, depression, or fear, *but if not*. . . . Our God will deliver us from threats, accusations, and insecurity, *but if not*. . . . He will deliver us from death or impairment of loved ones, *but if not*, . . . *we will trust in the Lord*.

“. . . *We will have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that if we do all we can do, we will, in His time and in His way, be delivered and receive all that He has*” (“But If Not . . .” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 74–75).

- How can we develop this same kind of faith in the Lord?

Remind students of the choices presented at the beginning of the lesson. Ask them to ponder whether they would show their faith by making those righteous choices despite the negative outcomes, or “fiery furnaces,” they might experience.

Invite a student to read Daniel 3:19–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how King Nebuchadnezzar reacted to the response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

- If you were one of these three men, what might you have been thinking and feeling as you watched the furnace being heated?

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Daniel 3:21–27. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast into the furnace.

- What did Nebuchadnezzar see when he looked into the furnace?

Display the picture *Three Men in the Fiery Furnace* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 25; see also LDS.org).

- What principle can we learn about what the Lord will do for us if we choose to obey Him regardless of the outcomes? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we choose to obey the Lord, He will be with us**. Write this principle on the board.)
- What are some ways the Lord shows He is with those who obey Him?

To help students feel the truth and importance of the principles they have identified, discuss the following questions:

- When have you or someone you know shown faith in the Lord by choosing to obey Him regardless of the outcome? How did the Lord show He was with you or the person you know?

Invite students to write in their class notebooks or scripture study journals how they feel impressed to apply the truths they have identified from studying this experience of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. You might invite them to write how they will show their faith in the Lord the next time they are faced with the choice to obey or disobey one of His commandments.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Daniel 3:28–30. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the positive outcomes that came from the affliction of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

- What positive outcomes came from the affliction of these three men?

## Daniel 4

### *Daniel interprets King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree*

Summarize Daniel 4 by explaining that Daniel interpreted another of King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams. The dream was a prophecy of the king's removal from the throne and his madness. A year later, while boasting of his accomplishments in his kingdom, the events in his dream began to be fulfilled. From the suffering Nebuchadnezzar experienced, he learned several lessons about the Lord.

Invite a few students to read aloud from Daniel 4:34–37. Ask the class to follow along, looking for some of the lessons Nebuchadnezzar learned.

- What did Nebuchadnezzar learn about God? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following truth: **God has power to humble the prideful**.)
- Why do you think God cares about whether we are humble?

## Daniel 5

### *Daniel interprets writing on a wall, and Babylon is conquered by the Medes and the Persians*

Explain that the lesson Nebuchadnezzar learned about pride and humility would have importance for a later king of Babylon.

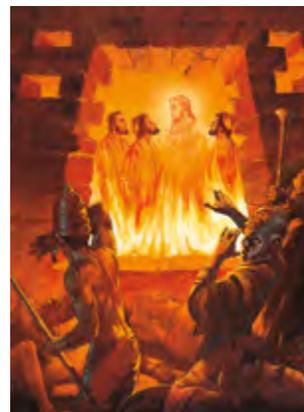
Summarize Daniel 5:1–21 by explaining that more than 20 years after Nebuchadnezzar died, Belshazzar, the king in Babylon at that time, hosted a feast for leaders in the kingdom. Belshazzar had the vessels that had been taken from the temple in Jerusalem brought to the feast. The king and the people mocked the Lord by drinking wine from these vessels while they praised their false gods. During the feast, a hand appeared and wrote on a wall in the king's palace. Belshazzar was greatly concerned, and when others were unable to interpret the writing, he summoned Daniel. Before interpreting the writing, Daniel spoke to Belshazzar about what his predecessor Nebuchadnezzar had experienced when his mind was "hardened in pride" (Daniel 5:20).

Invite a student to read Daniel 5:22–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Daniel taught Belshazzar about his actions.

- Despite knowing what Nebuchadnezzar had experienced, what had Belshazzar failed to do?

Summarize the remainder of Daniel 5 by explaining that Daniel interpreted the writing on the wall, which was a declaration that God had judged Belshazzar and that Babylon would be given to the Medes and the Persians. Even though Daniel had declined payment for giving the interpretation (see Daniel 5:17), Belshazzar promoted Daniel to third in command in the kingdom. That night, Belshazzar was slain and the Babylonian empire was conquered.

Invite students to think about what they can learn from the prideful decisions of others to avoid making similar mistakes.



# Daniel 6–12

## Introduction

Daniel was cast into a den of lions for praying to God, and God delivered him from harm. Later, Daniel saw visions of the future, including events in the last days.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Share true stories and accounts

To help generate students' interest in a lesson, consider sharing true stories or accounts from the lives of the prophets and Church history as well as from general conference addresses, Church magazines, or your own life. Such stories can build students' faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ by helping them understand the gospel through others' experiences.

### Daniel 6

#### *Daniel is cast into the den of lions for praying to God, and God delivers him*

Invite a student to read aloud the following experience of President Joseph F. Smith. Ask students to listen for how President Smith showed his faithfulness to the Lord.



At age 19, Joseph F. Smith returned home from his first mission and joined a wagon train. One evening, a group of “drunken men rode into the camp on horseback, cursing and swearing and threatening to kill any ‘Mormons’ that came within their path.” Joseph’s “first thought was to . . . seek shelter in the trees and in flight [as others had done]. Then the thought came to him, ‘Why should I run from these fellows?’ With that thought in mind he boldly marched up . . . to the campfire.” One of the drunk men, waving a pistol and pointing at

Joseph, “demanded in a loud, angry voice, ‘Are you a “Mormon”?’

“Without a moment of hesitation and looking the ruffian in the eye, Joseph F. Smith boldly answered, ‘Yes, siree; dyed in the wool; true blue, through and through.’”

Joseph’s response “completely disarmed the belligerent man, and in his bewilderment, he grasped [Joseph] by the hand and said:

“‘Well, you are the [blankety-blank] pleasantest man I ever met! Shake hands, young fellow, I am glad to see a man that stands up for his convictions’” (*Life of Joseph F. Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith [1938], 187–89).

- How did Joseph F. Smith show his faithfulness to the Lord? What about his situation might have made it difficult to do so?
- What are some situations today in which it might be difficult to show your faithfulness to the Lord?

Ask students to look for principles in Daniel 6 that can help them choose to be faithful to the Lord in any situation.

Remind students that Babylon was conquered by the Medes and the Persians, and Darius the Mede was made king over Babylon (see Daniel 5:28, 30–31). Invite a student to read Daniel 6:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Darius organized the government of his kingdom.

- How did Darius organize his government? What position was Daniel given?
- Why was Daniel preferred above the other leaders?
- What do you think it means that Daniel had “an excellent spirit” (Daniel 6:3)?

Invite students to read Daniel 6:4–5 silently, looking for what the other presidents and princes sought to do to Daniel.

- What did the other leaders seek to do to Daniel? (You may need to explain that the phrase “to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom” [verse 4] means to find a charge of misconduct against Daniel in the performance of his duties in the kingdom.)
- Why were they unsuccessful in finding fault with Daniel?
- What did the other leaders realize they needed to use against Daniel? (His commitment to obeying God.)

Invite a student to read Daniel 6:6–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what these other leaders did to create a dilemma for Daniel.

- What was the decree that the other leaders convinced Darius to establish? (You may need to explain that a “petition” [verse 7] is a prayer or earnest request.)
- Who did these leaders say had consulted together to propose this decree? How did this give Darius a false impression? (Darius was led to believe that Daniel supported the decree.)
- What problem did this decree create for Daniel?

Ask students to consider what they would have done if they were in Daniel’s situation. Invite a student to read Daniel 6:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Daniel responded to this decree.

- How did Daniel respond to this decree?
- What action indicates that Daniel was not afraid to be seen or heard obeying the Lord instead of the king’s decree?
- How would Daniel have been unfaithful to the Lord if he had obeyed the king’s decree?

Summarize Daniel 6:11–13 by explaining that the other leaders found Daniel praying and told Darius. Invite students to read Daniel 6:14 silently, looking for how Darius responded when he learned about Daniel’s defiance of the decree. Ask students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Daniel 6:15–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Darius did.

- Before casting Daniel into the lions’ den, what did Darius say to him? (You might suggest that students mark the phrase “thy God whom thou servest continually” [verse 16].)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Daniel 6:18–23. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Daniel.

- What did the Lord do to deliver Daniel from the lions’ den?

Display the picture Daniel in the Lions’ Den (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 26; see also LDS.org).

- What principle can we learn from Daniel’s example? (Students may identify several principles, but make sure it is clear that **if we are continually faithful to the Lord, He will help us through challenges we may experience as a result of our faithfulness.** Write this principle on the board.)
- Based on what you have learned in your study of the book of Daniel, what do you think it means to be continually faithful to the Lord?

To help students understand this principle, explain that we might not necessarily be threatened with death for being faithful to the Lord, but the world may threaten us with other challenges because of our faithfulness.

Divide students into groups of three or four. Give each group a slip of paper with one of the following faithful actions written on it:

---

Standing by your beliefs about marriage as defined by God

Refusing to gossip

Choosing to not participate with peers who are viewing pornography

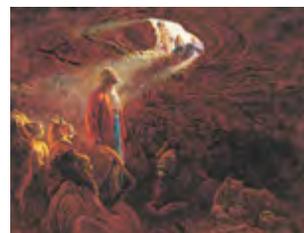
Turning down an invitation to a party where drugs and alcohol will be available

Being kind to someone who is treated rudely

---

Instruct each group to discuss different “dens of lions,” or challenges, that someone might be threatened with for choosing to act in that faithful way. While students are discussing, draw or display pictures of several lions on the board (one lion for each group of students). After sufficient time, invite a student from each group to come to the board and label one of the lions with the challenges that their group discussed. Ask them to describe the faithful action they were assigned and the possible challenges they came up with.

- Why would we choose to be faithful to the Lord if we knew we might experience some of these challenges as a result?
- When has the Lord helped you or someone you know endure or overcome a challenge that came as a result of being faithful to Him?



Invite students to ponder situations in their own lives in which they might be threatened with challenges for being faithful to the Lord. Encourage them to be faithful to the Lord in those situations, and testify that as they are faithful, the Lord will help them.

Summarize Daniel 6:24 by explaining that those who accused Daniel and tricked Darius were thrown into the lions' den with their families.

Invite a student to read Daniel 6:25–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the new decree that Darius made. Ask students to report what they find.

- Who was affected by Daniel's fearless decision to obey the Lord?
- What can happen if we are not afraid to show our obedience to the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we are not afraid to show our obedience to the Lord, we can help others believe in Him**. You might suggest that students write this principle in the margin next to Daniel 6:25–28.)
- How can seeing someone's obedience to the Lord help others believe in Him?
- When has your belief in the Lord, or the belief of someone you know, been strengthened because of another person's example of obedience to Him?

## Daniel 7–12

### *Daniel sees visions of the future, including events in the last days*

Summarize Daniel 7 by explaining that Daniel saw a vision representing different political kingdoms and evil that would be on the earth from his time through the last days. He also saw a sacred event associated with the Savior's Second Coming.

Invite a student to read Daniel 7:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Daniel saw.

- What did Daniel see would happen to the "thrones," or worldly governments?

Explain that Joseph Smith revealed that the "Ancient of days" (verse 9) is Adam (see D&C 27:11; *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 104). Summarize Daniel 7:10–14 by explaining that Daniel saw a council in which priesthood holders from all the dispensations will account for their stewardships to Adam. Adam will then report to Jesus Christ, whose people will recognize Him as their King (see Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Way to Perfection* [1970], 289–91).

Summarize Daniel 7:24–26 by explaining that the Savior will destroy the power of the wicked over the earth when He comes in His glory.

Invite a student to read Daniel 7:18, 27 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who will reign with the Savior in His kingdom on earth after His Second Coming.

- Who will reign with the Savior in His kingdom on earth? (**After the Second Coming, the Savior will reign on earth with His saints**. Write this truth on the board.)

Explain that the title "saints" means "holy ones" and refers to members of the Church who have faithfully kept the commandments. Explain also that after the Savior's glorious return and His millennial reign, the kingdom "shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High" (verse 27) and this earth in its celestial state will be their home forever.

- How can understanding that Jesus Christ will reign on the earth with His saints influence your decision to be faithful to Him?

Inform students that much of Daniel 8–12 consists of descriptions of additional visions of future events that Daniel saw.

Conclude by testifying of the importance of being a faithful follower of the Lord.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Hosea

### Why study this book?

One of the central messages of the book of Hosea is that Jehovah loves His people even when they are unfaithful to Him, and He will mercifully offer them reconciliation. By studying Hosea's words, students will learn that although there are consequences for our unfaithfulness, the Lord desires that all of His people return to Him and renew their covenant with Him.

### Who wrote this book?

This book contains the teachings of the prophet Hosea (or Hoshea). Hosea prophesied in the Northern Kingdom of Israel near the end of the reign of Jeroboam II. Hosea was a contemporary of the prophets Isaiah, Amos, Jonah, and Micah.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when or where the book of Hosea was written. However, Hosea's teachings were likely recorded during his lifetime (see Merrill F. Unger and others, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* [1988], "Hose'a," 589). Hosea "probably died before the accession of Pekah, 736 B.C., for he makes no allusion to the Syro-Ephraimitic war nor to the deportation of the northern tribes by Tiglath-pileser two years later" (Bible Dictionary, "Hosea, or Hoshea"). After the fall of the Northern Kingdom, writings by and about Hosea evidently were collected and preserved in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Hosea was one of the few prophets of the Northern Kingdom of Israel who left written prophecies. The book uses extensive metaphors and symbolism that illustrate the depths of God's love for His people.

One metaphor central to Hosea's message is marriage. Underlying this metaphor is Hosea's personal experience of marriage to an unfaithful wife (see Hosea 1:2–3; 3:1–3). From his wife's adultery and his later efforts to reconcile with her and restore their relationship, Hosea likely gained profound insight into the Lord's relationship with Israel, whose sins were like the infidelity of a spouse. Using this metaphor, the book of Hosea testifies of the Lord's love for Israel as He waits for His unfaithful bride to return to Him.

In addition to describing the Lord as a devoted and forgiving husband, Hosea also taught that the Lord is like a physician who heals (see Hosea 7:1; 11:3; 14:4), a gardener who nurtures his vineyard (Hosea 9:10; 10:1), and a shepherd who cares for his flock (Hosea 10:11; 13:5). Hosea taught about the role of prophets, visions, and similitudes in guiding the Lord's people (see Hosea 12:10–13). Additionally, the book references the Lord's role as the Redeemer from death and the grave (see Hosea 13:14).

### Outline

**Hosea 1–3** The Lord commands Hosea to marry, and Hosea selects a woman named Gomer. Following their marriage, Gomer chooses to be unfaithful to Hosea and commits adultery. The Lord uses the symbol of this marriage to describe His relationship with Israel. Israel (the wife) is unfaithful to the Lord (the husband) and has sought after other lovers, which unfaithfulness is symbolic of Israel's worship of false gods. After detailing the judgments that would come upon the Israelites for breaking their covenants, the Lord mercifully invites them to repent and enter into the covenant again.

**Hosea 4–6** The people of Israel rejected the knowledge and truth of the gospel they had received and committed great sins and iniquities. Hosea calls upon Israel to return back to the Lord.

**Hosea 7–14** Through Hosea, the Lord proclaims how He will punish the people of Israel for their sins. However, He also expresses His mercy and kindness. The Lord recounts that He brought the people of Israel out of Egypt, but they rejected their God. Through prophets, visions, and similitudes, the Lord teaches and directs His people. The Lord will ransom us from death. The people of Ephraim will repent of their sins in the last days.

# Hosea

## Introduction

The Lord commanded Hosea to marry, and Hosea selected a woman named Gomer. The Lord used this marriage as a symbol to teach the Israelites about His covenant relationship with them. The Israelites were

unfaithful to the Lord because they sought after false gods. Hosea prophesied that in the last days God would extend mercy to the Israelites who repent.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Hosea 1–3

#### *The Lord compares His covenant relationship with Israel to marriage*

Write the following phrase on the board: *Point of no return*

- What do you think it means to arrive at a point of no return?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency concerning the point of no return:



“[Airplane] flights over huge oceans, crossing extensive deserts, and connecting continents need careful planning to ensure a safe arrival at the planned destination. Some of these nonstop flights can last up to 14 hours and cover almost 9,000 miles.

“There is an important decision point during such long flights commonly known as the *point of safe return*. Up to this point the aircraft has enough fuel to turn around and return safely to the airport of departure. Having passed the point of safe return, the captain has lost this option and has to continue on. That is why this point is often referred to as the *point of no return*. . . .

“. . . Satan wants us to think that when we have sinned we have gone past a ‘point of no return’—that it is too late to change our course” (“Point of Safe Return,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2007, 99).

- What are some dangers of thinking that when we have sinned we have gone past a point of no return?

Invite students as they study the book of Hosea to look for principles that can help us turn to the Lord when we have sinned.

To help students understand the context of Hosea’s writings, display the diagram titled “The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance” (see lesson 102) and invite students to find “Hosea” on it. Point out that Hosea was a prophet in the Northern Kingdom of Israel who prophesied before the Israelites were carried away captive by the Assyrians. At that time the Northern Kingdom of Israel had formed alliances with other nations, and many Israelites were practicing idolatry, including rituals that violated God’s law of chastity.

Explain that the book of Hosea begins with the Lord giving Hosea an unusual command. Invite a student to read Hosea 1:2–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Hosea to do.

- What did the Lord command Hosea to do? (Marry a woman who had committed whoredoms, or sexual sins.)
- What was the name of the woman Hosea married?

Explain that the Lord used this marriage to teach the Israelites about His covenant relationship with them. Write the following statements on the board: *Hosea represents Jesus Christ; Gomer represents the Israelites.*

- Why is marriage a good symbol for the covenant relationship between Jesus Christ and the Israelites?

- According to verse 2, how was Gomer like the Israelites?

Summarize Hosea 1:4–2:4 by explaining that Hosea and Gomer had three children. The names of the children represented the consequences that the Israelites would suffer because of their sins. Through Hosea, the Lord also explained the consequences that would come upon Gomer because of her actions.

Invite a student to read Hosea 2:5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Gomer did after her marriage to Hosea.

- What had Gomer done?
- What feelings might Hosea have had after learning about Gomer’s actions?

Remind students that the marriage between Hosea and Gomer symbolized the covenant relationship between Jesus Christ and the Israelites, who had turned away from the Lord.

- How can Hosea’s experience with Gomer help us understand how the Lord might feel when we break our covenants by sinning?

Explain that Hosea used symbolic language to describe the consequences Israel would suffer for breaking their covenant with God. Invite a student to read Hosea 2:6–8 aloud, and ask the class to look for what the Lord said He would do because of Israel’s unfaithfulness.

- What did the Lord say He would do because His people had been unfaithful to Him? (Explain that the phrases “hedge up thy way” and “make a wall” [Hosea 2:6] refer to Israel being separated from their false gods when they were carried away by the Assyrians.)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Hosea 2:9–13. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what other consequences would come to Israel as a result of their unfaithfulness. Ask students to report what they find.

- What can we learn from these verses about what will happen if we violate our covenants with the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we violate our covenants with the Lord, we will suffer negative consequences.**)
- In what ways might the consequences that the Israelites would suffer be a blessing to them? (In time, these consequences would help the Israelites return to the Lord [see Hosea 2:7].)

Write the following scripture references on the board: *Hosea 2:14–15, 17, 19–20, 23*. Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from the references on the board. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord would eventually do for Israel.

- What did the Lord say He would eventually do for Israel?

You may need to explain that the word *allure* and the phrase “speak comfortably unto her” in verse 14 mean that the Lord was going to invite Israel to return to Him. The word *betroth* in verse 19 refers to a binding commitment to be married. In this case, it is used as a symbol to show the Lord’s desire to reestablish His covenant with Israel and thereby bind His people to Him.

- What do these actions teach you about the Lord?

Explain that in Hosea 3 we learn that because of her poor choices, Gomer had been placed in bondage. Ask a student to read Hosea 3:1–3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord commanded Hosea to do for Gomer.

- What did the Lord command Hosea to do for Gomer?
- According to verse 3, what did Hosea require of Gomer?

Help students understand that if Gomer would forsake her sins and remain faithful to her marriage covenant with Hosea, then Hosea would continue to love and care for Gomer as her husband in spite of her previous sins. Hosea did for Gomer what the Lord does for all of His covenant people who turn to Him through repentance.

- What principle can we learn from Hosea 2–3 about returning to the Lord after we have sinned? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we will repent and remain faithful to the covenants we have made with the Lord, then He will receive us and forgive our sins.**)

### Teach students to liken the scriptures to themselves

Likening the scriptures to ourselves means comparing them to our own lives. Encourage students to ask, “What situations in my life are like those in this passage of scripture?” or “How am I like the people we are studying in the scriptures?” As students see similarities between their own experiences and the events they study in the scriptures, they will be better able to identify doctrines and principles and apply them in their lives.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for what he learned about the Lord as he taught a seminary class about the book of Hosea.



“I had a new feeling about what it means to make a covenant with the Lord. All my life I had heard explanations of covenants as being like a contract, an agreement where one person agrees to do something and the other agrees to do something else in return.

“For more reasons than I can explain, during those days teaching Hosea, I felt something new, something more powerful. This was not a story about a business deal between partners. . . . This was a love story. This was a story of a marriage covenant bound by love, by steadfast love. What I felt then, and it has increased over the years, was that the Lord, with whom I am blessed to have made covenants, loves me, and you . . . with a steadfastness about which I continually marvel and which I want with all my heart to emulate” (“Covenants and Sacrifice” [address given at the Church Educational System symposium on the Old Testament, Aug. 15, 1995], 2; si.lds.org).

- Why is the Lord willing to receive us again when we have broken our covenants with Him?

Refer to the phrase *Point of no return* on the board, and ask:

- How can the principles taught in Hosea help those who feel they have sinned so much that they cannot return to the Lord?

Share your testimony of the Lord’s willingness to bring all who have strayed back to Him.

Write the following questions on the board:

*When have I experienced the Lord’s mercy and His love for me?*

*How have I felt the Lord inviting me to return to Him when I have sinned and been unfaithful to Him?*

Invite students to ponder their answers to these questions. Encourage them to act on any promptings they may receive to repent of their sins.

### Hosea 4–14

#### *Israel seeks after other gods, and Hosea invites them to return to the Lord*

Summarize Hosea 4–11 by explaining that Hosea called upon Israel to return to the Lord and serve Him. Hosea 12–13 records that Hosea explained that the Lord uses prophets to guide His people. Hosea also taught that through the Savior, all people will overcome physical death. In Hosea 13–14 we read that Hosea taught the Israelites that their decision to be unfaithful to the Lord was the reason for their impending destruction. However, Hosea also extended a message of hope to them by teaching that in the last days, the Lord would heal them of their backsliding, or apostasy, when the people of Israel return to Him.

Conclude by sharing your testimony of the truths taught in this lesson.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Hosea 1:4–11. Symbolic names of Hosea and Gomer’s children

“Biblical names often were taken from the circumstances surrounding the child’s birth. In Hosea’s narrative Gomer bore her husband three children: two sons and a daughter. The names given to the children

symbolize the destruction that lies in Israel’s future as a result of her idolatrous (adulterous) ways—that is, children (judgments) are the natural result of Israel’s harlotry (unrighteousness)” (*Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 105).

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Joel

### Why study this book?

The book of Joel teaches about the power of the combined prayers and fasting of God's people during a time of great difficulty in Israel's history. "Joel assured the people that through repentance they would again receive the blessings of God" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Joel"; scriptures.lds.org).

The book also contains many prophecies about the coming "day of the Lord" (Joel 1:15). These prophecies have been quoted by several prophets and have relevance to multiple generations, especially those living in the last days. Learning about Joel's prophecies can help students recognize the signs of the Lord's Second Coming. One exciting aspect of studying the book of Joel is that we are living in a day when we can see the fulfillment of these prophecies.

### Who wrote this book?

The book begins with a brief statement attributing the book to "Joel the son of Pethuel" (Joel 1:1), who was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when Joel lived and prophesied to the kingdom of Judah. "He may have lived sometime between the reign of Joash, before 850 B.C., and the return of the tribe of Judah from captivity in Babylon" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Joel"; scriptures.lds.org). We do not know where the book of Joel was written.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Joel centers on prophecies that Joel made after the land of Judah was afflicted with a severe drought and a plague of locusts. These prophecies tell of many signs to precede the Second Coming of the Savior, especially a great outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh (see Joel 2:28–29).

One fulfillment of this prophecy occurred on the day of Pentecost in New Testament times, when the Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon a multitude, who heard the preaching of the Lord's Apostles and understood the words in their own language. This event caused Peter to say, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:16–17).

On the night of September 21, 1823, the angel Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith and quoted Joel 2:28–32, saying that these prophecies would shortly be fulfilled (see Joseph Smith—History 1:41). President Gordon B. Hinckley commented on the fulfillment of these prophecies: "The era in which we live is the fulness of times spoken of in the scriptures, when God has brought together all of the elements of previous dispensations.

From the day that He and His Beloved Son manifested themselves to the boy Joseph, there has been a tremendous cascade of enlightenment poured out upon the world. . . . The vision of Joel has been fulfilled [see Joel 2:28–32]" ("Living in the Fulness of Times," *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 4).

### Outline

**Joel 1** Joel describes a natural disaster caused by a plague of locusts. He calls for the people to fast and to gather at the temple for a solemn assembly to plead with the Lord for deliverance.

**Joel 2** Joel describes the "day of the Lord" and the war and desolation that will accompany it and then asks, "Who can abide it?" (Joel 2:11). The Lord answers by telling the people to turn to Him with all their hearts. Joel prophesies of some of the blessings the Lord will give His people in the latter days.

**Joel 3** Joel prophesies of the latter days and affirms that every country in the world will be at war shortly before the Second Coming. The Lord will dwell with His people when He comes again.

# Joel

## Introduction

Joel prophesied of impending destruction and counseled the people to gather into the house of the Lord. He further prophesied of latter-day calamities upon the wicked

and of the Spirit of the Lord being poured out upon all flesh. Joel foretold of a great battle that will happen in the last days.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Joel 1

*Joel calls the people to the temple to pray for deliverance from approaching disaster*

Invite a student to read aloud the following experience of Sister Patricia T. Holland, the wife of Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and formerly of the Young Women general presidency:



“Recently we experienced the worst windstorm Bountiful [in Utah] has seen in several decades. . . . Just as I was hearing news reports of semi trucks—twenty of them—being blown over on the roadside, I looked out my lovely back window down toward our creek and saw one of our large trees go down with a crash. . . .

“For a moment, I confess, I was truly fearful. It was very early in the morning, and Jeff was just leaving for the office. I said to him, ‘Do you think this is the end? Is it all over—or about to be?’” (*A Quiet Heart* [2000], 129).

Invite students to discuss the following questions with the person sitting next to them:

- How do you feel about the signs and events that will accompany the Second Coming?
- How do you think Elder Holland responded to his wife?

After students have responded, invite a student to read aloud the remainder of Sister Holland’s account:

“My husband, who has deep faith and endless optimism, took me in his arms and said, ‘No, but wouldn’t it be wonderful if it were? Wouldn’t it be wonderful if Christ really did come and his children really were ready for him? Wouldn’t it be terrific if evil was finally conquered, once and for all, and the Savior of the world came down in the midst of the New Jerusalem to wipe away *every* tear from *every* eye? Yes,’ my husband said, ‘in lots of ways I wish it were the end, but it’s not. It is just a stiff windstorm in Bountiful. We have got more work to do’” (*A Quiet Heart*, 129–30).

- What stands out to you about Elder Holland’s thoughts and feelings concerning the Second Coming?

Explain that today students will study the prophecies of the prophet Joel, who prophesied to the people of Judah at a time when they were facing natural disasters and invading armies. Many of Joel’s prophecies relate to the time preceding the Second Coming, which will also be filled with natural disasters and wars. Although some events associated with the Second Coming may cause people to feel afraid, Joel’s prophecies contain principles that can help us prepare for them. Encourage students to look for these principles so they, like Elder Holland, can look forward to the Second Coming of the Savior with joy and confidence.

Summarize Joel 1:1–13 by explaining that Joel recounted the devastation brought on by a plague of locusts. One interpretation of this passage is that it symbolizes the destruction that would come from invading armies if the people did not repent (see Joel 1:4, footnote *a*).

Invite a student to read Joel 1:14–15 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Joel counseled his people to do. (Explain that the phrase “day of the Lord” [verse 15] refers to a point in time when the Lord administers rewards and penalties.)

### Establish relevance

When students see connections between their own lives and what they are studying in a scripture block, they learn to understand how the scriptures can provide answers and direction that can guide them in real-life situations. Teachers should often begin the lesson with a question, situation, or problem that will encourage students to search the scriptures for gospel principles and doctrines that can give them guidance and direction.

- What did Joel counsel the people to do?
- Why do you think Joel wanted the people to gather into the temple when they were faced with danger?
- What kinds of danger are youth today faced with?
- How can we be blessed as we gather into the temple? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we gather into the temple, we can receive protection from spiritual danger.**)

Consider pointing out that it may be difficult for some people to attend the temple regularly. However, these people can receive protection from spiritual danger by choosing to live worthy to enter the temple.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for ways we can gather to the temple and one of the blessings we can receive for doing so:



“Do you young people want a sure way to eliminate the influence of the adversary in your life? Immerse yourself in searching for your ancestors, prepare their names for the sacred vicarious ordinances available in the temple, and then go to the temple to stand as proxy for them to receive the ordinances of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost. As you grow older, you will be able to participate in receiving the other ordinances as well. I can think of no greater protection from the influence of the adversary in your life” (“The Joy of Redeeming the Dead,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 94).

- How did Elder Scott encourage us to gather into the temple? (Explain that even if students live far from a temple, they can participate in temple work by searching for their ancestors and preparing their names for temple ordinances.)
- How have you felt blessed and protected from spiritual danger as you have participated in family history and temple work?

Encourage students to ponder what they can do to participate more in family history and temple work.

## Joel 2

### *Joel prophesies of latter-day calamities and of the Spirit of the Lord being poured out upon all flesh*

Write the following phrase on the board: *Day of the Lord*. Explain that in Joel 2 this phrase refers to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and events preceding it. Invite students to read Joel 2:1–2 silently, looking for how Joel described the day of the Lord. Ask students to report what they find.

Summarize Joel 2:3–10 by explaining that these verses describe the war and destruction that will occur and the gloom that some people will experience before the Savior’s Second Coming.

Invite a student to read Joel 2:11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for additional words that describe the day of the Lord.

- What words describe the day of the Lord?
- What question did Joel ask?

Write the following question on the board: *Who can abide the day of the Lord?* Explain that Joel 2:12–16 contains truths that can help answer this question. Invite a student to read Joel 2:12 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what the Lord pleaded with the people to do.

- According to this verse, what did the Lord want the people to do? (Turn back to Him, or repent, with all their hearts.)

If possible, display an old piece of clothing or cloth. Begin to tear the clothing, and explain that people in Old Testament times often rent, or tore, their clothing as a symbol of their grief and sorrow.

Invite a student to read Joel 2:13–14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joel taught the people to rend instead of their clothes. Encourage students to look at Joseph Smith Translation, Joel 2:13 (in Joel 2:13, footnote *b*) and Joseph Smith Translation, Joel 2:14 (in Joel 2:14, footnote *a*).

- What do you think Joel was teaching the people when he told them to rend their hearts and not their garments? (To not just outwardly express sorrow but to sincerely experience remorse for what they had done and feel a desire to repent.)
- What do these verses teach about what the Lord will do for us as we turn to Him by sincerely repenting? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **As we turn to the Lord with all our hearts by sincerely repenting, He will show mercy and kindness to us.**)
- How can we show God that our repentance is sincere?
- How might knowing that God will show mercy and kindness to those who repent influence your desire to repent?

Invite students to ponder whether there are sins they need to repent of so they can more fully experience the Lord's mercy and kindness and be better prepared for the Second Coming.

Summarize Joel 2:15–32 by explaining that these verses describe some of the blessings that the righteous will enjoy while preparing for the day of the Lord.

Invite a student to read Joel 2:27–29 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the kindness the Lord would show in the latter days.

- What did Joel prophesy the Lord would do in the latter days? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **in the latter days the Lord will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh**. Write this truth on the board.)

To help the class understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Joseph Fielding Smith:

“Now, my brethren and sisters, I am not going to confine this prophecy to the members of the Church. The Lord said he would pour out his Spirit upon all flesh. . . . [This means that] the Lord would pour out his blessings and his Spirit upon all people and use them to accomplish his purposes” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:176).

- What evidence have you seen that the Lord is pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh?

Explain that signs and wonders will precede and accompany the day of the Lord. Invite a student to read Joel 2:30–31 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for some of these signs. Invite students to report what they find.

Invite students to ponder whether any of these signs or wonders cause them to feel afraid or concerned. You may want to invite a few students to share their thoughts.

Invite students to read Joel 2:32 silently, looking for what Joel taught that can help us when we feel afraid or concerned about signs of the Second Coming.

- What can we do if we are fearful or concerned about the signs and events of the last days?
- What can Heavenly Father do for those who call on His name?

### Joel 3

#### *Joel prophesies of a great battle that will happen in the last days*

Summarize Joel 3 by explaining that Joel prophesied of the battle of Armageddon, which will occur just before the Second Coming. In this battle, all the nations of the earth will fight against the Lord's people. Invite a student to read Joel 3:16 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who will help the righteous.

- Why should the Lord's people be hopeful during this challenging time?

Conclude the lesson by inviting students to share their feelings about how they can prepare to abide the day of the Lord with joy and optimism.

# The Book of Amos

### Why study this book?

The book of Amos records some of the prophecies and teachings that the prophet Amos delivered to the kingdom of Israel during the reign of King Jeroboam II. The people rejected Amos's warnings and teachings and wished he would take his forceful message elsewhere. By studying this book, students can gain a greater understanding of the critical role prophets perform in the Lord's work and a greater appreciation for the calling of prophets in our day.

### Who wrote this book?

Either Amos or scribes wrote down selections of his teachings and collected them into the book of Amos (see Amos 1:1). Amos was a shepherd who lived in a city called Tekoa, which was about 12 miles south of Jerusalem (see Bible Dictionary, "Amos"). The Lord called him to prophesy to the Northern Kingdom of Israel—a calling he did not expect but which he obediently fulfilled (see Amos 7:14–15).

### When and where was it written?

Although we do not know precisely when the book of Amos was written, the book begins with the explanation that Amos preached during the reign of Uzziah in Judah and of Jeroboam II in Israel in the eighth century B.C. (see Amos 1:1; Bible Chronology). Amos may have been a fellow laborer with the prophet Hosea in the kingdom of Israel. There is no clear information indicating where this book was written.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Amos places an emphasis on prophets (see Bible Dictionary, "Amos"). Amos explained that God uses prophets to do His work (see Amos 3:7). Amos warned of the judgments that were about to come upon the people of Israel because they had rejected the prophets.

Additionally, Amos emphasized "the moral character of Jehovah, the righteous ruler of all nations and men. Amos [showed] that the offering the Lord most cares for is a righteous life—the sacrifices of animals lose their meaning if offered as substitutes for personal righteousness [see Amos 5:21–27]" (see Bible Dictionary, "Amos").

Amos prophesied of a famine "of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11). During this famine, people would "seek the word of the Lord"—the inspired and authoritative teachings of prophets—but would "not find it" (Amos 8:12). This prophecy was initially fulfilled following the apostasy of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. After the ministry of Malachi, more than 400 years passed without prophets ministering in the land of Israel. Amos's prophecy was also fulfilled at a later time. After Jesus Christ established His Church on the earth, it too eventually fell into apostasy. Revelation for guiding the Church ceased, and the people of the earth were not able to receive the word of God through prophets for more than 1,700 years.

### Outline

**Amos 1–2** Amos prophesies that the Lord would pour out judgments upon Syria, the Philistines, Tyre, Edom, the people of Ammon, and Moab because of their wickedness. Amos also preaches that Judah and Israel will be punished for embracing wickedness and rejecting the Lord.

**Amos 3–4** Amos describes the various efforts of the Lord to save His people, including sending prophets to warn them, withholding rain, and allowing pestilence and war to trouble them. However, the people did not humble themselves and return to the Lord.

**Amos 5–6** Amos teaches that if the people repent and sincerely seek the Lord, they can avoid destruction. In particular, he declares that the Lord does not accept the people's offerings at the temple because the people's hearts are focused on false gods. Amos prophesies that their casual approach to worshipping the Lord will lead them to destruction.

**Amos 7–9** After prophesying of the doom and consequences Israel will face for rejecting the Lord, Amos delivers a message of hope promising that the Lord will gather His people together and restore them to their land.

# Amos

## Introduction

Amos warned the Israelites that they would be destroyed if they did not repent. He prophesied that because the Israelites had rejected the Lord's prophets, the Lord

would remove the prophets from among them. Amos also warned the nations bordering Israel and Judah that they would be destroyed.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Amos 1–6

*Amos prophesies that many nations, including Judah and Israel, will be destroyed*

Ask students to ponder how they would respond to the following questions:

- Have you ever tried to warn someone who did not heed your warning? What happened to that person as a result?
- Has someone ever tried to warn you, but you did not heed the warning? What happened to you as a result?

After students have had sufficient time to ponder, invite a few of them to share their responses with the class.

Invite students to look for truths as they study the book of Amos that might help us understand the importance of heeding the warnings that the Lord gives us through His prophets.

Introduce the book of Amos by explaining that Amos was a shepherd from the kingdom of Judah. Amos was called by the Lord to preach to the Northern Kingdom of Israel and warn the people of the consequences of their sins. To help students understand the historical context of Amos's ministry, you may want to invite them to locate "Amos" on the diagram "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance" (see lesson 102).

Summarize Amos 1–2 by explaining that Amos prophesied that destruction would come upon many nations for their wickedness. Invite a student to read Amos 2:4–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for two kingdoms the Lord said would be destroyed and why. (You may want to explain that the phrase "for three transgressions . . . and for four" does not refer to a specific number of sins but suggests that the wickedness of these nations was very great; a certain level of wickedness would have justified their destruction, but they had sinned above and beyond that level (see *Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 90).)

- Who did Amos say would be destroyed?
- What sins had the people of Judah and Israel committed?

Invite a student to read Amos 2:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord reminded the Israelites of all that He had done for them.

- What had the Lord done to help the Israelites?

Explain that the Lord had raised up prophets and Nazarites to help the people of Israel (see Amos 2:11). The term *Nazarite* comes from a Hebrew word that means consecrated or dedicated. (It has no connection with the town of Nazareth where the Savior lived.) Nazarites wholly dedicated themselves to the Lord for a certain period of their life. The Nazarite vow could last for a short or long time. As part of this vow, they did not drink wine. (See Bible Dictionary, "Nazarite.")

Invite a student to read Amos 2:12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the people responded to the Nazarites and prophets.

- How did the people of Israel respond to the Nazarites and prophets? (You may want to explain that Israelites encouraging Nazarites to drink wine was similar to Church members today encouraging fellow Church members to break their covenants.)

Write the following statement on the board: *Prophecy not.*

- What does it mean that the Israelites told the prophets to “prophecy not”? (They told the prophets to stop warning them about the consequences of sin and the coming destructions of Israel and Judah.)

Point out that Amos later personally experienced this rejection when Amaziah, a wicked priest of King Jeroboam, told Amos to return to Judah and stop prophesying to the people of Israel that they would be destroyed (see Amos 7:10–13).

- Why would someone want the prophets to “prophecy not”?

Summarize Amos 2:13–3:2 by explaining that the Lord expressed sorrow for Israel’s rejection of Him and His servants and warned the people that they would not be able to save themselves from destruction. Amos 3:3–8 records the Lord’s response to the people who wanted Amos and the other prophets to stop prophesying.

Invite a student to read Amos 3:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord inspired Amos to teach to the people who demanded that the prophets stop prophesying about the destruction of Israel.

- What did the Lord want His people to understand? (He would not destroy His people unless He first warned them through His prophets.)

To help students understand verse 8, explain that Amos declared that just as the roar of a lion naturally instills fear in those who hear it, so also a prophet is bound to prophesy when he is commanded by God. Amos understood this concept and would not allow the complaints of the people to stop him from fulfilling his sacred duty as a prophet.

Point out that Amos 3:7 records an important doctrine about the role of prophets in our day as well as in the days of Amos.

- What doctrine about prophets do we learn from Amos 3:7? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **The Lord reveals truth through His prophets.** Erase the statement “Prophecy not” from the board, and write this doctrine in its place.)

Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of Amos 3:7 replaces the word *but* with *until* (see Joseph Smith Translation, Amos 3:7 [in Amos 3:7, footnote a]). You may want to suggest that students write this change in the margin next to verse 7.

To help students understand the importance of the doctrine they just identified, divide them into small groups and invite them to discuss the following questions. You could write these questions on the board, distribute handouts with the questions printed on them, or read the questions aloud one at a time, pausing between each one to give students time to discuss them.

*In Amos’s day the people did not want the prophets to speak about the consequences of sin. In what ways do people oppose or ignore the teachings of prophets today?*

*What has the Lord revealed to latter-day prophets that shows how vital prophets are today?*

*How have you come to know that the Lord reveals truth through His prophets?*

Testify that the Lord reveals what we need to know through prophets. Invite students to always look to the latter-day prophets for direction and then follow them.

Summarize Amos 3:9–6:14 by explaining that Amos continued to warn the people of destruction. He also explained that although the Lord had used famines, droughts, pestilences, and war to teach His people the error of their sinful ways, they would not return to Him.

## Amos 7–9

### *Amos teaches of additional consequences for rejecting the Lord and His prophets*

Explain that in spite of the prophets’ warnings, the Israelites continued to sin.

Summarize Amos 7:1–8:10 by explaining that Amos reiterated his duty to declare God’s word and described another consequence of Israel’s rejection of the prophets. Invite a student to read Amos 8:11–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Amos prophesied would happen.

- What type of famine did Amos prophesy of? (Without revelation through a prophet, they would experience a spiritual famine.)



### Amos 3:7

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

- What did Amos prophesy that the people would do during this famine?
- What principle does this teach about the consequence of rejecting the Lord's prophets? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **When people reject the Lord's prophets, they lose the blessing of hearing the words of the Lord.**)
- What are examples of times when people lost the blessing of hearing the words of the Lord because they rejected His prophets?

Explain that the prophecy in Amos 8:11–12 has been fulfilled during several different periods in history (see verse 11, footnote *a*). One important fulfillment of this prophecy is the Great Apostasy. To help students better understand the Great Apostasy, invite a student to read aloud the following explanation:

"The Great Apostasy . . . occurred after the Savior established His Church. After the deaths of the Savior and His Apostles, men corrupted the principles of the gospel and made unauthorized changes in Church organization and priesthood ordinances. . . .

"During the Great Apostasy, people were without divine direction from living prophets. Many churches were established, but they did not have priesthood power to lead people to the true knowledge of God the Father and Jesus Christ. . . . This apostasy lasted until Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son appeared to Joseph Smith in 1820 and initiated the restoration of the fulness of the gospel" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 13).

- How would you summarize what happened during the Great Apostasy?
- How does understanding that a universal apostasy occurred explain the need for the Restoration? ("If there had been no apostasy, there would have been no need of a Restoration" [*Preach My Gospel*, 36].)

Summarize Amos 9 by explaining that although Amos saw the Great Apostasy, he also saw the Restoration in the latter days, when Israel would be gathered again and restored to their promised land.

To conclude, you may want to review the truths students have identified in the lesson. Invite students to share their testimonies of the importance of heeding the words of the Lord's prophets, and encourage students to follow the teachings of the prophets.

### Scripture Mastery—Amos 3:7

To help students memorize Amos 3:7, ask them to list the numbers one through five on a piece of paper. Invite them to find five other students and write those students' names in the five spaces on the paper. Once students have five names on their paper, ask them to meet with the first person on their list. Instruct them to recite Amos 3:7 to that person (using their scriptures as necessary) and allow the other student to recite Amos 3:7 too. Then ask students to move on to the second name and repeat the activity. (If you do not have at least 10 students in class, students could meet with a smaller number of classmates or repeat the activity with some of the same students.) Once students have met with all five students on their paper, invite them to recite Amos 3:7 from memory as a class.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Amos 8:11–12. "A famine . . . of hearing the words of the Lord"

President Spencer W. Kimball said:

"After centuries of spiritual darkness, . . . we solemnly announce to all the world that the spiritual famine is ended, the spiritual drought is spent, the word of the

Lord in its purity and totalness is available to all men. One needs not wander from sea to sea nor from the north to the east, seeking the true gospel as Amos predicted, for the everlasting truth is available" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1964, 93–94; see also *Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 94).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Daniel 3–12; Hosea; Joel; Amos (Unit 30)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Daniel 3–Amos 9 (unit 30) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Daniel 3–12)

By studying the experience of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and their refusal to worship the golden image, students learned that we show our faith in the Lord by choosing to obey Him regardless of the consequences. And if we choose to obey the Lord, He will be with us. From a vision given to Daniel, students discovered that after the Second Coming, the Savior will reign on earth with His Saints.

#### Day 2 (Hosea)

From their study of the book of Hosea, students learned that if we violate our covenants with the Lord, we will suffer negative consequences. Students also discovered that if we truly repent, the Lord will renew His covenant with us and receive us again.

#### Day 3 (Joel)

As students read Joel's teachings and prophecies, they learned that if we keep ourselves worthy to enter to the temple and participate in temple and family history work, we can receive protection from spiritual danger. They discovered that as we turn to the Lord with all our hearts by sincerely repenting, He will show mercy and kindness to us. They also learned that in the latter days the Lord will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.

#### Day 4 (Amos)

In this lesson, students studied Amos's teachings and prophecies and learned that the Lord reveals His will through His prophets. They also learned that when people reject the Lord's prophets, they lose the blessing of hearing the words of the Lord.

### Introduction

Daniel was cast into a den of lions because he prayed to God, and God delivered him from harm.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### Daniel 6

*Daniel is cast into a den of lions because he prayed to God, and God delivers him*

Fill a glass jar (the size of a quart or liter) half full of rice or wheat. Place a small, lightweight ball (such as a table tennis ball) in the jar, and cover the jar with a lid. Hold up the jar and quickly turn it upside down so that the ball is on the bottom, covered by the grain. Tell students that the ball represents those who are faithful to the Lord and the rice or wheat represents opposition and challenges we might face because of our faithfulness.

Ask the students to think about opposition and challenges we might face for being faithful to the Lord.

Invite students to look for principles in Daniel 6 that can help them choose to be faithful to the Lord in any situation.

Remind students that Babylon was conquered by the Medes and the Persians, and Darius the Mede was made king over Babylon (see Daniel 5:28, 30–31).

Invite a student to read Daniel 6:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the position Daniel was given in the new government.

- What position was Daniel given in the new government?
- Why was Daniel preferred above the other leaders?

Summarize Daniel 6:4–5 by explaining that the other presidents and princes were jealous of Daniel, and they sought to find a charge of misconduct against him. Because of his faithfulness, they were unable to find any fault against him. They realized they would need to use Daniel's commitment to obeying God against him.

Invite a student to read Daniel 6:6–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what these other leaders did to try to create a dilemma for Daniel.

- What was the decree that the other leaders convinced Darius to establish? (You may need to explain that a "petition" [verse 7] is a prayer or earnest request.)
- What problem did this decree create for Daniel?

Ask students to consider what they would have done if they were in Daniel's situation. Invite a student to read Daniel 6:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Daniel responded to this decree.

- What did Daniel do that indicates he was not afraid to be seen or heard obeying the Lord instead of the king's decree?
- How would Daniel have been unfaithful to the Lord if he had obeyed the king's decree?

Summarize Daniel 6:11–13 by explaining that the other leaders found Daniel praying and told Darius. Invite a student to read Daniel 6:14–17 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the king did when he learned about Daniel's defiance of the decree.

- Before casting Daniel into the lions' den, what did King Darius say to him? (You might suggest that students mark the phrase "thy God whom thou servest continually" [Daniel 6:16].)

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Daniel 6:18–23. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Daniel.

- What did the Lord do to deliver Daniel from the lions' den?

Display the picture Daniel in the Lions' Den (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 26; see also LDS.org). Show the jar from the beginning of the lesson, and shake it so that the ball rises to the top. Ask students how this relates to what the Lord did for Daniel.

- What principle can we learn from Daniel's example? (Students may identify several principles, but make sure it is clear that **if we are continually faithful to the Lord, He will help us through challenges we may experience as a result of our faithfulness.** Write this principle on the board.)
- Based on what you have learned in your study of the book of Daniel, what do you think it means to be continually faithful to the Lord? (You may want to refer students to the responses they wrote to a similar question in assignment 4 in the day 1 lesson.)

Invite a student to draw four lions on the board. While the student is drawing, read aloud each of the following faithful actions, and ask the class to name different "lions," or difficult situations, that someone might be threatened with for choosing to act in that faithful way. (You may want the student drawing the lions to label each one with the types of opposition or challenges the students name.)

*Standing by your beliefs about marriage as defined by God*

*Refusing to gossip*

*Choosing to not participate with peers who are viewing pornography*

*Being kind to someone who is treated rudely*

- Why would we choose to be faithful to the Lord if we knew we might experience some of these challenges as a result?
- When has the Lord helped you or someone you know through a challenge that came as a result of being faithful to Him?

Encourage students to be faithful to the Lord when they experience opposition and challenges as a result of being faithful. Testify that as they are faithful, the Lord will help them.

Summarize Daniel 6:24 by explaining that those who accused Daniel and tricked Darius were thrown into the lions' den with their families.

Invite a student to read Daniel 6:25–28 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the new decree that Darius made. Ask students to report what they find.

- Who was affected by Daniel's fearless decision to obey the Lord?
- What can happen if we are not afraid to show our obedience to the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we are not afraid to show our obedience to the Lord, we can help others believe in Him.** You might suggest that students write this principle in the margin of their scriptures next to Daniel 6:25–28.)
- How can seeing someone's obedience to the Lord help others believe in Him?
- When has your belief in the Lord, or the belief of someone you know, been strengthened because of another person's example of obedience to Him?

To conclude this lesson, share your testimony of the blessings of being continually faithful to God, even in difficult situations.

### Next Unit (Obadiah–Haggai)

Explain that students will learn how they can be "saviours . . . on mount Zion" (Obadiah 1:21) to others. Ask students if they have ever had difficulty believing that someone could repent and change and be forgiven by the Lord. Explain that in the next unit they will study an experience of Jonah, who faced a similar challenge and learned important truths about the Lord in the process. Students will also read about more prophecies of events associated with the Second Coming.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Obadiah

### Why study this book?

As students study the short book of Obadiah, they will learn of the importance of brotherhood and the dangers and consequences of forsaking the commandment to love others. Obadiah delivered his prophecies to the Edomites, who were descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother (see Genesis 25:30), and lived in the territory south of Judah. Although the Edomites were not of the house of Israel, they still belonged to the family of Abraham. Unfortunately, the relationship between Judah and Edom was contentious, and each nation viewed the other as an enemy. When Jerusalem was captured, the people of Edom refused to help the people of Judah, gloated over their misfortune, looted the goods they had left behind, and betrayed them to the Babylonians (see Obadiah 1:11–14). Obadiah foretold of the doom that awaited the people of Edom because of their cruelty toward Judah. He also prophesied of the future restoration of Zion and the importance of latter-day temple work, describing those who would participate in it as "saviours" (see Obadiah 1:17–21).

### Who wrote this book?

Obadiah 1:1 states that this book records a vision the Lord gave to a prophet named Obadiah. Though a number of individuals

named Obadiah are mentioned in 1 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, these are references to other persons. Apart from the fact that Obadiah was a prophet in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, we do not know anything about his background or ministry. Fittingly, the name Obadiah means "servant of the Lord" (see Bible Dictionary, "Obadiah").

### When and where was it written?

Obadiah's prophecy dates to soon after one of the captures of Jerusalem, probably the conquest by the Babylonians in approximately 586 B.C. (see Bible Dictionary, "Obadiah").

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament.

Obadiah's prophecies against Edom are similar to those found in other Old Testament books (see Isaiah 34:5–8; Jeremiah 49:7–22; Ezekiel 25:12–14; 35:1–15; 36:5; Joel 3:19). However, among these prophecies, Obadiah's are unique in stating that the reason Edom's cruelty toward Judah was so offensive was because the people of the two nations were related. Particularly cruel was Edom's

decision to stand by while their Israelite brothers and sisters were being destroyed and to rejoice over their misfortune. Obadiah declared that the people of Edom should not "have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction" (Obadiah 1:12).

Additionally, Obadiah's vision of the future restoration of Zion and of "saviours . . . on mount Zion" (Obadiah 1:21) applies not only to Jerusalem but also to the latter-day Church. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that Latter-day Saints can be "as saviors on Mount Zion" by participating in the great work of salvation for the dead (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 473).

### Outline

**Obadiah 1:1–9** Obadiah speaks against Edom's pride and prophesies of its downfall and destruction.

**Obadiah 1:10–16** Edom will be cut off and destroyed because of its cruelty toward Judah.

**Obadiah 1:17–21** Obadiah prophesies of Israel's future restoration.

# Obadiah

## Introduction

Obadiah prophesied of the destruction of the Edomites, who were the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob. This destruction was a consequence of their pride and

their mistreatment of Israel. Obadiah also prophesied of the restoration of Israel and of saviors on Mount Zion.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Obadiah 1:1–16

#### *Obadiah prophesies of Edom's destruction*

Write the following scenarios on the board, or provide them to students on a handout:

1. *A young man is very intelligent and talented and feels that he can succeed in life without the Lord's help.*
2. *A young woman continues to associate with a group of friends who appear to like her, despite her parents' concern that these friends do not have her best interests in mind.*
3. *A young woman feels resentful when a classmate receives an award and recognition that she hoped to get.*

Divide students into pairs. Ask the pairs to read each scenario and discuss how the person's attitude and actions could cause him or her to feel unhappy.

Invite students to look for a principle as they study Obadiah 1:1–16 that can help them avoid the attitudes and actions described in the scenarios they discussed.

Introduce the book of Obadiah by explaining that we do not know much about the prophet Obadiah except that he may have prophesied after the capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. (see Bible Dictionary, "Obadiah").

Invite students to scan Obadiah 1:1, looking for the nation the Lord addressed through the prophet Obadiah. Ask students to report what they find.

Point out that the land of Edom was southeast of the kingdom of Judah and was inhabited by the descendants of Esau, the son of Isaac and twin brother of Jacob (or Israel; see Genesis 25:21–34; 36:1). The Edomites were therefore relatives of the Israelites. Despite their close kinship, however, mutual hatred existed between the Edomites and the Israelites.

Invite a student to read Obadiah 1:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what had deceived the Edomites.

- According to verse 3, what had deceived the Edomites?
- What had their pride led them to believe?

Explain that the reference to dwelling "in the clefts of the rock" (verse 3) refers to Edomite cities and dwellings that were built on mountainous land and ridges and even carved into rock cliffs. Situated high above the ground, the Edomites felt secure and safe from enemy attack.

- According to verse 4, what did the Lord say He would do to the Edomites?
- What can we learn from the Edomites about the danger of yielding to pride? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **Yielding to pride can cause us to be deceived.** Using students' words, write this truth on the board.)

To help students understand this truth, invite a student to read aloud the scenarios discussed at the beginning of class. After each scenario is read, ask:

- How is this an example of the ways in which pride can deceive us?
- What are other examples of how yielding to pride can deceive and misguide us?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency. Invite students to listen for other examples of how pride can deceive us.



“Pride is the great sin of self-elevation. . . .

“ . . . It leads some to revel in their own perceived self-worth, accomplishments, talents, wealth, or position. They count these blessings as evidence of being ‘chosen,’ ‘superior,’ or ‘more righteous’ than others. . . .

“For others, pride turns to envy: they look bitterly at those who have better positions, more talents, or greater possessions than they do. They seek to hurt, diminish, and tear down others in a misguided and unworthy attempt at self-elevation. When those they envy stumble or suffer, they secretly cheer” (“Pride and the Priesthood,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 56).

- How can elevating ourselves above others cause us to be deceived?
- What can we do to avoid being deceived into putting ourselves above others?

Ask students to ponder how they may be deceived or misguided as a result of yielding to pride. Invite students to write on a piece of paper a goal that will help them overcome pride and avoid being deceived by it. Encourage students to take this paper home and put it in a place where they will see it often.

Summarize Obadiah 1:5–9 by explaining that Obadiah prophesied that Edom would be plundered and conquered. Additionally, the nations that the Edomites had allied with would betray and attack them.

Invite a student to read Obadiah 1:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for why the Lord said Edom would be “cut off,” or destroyed. Explain that the phrase “thy brother Jacob” refers to Israel.

- Why would Edom be cut off?
- How do you think the phrase “thy brother Jacob” might have helped the Edomites understand how they should have treated the Israelites?

Invite a few students to take turns reading aloud from Obadiah 1:11–14. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Edomites had treated the Jews during the destruction of Jerusalem.

- During the destruction of Jerusalem, what had the Edomites done to the Jews and their property?

Invite a student to read Obadiah 1:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord would judge the Edomites for their cruel actions. You may want to explain that the phrase “the day of the Lord is near” refers to the judgments the Lord would send upon Edom and the word *heathen* refers to non-Israelites.

- How would you explain the meaning of the phrase “as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee”?
- What truth can we learn from verse 15 about how the Lord will judge us? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **the Lord will judge us according to the way we have judged and treated others**. Using students’ words, write this truth on the board.)

To help students understand this principle, invite them to turn to Alma 41:14. Invite a student to read this verse aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how Alma taught this truth to his son Corianton.

- How do Alma’s teachings relate to the truth on the board?

## Obadiah 1:17–21

### *Obadiah prophesies of the Israelites’ return to their lands and of saviors on Mount Zion*

If possible, display a few objects that can be used to save someone, such as a life preserver, rope, first aid kit, or fire extinguisher (or draw pictures of these items on the board).

- Have you ever used one of these objects to help save someone?
- Has anyone ever used one of these objects to save you?

Invite students to look for a truth as they study Obadiah 1:17–21 that describes one way they can help save others.

#### Cross-references

A cross-reference is a scripture reference that can provide additional information about or insight into a verse or passage we are studying. Cross-referencing or linking means connecting scripture references that help explain a doctrine or principle or some other element of a scripture passage. Cross-references are most helpful when they enhance students’ understanding of a scripture passage rather than merely restating truths students have already identified.

Invite a student to read Obadiah 1:17 aloud. Ask the class to look for what Obadiah prophesied would happen on Mount Zion. Explain that in this verse Mount Zion can refer to the city of Jerusalem and its temple.

- What did Obadiah prophesy would happen upon Mount Zion? (Explain that this prophecy has more than one fulfillment. It was fulfilled anciently when the Jews returned to their promised lands and rebuilt Jerusalem and the temple [see Ezra 1–7]. It also points to the latter days when Israel will be gathered, Zion will be established, and temple work will bless God’s children.)

Display a picture of a temple.

- In what ways can the temple provide deliverance for God’s children?

Summarize Obadiah 1:18–20 by explaining that Obadiah prophesied that Israel would again possess the land of their inheritance.

Invite a student to read Obadiah 1:21 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who would come upon Mount Zion.

- Who did Obadiah prophesy would come upon Mount Zion?

The word *saviour* can refer to one who saves, rescues, or delivers. Jesus Christ is *the* Savior because He saved and delivered us from sin and death, which we could not do for ourselves.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask the class to listen for ways in which members of the Church can act as saviors on Mount Zion.



“But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion? By building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts, and going forth and receiving all the ordinances, baptisms, confirmations, washings, anointings, ordinations and sealing powers upon their heads, in behalf of all their progenitors who are dead, and redeem them that they may come forth in the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory with them” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 473).

- According to the Prophet Joseph Smith, how can we become saviors on Mount Zion? (Students should identify a principle similar to the following: **We become saviors on Mount Zion as we identify our deceased family members and perform ordinances for them in the temple.** You may want to suggest that students write this truth in the margin of their scriptures.)

- How are we like the Savior when we participate in family history and temple work?

Invite students to consider their experiences involving family history and temple work.

Write the following questions on the board:

1. *What are your thoughts and feelings about helping to rescue and save family members who died without the blessings or ordinances of the gospel?*
2. *What blessings have you and your family received by acting as saviors in behalf of your ancestors?*

Ask students to respond to one of these questions in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. After sufficient time, invite students to share their responses with someone sitting near them.

Conclude by encouraging students to act as saviors in behalf of their ancestors by doing family history and temple work.

### Scripture Mastery Review

Assign each student a different scripture mastery passage. Instruct each student to write on a piece of paper a real-life scenario in which the principles and truths contained in his or her assigned scripture mastery passage could be applied. (You may want to provide students with an example.) After students have finished writing, collect the scenarios. During the next week, begin or end class by reading one or more scenarios aloud and inviting students to identify a scripture mastery passage that is relevant to that scenario. Then invite students to share how the principles in that scripture mastery passage could be applied to the scenario.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Jonah

### Why study this book?

As students study the book of Jonah, they will learn valuable lessons that are relevant to their lives. After Jonah attempted to avoid preaching repentance to the people of Nineveh, he learned the futility of trying to flee from Jehovah. Jonah's miraculous deliverance from a "great fish" (Jonah 1:17) can teach us that the Lord extends His mercy to us when we repent. Jonah's second opportunity to preach the gospel and do as God asked can reassure students that the gospel of Jesus Christ offers second chances for all who humble themselves and repent, as Jonah did. By studying the account of Nineveh's repentance, students can also learn about the love and mercy God has for all those who turn to Him. Finally, the Lord's rebuke of Jonah's displeasure at seeing the Lord spare the people of Nineveh can teach students about the importance of overcoming any resentment they feel concerning God's mercy toward those who repent.

### Who wrote this book?

Although this book is clearly about the prophet Jonah, it was written by a later, unknown author (see Bible Dictionary, "Jonah"). Jonah, who was the son of Amittai, was from a town called

Gath-hepher in Zebulun, a territory in Israel (see Jonah 1:1; 2 Kings 14:25).

### When and where was it written?

It is not certain when the book of Jonah was written. However, Jonah ministered and prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel, which lasted from about 790 to 749 B.C. (see 2 Kings 14:23–25; see also Bible Chronology).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Unlike other prophetic books in the Old Testament, the book of Jonah is not a record of Jonah's prophecies but a narrative about the prophet's experiences. The account contains details that appear to be exaggerations, which has raised questions for some readers about how much of the book is historical. Nevertheless, its literary elements make it a "beautiful poem" (Bible Dictionary, "Jonah") containing valuable lessons. Jesus Christ referred to Jonah's three days and nights in the belly of the whale as a sign of His death and Resurrection (see Matthew 12:39–40; 16:4; Luke 11:29–30).

Jonah's actions may reflect the hostile feelings and attitudes some Israelites held toward the Gentiles. The book's testimony of God's mercy to the Ninevites echoes

the messages of Old Testament prophets who taught of God's concern for people outside of Israel (see Isaiah 49:6; 60:3; Jeremiah 16:19), and it foreshadows the future incorporation of Gentiles into the Church in New Testament times.

### Outline

**Jonah 1** God calls Jonah to preach to the people of Nineveh. Jonah flees in a ship. A storm arises and threatens to sink the ship. Jonah confesses he is to blame for the storm, and he is cast overboard and swallowed by a great fish.

**Jonah 2** Jonah repents. The Lord hears his cries and delivers him from the belly of the great fish.

**Jonah 3** God again calls Jonah to preach to Nineveh. Jonah goes to Nineveh and prophesies of the people's destruction. The people respond with fasting and humility, and the Lord revokes their punishment.

**Jonah 4** Jonah is angered by the Lord's decision to show mercy to the people. The Lord teaches him about His concern for the salvation of the people of Nineveh.

# Jonah

## Introduction

The Lord called Jonah to preach to the people of Nineveh, but Jonah fled and was swallowed by a great fish. After God delivered him, Jonah traveled to Nineveh and prophesied that the Lord would destroy the city because of its

wickedness. The people of Nineveh repented, and God spared the city. The Lord then taught Jonah about His love for the people of Nineveh.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### *Be attentive to students' behavior and respond appropriately*

Be aware of how students are behaving during the lesson, and respond in an appropriate manner. If students seem bored or restless, it may be because they are not involved in the lesson or they do not understand what is being taught or how the lesson applies to them. To help students focus, you may need to change something in the lesson presentation.

### Jonah 1–2

#### *Jonah flees from the Lord's call to preach in Nineveh*

Ask students to think of one or more individuals whom they struggle to love or forgive.

Invite students to look for principles as they study the book of Jonah that can help them choose to love and forgive others.

Invite a student to read Jonah 1:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord called Jonah to do.

- What did the Lord call Jonah to do?

You may want to invite students to locate Bible Map no. 5, “The Assyrian Empire.” Explain that Jonah was from a place called Gath-hepher, located in Zebulun, a territory in Israel near Samaria (see Jonah 1:1; 2 Kings 14:25). Nineveh was a major city of the Assyrians, who were enemies of the Israelites. The Assyrian kings and soldiers were famous for their brutality, which included torturing and cruelly murdering the people they conquered.

- If you had been Jonah, what thoughts or feelings might you have had about preaching in Nineveh?

Invite a student to read Jonah 1:3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what Jonah did in response to his call from the Lord.

- What did Jonah do?

Explain to students that Joppa is a city on the coast of Israel and that Tarshish may have been located in present-day Spain.

- Based on Jonah's response, how do you think he felt about his call to go to Nineveh?

Invite a student to read Jonah 1:4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for what the Lord did as Jonah was fleeing to Tarshish. Invite students to report what they find.

Summarize Jonah 1:5–9 by explaining that the men on the ship feared they might perish in the storm. They believed that Jonah was responsible, and they asked him why the storm had come upon them.

Invite a student to read Jonah 1:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the cause of the storm and Jonah's instruction to the men on the boat.

- What was the cause of the storm?
- What did Jonah instruct the men on the boat to do?

Summarize Jonah 1:13–16 by explaining that the men reluctantly threw Jonah overboard. Once they had done so the storm ceased.

- What can we learn from this account about trying to avoid the responsibilities the Lord has given us? (Help students identify a principle similar to the following: **The Lord will hold us accountable for the responsibilities He gives us, even if we try to avoid them.**)
- What are some responsibilities the Lord gives people today that they may try to avoid? (You may want to list students' answers on the board.)
- What are some consequences that can come to individuals who try to avoid these responsibilities?

Invite students to read Jonah 1:17 silently and look for what happened after Jonah was cast into the sea. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that Jonah 2 contains the prayer Jonah offered while he was in the fish's belly.

Divide students into pairs, and invite them to read Jonah 2:1–9. Ask students to look for phrases in Jonah's prayer that indicate his willingness to repent.

- What phrases indicate Jonah's willingness to repent?

You may want to explain that the phrase "I will look again toward thy holy temple" in verse 4 indicates that Jonah would no longer flee from the Lord. The phrase "I will pay that that I have vowed" in verse 9 indicates that Jonah promised to honor his commitments to the Lord.

- How do these phrases indicate Jonah's willingness to repent?

Ask a student to read Jonah 2:10 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for what the Lord did after Jonah expressed his willingness to repent.

- How did the Lord show mercy to Jonah?
- What principle can we learn from this chapter? (Students may use different words, but they should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we cry unto the Lord and repent when we have sinned, we can receive His mercy.**)

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President James E. Faust of the First Presidency:

"Many of us backslide, many stumble, and I believe firmly in the gospel of the second chance. But the gospel of the second chance means that having once been found weak, . . . thereafter we become steadfast" ("Stand Up and Be Counted," *Ensign*, Feb. 1982, 71).

Testify of the Lord's willingness to mercifully give us a second chance when we repent of our sins and commit to obey the Lord.



### Jonah 3

#### *Jonah fulfills his mission to Nineveh*

Invite a student to read Jonah 3:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord gave Jonah a second chance. Invite students to report what they find.

- How did the Lord give Jonah a second chance?
- How did Jonah respond this time?

Ask a student to read Jonah 3:5, 10 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for how the people of Nineveh responded to Jonah's preaching.

- What did the people of Nineveh do?

Point out that the Joseph Smith Translation of Jonah 3:9–10 clarifies that the people of Nineveh declared, "*we will repent, and turn unto God*" (Joseph Smith Translation, Jonah 3:9 [in Jonah 3:9, footnote a]) and that "*God turned away the evil that he had said he would bring upon them*" (Joseph Smith Translation, Jonah 3:10 [in Jonah 3:10, footnote c]).

### Jonah 4

#### *Jonah learns about God's love for the people of Nineveh*

Write the following incomplete statement on the board: *After the people of Nineveh repented, I felt \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.*

Invite students to imagine they are Jonah writing a journal entry following their successful mission to Nineveh. Invite them to complete the statement based on the feelings they think Jonah might have had.

Ask students how many of them completed the statement with a positive response. Then ask whether any students wrote a negative response. Invite a few students to read their statements and explain why they completed them that way.

Ask a student to read Jonah 4:1–3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along and look for how Jonah felt when the Lord spared the people of Nineveh.

- What feelings did Jonah have?
- What blessing did Jonah want to deny the people of Nineveh after he had received that same blessing?

You may want to suggest that students mark the Lord’s attributes listed in verse 2. Point out that although Jonah was blessed by these attributes when the Lord mercifully gave him a second chance, Jonah resented these attributes when the Lord gave the people of Nineveh a second chance. (Refer students to footnote *b*, which clarifies that the word *repentest* can mean “relentest.” Explain that Jonah knew that God could revoke the destruction pronounced upon Nineveh, but he apparently presumed that God would revoke the punishment even if the people did not repent.)

Explain that the remaining verses of Jonah 4 record what the Lord taught Jonah about love and forgiveness. To help students study these verses, copy the following chart on the board or provide it to students as a handout. You could complete the chart as a class or invite students to complete it on their own or with a partner. Invite students to read each scripture passage and then draw in the box below the scripture reference a simple picture of what the passage describes. As students complete the chart, you may want to explain that the word *booth* in verse 5 refers to a shelter and that the word *gourd* mentioned in verses 6–7, 9 refers to a large plant that could provide shade.

Jonah 4:4–5	Jonah 4:6	Jonah 4:7–8

After sufficient time, invite one or two students to summarize what they learned. Then ask the class:

- How did Jonah initially feel about the gourd? What feelings did he have after the gourd withered?

Invite a student to read Jonah 4:10–11 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the Lord used Jonah’s experience with the gourd to teach him about the Lord’s feelings for the people of Nineveh.

- How did the Lord use Jonah’s experience with the gourd to teach Jonah about His feelings for the people of Nineveh? (The Lord helped Jonah understand that while Jonah had loved the gourd and was sad when it had withered, the Lord loved the people of Nineveh vastly more and did not want them to perish. The Lord was rebuking Jonah’s lack of charity for the people of Nineveh.)
- According to this account, what must we do to become like the Lord? (Students may identify a principle such as the following: **To become like the Lord, we must learn to love and forgive others as He does.**)

To help students understand how this principle relates to them, invite them to recall the person or people they thought of at the beginning of the lesson whom they find difficult to love or forgive. Then read aloud the following statement by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the First Presidency:



“When it comes to hating, gossiping, ignoring, ridiculing, holding grudges, or wanting to cause harm, please apply the following:

“Stop it!

“It’s that simple. We simply have to stop judging others and replace judgmental thoughts and feelings with a heart full of love for God and His children. . . .

“Because we all depend on the mercy of God, how can we deny to others any measure of the grace we so desperately desire for ourselves? . . .

“The pure love of Christ can remove the scales of resentment and wrath from our eyes, allowing us to see others the way our Heavenly Father sees us: as flawed and imperfect mortals who have potential and worth far beyond our capacity to imagine. Because God loves us so much, we too must love and forgive each other” (“The Merciful Obtain Mercy,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2012, 75–76).

- When have you tried to love and forgive as the Lord does? How were you blessed for doing so?

Testify of the truths you have discussed today. Invite students to seek to become more like the Lord by choosing to love and forgive others, particularly individuals who may be difficult to love and forgive.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Micah

### Why study this book?

Micah's writings address the themes of judgment and hope. For example, Micah taught that the sins of the leaders of Israel would result in the destruction of Jerusalem (see Micah 3:5–12). However, Micah also eloquently stated that Heavenly Father hears the prayers of His children and that Jesus Christ is an advocate for and a light unto all (see Micah 7:7–9). Micah further praised God, saying that Jehovah "pardoneth iniquity" and "retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Micah 7:18). Through this contrast of themes, students can learn about both the Lord's disdain for evil and His mercy for those who return to righteousness.

### Who wrote this book?

Although we do not know who wrote this book, the book contains the prophecies of the prophet Micah. Micah was from Moresheth-gath, a small rural town in the kingdom of Judah (see Micah 1:1, 14).

### When and where was it written?

We do not know when the book of Micah was written or compiled in its current form. According to Micah 1:1, Micah prophesied during the reigns of the kings Jotham,

Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah, who ruled from about 740 to 697 B.C. Therefore, he was likely a contemporary of the prophets Amos, Hosea, Jonah, and Isaiah. Micah addressed his words to the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Micah ministered during a time when the people of Israel were thriving economically but suffering spiritually (see Thomas E. McComiskey, "Micah," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebeline, 12 vols. [1976–1992], 7:395). This environment allowed for the upper class to place increasing burdens upon the lower class. Micah was particularly concerned with the oppression of the poor by the wealthy, and he counted this injustice among Judah and Israel's greatest sins.

Micah's origins from a small town may have given him special sensitivity to the concerns of the poor rural people of the land. Micah is the only book in the Old Testament to name Bethlehem—a town "little among the thousands of Judah" (Micah 5:2)—as the place where the Messiah would be born.

Like the teachings of the prophet Isaiah, many of Micah's teachings are written in the style of Hebrew poetry. Micah's

prophecy of Jerusalem's destruction was remembered many years later during the time of Jeremiah (see Jeremiah 26:18).

### Outline

**Micah 1–3** Micah prophesies of judgment and ruin upon the Israelites, including those living in Samaria and Jerusalem. Micah identifies the sins of idolatry and the oppression of the poor by the upper classes as the reasons for the Israelites' imminent destruction. He also condemns corrupt religious teachers who teach for money.

**Micah 4–5** Micah prophesies of the restoration of Israel. He also prophesies that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem.

**Micah 6–7** Micah describes some of the ways in which Jehovah has blessed the Israelites. Micah teaches his people that living justly, loving mercy, and following the Lord are more important than sacrifices and offerings. Micah testifies that Jehovah is compassionate and forgives the sins of those who repent.

# Micah

## Introduction

Micah prophesied to the people of Israel and Judah about the judgments that would come upon them because of their wickedness, lamenting their sins and eventual destruction. However, he also prophesied that

the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem and taught that in the latter days the Lord would have compassion on Israel.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Micah 1–5

#### *Micah prophesies that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem and save His people*

Display or draw a picture of the Wise Men. Remind students that after Jesus was born, the Wise Men came from the East to Jerusalem, seeking the Messiah. Invite a student to read Matthew 2:1–2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and identify how the Wise Men knew that the Messiah had been born.

- How did the Wise Men know that Jesus had been born? (They had “seen his star in the east” and followed it to the place where He was born. Point out that the phrase “seen his star in the east” implies that the Wise Men may have heard prophecies of the Messiah’s birth and had been watching for this sign.)

Invite a student to read Matthew 2:3–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along and look for how the chief priests and scribes knew that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

- How did the chief priests and scribes know where the Messiah would be born? (From the written prophecies.)

Invite a student to read Micah 5:2, 4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the details that Micah described about the coming of the Messiah. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- Where specifically did Micah say the “ruler of Israel” (Jesus Christ) would be born?
- According to verse 4, what would Jesus Christ come to earth to do? (Point out that verse 4, footnote *a*, indicates that He would “feed the flock” [see also Ezekiel 34:11–16]. You may also want to explain that *Bethlehem* means “house of bread,” adding to the symbolism of Jesus Christ as the Bread of Life [see Bible Dictionary, “Bethlehem”].)

Inform students that the prophecies of Micah are the only prophetic writings preserved in the Old Testament to name the birthplace of the Messiah. The chief priests and scribes quoted this prophecy more than 700 years later when Herod asked them where the Messiah would be born (see Matthew 2:3–6).

Explain that Micah was a prophet in the Southern Kingdom of Judah who ministered at the same time as Isaiah. (You may want to display the diagram “The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance” [see lesson 102] to show students when Micah ministered in relation to other prophets and the major events in the histories of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.)

Summarize Micah 1–4 by explaining that Micah prophesied that Samaria and Judah would be destroyed because of the wickedness of the people. He also chastised false prophets who taught the people false doctrines. Micah 4 records that the Lord gave Israel a message of hope that in the last days the Lord’s temple would be built again, Israel would conquer its enemies, and there would be peace for the Lord’s people in the Millennium. As recorded in Micah 5, Micah prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem and that in the last days the remnant of Jacob (Israel) would triumph over its oppressors.



## Micah 6–7

### *Micah laments the wickedness of the Israelites and expresses hope in the Lord's power to redeem them*

Ask students to reflect on a time when someone did something kind for them. (For example, someone may have given them a special gift, performed an act of service, or spoken kind words.) Invite one or two students to share the experience they are thinking of and to describe how the other person's goodness made them feel.

- When we experience others' goodness toward us, how do we generally want to respond?

Explain that through His prophet Micah, the Lord reminded the people of Judah of His goodness toward them so that they would serve Him and show gratitude and devotion to Him. Invite students to look for principles in Micah's teachings that can help them show their devotion to the Lord in return for all He has done for them.

Invite a student to read Micah 6:3–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord reminded the people that He had done for them.

- What did the Lord remind the people of?

Invite a student to read Micah 6:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Micah asked the people.

- What is the first question Micah asked in verse 6? How would you rephrase this question in your own words? (Help students understand that Micah essentially asked, "How should I come before the Lord and worship Him?")

Write the following incomplete principle on the board: *If we desire to come unto the Lord and worship Him, then we must . . .*

Invite a student to read Micah 6:7–8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how Micah answered his question.

- How would you rephrase in your own words Micah's question in verse 7? ("If my outward acts of worship are very great in number or value, will these be enough to please the Lord?")

Point out in verse 8 that Micah taught that our outward acts of worship alone do not please God. He requires something else before our outward worship becomes meaningful and pleasing to Him.

- According to verse 8, what does the Lord require of us in our worship of Him?
- What does it mean to "do justly"? To "love mercy"? To "walk humbly with . . . God"? (see also D&C 11:12).

To help students better understand these verses and identify a principle Micah taught the children of Israel, invite students to turn to Deuteronomy 10:12–13. (You might suggest that students write this cross-reference in the margin next to Micah 6:7–8.) Explain that as recorded in this passage in Deuteronomy, the prophet Moses used similar language when He taught the people what the Lord required of them. Invite a student to read this passage aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Moses said the Lord requires of those who worship and serve Him.

- What does the Lord require of us as we worship and serve Him?

Refer to the incomplete principle written on the board. How would you complete this statement based on the words of Micah and Moses? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we desire to come unto the Lord and worship Him, then we must love and serve Him with all our hearts.**)

- What do you think it means to serve the Lord with all our hearts?

To help students better understand this principle, ask them to name ways that we worship or show love for the Lord. Responses might include attending church, partaking of the sacrament, attending the temple, reading the scriptures, singing hymns, and praying. As students respond, list their ideas on the board and add to the list any forms of worship that students may not have mentioned.

- How does the principle identified in Micah 6:6–8 help us understand what our motive should be as we participate in the activities listed on the board?
- How might we perform these acts of worship with all our hearts?

#### **Understanding the content of the scriptures**

In order to identify doctrines and principles in the scriptures, students must understand the content of what they are reading. One way to evaluate their understanding of a scripture passage is to ask them to summarize it in their own words. As students understand the content of the scriptures, they will be better able to identify the truths they contain.

- What difference has it made in your life when you have offered the Lord your time, obedience, and worship out of love for Him?

Invite students to copy the list on the board in their class notebooks or scripture study journals. Ask them to evaluate how well they are applying the principle they identified in Micah 6:6–8 to each of the forms of worship on their list. Invite students to set a specific goal about how they will begin to worship and serve the Lord with more of their heart in one of the areas on their list.

Summarize Micah 6:10–16 by explaining that the Lord said He could not justly excuse the children of Israel because they continued in their wickedness. He then pronounced consequences that would come to them because of their sins.

Summarize Micah 7:1–17 by explaining that Micah continued to lament the wickedness of the Israelites and the destructions that were coming because of their sins. However, Micah prophesied that Israel would turn to righteousness and rise again with the Lord's help and that other nations would be amazed at what the Lord had done for Israel.

Invite a student to read Micah 7:18–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for Micah's description of the Lord. You may want to suggest that students mark words and phrases that describe the Lord in a way that is meaningful to them. Invite students to share a word or phrase that they chose and to explain why it is important to them.

- According to verses 18–19, what did Micah say the Lord delights in? What will the Lord do with our iniquities because He delights in mercy?
- What do we have to do to receive the Lord's mercy when we have sinned?
- What can we learn from these verses about what will happen as we repent of our sins? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **As we repent of our sins, we will be forgiven because the Lord delights in mercy.**)
- Why do you think we are extended mercy from the Lord even when we may have been rebellious?

As you help students understand this truth, warn them that sometimes people think that the Lord's mercy is an excuse to sin now and repent later (see 2 Nephi 28:7–9). Caution students against this false belief.

Conclude with your testimony of the merciful nature of the Lord and the other principles taught in this lesson. Encourage students to act on the thoughts and impressions that have come to them as they have studied Micah's teachings.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Micah 5:8–9. "The remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion"

When ministering in America, Jesus Christ quoted some of Micah's writings (see Micah 4–5; 3 Nephi 16; 20–21). Referring to 3 Nephi 20:16–17, Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said:

"These words of our Lord to the Nephites are quoted from Micah 5:8–9 and have reference to the desolations and ultimate burning that shall destroy the wicked at the Second Coming. . . . The righteous—here called the remnant of Jacob—shall abide the day. And then, in the prophetic imagery, it will be as though the remnant of Israel overthrew their enemies as a young lion among the flocks of sheep" (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [1982], 248).

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Nahum

### Why study this book?

The book of Nahum contains a prophecy that Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, would be destroyed because of its people's wickedness. The Assyrians had brutally conquered and terrorized large areas of the Near East in the eighth century B.C., destroying the Northern Kingdom of Israel and deporting its inhabitants in approximately 721 B.C. and later laying siege to Jerusalem in 701 B.C.

Nahum addressed a significant portion of his prophecy to the people of Nineveh. These people were not the same as those who had repented of their sins after Jonah had preached in Nineveh more than a century earlier. The people of Nineveh in Nahum's time had returned to wickedness, and their actions led to their destruction. The destruction of Assyria can be likened to the destruction of the wicked in the last days. By studying the Ninevites in both Jonah's day and Nahum's time, students can learn that when people turn from sin, the Lord will forgive them, and when they do not, they will be destroyed.

As students study the book of Nahum, they can also learn that God cares deeply about His people and will not let their oppressors go unpunished. Students can also learn of the great mercy that the Lord shows to those who trust in Him.

### Who wrote this book?

According to Nahum 1:1, this book records "the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite." We do not know whether Nahum wrote or dictated the words of this vision or someone else wrote them. Nahum prophesied in the seventh century B.C., at about the same time as Zephaniah and Jeremiah. Each of these prophets shared insights into the years leading up to the Babylonian conquest of Judah.

### When and where was it written?

The prophecy of Nahum was most likely recorded in the kingdom of Judah sometime after 660 B.C. and before the fall of Nineveh, which occurred around 606 B.C. (see Bible Dictionary, "Nahum").

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Nahum wrote in poetic form, using imagery and symbolism. His tone is markedly hostile toward Nineveh, especially in chapters 2 and 3, which describe the city's destruction and humiliation. The book's description of the Lord's anger may cause some readers to feel uncomfortable. However, it is important to recognize that underlying the Lord's anger toward Nineveh is a deep sense of concern for the suffering of the many people who had been conquered, slain,

enslaved, and terrorized by Assyria (see Nahum 3:19). The Lord's judgments of the wicked are connected to His compassion for their victims.

The meaning of Nahum's name, "consoler," plays an important role in the prophet's message (see Bible Dictionary, "Nahum"). The unrepentant wicked will receive no comfort (see Nahum 3:7), but the righteous can take comfort from Nahum's message that the Lord cares about them and will one day bring an end to wickedness.

### Outline

**Nahum 1** Nahum explains that the Lord will burn the earth at His Second Coming but will show mercy to the righteous.

**Nahum 2** Nahum prophesies of Nineveh's destruction, which foreshadows events that will occur in the latter days.

**Nahum 3** Nahum continues to foretell Nineveh's destruction.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Habakkuk

### Why study this book?

The book of Habakkuk contains an exchange between Habakkuk and the Lord that is “similar to those in Jeremiah 12 and D&C 121” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Habakkuk”; scriptures.lds.org). Like Jeremiah and Joseph Smith, Habakkuk asked God sincere and bold questions that reflected concern for his people and for the Lord’s plans for them. By studying the book of Habakkuk, students can learn about the value of taking their troubles and questions to Heavenly Father in honest prayer.

### Who wrote this book?

This book is attributed to a prophet named Habakkuk (see Habakkuk 1:1; 3:1). Little is known about Habakkuk except that he was a prophet who lived in the kingdom of Judah, “possibly in the reign of Josiah or of Jehoiakim (about 600 B.C.)” (Bible Dictionary, “Habakkuk”). If this dating is

correct, he would have been a contemporary of the prophets Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Obadiah, and Ezekiel.

### When and where was it written?

We do not know exactly when or where this book was written. The date of Habakkuk’s ministry is uncertain, but it likely took place shortly before the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. (see Habakkuk 1:6).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Habakkuk’s dialogue with God takes the form of alternating speeches in Habakkuk 1–2. Some of Habakkuk’s petitions take the form of a grievance, such as “O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!” (Habakkuk 1:2). These reflect the deep emotion and desperation the righteous may feel in times of great suffering

(see Psalms 6:3; 13:1; 35:17; 74:10; 79:5; D&C 121:1–6) and can remind us that even in our anguish, we may turn to Heavenly Father and pour out our troubles in honest, heartfelt prayer.

### Outline

**Habakkuk 1** Habakkuk learns that the kingdom of Judah will be conquered by the Chaldeans (Babylonians). In his distress, he asks why the Lord would allow a wicked nation to destroy Judah.

**Habakkuk 2** The Lord reminds Habakkuk that His plans are not yet completed but will be fulfilled at a later time. God’s justice will eventually come upon the wicked.

**Habakkuk 3** Habakkuk offers a prayer or poetic psalm of praise to God and His majesty.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Zephaniah

### Why study this book?

Zephaniah prophesied of “the day of the Lord” (Zephaniah 1:7, 8, 14, 18; 2:2, 3), or the Lord’s impending judgment upon Judah and other nations (see Bible Dictionary, “Zephaniah”). Zephaniah explained that on this day God would punish the proud and mighty and reward the righteous. Zephaniah pleaded, “Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth . . . ; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger” (Zephaniah 2:3). By studying the book of Zephaniah, students can learn that they do not need to follow the sinful customs of the societies in which they live and that they can seek the Lord regardless of what others around them choose to do.

### Who wrote this book?

The book is attributed to a prophet named Zephaniah, who prophesied in Judah during the seventh century B.C. (see Bible Dictionary, “Zephaniah”). Zephaniah may have been a contemporary of other Old Testament prophets such as Jeremiah and Nahum and the Book of Mormon prophet Lehi (see Bible Chronology). Zephaniah’s name means “the Lord hides” (Bible Dictionary, “Zephaniah”).

### When and where was it written?

Zephaniah ministered in Judah during the reign of King Josiah, which lasted from about 639 to 608 B.C. (see Zephaniah 1:1; Bible Dictionary, “Zephaniah”). However,

we do not know when and where the prophecies were recorded.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Like many ancient prophecies, the words of Zephaniah can apply to both his day and the future. At the time Zephaniah was prophesying, a foreign army was threatening to destroy Judah. This threatened destruction can be compared to the destruction of the wicked that will occur before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Additionally, the blessings the Lord promised to the righteous inhabitants of Jerusalem can foreshadow the blessings the righteous will receive at the Second Coming (see Zephaniah 3:12–20).

### Outline

**Zephaniah 1** Zephaniah prophesies that God will destroy the people of Judah if they do not repent.

**Zephaniah 2** Zephaniah encourages Judah and the meek people of the earth to seek righteousness. He also warns some of Judah’s antagonistic neighbors of God’s judgments that will come upon them.

**Zephaniah 3** Zephaniah prophesies of the wickedness of Jerusalem’s leaders and the blessings that the humble inhabitants of Jerusalem will receive after the Lord removes the proud from their city. Zephaniah explains that the Lord will pour out judgment on all nations. Zephaniah reveals that the Lord will give His people a pure language, renew His relationship with them, and reign in the midst of Zion.

## LESSON 154

# Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah

### Introduction

Nahum prophesied of the downfall of Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria. Habakkuk asked the Lord questions regarding the punishment of the wicked. The

Lord answered his questions, and Habakkuk praised the Lord. Zephaniah prophesied of the disasters that would accompany the fall of Judah.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Nahum 1–3

#### *Nahum prophesies of the downfall of Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria*

On the board, draw a simple picture of several arrows pointing at a person, and invite students to imagine that the arrows represent the evils and perils that threaten us in our day.

- What are some of the evils and perils that threaten us in our day? (You could invite a student to write the class's responses on the board near the arrows.)

Invite students as they study the prophecies of Nahum to look for truths that will help them find protection against the evils of our day.

Explain that the prophet Nahum prophesied during the time of the Assyrian Empire, approximately 100 years after the time of Jonah. The Assyrian army had already destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel and was planning to conquer the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Invite students to turn to Bible Map no. 5, "The Assyrian Empire." Ask students to locate the cities of Nineveh and Jerusalem on the map. Explain that Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria.

Point out the phrase "the burden of Nineveh" in Nahum 1:1. Explain that this phrase refers to a message of doom pronounced against Nineveh. Remind students that the people of Nineveh had repented once before when Jonah preached to them. But more than 100 years later, at the time of Nahum, the people of Nineveh had again become wicked.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Nahum 1:1–8. Ask the class to follow along, looking for words and phrases that describe the nature of God, including His power and His being slow to anger.

- How did the Lord feel about Nineveh?
- Why do you think the Lord was angry with the people of Nineveh?

Point out the phrase "the Lord is slow to anger" in verse 3, and explain that this phrase implies that the Lord had given the people of Nineveh adequate time to repent. Because they chose not to repent and continued in wickedness, they would experience the Lord's judgments.

Ask students to notice the phrase "the Lord is good, a strong hold" in verse 7, and explain that a *stronghold* is a fortress or position that provides a strong defense against attacking forces. Invite a student to quickly draw a stronghold around the figure on the board.

- According to verse 7, what will the Lord be for those who trust Him? (After students respond, write the following principle on the board: **The Lord is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who trust Him.**)
- What does it mean to trust in the Lord? (List answers on the board.)

To help the class add to their understanding of what it means to trust in the Lord, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"To trust means to obey willingly without knowing the end from the beginning (see Prov. 3:5–7)" ("Trust in the Lord," *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 17).

- In what ways have you witnessed that the Lord blesses those who trust Him?

### Capture students' interest

Teachers can help students focus on the learning experience by beginning each lesson in a way that captures students' attention and leads them to search the scriptures with greater purpose.



Invite students to ponder and record a goal in their class notebooks or scripture study journals stating how they plan to better show their trust in the Lord.

Summarize Nahum 1:9–14 by explaining that Nahum prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed for its wickedness.

Invite a student to read Nahum 1:15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Nahum reminded the Jews to do. Explain that the phrase “the feet of him that bringeth good tidings” is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ (see Mosiah 15:18).

- What was Nahum’s counsel to the people? (Remind students that these feasts and vows were designated by the law of Moses.)
- How might the observance of these feasts and rituals help the people develop trust in the Lord so they could be protected by Him?

Summarize Nahum 2–3 by explaining that Nahum saw that Nineveh’s downfall would be desolating. Explain that these prophecies about the destruction of Nineveh can be likened to the destruction of the wicked in the last days at the Lord’s Second Coming.

### Habakkuk 1–3

#### *Habakkuk wonders at the power of the Lord and the coming destruction of Jerusalem*

Explain that the prophet Habakkuk may have lived sometime between the fall of the northern tribes of Israel (721 B.C.) and the destruction of Jerusalem (587 B.C.). Summarize Habakkuk 1–2 by explaining that Habakkuk learned that the Lord would use a wicked nation (the Babylonians, also known as Chaldeans) to destroy the kingdom of Judah. This troubled Habakkuk, and he asked the Lord why He would use a wicked people to destroy His chosen people. The Lord answered kindly and encouraged patience, assuring Habakkuk that in time the wicked Chaldeans would also be punished.

Explain that Habakkuk 3 contains a prayer of praise to the Lord. Invite a student to read Habakkuk 3:17–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Habakkuk learned from his dialogue with the Lord. Explain that a *hind* is a deer that can travel easily across rocky and uneven terrain.

- How do these verses relate to the principle written on the board?

### Zephaniah 1–3

#### *Zephaniah prophesies of the destruction of Jerusalem as a type of the Second Coming*

Write the following list of events on the board. You may want to adapt this list to match the experiences of your students.

*School test*

*Date*

*Audition*

*Performance*

*Athletic meet or game*

*Mission*

*Patriarchal blessing*

*General conference*

Invite students to choose one of the events on the board and explain what they would do to prepare for that event.

Display the picture *The Second Coming* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 66; see also LDS.org). Ask students why it matters how we prepare for the Savior’s Second Coming. Invite students to look for a truth in Zephaniah that will help them know how they can prepare for the Second Coming.

Explain that the prophet Zephaniah probably lived during the time of Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Lehi, and other prophets, and he joined them in warning the kingdom of Judah of approaching destruction. Zephaniah’s prophecies also apply to the latter days and warn of the calamities to come before the Second Coming of the Savior.



Explain that Zephaniah 1 records the Lord’s description of the destruction awaiting the people because they “turned back from the Lord” (Zephaniah 1:6). The Lord “bid his guests” to come to “a sacrifice” that He had prepared and said that He would punish those who came clothed with “strange apparel” (Zephaniah 1:7–8). “Strange apparel” in this context likely means foreign apparel worn for idolatrous purposes; those wearing it would have shown indifference for Jehovah.

Invite a student to read Zephaniah 1:14–15 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the nation of Judah will experience because of their sins. Invite students to report what they find.

Invite a student to read Zephaniah 2:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord counseled the Jews to do before the day of destruction.

- What did the Lord counsel the Jews to do before the day of the Lord’s anger?
- What is meekness?

To help class members understand the meaning of the word *meekness*, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“Meekness implies a spirit of gratitude as opposed to an attitude of self-sufficiency, an acknowledgment of a greater power beyond oneself, a recognition of God, and an acceptance of his commandments” (“With All Thy Getting Get Understanding,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1988, 3–4).

- What principle do these verses teach that can help us prepare for the day of the Lord’s Second Coming? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **As we seek the Lord, seek righteousness, and seek meekness, we can be protected from harm in the day of His judgment.**)
- How do you think we can be more righteous and meek?

Summarize Zephaniah 2:4–3:7 by explaining that Zephaniah prophesied that the Lord would destroy several wicked nations. Explain that similar destruction will come to all of the wicked in the day of God’s judgment before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Invite a student to read Zephaniah 3:8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord counseled the righteous to do to prepare for the Second Coming. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find.

- What do you think it means to “wait” upon the Lord?

To help students understand what it means to wait upon the Lord, invite someone to read aloud the following explanation from President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency:

“The word *wait* in scripture language means to hope for or anticipate” (“Waiting Upon the Lord” [Brigham Young University fireside, Sept. 30, 1990], 4; [speeches.byu.edu](http://speeches.byu.edu)).

- What are some ways we can show that we hope for and anticipate the Second Coming?

Invite a student to read Zephaniah 3:17–20 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord promised those who wait upon Him.

- What did the Lord promise to those who wait upon Him faithfully?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about waiting upon the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we will wait upon the Lord, He will deliver us from our sorrows, afflictions, and captivity.**)

Explain that waiting upon the Lord takes patience. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“Some blessings come soon, some come late, and some don’t come until heaven; but for those who embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ, *they come*” (“An High Priest of Good Things to Come,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 38).

You may want to suggest that students write this statement in the margin of their scriptures.

- When have you or someone you know waited upon the Lord and been delivered from sorrow or afflictions?

Invite students to reflect on the principles they identified in the lesson today and determine what they will do to live these principles. You may want to invite students to record their goals in their class notebooks or scripture study journals.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Haggai

### Why study this book?

The book of Haggai affirms that a temple will again be built in Jerusalem and that peace will finally come to Jerusalem.

Studying the book of Haggai can help students gain a deeper understanding of the urgency and importance of building temples and worshipping in the temple (see Haggai 1; see also D&C 95).

### Who wrote this book?

Haggai was a prophet who lived in Jerusalem not long after the Jews returned from the Babylonian exile (see Bible Dictionary, "Haggai"). It is presumed that he is the author of the book bearing his name.

### When and where was it written?

Haggai spoke the prophecies contained in his book around 520 B.C. in Jerusalem

(see Bible Dictionary, "Haggai"). If Haggai wrote this book, he most likely wrote it in Jerusalem as well.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Haggai provides helpful insights concerning the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. After the Jews returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, they began to rebuild the city and the temple but stopped when they encountered opposition (see Ezra 1–4). The book of Haggai records the Lord's commandment to the Jews to renew their efforts in rebuilding the temple. The Jews obeyed the word of the Lord through Haggai and succeeded in completing the temple (see Haggai 1–2; Ezra 5–6).

### Outline

**Haggai 1** Through Haggai, the Lord chastises the people for caring more about the condition of their own homes than that of the Lord's temple. He explains that their poor crop conditions are a result of their failure to rebuild the temple. He exhorts them to renew their efforts in building the temple.

**Haggai 2** The Lord commands Haggai to speak to the people and exhort them to be strong as they rebuild the temple. He prophesies that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) will come to His temple and bring peace.

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Zechariah

### Why study this book?

The book of Zechariah contains descriptions of visions concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple, the gathering of scattered Israel, and the triumph of Israel over its enemies. The book culminates in prophecies of the Savior's mortal ministry and final return in glory. By studying the book of Zechariah, students can learn about the Lord's love for His people and His desire to cleanse and redeem them if they repent and keep their covenants. Students can also learn about events that will occur before and after Jesus Christ's Second Coming and feel the importance of preparing themselves for the Lord's return.

### Who wrote this book?

The prophet Zechariah wrote this book. He was the son of Berechiah, who was the son of Iddo (see Zechariah 1:1). Iddo was a priest who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel, the first Jewish governor of Jerusalem after the Jews' return from the Babylonian exile (see Nehemiah 12:1–7). Zechariah prophesied from the second to the fourth year of the reign of Darius, about 520 to 518 B.C. (see Zechariah 1:1; 7:1). Along with his contemporary Haggai, Zechariah was instrumental in organizing and inspiring the Jews to finish rebuilding the temple (see Ezra 5:1; 6:14).

### When and where was it written?

We do not know precisely when or where the book of Zechariah was written. However, we do know that Zechariah lived in Jerusalem soon after the return of the Jews from their exile in Babylon. He received the visions recorded in this book between the second and fourth years of the reign of Darius, or between 520 and 518 B.C. (see Zechariah 1:1; 7:1).

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

Many of the messages Zechariah received from the Lord were in the form of visions (see Zechariah 1–6). Possibly because of the difficulty of conveying heavenly visions in earthly terms, most of the messages in the book of Zechariah are couched in symbolic imagery and descriptions.

The book is generally divided by its readers into two divisions: "Zech. 1–8, a series of visions sketching the future of the people of God, and Zech. 9–14, prophecies about the Messiah and events preceding His Second Coming" (Bible Dictionary, "Zechariah"). Of particular significance are the vivid prophecies of Christ's earthly ministry (see Zechariah 9:9; 11:10–13) and of such latter-day events as the gathering of Israel, the final great battle, and the Second Coming (see Zechariah 10:6–12; 12:2–14; 14:1–9).

### Outline

**Zechariah 1–6** In a series of visions, Zechariah sees the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple; the gathering of Israel; and Joshua, the high priest, crowned in similitude of Christ.

**Zechariah 7–8** Because of the Israelites' hypocrisy and oppression of the poor, the Lord scattered them among the nations. In the latter days, He will restore Jerusalem and gather Judah; many Gentiles will gather with them to worship the Lord.

**Zechariah 9–11** Zechariah prophesies of Christ's ministry: He will enter Jerusalem riding upon an ass; the spirits in prison will be redeemed by the blood of the covenant. Scattered Israel will be gathered, redeemed, and strengthened. Christ will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

**Zechariah 12–14** In the final battle before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, many people will gather to fight against Jerusalem, and the Lord will destroy them. The Jews will recognize their Messiah, whom they crucified, and see the wounds in His hands. Christ will reign as King of the whole earth.

# Haggai; Zechariah 1–2

## Introduction

Through the prophet Haggai, the Lord exhorted the Jews to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem and promised them great blessings if they obeyed Him. The prophet

Zechariah had several visions about Judah, Jerusalem, and the last days.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Haggai 1–2

#### *Haggai encourages the people to rebuild the temple*

Bring to class an empty container (such as a plastic bottle) with several small holes in the bottom, a pitcher of water, a sponge or rag, and a pan large enough to catch the water that will spill.

Invite a student to come to the front of the class and use the sponge or rag to transfer the water from the pitcher to the container with holes. (Make sure the student does this over the pan so it catches the water that spills.) After the student struggles to complete this task, ask the following question:

- Why is it a challenge to fill a container that has holes?

Ask students to ponder how this activity could represent the experience of someone who is given the word of God but chooses to ignore God's will and pursue his or her own desires instead.

Invite students to look for truths as they study the book of Haggai that illustrate the blessings of putting God and His will first in our lives.

Invite students to locate "Haggai" on the diagram "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance" (see lesson 102). Explain that after the Jews arrived in Jerusalem from their captivity in Babylon, they put great effort into rebuilding the temple, the city, their homes, and their lives. However, because of opposition from the Samaritans and their own apathy, they stopped working on the temple for several years (see Ezra 4:1–5, 24).

Invite a student to read Haggai 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's message that Haggai delivered to Zerubbabel and Joshua, two of the Jewish leaders.

- According to verse 2, what did the people say about rebuilding the temple?
- What question did the Lord ask the people in verse 4?

Explain that the word *ceiled* means "paneled" (see verse 4, footnote *a*). "Ceiled houses" refers to the way many Jews furnished their homes with fine wood, and the phrase "this house" refers to the temple.

- How had the people placed their will ahead of the Lord's will?

Display the container with the holes in it, and invite a student to read Haggai 1:5–7 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for similarities between the Jews' situation and the container.

- How was the Jews' situation similar to the container with holes?
- According to verse 6, in what ways did the people not prosper?

Point out the phrase "consider your ways" in verses 5 and 7, and ask a student to express in his or her own words what this phrase means.

- Why do you think the Jews needed to consider their ways?

Invite a student to read Haggai 1:8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord instructed the people to do.

- What did the Lord instruct the people to do?

Summarize Haggai 1:9–11 by explaining that the Lord told the Jews that the difficulties they were experiencing, including a drought and a famine, were the result of putting a higher priority on furnishing their own homes than on rebuilding His temple.

### Define difficult words and phrases

Use the words of the prophets, dictionaries, student manuals, footnotes, and other scripture study resources to help students understand difficult words and phrases. Defining difficult words and phrases can help students understand the content of the scriptures and prepare to identify doctrines and principles.

Invite a student to read Haggai 1:12–14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people decided to do.

- What did the Jews decide to do?
- According to verse 13, what was the Lord’s message to the people because of their decision to work on the temple?

Summarize Haggai 2:1–6 by explaining that after the Jews struggled for nearly a month to rebuild the temple, the Lord spoke words of encouragement to them through the prophet Haggai. Invite a student to read Haggai 2:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Lord encouraged the people.

- Why could the people be strong and fearless as they rebuilt the temple?

Invite a student to read Haggai 2:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would do to His temple. Point out that the title “the desire of all nations” (verse 7) refers to the Savior Jesus Christ.

- According to verse 7, what will Jesus Christ do to His temple when He comes?

Explain that this prophecy could refer to the Savior’s visits to the temple during His mortal ministry. It could also refer to His visit to His temple in Jerusalem at the Second Coming, which may be what Haggai meant when he said, “The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former,” or Solomon’s temple (verse 9).

- According to verse 9, what will the Lord give in His temple?
- What principle we can learn from verse 9 that can help us understand an important purpose of temples? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **When we are in the house of the Lord, He can give us peace.** You may want to suggest that students write this principle in the margin next to verse 9.)

To help students understand this principle, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David B. Haight of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The moment we step into the house of the Lord, the atmosphere changes from the worldly to the heavenly, where respite from the normal activities of life is found, and where peace of mind and spirit is received. It is a refuge from the ills of life and a protection from the temptations that are contrary to our spiritual well-being” (“Temples and the Work Therein,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 61).

Invite students to share an experience they have had when they felt peace in the temple. Encourage students to be worthy to be in the temple and to go to the temple as often as they can.

Summarize Haggai 2:10–17 by explaining that these verses refer to ordinances of the law of Moses related to holiness and cleanliness and again identify the Jews’ temporal problems as a result of not building the temple.

Display the container with holes again. Invite a student to read Haggai 2:18–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for blessings the Lord said would result from the people’s decision to work on the temple.

- What did the Lord say He would do for Israel starting from the day they continued working on the temple?
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we put God and His will first in our lives, then He will be with us and bless all aspects of our lives.** Write this principle on the board. You may want to suggest that students write it in the margin of their scriptures next to Haggai 2:18–19.)

To help students understand this principle, ask them to share situations in which we would need to decide whether to put God first (for example, accepting a well-paying job that requires working on the Sabbath instead of going to church).

- How might God bless us in all aspects of our lives as we put Him first?

To help students understand how they will be blessed as they place God first in their lives, ask a student to read aloud the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:



“Men and women who turn their lives over to God will find out that he can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace” (“Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations,” *New Era*, May 1975, 20).

Invite students to ponder how putting God first in their lives has blessed them. Consider asking a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Ask students to ponder how well they are doing with putting God first in their lives. Encourage them to make any changes that would help them put God first in their lives.

Summarize Haggai 2:20–23 by explaining that the Lord, through Haggai, told of the great influence that Zerubbabel would have on Judah.

## Zechariah 1–2

### *Zechariah receives several visions about Judah, Jerusalem, and the last days*

Explain that Zechariah prophesied in Jerusalem at about the same time as Haggai. At a time when the Jews felt that God had forgotten them and their struggles, Zechariah (whose name means “Jehovah remembers”) received eight different visions that restored the Jews’ hope and faith in God’s love for them (see Bible Dictionary, “Zechariah”). Invite students to look for a principle in Zechariah 1–2 that can help them have faith in God’s love for them.

Invite a student to read Zechariah 1:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for a truth that might have strengthened the Jews’ faith in God’s love.

- How would you rephrase verse 3 as a principle using the words *if* and *then*? (Students may use different words but should identify the following principle: **If we turn unto the Lord, then He will turn unto us.**)
- How do we turn to the Lord?

Explain that some people may mistakenly believe that when they turn away from God by committing sin, He also turns away from them. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for an explanation of God’s attitude toward those who sin.



“In the anguishing process of repentance, we may sometimes feel God has deserted us. The reality is that our behavior has isolated us from Him. Thus, while we are turning away from evil but have not yet turned fully to God, we are especially vulnerable. Yet we must not give up, but, instead, reach out to God’s awaiting arm of mercy, which is outstretched ‘all the day long.’ (Jacob 5:47; 6:4; 2 Ne. 28:32; Morm. 5:11.)” (“Repentance,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 31).

- Why might someone feel like God has turned away from them?
- What does Elder Maxwell teach about God’s desires for those who sin?

Summarize the rest of Zechariah 1–2 by explaining that Zechariah prophesied that there would be peace in the land so that the temple could be rebuilt. He also prophesied that in the last days Judah would be gathered to Jerusalem and the Lord would dwell in the midst of His people.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Haggai 1:8–13; 2:18–19. Putting God’s will first in our lives

President Ezra Taft Benson taught of the importance and blessings of putting God first in our lives:

“When we put God first, all other things fall into their proper place or drop out of our lives. Our love of the Lord will govern the claims for our affection, the demands on our time, the interests we pursue, and the order of our priorities” (“The Great Commandment—Love the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1988, 4).

# Home-Study Lesson

## Obadiah; Jonah; Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah 1–2 (Unit 31)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### *Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons*

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Obadiah 1–Zechariah 2 (unit 31) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### **Day 1 (Obadiah)**

As students studied the book of Obadiah, they learned that the Lord will judge us according to the way we have judged and treated others. They also learned that they can become saviors on mount Zion as they identify their deceased family members and perform ordinances in the temple for them.

#### **Day 2 (Jonah)**

As students studied the book of Jonah, they learned that God's children will experience negative consequences if they try to avoid the responsibilities He has given them. They also learned that if we cry unto the Lord when we sin, we can receive His mercy. From Jonah's experience with the gourd plant, students learned that to become like the Lord, we must learn to love and forgive others as He does.

#### **Day 3 (Micah)**

Micah prophesied that the Savior would be born in Bethlehem and would save His people. Students learned that if we desire to come unto the Lord and worship Him, we must love and serve Him with our hearts. Micah lamented the wickedness of Israel, but he also taught that as we repent of our sins, we will be forgiven because the Lord delights in mercy.

#### **Day 4 (Nahum 1–Zechariah 2)**

From Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, the students learned that the Lord is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He will protect those who trust Him. They also learned that as they seek the Lord, they can be hid from harm in the day of His judgment. From Haggai, students learned that if they put God and His will first in their lives, then He will be with them and bless all aspects of their lives.

### Introduction

Through the prophet Haggai, the Lord exhorted the Jews to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem and promised them great blessings if they obeyed Him. The prophet Zechariah had several visions about Judah, Jerusalem, and the last days.

### Suggestions for Teaching

#### **Haggai 1–Zechariah 2**

##### *Haggai encourages the people to rebuild the temple*

Bring to class an empty container (such as a plastic bottle) with several small holes in the bottom, a pitcher of water, a sponge or rag, and a pan large enough to catch the water that will spill.

Invite a student to come to the front of the class and use the sponge or rag to transfer the water from the pitcher to the container with holes. (Make sure the student does this over the pan so that it catches the water that spills.) After the student struggles to complete this task, ask the following question:

- Why is it a challenge to fill a container that has holes?

Ask students to ponder how this activity could represent the experience of someone who is given the word of God but chooses to ignore God's will and pursue his or her own desires instead.

Invite students to look for truths as they study the book of Haggai that illustrate the blessings of putting God and His will first in our lives.

Explain that after the Jews arrived in Jerusalem from their captivity in Babylon, they put great effort into rebuilding the temple, the city, their homes, and their lives. However, because of opposition from the Samaritans and their own apathy, they stopped working on the temple for several years (see Ezra 4:1–5, 24).

Invite a student to read Haggai 1:1–4 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord's message that Haggai delivered to Zerubbabel and Joshua, two of the Jewish leaders.

- According to verse 2, what did the people say about rebuilding the temple?
- What question did the Lord ask the people in verse 4?

Explain that the word *ceiled* means "paneled" (see verse 4, footnote a). "Ceiled houses" refers to the way many Jews furnished their homes with fine wood, and the phrase "this house" refers to the temple.

- How had the people placed their will ahead of the Lord's will?

Display the container with the holes in it, and invite a student to read Haggai 1:5–7 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for similarities between the Jews' situation and the container.

- How was the Jews' situation similar to the container with holes?

- According to verse 6, in what ways did the people not prosper?

Invite a student to read Haggai 1:8 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord instructed the people to do.

- What did the Lord instruct the people to do?

Summarize Haggai 1:9–11 by explaining that the Lord told the Jews that the difficulties they were experiencing, including a drought and a famine, were the result of putting a higher priority on furnishing their own homes than on rebuilding His temple.

Invite a student to read Haggai 1:12–14 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for what Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people decided to do.

- What did the Jews decide to do?
- According to verse 13, what was the Lord's message to the people because of their decision to work on the temple?

Summarize Haggai 2:1–6 by explaining that after the Jews struggled for nearly a month to rebuild the temple, the Lord spoke words of encouragement to them through the prophet Haggai.

Invite a student to read Haggai 2:7–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would do to His temple. Point out that the title "the desire of all nations" (verse 7) refers to the Savior, Jesus Christ.

- According to verse 7, what will Jesus Christ do to His temple when He comes?

Explain that this prophecy could refer to the Savior's visits to the temple during His mortal ministry. It could also refer to His visit to His temple in Jerusalem at the Second Coming, which may be what Haggai meant when he said, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former," or Solomon's temple (Haggai 2:9).

- According to verse 9, what will the Lord give in His temple?
- What principle can we learn from verse 9 that can help us understand an important purpose of temples? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **When we are in the house of the Lord, He can give us peace.** You may want to suggest that students write this principle in the margin next to verse 9.)

Invite students to share an experience they have had when they felt peace in the temple. Encourage students to be worthy to be in the temple and to go to the temple as often as they can.

Summarize Haggai 2:10–17 by explaining that these verses refer to ordinances of the law of Moses related to holiness and

cleanliness and again identify the Jews' temporal problems as a result of not building the temple.

Invite a student to read Haggai 2:18–19 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for blessings the Lord said would result from the people's decision to work on the temple.

- What did the Lord say He would do for Israel starting from the day they continued working on the temple?
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we put God and His will first in our lives, then He will be with us and bless all aspects of our lives.** Write this principle on the board. You may want to suggest that students write it in the margin of their scriptures next to Haggai 2:18–19.)

To help students understand this principle, ask them to share situations in which we would need to decide whether to put God first.

- How might God bless us in all aspects of our lives as we put Him first?

Invite students to ponder how putting God first in their lives has blessed them. Consider asking a few students to share their experiences with the class.

Summarize Haggai 2:20–23 by explaining that the Lord, through Haggai, told of the great influence that Zerubbabel would have on Judah.

Summarize Zechariah 1–2 by explaining that Zechariah prophesied in Jerusalem at about the same time as Haggai. During a time when the Jews felt that God had forgotten them and their struggles, Zechariah prophesied that there would be peace in the land so that the temple could be rebuilt. He also prophesied that in the last days Judah would be gathered to Jerusalem and that the Lord would dwell in the midst of His people.

## Next Unit (Zechariah 3–Malachi 4)

Invite students to imagine that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is about to occur. Ask them to ponder if they feel they are ready for it. Explain that as they study Zechariah 3–Malachi 4, they will learn about prophecies about the Second Coming and how they can prepare themselves and the world for it. They will also learn why the Lord has emphasized the need to do family history and temple work for their ancestors.

# Zechariah 3–8

## Introduction

Zechariah preached among the Jews after they returned to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon. He had a vision of Joshua, the high priest of Jerusalem, wearing filthy clothes. In this vision, an angel of the Lord had clean garments placed on Joshua and charged him to walk in righteousness. The purification of Joshua symbolized

what the Jews needed to do to prepare for the coming of Jesus Christ. Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah appointed by King Cyrus of Persia, was charged with rebuilding the temple. The Lord promised the Jews that their mourning over the destruction of Jerusalem would become joy when the city was restored.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Zechariah 3–4

*Joshua, the high priest, is prepared to officiate, and Zerubbabel is charged with rebuilding the temple*

Ask students to list on a piece of paper individuals they hope to associate with in the celestial kingdom. Invite students to share some names they listed and to explain why they included those individuals on their lists.

Explain that in this lesson, students will learn about visions that the Lord gave to Zechariah, a prophet who lived during the time of Haggai and Ezra. He was also one of many Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon as a result of the decree by King Cyrus of Persia. Invite students to look for principles as they study Zechariah 3 that illustrate how we can prepare to return to live with Heavenly Father and His righteous children.

Invite a student to read Zechariah 3:1–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for who stood before an angel of the Lord and what he was wearing. Explain that the “brand plucked out of the fire” in verse 2 represents the people of Judah who were delivered from exile by the decree of King Cyrus.

- Who stood before the angel? What was he wearing? (Joshua, the high priest, wore filthy garments to represent the people of Judah in their sinful state.)
- Who stood next to Joshua before the angel of the Lord?

Refer students to verse 1, footnote *b*, and explain that one meaning of the name *Satan* is adversary or accuser.

Invite a student to read Zechariah 3:4–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what happened to Joshua.

- What did the angel command others nearby to remove from Joshua?
- What could the changing of Joshua’s garment symbolize? (It could symbolize the Jews who had returned from captivity removing the worldliness of Babylon and again becoming God’s holy people.)

Explain that the clothing referred to in verse 5 was the attire priests wore to officiate in the temple. This included a “fair mitre,” which was a clean, or pure, cap (see footnote *a*).

Invite a student to read Zechariah 3:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what Joshua was commanded to do after he had been cleansed from sin and was prepared to officiate in the temple.

- What was Joshua commanded to do? (Walk in the Lord’s ways and keep His charge. You may want to explain that the phrase “keep my charge” [verse 7] means to keep God’s commandments and fulfill the duties He requires, including priesthood duties.)
- Who does the phrase “these that stand by” refer to? (“The heavenly messengers” [see verse 7, footnote *c*].)

Explain that to be given “places to walk among [the angels]” (verse 7) means that Joshua would be worthy to enter the Lord’s presence and dwell with those who live in the celestial kingdom.

- What principle can we learn from Joshua’s experience about how we can be worthy to enter the Lord’s presence? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **If we walk in the Lord’s ways and keep our covenants, then we will be worthy to enter His presence.**)
- How can we walk in the Lord’s ways?
- When have you seen someone walk in the Lord’s ways? What stood out to you about that person’s example?

**Ask questions and make invitations that encourage application**

The aim of gospel teaching is to help students apply doctrines and principles from the scriptures, become converted, and receive the blessings promised to those who are faithful and obedient. Questions and invitations that encourage application can play a vital role in helping students see how to apply doctrines and principles to their current situations and to the future.

Invite students to imagine how they would feel if they were unprepared to be in the Lord’s presence. Then ask them to imagine that they had prepared themselves to be in His presence. To help students consider what they need to do now to prepare for being in the Lord’s presence, invite them to complete the following statement in their class notebooks or scripture study journals: *I will walk in the Lord’s ways and be worthy to enter His presence by . . .*

Summarize Zechariah 3:8–4:14 by explaining that Zechariah had a vision of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, who is referred to as “the BRANCH” in these verses and in Zechariah 6:12. In addition, the Lord revealed to Zechariah that Zerubbabel, the appointed governor of Judah, was to lay the foundation of and finish building the temple.

**Zechariah 5–6**

*Zechariah sees visions of the last days and crowns Joshua as the high priest*

Summarize Zechariah 5–6 by explaining that an angel showed Zechariah visions of how wickedness would be removed from the earth as part of the Second Coming.

**Zechariah 7–8**

*The Lord promises the Jews that they will feel joy when Jerusalem is restored*

Provide students with a copy of the following chart. Invite them to make a check mark in the column that best represents their motivation for each form of worship.

	Meet others’ expectations	Feel good about myself	Draw closer to Heavenly Father
I go to church in order to . . .			
I pray in order to . . .			
I fast in order to . . .			
I go to the temple in order to . . .			
I serve others in order to . . .			

Explain that for 70 years the Jews had mourned the loss of their land and the destruction of the temple. As part of their mourning, they participated in ritual fasts. As recorded in Zechariah 7:1–3, the people asked Zechariah if they needed to continue fasting even though they had returned to Jerusalem and were rebuilding the temple.

Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Zechariah 7:4–7. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the Lord’s response to the people.

- What did the Lord ask those who participated in these ritual fasts?
- What do the Lord’s questions in verses 5–6 indicate about the thoughts and desires of the people?

Help students understand that the way the Jews had been fasting illustrated their misunderstanding of the proper focus of worship.

- What can we learn from these verses about the proper focus of worship? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **When we worship, we should focus on the Lord and not on ourselves.**)
- What are some improper or selfish reasons why someone might choose to worship?
- Why is it important that our worship is focused on the Lord and our relationship with Him?
- What have you done to make your worship of the Lord more focused on Him?

Refer students to the self-evaluation chart they completed, and invite them to consider how they will focus their worship more on the Lord.

Summarize Zechariah 7:8–10 by explaining that the Lord reminded the Jews of commandments He had given them through past prophets whom they had refused to follow.

Invite a student to read Zechariah 7:11–13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for why the people were not receiving answers to their prayers.

- What attitudes or behaviors prevented the people from receiving answers from the Lord?
- What principle can we learn from these verses about what we need to do to receive answers to our prayers? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following principle: **As we soften our hearts to the word of the Lord, we can receive answers to our prayers.**)
- What does it mean to soften our hearts?
- Why is a soft heart essential to receiving answers to our prayers?

Summarize Zechariah 7:14–8:2 by explaining that the Lord described the consequences that the people experienced because they turned away from Him.

Explain that Zechariah 8 records the Lord’s description of a joyful day when the relationship between Him and the people of Judah would be restored. Invite several students to take turns reading aloud from Zechariah 8:3–8. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He would do for His people. (You may want to explain that the Joseph Smith Translation changed the word “save” in verse 7 to “gather” [in Zechariah 8:7, footnote a].) Remind the class that when Zechariah gave this prophecy, Jerusalem was largely desolate, its temple lay in ruins, and many of the Lord’s people were still scattered.

- Why do you think the image of streets being filled with elderly people and children playing would have been “marvellous in the eyes of the” Jews in Zechariah’s day (verse 6)?
- According to verses 7–8, how will the Lord demonstrate mercy for His people?
- What truth can we learn from these verses? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **The Lord in His mercy will save and gather His people.**)

To help students see additional evidence of the Lord’s mercy in gathering His people, ask several students to take turns reading aloud from Zechariah 8:11–15. Ask the class to follow along, looking for other blessings the Lord said He would give His people as part of gathering them.

- What other blessings did the Lord promise His people?
- How is gathering His people a manifestation of the Savior’s mercy?

Invite students to ponder a time when they recognized the Lord’s hand mercifully bringing them closer to Him. Ask a few students to share their experiences if they are not too personal. Consider sharing how you have been blessed by God’s mercy.

Summarize Zechariah 8:16–23 by explaining that the Lord encouraged His people to be honest and virtuous and to rejoice in their hopeful future. He also foretold of a future day when many people and nations would seek the Lord in Jerusalem.

# Zechariah 9–14

## Introduction

Zechariah saw in a vision the first coming of the Messiah to earth and His people’s rejection of Him. In a subsequent vision, Zechariah saw the Messiah’s Second Coming, when

He will return to the earth and deliver His people from the nations gathered to fight them. At this time, the Jews will recognize Jesus Christ as the Messiah and worship Him.

### Use pictures

Pictures can help students visualize the people, places, events, objects, and symbols in the scriptures. But rather than relying solely on an artist’s interpretation of a story, use the account in the scriptures as the main source for class discussions about the setting and details of an event.



## Suggestions for Teaching

### Zechariah 9–11

*Zechariah prophesies that the Messiah will come to Jerusalem and be rejected by His people*

*Note:* Before class, place a small picture of Jesus Christ somewhere in the classroom where it is visible but not obvious. You will discuss this picture later in the lesson.

Display the picture *Triumphal Entry* (*Gospel Art Book* [2009], no. 50; see also [LDS.org](http://LDS.org)), and invite students to notice the emotions that are depicted on the people’s faces.

- Why do you think the people in this picture are rejoicing?

Explain that the picture shows an event called the triumphal entry. When Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem, He fulfilled a prophecy given by the prophet Zechariah hundreds of years earlier.

Explain that Zechariah 9:9 discusses Jesus Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem and is one of the most widely quoted prophecies about the Messiah in the Bible. Provide context for this passage by explaining that as recorded in Zechariah 9:1–8, Zechariah prophesied of a time when Jerusalem would be threatened and the people would seek the Lord’s help to be delivered from opposing nations.

Invite a student to read Zechariah 9:9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the reason the people of Jerusalem rejoiced during Jesus Christ’s triumphal entry.

- Why did the people of Jerusalem rejoice?

Explain that in New Testament times, “many Jews were looking only for a deliverer from the Roman power and for a greater national prosperity.” When Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem, many Jews cheered for Him as *a* messiah, or a political deliverer, not necessarily *the* Messiah, who would bring them eternal salvation. The title *Messiah* means “the anointed Prophet, Priest, King, and Deliverer whose coming the Jews were eagerly expecting” (*Guide to the Scriptures*, “Messiah”; [scriptures.lds.org](http://scriptures.lds.org)).

- What might have been significant about Jesus Christ entering Jerusalem riding a donkey rather than a large, majestic horse?

Explain that although some people believed that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, many were disappointed that He did not overthrow the Roman rule. Some of the Jewish leaders envied Him and rejected Him as both *a* messiah and *the* Messiah, so they plotted His death. They persuaded the multitude at Pilate’s court to demand that Barabbas be released instead of Jesus Christ, which resulted in the Savior’s Crucifixion (see Matthew 27:17–20).

To prepare students to study Zechariah 9:10–12, ask them to raise their hands if they have noticed the other picture of the Savior you placed in the room. Invite students who have not yet noticed it to see whether they can find it. (If some students have trouble finding it, ask a student to point it out to the rest of the class.)

- Why did some of you not notice the picture?
- Why might some people today not find Jesus Christ and His gospel?

Invite a student to read Zechariah 9:10–12 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord would do for individuals described in these verses as “the heathen” (people who do not believe in Him) and “prisoners.”

As you ask the following questions, invite students to consider the extent of Jesus Christ’s power to save. (Remember that Jesus Christ can save and free not only those who are bound by sin in mortality but also those who are bound in the spirit world.)

- According to verse 10, what will the Lord do for “the heathen”?
- In what ways might Jesus Christ speak or bring peace to “the heathen”?
- According to verse 11, what makes it possible for the prisoners to be freed?

To help students better understand verse 11, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“By the blood of thy covenant’—that is, because of the gospel covenant, which is efficacious because of the shedding of the blood of Christ—‘I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.’ (Zech. 9:11–16.) ‘Wherein is no water’—how aptly and succinctly this crystallizes the thought that the saving water, which is baptism, is an earthly ordinance and cannot be performed by spirit beings while they dwell in the spirit world” (*The Promised*

*Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], 241).

- What are the prisoners delivered from?
- What makes their deliverance possible?
- In your own words, how would you summarize the truth we learn from Zechariah 9:11? (Students may use different words, but they should identify the following truth: **Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, salvation is available to all mankind, and those who have died without having been baptized can be freed from spirit prison.**)

To help the class understand how Jesus Christ made it possible for those who die without the gospel to be delivered from spirit prison, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“While yet in life, Jesus prophesied that He would also preach to the dead. Peter tells us this happened in the interval between the Savior’s Crucifixion and Resurrection (see 1 Peter 3:18–19). President Joseph F. Smith . . . witnessed in vision that the Savior visited the spirit world and ‘from among the righteous [spirits], he organized his forces and appointed messengers, clothed with power and authority, and commissioned them to go forth and carry the light of the gospel to them that were in darkness. . . .

“These were taught faith in God, repentance from sin, vicarious baptism for the remission of sins, [and] the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands’ (D&C 138:30, 33). . . .

“. . . Jesus Christ is the divine Redeemer of all mankind. His grace and promises reach even those who in life do not find Him. Because of Him, the prisoners shall indeed go free” (“Why Do We Baptize for the Dead?” *New Era*, Mar. 2009, 2, 5).

- How can we help our deceased ancestors receive the ordinances necessary for salvation?
- What feelings have you had as you have performed family history and temple work?

Summarize Zechariah 10–11 by explaining that Zechariah prophesied that the Lord’s people would be scattered and then gathered in the last days. Zechariah also prophesied that the Messiah would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (see Zechariah 11:12). This prophecy refers to the Apostle Judas’s betrayal of Jesus for 30 pieces of silver during the final week of the Savior’s mortal life (see Matthew 26:14–16). Zechariah also saw that as part of this betrayal, Jesus Christ would be smitten and His followers would be scattered (see Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:31).

## Zechariah 12–14

*Jesus Christ will deliver Jerusalem from the nations that will gather to fight against it*

Explain that after prophesying about the Lord’s mortal ministry, Zechariah prophesied about the Second Coming.

- In what ways will the Second Coming of Jesus Christ be different from His mortal ministry?

Explain that Zechariah 12 records Zechariah’s prophecy of a great battle (the battle of Armageddon) that will precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Ask a student to read Zechariah 12:2–3 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for whom all nations would gather against in this battle.

- Whom would all nations gather against in this battle?

Ask a student to read Zechariah 12:8–9 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord will do for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

- What will the Lord do for the people of Jerusalem?

Summarize Zechariah 12:10–14:5 by explaining that Zechariah described other significant events that are part of this battle. To help students understand this sequence of events, invite a student to read Zechariah 14:2 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen to the inhabitants of Jerusalem before they are delivered. Invite students to report what they find.

Invite another student to read Zechariah 14:3–5 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what will happen that will allow the people of Jerusalem to be delivered.

- What will Jesus Christ do to deliver His people?

Invite a student to read Zechariah 13:6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews will notice about Jesus Christ's appearance.

- What will the Jews notice about Jesus Christ's appearance when He comes to deliver them from their enemies?

Explain that modern revelation confirms and clarifies this prophecy. Invite a student to read Doctrine and Covenants 45:51–52 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews will realize about Jesus Christ.

- What will the Jews realize at the Second Coming? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **at the Second Coming, the Jews at Jerusalem will recognize Jesus Christ as the Messiah.**)
- What do you think this moment will be like for the Jews?

Invite a student to read Zechariah 12:10 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Jews will do when they realize that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Explain that the word *pierced* refers to the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (see John 19:37).

- What will the Jews do when they realize that Jesus Christ is the Messiah?
- Why do you think the Jews will mourn?

Divide students into pairs. Ask them to read Zechariah 14:6–9 together, looking for events that will take place as part of the Lord's Second Coming. Invite students to report what they find.

- What do we learn about Jesus Christ in verse 9? (Students should identify the following doctrine: **Jesus Christ will be King over all the earth.**)

Summarize Zechariah 14:10–19 by explaining that the battle will end, many of those who have fought against Jerusalem will be destroyed, and those who remain will "worship the King, the Lord of hosts" (verse 16) or suffer droughts and plagues.

- How can we benefit now from knowing that one day Jesus Christ will reign over all the earth?

Testify that Jesus Christ will one day return to the earth and all people will honor Him as their King.

Invite students to ponder what they can do to prepare for the time when the Savior comes again. Encourage them to follow any promptings they receive from the Holy Ghost.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Zechariah 9:10. "He shall speak peace unto the heathen"

In this verse, "the heathen" refers to those who were not numbered among the covenant people of the Lord. The term Gentiles is often used to refer to this group of

people. This prophecy was partially fulfilled when the Lord revealed to the Apostle Peter through a vision that the time had come to "speak peace unto the heathen" or begin preaching to people who were not descendants of Israel (see Acts 10).

## INTRODUCTION TO

# The Book of Malachi

### Why study this book?

A century after the Jews returned to their homeland, many of them had become complacent and less devoted to the Lord. Through the prophet Malachi, the Lord addressed the Jews' declining commitment to God. The Lord instructed His covenant people to return to Him by bringing Him their tithes and offerings with greater faithfulness, and He promised to bless and protect those who did so (see Malachi 3:7–12). By studying the words of Malachi, students can gain a greater testimony of the law of tithing and feel an increased desire to obey it.

Additionally, students can learn that they are fulfilling Malachi's prophecy that the Lord will turn the hearts of children to their fathers, or ancestors (see Malachi 4:6), as they participate in family history and temple work. Studying this prophecy can help inspire students to participate in the work of salvation for their departed ancestors.

### Who wrote this book?

The book states that it contains "the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi" (Malachi 1:1). In Hebrew the name *Malachi* means "my messenger" (Bible Dictionary, "Malachi"). This name fittingly reflects the important messages the prophet delivered to the people of his day, many of which also apply to the Lord's people in the last days.

We know very little about the life of Malachi, aside from what we learn from his writings. His origin and background are unknown, but he evidently lived in the fifth century B.C. (see Bible Dictionary, "Malachi") and would have been a contemporary of Ezra and Nehemiah.

### When and where was it written?

Although we do not know when or where Malachi's prophecies were recorded, Malachi delivered them in approximately 430 B.C., most likely in Jerusalem (see Bible Dictionary, "Malachi"). If Malachi recorded his own prophecies, he may have done so around this time.

### What are some distinctive features of this book?

The book of Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. In addition, Malachi is one of the most frequently quoted Old Testament prophets. He was quoted by New Testament writers, often with specific reference to the mission of John the Baptist (see Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 1:17; 7:27), by Jesus Christ to the Nephites (see 3 Nephi 24–25), and by Moroni to the Prophet Joseph Smith (see D&C 2:1–3; Joseph Smith—History 1:36–39).

Malachi's prophecy that Elijah would "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" (Malachi 4:6) can be found in all four standard works (see 3 Nephi 25:6; D&C 2:2–3; 128:17; Joseph Smith—History 1:39). When Elijah appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, he alluded to this prophecy: "Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come" (D&C 110:14). This prophecy has great significance for Latter-day Saints because it teaches the doctrines of the sealing power, eternal families, and the work we do for the dead in temples (see D&C 138:46–48).

The book of Malachi was written in a distinctive literary form that features "dialogue" between the Lord and the people of Israel (for example, see Malachi 1:2–5). Some of these instances of dialogue include questions posed by the Lord or by various people, as well as statements from those who oppose the Lord.

### Outline

**Malachi 1** Through Malachi, the Lord rebukes the Jews for their disobedience in the practices and sacrifices at the temple. The Jewish leaders were offering "polluted bread" (Malachi 1:7) and improper sacrifices using blemished, injured, and diseased animals.

**Malachi 2** The Lord chastises the priests for not keeping their covenant with the Lord and for being a poor example to the people. He uses the breaching of a marriage covenant to illustrate their failure to keep their covenant with Him.

**Malachi 3–4** The Lord will send a forerunner to prepare the way before Him, and He will come suddenly to His temple. He challenges the people to live the law of tithing and promises to send Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

# Malachi 1–2

## Introduction

Through the prophet Malachi, the Lord rebuked the Israelites for offering lame, blind, or maimed animals for their sacrifices. The Lord also reproved the priests

for setting a poor example that caused many people to stumble.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### *Prayerfully seek the Lord's help as you teach*

Teaching the gospel is the Lord's work, and He wants you to succeed in that task. When you call on Him daily, you will feel and recognize His help (see D&C 100:5–8).

### Malachi 1

#### *The Lord rebukes the Israelites for offering polluted sacrifices*

Before class, gift wrap something old, worn out, or broken. To begin the lesson, ask the class:

- What is the nicest gift you have ever given to someone else? What did you hope to communicate to that person when you gave him or her the gift?

Invite a student to come to the front of the class and open the gift. Then ask the student:

- How might you feel if you gave someone a very nice gift and you received this in return? Why might you feel that way?

Ask the student to return to his or her seat. Explain that Malachi 1 records what the Lord said to the Israelites about the gifts or offerings they presented to Him. Invite students as they study this chapter to think about the quality of the gifts or offerings they present to the Lord.

Introduce the book of Malachi by explaining that Malachi ministered among the children of Israel at a time when many of them were in apostasy—meaning they had turned away from the Lord. (You may want to invite students to locate “Malachi” on the chart titled “The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah at a Glance” [see lesson 102].) Point out that Malachi was the last prophet we know of to minister in the land of Israel until John the Baptist began to preach more than 400 years later.

Invite a student to read Malachi 1:1–2 aloud. Invite the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said He felt for His people.

- What did the Lord say He felt for His people, who were the descendants of Jacob?

Summarize Malachi 1:3–5 by explaining that the Lord pointed out that the children of Israel had been blessed above other nations.

Invite a student to read Malachi 1:6–7 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Israelites had treated the Lord.

- How had the Israelites treated the Lord? (They had dishonored Him and despised His name.)
- According to verse 7, what had the priests done to dishonor the Lord?

Invite a student to read Malachi 1:8, 13 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the condition of the animals the Israelites were presenting as sacrifices to the Lord. As the verses are read, invite a student to draw four lambs on the board representing the animals described in Malachi 1:8, 13. The pictures can be simple and should include a blind lamb, a lame lamb (it could be drawn with only three legs), a sick lamb, and a torn or wounded lamb.

To help the students understand how the Israelites dishonored the Lord through their sacrifices, you may want to suggest that they write Leviticus 22:21–23 in the margin of their scriptures near Malachi 1:8. Invite a student to read Leviticus 22:21–23 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the kinds of animal sacrifices the Lord said He would not accept from the Israelites.

- What kinds of animal sacrifices did the Lord say He would not accept?
- Why do you think the Lord only accepted animal sacrifices that were perfect and without blemish? (If needed, remind students that the animals that were sacrificed represented Jesus Christ, who was perfect [see Moses 5:6–7; Exodus 12:5; 1 Peter 1:19].)

Invite a student to read Malachi 1:14 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the Lord said to those who had healthy animals they could have sacrificed but who offered sick and wounded animals instead.

- What did the Lord say to those who offered sick and wounded animals instead of healthy animals?
- As you think about the Israelites who tried to deceive the Lord, what principle can you learn about what we can do to honor and please the Lord? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **We honor and please the Lord when we give our best to Him.** Consider writing this principle on the board.)
- What are some opportunities a young person may have to give his or her best to the Lord? (Write students' answers on the board under the principle. Some examples might include preparing a sacrament meeting talk, engaging in personal scripture study, paying tithing, fulfilling callings, pursuing an education, fasting, giving missionary service, and participating in seminary.)

Explain that sometimes giving our best to the Lord includes the amount of effort, willingness, or quality we put into something. Refer to the list of opportunities students may have to give their best to the Lord.

- How might a person offer less than their best to the Lord in these activities? On the other hand, how might a person offer their best?

Invite students to write their answers to the following questions in their class notebooks or study journals:

- When have you felt that you gave your best to the Lord?
- How did you feel knowing you gave your best to Him?

After sufficient time, invite a few students to share their experiences. Then encourage students to write a goal regarding how they will give their best to the Lord.

## **Malachi 2:1–17**

### *The priests are reprovved for not keeping their covenants and for setting a poor example*

Invite students to think of someone they know who has gone against what he or she knows to be right.

- What are some problems that may result from choosing to go against what we know to be right?

Invite students as they study Malachi 2 to look for what can happen if we choose to go against what we know to be right.

Summarize Malachi 2:1–3 by explaining that Malachi addressed the priests of his day, who were responsible for providing righteous examples to the people. He warned that if they did not hear and apply the Lord's direction, they would bring curses instead of blessings upon themselves.

Divide students into pairs and invite them to study Malachi 2:4–7, looking for what the Lord said He expected of the priests. You may want to suggest that students mark what they find. (You may want to remind students that the priests in ancient Israel came from the tribe of Levi.)

- What did the Lord expect of the priests?

You may want to remind students that to fear the Lord means to honor and respect Him. The phrase "the law of truth is in his mouth" in verse 6 means that the Lord expected the priests to be honest.

- What types of behavior do you think are expected of someone who is a "messenger of the Lord"? (Malachi 2:7).
- What might it mean that "iniquity was not found in his lips"? (Malachi 2:6).
- In what ways can those who are called to represent the Lord "turn many away from their iniquity"? (Malachi 2:6).

Explain that the priests in Malachi's day failed to fulfill their responsibilities. Invite a student to read Malachi 2:8–9 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for the consequences of the priests' poor examples to the people. (You may want to explain that the words *contemptible* and *base* in verse 9 indicate that the priests were disgraceful and not respected by the people.)

- According to verse 8, how did the priests' poor examples influence the people?
- Based on what the Lord taught the priests of Malachi's day, what can we learn about how our actions can influence others? (Although students may use different words, be sure they identify a principle similar to the following: **If we do not follow the Lord's ways, then we may cause others to stumble.**)
- What are some examples of how we can cause others to stumble if we do not follow the Lord's ways?

Point out that we can also have a positive influence on others if we choose to follow the Lord's ways.

Invite students to ponder the effects of their influence on others. Ask them to think of some ways they might better follow the Lord's ways so they can influence others positively rather than negatively. Ask students to strive to do those things and to set a righteous example throughout the day.

Summarize Malachi 2:11–17 by explaining that the Lord chastised the Israelites for breaking their covenant with Him, marrying unbelievers, dealing treacherously with their wives, and claiming that those who do evil are "good in the sight of the Lord" (Malachi 2:17).

You may want to conclude by reviewing the principles students identified in this lesson and sharing your testimony of their truthfulness. Encourage students to give the Lord their best and to set a righteous example for others.

### Scripture Mastery Review

Consider giving students a final scripture mastery test. You might encourage them to study at home or give them time to study immediately before the test. The following are examples of types of tests you could use (you may adapt these ideas to your situation):

**Reference test:** Give students clues about each scripture mastery passage, such as key words, a doctrine or principle, or a summary of the passage's meaning. Invite students to write the corresponding scripture mastery references on a piece of paper.

**Doctrine test:** List the Basic Doctrines and scripture mastery passages on the board. Ask students to write the Basic Doctrines on a piece of paper and then write corresponding scripture mastery references under each doctrine.

**Memorization test:** Invite students to use memorized words and principles from the scripture mastery passages to explain some of the Basic Doctrines. Ask them to write their explanations on a piece of paper or present them to the class.

Remember to commend your students for their efforts to master key scripture passages and basic doctrines. Testify of the spiritual power and testimony we can receive as we master scripture passages and doctrines.

## Commentary and Background Information

### Malachi 1:3. "I hated Esau"

"The word *hated* in Hebrew means to be loved less than someone else, not to be disliked with bitter hostility (compare Genesis 29:31). Esau was the brother of Jacob, who became Israel, father of the twelve tribes. Students of the scriptures know that the Lord hates the sin rather than the sinner, but when people array themselves against the Lord as Esau and his descendants, the Edomites, had done

for centuries, the Lord withdraws His blessings. In this sense, Jacob was loved and Esau hated. . . .

"Jacob stood as a symbol for Israel or the chosen people while Esau (Edom) symbolized the world. This gives the Lord's statement much broader meaning" (*Old Testament Student Manual: 1 Kings–Malachi*, 3rd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 351).

## LESSON 159

# Malachi 3

### Introduction

Malachi prophesied concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The Lord commanded the Jews to return to Him by paying their tithes and offerings. He assured

the righteous that their efforts to serve Him would be rewarded and that when He returned to earth, they would be His.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Malachi 3:1–6

#### *Malachi prophesies concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ*

Ask students if they have ever been in a situation where they needed to be prepared for something important but were not. Invite a few students to describe how that feels.

Explain that Malachi 3 teaches of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and some ways we can prepare ourselves for it. Invite a student to read Malachi 1:1–2 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for phrases that describe the Second Coming.

- What title refers to Jesus Christ in verse 1?
- How would you summarize the questions asked in verse 2? (Malachi is asking who will be ready and worthy for the Second Coming.)

Write the phrases *refiner's fire* and *fullers' soap* on the board. Explain that a refiner uses fire to heat a metal like silver or gold until it reaches a liquid state. The heating process allows dross, or impurities, to rise to the surface of the liquid metal, where the refiner can remove them, thus purging the metal of its impurities. A fuller is someone who cleans or whitens fabrics using soap.

- According to verse 2, why do we need to be ready for the Second Coming?
- What are some ways Jesus Christ is like a refiner's fire or fullers' soap?

To help students understand this imagery, read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"The fierce flames, the fervent heat, the burning fires of the Second Coming that destroy the wicked shall also cleanse the righteous. . . . Evil and sin and dross will be burned out of their souls because they qualify to abide the day" (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [1982], 543–44).

Invite students to read Malachi 3:1 again silently, looking for what the Lord said He would do to prepare people for His Second Coming.

- Who do you think is the "messenger" that would prepare the way for the Second Coming?

To help students understand who this messenger is, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

"John the Baptist did this very thing in the meridian of time, but it remained for Joseph Smith to perform the glorious work in our day. He is the latter-day messenger who was sent to restore the gospel, which itself prepares a people for the return of the Lord" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 629).

- Who prepared the way for the Messiah's first coming? (John the Baptist.)
- Who was sent to prepare the way for the Lord's Second Coming? How does Malachi 3:1 help us understand the importance of the ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith? (Following students' responses, write the following truth on the board: **The Lord sent Joseph Smith to prepare the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**)
- What did Joseph Smith do to prepare us for the return of Jesus Christ? (Joseph Smith restored and taught the gospel of Jesus Christ. By living the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can be refined, purified, and prepared for the Second Coming.)

### *Adapt the lesson to the needs of your students*

You may want to adapt the teaching suggestions according to the needs and circumstances of your class. For example, if some students are less familiar with the principles of tithing and fast offerings, you could invite them to study the topic of tithing in pairs, using their scriptures or the book *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004). You might also display a Tithing and Other Offerings form and teach them how to fill it out.

Invite students to ponder how well they are living the gospel of Jesus Christ and preparing for the Second Coming.

Summarize Malachi 3:3–6 by explaining that these verses describe how the Savior will, like a refiner’s fire, purify the sons of Levi and destroy the wicked at His Second Coming. The “sons of Levi” were priesthood holders in ancient Israel. Today the phrase can refer to modern-day priesthood holders (see D&C 84:33–34).

### Malachi 3:7–12

#### *The Israelites are admonished to return to the Lord by paying their tithes and offerings*

Invite students to imagine that they have a close friend or family member who some time ago stopped keeping the commandments and left the Church. However, this person has recently expressed a desire to return to Church but does not feel worthy to do so.

- What would you do to try to help this person?

Explain that Malachi 3:7–12 records what the Lord said to the Israelites who had broken their covenants and turned from Him. Invite students to read Malachi 3:7 silently, looking for the Lord’s counsel to these people.

- What principle did the Lord teach those who were not keeping their covenants? (Students may use different words, but make sure they identify the following principle: **If we will return to the Lord, He will return to us.**)

- What do you think it means to return to the Lord?

- What does this principle teach you about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ?

Invite students to look in verse 7 for a question that the people asked the Lord. Ask students to report what they find.

Explain that in Malachi 3:8–12 we learn of one way the Lord indicated the people could return to Him.

Invite a student to read Malachi 3:8–9 aloud. Ask students to follow along looking for a question the Lord asked the people.

- What question did the Lord ask the Israelites?
- How had the Israelites robbed the Lord?

Write the words *tithes* and *offerings* on the board. Explain that the way tithes and offerings have been paid has changed over the years. For example, Abraham gave a tenth of all he possessed to the high priest Melchizedek, and his offerings were animals or crops that were given as sacrifices to Jehovah. Today we pay one-tenth of our income as tithing and contribute the cost of two meals as fast offerings (see *True to the Faith* [2004], 67–68, 181).

Remind students that according to Malachi 1–2, the people had been offering animals that were lame, blind, or otherwise unsuitable as sacrifices to God.

- What did these feeble sacrifices reveal about the Israelites’ feelings toward God? How could this also be considered robbing God?

Explain that Malachi 3:10–12 records that the Lord invited the Israelites to return to Him by paying tithing. Invite a student to read these verses aloud, and ask the class to follow along and look for the blessings the Lord promised to give the Israelites if they would accept His invitation.

- What do you think the phrase “prove me now herewith” means?
- What does the Lord promise those who faithfully pay their tithes and offerings?

You may want to suggest that students mark the phrases that teach about these promises. You might ask questions such as the following to help them analyze these promises:

- What does it mean that the Lord will open the windows of heaven?
- Anciently, the “devourer” was often something like locusts that destroyed a person’s crops. How might the promise to “rebuke the devourer” be fulfilled in our day?
- What principle can we learn from these verses? (Although students may use different words, they should identify a principle similar to the following: **If we return to God and pay our tithes and offerings, then the Lord will pour out blessings upon us.**)

#### Malachi 3:8–10

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.

To help students understand how the Lord blesses those who keep the law of tithing, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Ask students to listen for the types of blessings Elder Bednar says may come from keeping the law of tithing.



“Often as we teach and testify about the law of tithing, we emphasize the immediate, dramatic, and readily recognizable temporal blessings that we receive. And surely such blessings do occur. Yet some of the diverse blessings we obtain as we are obedient to this commandment are significant but subtle. . . .

“Sometimes we may ask God for success, and He gives us physical and mental stamina. We might plead for prosperity, and we receive enlarged perspective and increased patience, or we petition for growth and are blessed with the gift of grace. He may bestow upon us conviction and confidence as we strive to achieve worthy goals. And when we plead for relief from physical, mental, and spiritual difficulties, He may increase our resolve and resilience.

“I promise that as you and I observe and keep the law of tithing, indeed the windows of heaven will be opened and spiritual and temporal blessings will be poured out such that there shall not be room enough to receive them (see Malachi 3:10)” (“The Windows of Heaven,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 17–18).

- What are some of the significant but subtle blessings Elder Bednar mentioned that come from keeping the law of tithing?
- In what ways have you or your family been blessed for faithfully paying tithing?

Invite students to ponder how they are doing at paying tithes and offerings. Invite them to qualify for the windows of heaven to be opened by deciding to faithfully keep or continue keeping the law of tithing.

### **Malachi 3:13–18**

#### *The Lord explains why it is not vain to serve Him*

Summarize Malachi 3:13–18 by explaining that in these verses the Lord addressed two groups of people. The first were those in Israel who questioned the need to keep the ordinances of the gospel. They complained that the proud and the wicked seemed to prosper despite their unrighteousness.

Invite a student to read verses 16–17 aloud. Ask students to follow along, looking for how the second group of people felt toward God. Invite students to report what they find.

Point out that the Lord then indicated that a “book of remembrance” would be kept, wherein the names of these people would be recorded (see also D&C 85:7–9; 128:6–7; Moses 6:5–8).

- According to verse 17, how does the Lord refer to those whose names are written in this book of remembrance?
- How can these verses help us understand why it is important to be faithful even when it doesn’t appear to be worth it?

Conclude by inviting students to share their testimonies of the principles found in Malachi 3.

### **Scripture Mastery—Malachi 3:8–10**

To help students master this passage, invite them to read the verses silently several times and plan how they would explain the law of tithing to someone who has never heard it before. After sufficient time, assign students in pairs and invite them to explain the law of tithing to their partner. Encourage them to use analogies and personal experiences to explain this commandment and how keeping it shows their love for God.

# Malachi 4

## Introduction

Malachi foresaw the fate of the wicked and the righteous at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and

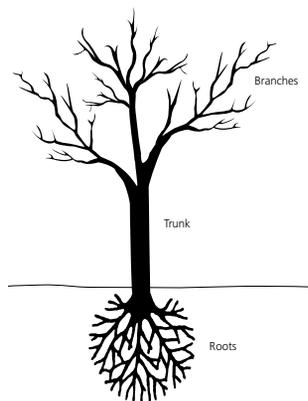
prophesied that the Lord would send the prophet Elijah before the Second Coming to do a great work.

## Suggestions for Teaching

### Malachi 4:1–4

#### *Malachi prophesies of the fate of the wicked and the righteous at the Second Coming*

Draw or display a picture of a tree on the board. Point out and label the three essential parts of a tree: branches, trunk, and roots.



- What would happen to a tree if we eliminated one of its vital parts?

Above the picture of the tree, write the word *Family*. Invite students to think of this tree as a family tree.

- If the trunk of the tree represents you, what might the branches and roots represent?

As students study Malachi 4, invite them to look for how their actions can affect their family tree in the eternities.

Invite a student to read Malachi 4:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what those who are proud and wicked will experience at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

- What will the proud and wicked experience at the Second Coming of the Lord?

Explain that *stubble* refers to the short stalks that remain after grain has been harvested from a field. Farmers often burn the stubble in preparation to plow and plant the field again. Malachi’s reference to the wicked being like stubble in the day of burning means that the wicked will be destroyed as part of the Lord’s cleansing of the earth at His Second Coming.

- Based on our discussion about the family tree, what do you think the phrase “it shall leave them neither root nor branch” means for the wicked?

Erase or cover up the roots and branches from the picture on the board to illustrate that the tree is incomplete and limited without these vital parts.

Invite a student to read Malachi 4:2–3 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what the righteous will experience at the Lord’s Second Coming. Explain that the “Sun of righteousness” (verse 2) is Jesus Christ.

- What will the righteous experience when the Lord comes again? (They will receive healing, “grow up as calves of the stall,” and “tread down the wicked.” You may want to list students’ answers on the board.)

Invite students to discuss in pairs what they think these phrases mean. After sufficient time, ask them to report what they learned. As needed, explain that the phrase “calves of the stall” refers to calves that are safe, well fed, and cared for. The Lord promises that He will similarly protect and care for those who fear His name. The phrase “healing in his wings” refers to the healing and protective power of the Lord’s Atonement. The phrase “ye shall tread down the wicked” means that the Lord will help the righteous overcome evil by destroying the wicked at His Second Coming.

- What principle can we learn from these verses about what the Lord provides through His Atonement to those who fear or reverence Him? (Students may use different words, but make sure it is clear that **if we reverence and obey the Lord, we will experience the power and protection of the Atonement.** Using students’ words, write this principle on the board.)
- What are specific ways we can reverence and obey the Lord?

- Why does reverencing and obeying the Lord enable us to experience His power and protection?
- When have you experienced the Lord’s power or protection?

Summarize Malachi 4:4 by explaining that the Lord asked His people to remember the statutes (laws or commandments) and judgments (ordinances) that He gave to Moses.

### Malachi 4:5–6

#### *Malachi prophesies that Elijah will do a great work before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ*

Refer students to the picture of the tree trunk on the board. To help them personalize the tragedy of having no roots or branches on their family trees, ask students to consider their own parents, grandparents, and ancestors, as well as their future spouse and children. Invite them to imagine what it might be like if they were separated from their family members in the eternities.

Invite a student to read Malachi 4:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior said He would help the families of the world before His Second Coming.

- Whom did the Savior say He would send before the Second Coming?
- Who is Elijah? (You may want to show students the picture Elijah Appearing in the Kirtland Temple [*Gospel Art Book* (2009), no. 95; see also LDS.org]. Remind students that Elijah is a prophet who performed many mighty miracles [see 1 Kings 17–18; 2 Kings 1–2].)
- What do you think the phrase “turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” (Malachi 4:6) means?

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Ask the class to listen for what the word *turn* means in this verse. You might suggest that students write Joseph Smith’s statement in the margin next to Malachi 4:5–6.

“Now, the word *turn* here should be translated *bind*, or seal” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 472).

- What is the purpose of the coming of Elijah?
- Why do you think binding or sealing families together is important to Heavenly Father?
- How has the prophecy about Elijah in Malachi 4:5–6 been fulfilled?

Explain to students that the resurrected prophet Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836, in the Kirtland Temple and conferred upon them the sealing keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood (see D&C 110:13–16). These keys opened the doors to family history and temple work for the living and for the dead.

Invite a student to read aloud the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency. Ask the class to listen for the role we can play in fulfilling Elijah’s mission.



“Many of your ancestors died never having the chance to accept the gospel and to receive the blessings and promises you have received. . . .

“ . . . There are more temples across the earth than there have ever been. More people in all the world have felt the Spirit of Elijah move them to record the identities and facts of their ancestors’ lives. There are more resources to search out your ancestors than there have ever been in the history of the world. The

Lord has poured out knowledge about how to make that information available worldwide through technology that a few years ago would have seemed a miracle. . . .

“ . . . When you were baptized, your ancestors looked down on you with hope. Perhaps after centuries, they rejoiced to see one of their descendants make a covenant to find them and to offer them freedom. In your reunion, you will see in their eyes either gratitude or terrible disappointment. Their hearts are bound to you. Their hope is in your hands. You will have more than your own strength as you choose to labor on to find them” (“Hearts Bound Together,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2005, 77, 79–80).

- What is our role in binding families together in the last days?

Write the following incomplete principle on the board: *As we do family history and temple work, . . .*

#### **Malachi 4:5–6**

is a scripture mastery passage. Studying scripture mastery passages will help students increase their understanding of basic doctrines and be prepared to teach them to others. You may want to suggest that students mark scripture mastery passages in a distinctive way so they will be able to locate them easily. Refer to the teaching idea at the end of the lesson to help students with their mastery of this passage.



- What will happen as we fulfill our responsibility to do family history and temple work for our ancestors? (After students respond, add the following to the incomplete principle on the board: *our hearts will be turned to our ancestors . . .*)

Ask students to look again at Malachi 4:6, and point out that unless the hearts of family members turn to each other, the earth will be cursed or “utterly wasted” (D&C 2:3). To help students understand what this means, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“Elijah restored the sealing powers whereby ordinances that were sealed on earth were also sealed in heaven. That would affect all priesthood ordinances but was particularly important for the sealing of families down through the generations of time, for without that link no family ties would exist in the eternities, and indeed the family of man would have been left in eternity with ‘neither root [ancestors] nor branch [descendants]’ [Malachi 4:1].

“Inasmuch as such a sealed, united, celestially saved family of God is the ultimate purpose of mortality, any failure here would have been a curse indeed, rendering the entire plan of salvation ‘utterly wasted’ [D&C 2:3]” (*Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [1997], 297–98).

To complete the principle on the board, add the following: *and we will help prepare the earth for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ*. Invite a student to read the completed principle aloud:

**As we do family history and temple work, our hearts will be turned to our ancestors and we will help prepare the earth for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**

- Why do our hearts turn to our ancestors when we do their family history and temple work?
- How do you think our ancestors feel toward us for doing this work for them?
- What experiences have you had with doing family history and temple work for your own ancestors?

If circumstances allow, you might want to invite a student who is familiar with the website FamilySearch.org to log in to his or her account and display the website in front of the class. You could allow the student a few minutes to demonstrate how to use the website and search for a family name. This demonstration could inspire other students who might be unfamiliar with the site and the process of finding family names online.

Ask students to write on a piece of paper one goal that will help them more fully participate in family history and temple work. Encourage them to take the paper home and place it where it will remind them of their goal.

Because this is the last lesson of the Old Testament course of study, you may want to take several minutes at the end of the lesson to invite students to consider and share their experiences with studying the Old Testament in seminary this year.

### Scripture Mastery—Malachi 4:5–6

Invite students to write the passage in Malachi 4:5–6 on the back of the paper containing their goal for family history or temple work. Encourage them to memorize the passage at home with their family members. Invite students to share with their family members what they learned in class about Malachi 4.

## Supplemental Teaching Ideas

### Malachi 4. Video presentation—“Now I’m Converted”

In addition to inviting students to share experiences they may have had with family history and temple work, you might consider showing the video “Now I’m Converted”

(4:21). This video shows how the youth in one stake were blessed as they responded to Elder Bednar’s invitation to participate in family history work. Invite students to look for why these youth were drawn to their ancestors and how they were converted while doing their temple work. This video is available on LDS.org.

# Home-Study Lesson

## Zechariah 3–14; Malachi 1–4 (Unit 32)

### Preparation Material for the Home-Study Teacher

#### Summary of Daily Home-Study Lessons

The following summary of the doctrines and principles students learned as they studied Zechariah 3–Malachi 4 (unit 32) is not intended to be taught as part of your lesson. The lesson you teach concentrates on only a few of these doctrines and principles. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as you consider the needs of your students.

#### Day 1 (Zechariah 3–8)

In this block of scripture, Zerubbabel was charged with rebuilding the temple. Students learned that as we walk in the ways of the Lord and keep our covenants, we will be worthy to enter God's presence. They also learned that when worshipping the Lord, we should focus on Him instead of on ourselves. Additionally, they studied about the need to keep our hearts softened toward the word of the Lord in order to receive answers to our prayers.

#### Day 2 (Zechariah 9–14)

As they completed their study of Zechariah, students learned that the Atonement of Jesus Christ enables those who die without being baptized to be freed from spirit prison. They also discovered that the Jews will recognize Jesus Christ as the Messiah at the time of the Second Coming and that He will be king over all the earth.

#### Day 3 (Malachi 1–2)

Through Malachi, the Lord taught the Israelites and priests, some of whom were falling into apostasy. The students learned that we honor the Lord when we give Him our best, and if we do not follow the Lord's ways, we can cause others to stumble because of our poor examples.

#### Day 4 (Malachi 3–4)

By studying these chapters, students discovered that the Lord sent Joseph Smith to prepare the world for the Second Coming. They also learned that if we return to God and pay our tithes and offerings, then the Lord will bless us. In addition, they discovered the fate of the wicked and the righteous at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and learned that Elijah would return to the earth before the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

### Introduction

This lesson focuses primarily on Malachi 4, which records Malachi's prophecy that the Lord would send the prophet Elijah before the Second Coming to do a great work.

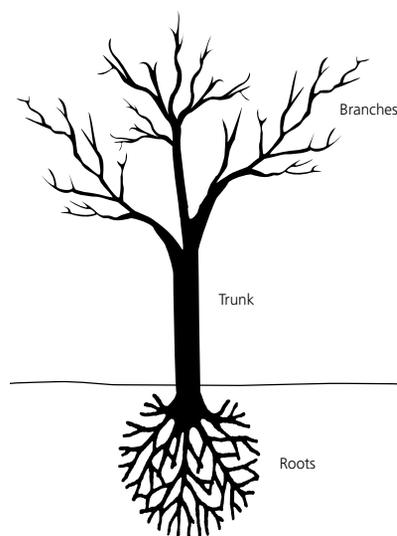
### Suggestions for Teaching

*Note:* As students studied the scripture mastery passage in Malachi 3:8–10, they were invited to write a paragraph in their scripture study journal about how they might explain the law of tithing to someone who had never heard of it before by using the scripture passage, analogies, and any personal experiences they have had. You may want to invite students to share some of their ideas and then recite the scripture mastery passage together as a class.

#### Malachi 4:1–4

*Malachi prophesies of the fate of the wicked and the righteous at the Second Coming*

Draw or display a picture of a tree on the board. Point out and label the three essential parts of a tree: branches, trunk, and roots.



- What would happen to a tree if we removed one of its vital parts? (It would die or stop producing fruit or blossoms.)

Above the picture of the tree, write the word *Family*. Invite students to think of this tree as a family tree.

- If the trunk of the tree represents you, what might the branches and roots represent? (The roots of the tree could symbolize their ancestors, and the branches could represent their future posterity.)

As students study Malachi 4, invite them to look for how their actions can affect their family tree in the eternities.

Invite a student to read Malachi 4:1 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what those who are proud and wicked will experience at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

- Based on our discussion about the family tree, what do you think the phrase “it shall leave them neither root nor branch” means for the wicked?

Help students understand that the wicked who are destroyed at the Second Coming are left without eternal ties to their ancestors and their descendants. In other words, they are unworthy to live with their family members for eternity in the celestial kingdom.

Erase or cover up the roots and branches from the picture on the board to illustrate that the tree is incomplete and limited without these vital parts.

### Malachi 4:5–6

#### *Malachi prophesies that Elijah will do a great work before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ*

To help the class personalize the tragedy of having no roots or branches on their family trees, ask students to consider their own parents, grandparents, and ancestors, as well as their future spouse and children. Invite them to imagine what it might be like if they were separated from their family members in the eternities.

Invite a student to read Malachi 4:5–6 aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for how the Savior said He would help the families of the world before His Second Coming. (In their study during the week, students were invited to memorize this scripture mastery passage. To review these verses, you may want to ask the class to recite the passage together a few times.)

- What did Malachi say Elijah would do?

Remind students that the resurrected prophet Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836, in the Kirtland Temple and conferred upon them the sealing keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood (see D&C 110:13–16). These keys opened the doors to family history and temple work for the living and for the dead.

Provide students with a copy of the following statement by President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency. Invite a student to read it aloud. Ask the class to follow along, looking for what President Eyring said we can do to turn our hearts to our ancestors.

“Many of your ancestors died never having the chance to accept the gospel and to receive the blessings and promises you have received. The Lord is fair and He is loving. And so He prepared for you and me a way for us to have the desire of our hearts to offer to our ancestors all the blessings He has offered us. . . .

“ . . . There are more temples across the earth than there have ever been. More people in all the world have felt the Spirit of Elijah move them to record the identities and facts of their ancestors’ lives. There are more resources to search out your ancestors than there have ever been in the history of the world. The Lord has poured out knowledge about how to make that

information available worldwide through technology that a few years ago would have seemed a miracle. . . .

“ . . . When you were baptized, your ancestors looked down on you with hope. Perhaps after centuries, they rejoiced to see one of their descendants make a covenant to find them and to offer them freedom. In your reunion, you will see in their eyes either gratitude or terrible disappointment. Their hearts are bound to you. Their hope is in your hands. You will have more than your own strength as you choose to labor on to find them” (“Hearts Bound Together,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2005, 77, 79–80).

- What is our role in binding families together in the last days?

Write the following incomplete principle on the board: *As we do family history and temple work, . . .*

- What will happen as we fulfill our responsibility to do family history and temple work for our ancestors? (After students respond, add the following to the incomplete principle on the board: *our hearts will be turned to our ancestors . . .*)

Ask students to look again at Malachi 4:6, and point out that unless the hearts of family members turn to each other, the earth will be cursed. Explain that the earth was created to help “bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). This is accomplished when we perform saving ordinances on earth that bind individuals to the Savior and bind families together. If family history and temple work are left undone, then the earth will be “utterly wasted” (D&C 2:3). To complete the principle on the board, add the following: *and we will help prepare the earth for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ*. Invite a student to read the completed principle aloud: **As we do family history and temple work, our hearts will be turned to our ancestors and we will help prepare the earth for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.**

- Why do our hearts turn to our ancestors when we do their family history and temple work?
- How do you think our ancestors feel toward us for doing this work for them?
- What experiences have you had with doing family history and temple work for your own ancestors?

If circumstances allow, you may want to invite a student who is familiar with the website FamilySearch.org to log in to his or her account and display the website in front of the class. You could allow the student a few minutes to demonstrate how to use the website and search for a family name and to give a report of his or her experience doing this work.

Ask students to write on a piece of paper one goal that will help them more fully participate in family history and temple work. Encourage them to take the paper home and place it where it will remind them of their goal.

Because this is the last lesson of the Old Testament course of study, you may want to take time at the end of the lesson to invite students to share their experiences with studying the Old Testament in seminary this year. In addition, encourage students to continue studying the scriptures every day at home. If they will be taking the next seminary course, you might suggest that they begin studying the New Testament.

# Appendix

## Scripture Reading Charts

We help fulfill the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion as we encourage students to (1) read and study the scriptures daily and (2) read the scriptures for the course of study. The text for the Old Testament seminary course consists of the selected readings outlined in the reading chart below. If students desire, they may choose to read the entire Old

Testament, but it is not required. This is the only seminary course for which reading the entire text is not required. (Charts for tracking scripture reading of the entire Old Testament can be found with the Old Testament Scripture Mastery Cards on LDS.org and on store.lds.org [item no. 10555].)

You may want to give reading charts to students to help them keep track of their progress. If you would like to report students' daily reading of the scriptures, follow the directions in the Scripture Reading Reporting Instructions. Search for these instructions on si.lds.org using the phrase "scripture reading reporting instructions."

**Old Testament Reading Chart (selected readings)**

Intro to P of GP	<b>Moses</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
<b>Genesis</b>	6	7	8	9	11	<b>Abraham</b>		1	2	3	4		
<b>Genesis</b>	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	24		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	37	39	
40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50			
<b>Exodus</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	22	25	26	27	
28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	40	<b>Leviticus</b>			1	4
8	11	16	19	20	26	<b>Numbers</b>		2	6	11	12	13	
14	16	20	21	22	23	24	27	31	32				
<b>Deuteronomy</b>		6	7	8	14	15	20	26	28	30	34		
<b>Joshua</b>		1	2	3	4	6	7	23	24				
<b>Judges</b>		1	2	3	4	6	7	8	13	14	15	16	
<b>Ruth</b>		1	2	3	4	<b>1 Samuel</b>		1	2	3	4	8	
9	10	11	13	15	16	17	18	24	25	<b>2 Samuel</b>		5	
6	11	12	<b>1 Kings</b>			3	8	9	10	11	17	18	19
<b>2 Kings</b>		2	3	4	5	6	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	<b>Ezra</b>		1	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	<b>Nehemiah</b>		2	4	6	8	9	<b>Esther</b>			1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	<b>Job</b>		1	2	19	23	
38	42	<b>Psalms</b>		9	22	23	24	33	51	119	127	143	
145	<b>Proverbs</b>		1	2	3	13	15	16	31				
<b>Ecclesiastes</b>		1	2	12	<b>Isaiah</b>		1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	22	25	28	29	
30	33	35	40	41	42	45	46	48	49	50	51	52	
53	54	55	58	59	61	65	<b>Jeremiah</b>		1	3	7	16	
17	18	31	32	33	36	38	39	42	50				
<b>Lamentations</b>		1	3	<b>Ezekiel</b>		1	2	3	18	33	34		
36	37	38	39	47	<b>Daniel</b>		1	2	3	5	6	7	
<b>Hosea</b>		1	2	3	<b>Joel</b>		1	2	<b>Amos</b>			3	8
<b>Obadiah</b>		1	<b>Jonah</b>		1	2	3	4	<b>Micah</b>			5	6
7	<b>Nahum</b>		1	<b>Habakkuk</b>		3	<b>Zephaniah</b>		2	3			
<b>Haggai</b>		1	2	<b>Zechariah</b>		1	3	7	9	12	13	14	
<b>Malachi</b>		1	2	3	4								

**Daily Scripture Reading Chart**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
30		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
31		31		31		31	31		31		31	31

## Pacing Guide for Daily Teachers

### Suggested Schedule for 36-Week School Year

Week	Lessons	Scripture Block
1	Day 1: Lesson 1 Introduction to the Old Testament Day 2: Lesson 2 The Plan of Salvation Day 3: Lesson 3 The Role of the Learner Day 4: Lesson 4 Studying the Scriptures Day 5: Lesson 5 The Bible	Introduction to the Pearl of Great Price
2	Day 1: Lesson 6 Moses 1:1–23 Day 2: Lesson 7 Moses 1:24–42 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 8 Moses 2 (Genesis 1; Abraham 4) Day 5: Lesson 9 Moses 3 (Genesis 2; Abraham 5)	Moses 1–3; Abraham 4–5; Genesis 1–2
3	Day 1: Lesson 10 Moses 4 (Genesis 3) Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 11 Moses 5:1–11 Day 4: Lesson 12 Moses 5:12–59 (Genesis 4) Day 5: Lesson 13 Moses 6:1–47 (Genesis 5)	Moses 4:1–6:47; Genesis 3–5
4	Day 1: Lesson 14 Moses 6:48–68 Day 2: Lesson 15 Moses 7 Day 3: Lesson 16 Moses 8 (Genesis 6:1–13) Day 4: Lesson 17 Genesis 6:14–9:29 Day 5: Lesson 18 Genesis 10–11	Moses 6:48–8:30; Genesis 6–11
5	Day 1: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 2: Lesson 19 Abraham 1 Day 3: Lesson 20 Abraham 2; Genesis 12 Day 4: Lesson 21 Abraham 3 Day 5: Lesson 22 Genesis 13–14	Abraham 1–3; Genesis 12–14
6	Day 1: Lesson 23 Genesis 15–16 Day 2: Lesson 24 Genesis 17 Day 3: Lesson 25 Genesis 18 Day 4: Lesson 26 Genesis 19 Day 5: Lesson 27 Genesis 20–21	Genesis 15–21
7	Day 1: Lesson 28 Genesis 22 Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 29 Genesis 23–24 Day 4: Lesson 30 Genesis 25–27 Day 5: Lesson 31 Genesis 28–30	Genesis 22–30
8	Day 1: Lesson 32 Genesis 31–32 Day 2: Lesson 33 Genesis 33–34 Day 3: Lesson 34 Genesis 35–37 Day 4: Lesson 35 Genesis 38–39 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	Genesis 31–39
9	Day 1: Lesson 36 Genesis 40–41 Day 2: Lesson 37 Genesis 42–43 Day 3: Lesson 38 Genesis 44–46 Day 4: Lesson 39 Genesis 47–49 Day 5: Lesson 40 Genesis 50	Genesis 40–50

Week	Lessons	Scripture Block
10	Day 1: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 2: Lesson 41 Exodus 1–2 Day 3: Lesson 42 Exodus 3–4 Day 4: Lesson 43 Exodus 5–6 Day 5: Lesson 44 Exodus 7–11	Exodus 1–11
11	Day 1: Lesson 45 Exodus 12–13 Day 2: Lesson 46 Exodus 14–15 Day 3: Lesson 47 Exodus 16:1–17:7 Day 4: Lesson 48 Exodus 17:8–19:25 Day 5: Lesson 49 Exodus 20, Part 1	Exodus 12:1–20:17
12	Day 1: Lesson 50 Exodus 20, Part 2 Day 2: Lesson 51 Exodus 21–24 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 52 Exodus 25–27; 30 Day 5: Lesson 53 Exodus 28–29; 31	Exodus 20:18–31:18
13	Day 1: Lesson 54 Exodus 32 Day 2: Lesson 55 Exodus 33–34 Day 3: Lesson 56 Exodus 35–40 Day 4: Lesson 57 Leviticus 1–7 Day 5: Lesson 58 Leviticus 8–11	Exodus 32–40; Leviticus 1–11
14	Day 1: Lesson 59 Leviticus 12–18 Day 2: Lesson 60 Leviticus 19–27 Day 3: Lesson 61 Numbers 1–10 Day 4: Lesson 62 Numbers 11–12 Day 5: Lesson 63 Numbers 13–14	Leviticus 12–27; Numbers 1–14
15	Day 1: Lesson 64 Numbers 15–19 Day 2: Lesson 65 Numbers 20–21 Day 3: Lesson 66 Numbers 22–29 Day 4: Lesson 67 Numbers 30–36 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	Numbers 15–36
16	Day 1: Lesson 68 Deuteronomy 1–13 Day 2: Lesson 69 Deuteronomy 14–19 Day 3: Lesson 70 Deuteronomy 20–26 Day 4: Lesson 71 Deuteronomy 27–34 Day 5: Lesson 72 Joshua 1–2	Deuteronomy 1–34; Joshua 1–2
17	Day 1: Lesson 73 Joshua 3–5 Day 2: Lesson 74 Joshua 6–10 Day 3: Lesson 75 Joshua 11–24 Day 4: Lesson 76 Judges 1–5 Day 5: Lesson 77 Judges 6–9	Joshua 3–24; Judges 1–9
18	Day 1: Lesson 78 Judges 10–21 Day 2: Lesson 79 Ruth 1–2 Day 3: Lesson 80 Ruth 3–4 Day 4: Flexible Day (recommended class period for administering the “Old Testament Learning Assessment for Genesis–Ruth”) Day 5: Flexible Day (recommended class period for reviewing the “Old Testament Learning Assessment for Genesis–Ruth”)	Judges 10–21; Ruth

Week	Lessons	Scripture Block	Week	Lessons	Scripture Block
19	Day 1: Lesson 81 1 Samuel 1–2 Day 2: Lesson 82 1 Samuel 3 Day 3: Lesson 83 1 Samuel 4–8 Day 4: Lesson 84 1 Samuel 9–11 Day 5: Lesson 85 1 Samuel 12–15	1 Samuel 1–15	29	Day 1: Lesson 125 Isaiah 42–47 Day 2: Lesson 126 Isaiah 48–50 Day 3: Lesson 127 Isaiah 51–52 Day 4: Lesson 128 Isaiah 53 Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	Isaiah 42–53
20	Day 1: Lesson 86 1 Samuel 16 Day 2: Lesson 87 1 Samuel 17 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 88 1 Samuel 18–24 Day 5: Lesson 89 1 Samuel 25–31	1 Samuel 16–31	30	Day 1: Lesson 129 Isaiah 54–57 Day 2: Lesson 130 Isaiah 58 Day 3: Lesson 131 Isaiah 59–66 Day 4: Lesson 132 Jeremiah 1–6 Day 5: Lesson 133 Jeremiah 7–16	Isaiah 54–66; Jeremiah 1–16
21	Day 1: Lesson 90 2 Samuel 1–10 Day 2: Lesson 91 2 Samuel 11:1–12:9 Day 3: Lesson 92 2 Samuel 12:10–24:25 Day 4: Lesson 93 1 Kings 1–10 Day 5: Lesson 94 1 Kings 11–16	2 Samuel; 1 Kings 1–16	31	Day 1: Lesson 134 Jeremiah 17–29 Day 2: Lesson 135 Jeremiah 30–33 Day 3: Lesson 136 Jeremiah 34–41 Day 4: Lesson 137 Jeremiah 42–52 Day 5: Lesson 138 Lamentations	Jeremiah 17–52; Lamentations
22	Day 1: Lesson 95 1 Kings 17 Day 2: Lesson 96 1 Kings 18–22 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 97 2 Kings 1–4 Day 5: Lesson 98 2 Kings 5–13	1 Kings 17–22; 2 Kings 1–13	32	Day 1: Lesson 139 Ezekiel 1–3 Day 2: Lesson 140 Ezekiel 4–32 Day 3: Lesson 141 Ezekiel 33–36 Day 4: Lesson 142 Ezekiel 37 Day 5: Lesson 143 Ezekiel 38–48	Ezekiel
23	Day 1: Lesson 99 2 Kings 14–17 Day 2: Lesson 100 2 Kings 18–20 Day 3: Lesson 101 2 Kings 21–25 Day 4: Lesson 102 1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	2 Kings 14–25; 1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles	33	Day 1: Lesson 144 Daniel 1 Day 2: Lesson 145 Daniel 2 Day 3: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 4: Lesson 146 Daniel 3–5 Day 5: Lesson 147 Daniel 6–12	Daniel
24	Day 1: Lesson 103 Ezra 1–6 Day 2: Lesson 104 Ezra 7–10 Day 3: Lesson 105 Nehemiah Day 4: Lesson 106 Esther Day 5: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days)	Ezra; Nehemiah; Esther	34	Day 1: Lesson 148 Hosea Day 2: Lesson 149 Joel Day 3: Lesson 150 Amos Day 4: Lesson 151 Obadiah Day 5: Lesson 152 Jonah	Hosea; Joel; Amos; Obadiah; Jonah
25	Day 1: Lesson 107 Job 1–16 Day 2: Lesson 108 Job 17–37 Day 3: Lesson 109 Job 38–42 Day 4: Lesson 110 Psalms, Part 1 Day 5: Lesson 111 Psalms, Part 2	Job; Psalms 1–87	35	Day 1: Lesson 153 Micah Day 2: Lesson 154 Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah Day 3: Lesson 155 Haggai; Zechariah 1–2 Day 4: Lesson 156 Zechariah 3–8 Day 5: Lesson 157 Zechariah 9–14	Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah
26	Day 1: Lesson 112 Psalms, Part 3 Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 113 Proverbs 1–9 Day 4: Lesson 114 Proverbs 10–31 Day 5: Lesson 115 Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon	Psalms 88–150; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon	36	Day 1: Lesson 158 Malachi 1–2 Day 2: Lesson 159 Malachi 3 Day 3: Lesson 160 Malachi 4 Day 4: Flexible Day (recommended class period for <i>administering</i> the "Old Testament Learning Assessment for 1 Samuel–Malachi") Day 5: Flexible Day (recommended class period for <i>reviewing</i> the "Old Testament Learning Assessment for 1 Samuel–Malachi")	Malachi
27	Day 1: Lesson 116 Isaiah 1–2 Day 2: Flexible Day (see suggestions for flexible days) Day 3: Lesson 117 Isaiah 3–5 Day 4: Lesson 118 Isaiah 6–9 Day 5: Lesson 119 Isaiah 10–16	Isaiah 1–16			
28	Day 1: Lesson 120 Isaiah 17–23 Day 2: Lesson 121 Isaiah 24–28 Day 3: Lesson 122 Isaiah 29 Day 4: Lesson 123 Isaiah 30–35 Day 5: Lesson 124 Isaiah 36–41	Isaiah 17–41			

## Suggestions for Flexible Days

The pacing guide for daily teachers is based on a 36-week or 180-day school year. This manual provides 160 daily lessons, leaving 20 days for which no teaching material is provided. These 20 “flexible days” should be used wisely for worthwhile goals and activities, including the following:

**1. Assessments.** The Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion is to “help youth and young adults understand and rely on the teachings and Atonement of Jesus Christ, qualify for the blessings of the temple, and prepare themselves, their families, and others for eternal life with their Father in Heaven.” With this objective in mind, S&I has prepared learning assessments. These assessments are intended to help students understand, explain, believe, and live what they are learning in class.

In 2014, requirements for seminary graduation were adjusted so that students must pass the learning assessments for each course of study in order to graduate. You should administer learning assessments once during each half of the school year. Each assessment has two parts: (1) administering the assessment, which will take approximately 40 minutes, or one daily class period, and (2) correcting and discussing the assessment with students the following class period. This review is an essential part of helping students learn from the experience. If your class meets for longer than 60 minutes, you should only take one class period to administer and review the assessment.

Assessments are to be used to help students. While announcing the addition of learning assessments to seminary graduation requirements, Elder Paul V. Johnson of the Seventy said, “A teacher’s attitude is going to make a big difference. If the teachers can see how this blesses the lives of students, they’ll view assessments as a way to help their students. . . . I think if there were a caution, it would be that we don’t want the teachers to view this as some sort of manipulation device or a club—maybe a club in two meanings of the word—a blunt instrument to beat somebody with, or some elite club for only certain students. We want them to view this as something that will really bless their lives” (“2014 Global Faculty Meeting. Elevate Learning Announcement” [Seminaries and Institutes of Religion global faculty meeting, June 20, 2014]; si.lds.org).

**Note:** Other optional assessments may be found by searching the S&I website (si.lds.org) using the key word *assessment*.

**2. Adapting the daily lessons.** You may want to spend extra time on a lesson that takes longer to teach effectively. You may also want to use the supplemental teaching ideas that appear at the end of some lessons or take time to answer students’ questions about a particular scripture passage or gospel topic. Flexible days allow you to take advantage of these opportunities while maintaining your pacing schedule and fulfilling your commission to teach the scriptures sequentially.

**3. Mastering key scripture passages and Basic Doctrines.** You may want to use the review activities for scripture mastery passages that are found throughout the manual and in the appendix. You could create additional scripture mastery review activities that meet the specific needs and interests of the students in your class. You could also use part of a flexible day for activities that help students review and deepen their understanding of the Basic Doctrines.

**4. Reviewing previous material.** It is helpful for students to periodically look back at what they have learned in previous lessons or from a particular book of scripture. You could provide students with an opportunity to explain a truth from a previous lesson and share how that truth has influenced their lives. You could also create and administer a quiz or learning activities that review previous material.

**5. Allowing for schedule interruptions.** School activities or assemblies, community events, weather, and other interruptions may require you to cancel or shorten class periodically. Flexible days can be used to allow for such interruptions.

## Pacing Guide for Home-Study Teachers

This manual contains 32 home-study lessons that correspond to the 32 units in the *Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students*. You will likely need to plan for an additional four classes in order to administer and review the required learning assessments, for a total of 36 classes. You may adapt the lessons and pacing as needed for the number of weeks you have to teach your class.

Unit	Home-Study Lesson	Unit	Home-Study Lesson	Unit	Home-Study Lesson
Unit 1	Day 1: Introduction to the Old Testament Day 2: The Plan of Salvation Day 3: The Role of the Learner Day 4: Studying the Scriptures <i>Teacher Lesson: Introduction to the Old Testament—Studying the Scriptures</i>	Unit 10	Day 1: Exodus 14–15 Day 2: Exodus 16:1–17:7 Day 3: Exodus 17:8–19:25 Day 4: Exodus 20 <i>Teacher Lesson: Exodus 14–20</i>	Unit 18	Day 1: 1 Samuel 16–17 Day 2: 1 Samuel 18–24 Day 3: 1 Samuel 25–31 Day 4: 2 Samuel 1–10 <i>Teacher Lesson: 1 Samuel 16–31; 2 Samuel 1–10</i>
Unit 2	Day 1: Moses 1 Day 2: Moses 2 (Genesis 1; Abraham 4) Day 3: Moses 3 (Genesis 2; Abraham 5) Day 4: Moses 4 (Genesis 3) <i>Teacher Lesson: Moses 1–4</i>	Unit 11	Day 1: Exodus 21–24 Day 2: Exodus 25–31 Day 3: Exodus 32 Day 4: Exodus 33–34 <i>Teacher Lesson: Exodus 21–34</i>	Unit 19	Day 1: 2 Samuel 11:1–12:9 Day 2: 2 Samuel 12:10–24:25 Day 3: 1 Kings 1–10 Day 4: 1 Kings 11–17 <i>Teacher Lesson: 2 Samuel 11–24; 1 Kings 1–17</i>
Unit 3	Day 1: Moses 5:1–11 Day 2: Moses 5:12–59 (Genesis 4) Day 3: Moses 6 (Genesis 5) Day 4: Moses 7 <i>Teacher Lesson: Moses 5–7</i>	Unit 12	Day 1: Exodus 35–40 Day 2: Leviticus 1–11 Day 3: Leviticus 12–18 Day 4: Leviticus 19–27 <i>Teacher Lesson: Exodus 35–40; Leviticus</i>	Unit 20	Day 1: 1 Kings 18–22 Day 2: 2 Kings 1–13 Day 3: 2 Kings 14–17 Day 4: 2 Kings 18–20 <i>Teacher Lesson: 1 Kings 18–22; 2 Kings 1–20</i>
Unit 4	Day 1: Moses 8; Genesis 6:1–13 Day 2: Genesis 6:13–9:29 Day 3: Genesis 10–11; Abraham 1:1–7 Day 4: Abraham 2; Genesis 12 <i>Teacher Lesson: Moses 8; Genesis 6–12; Abraham 1–2</i>	Unit 13	Day 1: Numbers 1–10 Day 2: Numbers 11–12 Day 3: Numbers 13–14 Day 4: Numbers 15–21 <i>Teacher Lesson: Numbers 1–21</i>	Unit 21	Day 1: 2 Kings 21–25; 1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles Day 2: Ezra 1–6 Day 3: Ezra 7–10 Day 4: Nehemiah <i>Teacher Lesson: 2 Kings 21–25; 1 Chronicles; 2 Chronicles; Ezra; Nehemiah</i>
Unit 5	Day 1: Abraham 3 Day 2: Genesis 13–14 Day 3: Genesis 15–16 Day 4: Genesis 17–18 <i>Teacher Lesson: Abraham 3; Genesis 13–18</i>	Unit 14	Day 1: Numbers 22–36 Day 2: Deuteronomy 1–13 Day 3: Deuteronomy 14–19 Day 4: Deuteronomy 20–26 <i>Teacher Lesson: Numbers 22–36; Deuteronomy 1–26</i>	Unit 22	Day 1: Esther; Job 1–16 Day 2: Job 17–37 Day 3: Job 38–42 Day 4: Psalms, Part 1 <i>Teacher Lesson: Esther; Job; Psalms, Part 1</i>
Unit 6	Day 1: Genesis 19 Day 2: Genesis 20–22 Day 3: Genesis 23–24 Day 4: Genesis 25–27 <i>Teacher Lesson: Genesis 19–27</i>	Unit 15	Day 1: Deuteronomy 27–34 Day 2: Joshua 1–2 Day 3: Joshua 3–10 Day 4: Joshua 11–24 <i>Teacher Lesson: Deuteronomy 27–34; Joshua</i>	Unit 23	Day 1: Psalms, Part 2 Day 2: Psalms, Part 3 Day 3: Proverbs Day 4: Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon <i>Teacher Lesson: Psalms, Parts 2–3; Proverbs; Ecclesiastes; Song of Solomon</i>
Unit 7	Day 1: Genesis 28–30 Day 2: Genesis 31–32 Day 3: Genesis 33–37 Day 4: Genesis 38–39 <i>Teacher Lesson: Genesis 28–39</i>	Unit 16	Day 1: Judges 1–5 Day 2: Judges 6–9 Day 3: Judges 10–21 Day 4: Ruth <i>Teacher Lesson: Judges; Ruth</i>	Unit 24	Day 1: Isaiah 1–5 Day 2: Isaiah 6–9 Day 3: Isaiah 10–16 Day 4: Isaiah 17–23 <i>Teacher Lesson: Isaiah 1–23</i>
Unit 8	Day 1: Genesis 40–41 Day 2: Genesis 42–46 Day 3: Genesis 47–49 Day 4: Genesis 50 <i>Teacher Lesson: Genesis 40–50</i>	Recommended class period for administering the “Old Testament Learning Assessment for Genesis–Ruth”		Unit 25	Day 1: Isaiah 24–29 Day 2: Isaiah 30–35 Day 3: Isaiah 36–41 Day 4: Isaiah 42–47 <i>Teacher Lesson: Isaiah 24–47</i>
Unit 9	Day 1: Exodus 1–4 Day 2: Exodus 5–6 Day 3: Exodus 7–11 Day 4: Exodus 12–13 <i>Teacher Lesson: Exodus 1–13</i>	Recommended class period for reviewing the “Old Testament Learning Assessment for Genesis–Ruth”		Unit 26	Day 1: Isaiah 48–50 Day 2: Isaiah 51–53 Day 3: Isaiah 54–57 Day 4: Isaiah 58 <i>Teacher Lesson: Isaiah 48–58</i>
		Unit 17	Day 1: 1 Samuel 1–3 Day 2: 1 Samuel 4–8 Day 3: 1 Samuel 9–11 Day 4: 1 Samuel 12–15 <i>Teacher Lesson: 1 Samuel 1–15</i>		

Unit	Home-Study Lesson
Unit 27	Day 1: Isaiah 59–66 Day 2: Jeremiah 1–6 Day 3: Jeremiah 7–29 Day 4: Jeremiah 30–33 <i>Teacher Lesson: Isaiah 59–66; Jeremiah 1–33</i>
Unit 28	Day 1: Jeremiah 34–41 Day 2: Jeremiah 42–52 Day 3: Lamentations Day 4: Ezekiel 1–32 <i>Teacher Lesson: Jeremiah 34–52; Lamentations; Ezekiel 1–32</i>
Unit 29	Day 1: Ezekiel 33–36 Day 2: Ezekiel 37 Day 3: Ezekiel 38–48 Day 4: Daniel 1–2 <i>Teacher Lesson: Ezekiel 33–48; Daniel 1–2</i>
Unit 30	Day 1: Daniel 3–12 Day 2: Hosea Day 3: Joel Day 4: Amos <i>Teacher Lesson: Daniel 3–12; Hosea; Joel; Amos</i>
Unit 31	Day 1: Obadiah Day 2: Jonah Day 3: Micah Day 4: Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah 1–2 <i>Teacher Lesson: Obadiah; Jonah; Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk; Zephaniah; Haggai; Zechariah 1–2</i>
Unit 32	Day 1: Zechariah 3–8 Day 2: Zechariah 9–14 Day 3: Malachi 1–2 Day 4: Malachi 3–4 <i>Teacher Lesson: Zechariah 3–14; Malachi 1–4</i>
Recommended class period for administering the "Old Testament Learning Assessment for 1 Samuel–Malachi"	
Recommended class period for reviewing the "Old Testament Learning Assessment for 1 Samuel–Malachi"	

## Introduction to Scripture Mastery

Seminaries and Institutes of Religion has selected 25 scripture mastery passages for each of the four seminary courses. These passages provide an important scriptural foundation for understanding and sharing the gospel and for strengthening faith. The scripture mastery passages for the Old Testament course are as follows:

Moses 1:39  
 Moses 7:18  
 Abraham 3:22–23  
 Genesis 1:26–27  
 Genesis 2:24  
 Genesis 39:9  
 Exodus 19:5–6  
 Exodus 20:3–17  
 Joshua 24:15  
 1 Samuel 16:7  
 Psalm 24:3–4  
 Psalm 119:105  
 Psalm 127:3  
 Proverbs 3:5–6  
 Isaiah 1:18  
 Isaiah 5:20  
 Isaiah 29:13–14  
 Isaiah 53:3–5  
 Isaiah 58:6–7  
 Isaiah 58:13–14  
 Jeremiah 1:4–5  
 Ezekiel 37:15–17  
 Amos 3:7  
 Malachi 3:8–10  
 Malachi 4:5–6

Seminary students are encouraged to develop a “mastery” of these passages. You will be better able to help your students if you master these passages as well. Mastery of scripture passages includes the following:

- **Locating** the verses by knowing the associated scripture references
- **Understanding** the context and content of the scripture passages
- **Applying** the gospel principles and doctrines taught in the scripture passages
- **Memorizing** the passages

### Consistency, Expectations, and Methods

As you plan to help students master scripture passages, you will be more successful if you refer to scripture mastery passages with consistency, maintain appropriate expectations, and use methods that appeal to different learning styles.

Consistency and repetition in teaching scripture mastery will help students place truths in their long-term memories for future use. It may be helpful to outline the course of study for the year and create a plan to consistently provide opportunities in the classroom for students to master scripture passages. Be wise in determining how often and how much time to spend helping students learn the scripture mastery passages. Ensure that scripture mastery activities do not overshadow daily sequential study of the scriptures. You could decide to spend a few minutes each day reviewing scripture mastery passages with your students. Or you might decide to provide a short mastery activity once or twice each week for 10 to 15 minutes. No matter how you plan to help students learn scripture mastery passages, be consistent and appropriate in your efforts.

Base your expectations for scripture mastery on each student’s abilities. Mastering scripture passages takes effort on the part of the learner. Communicate to students that their success with scripture mastery depends largely on their attitude and their willingness to work. Encourage them to set goals that push their abilities to higher levels. Be sensitive to students who may have difficulty memorizing, and be willing to adapt your expectations and teaching methods according to the needs of your students.

To appeal to a wider range of personality and learning styles, vary the methods you use to help students master scripture passages. As in all gospel teaching and learning, be wise in your choice of activities so that the Holy Ghost can support students’ scriptural and doctrinal mastery. You will find a number of appropriate scripture mastery teaching methods in the lessons in this manual. For additional scripture mastery teaching methods, see the section called “Scripture Mastery Activities” in this appendix.

### Scripture Mastery in the Curriculum

Scripture mastery is written into the curriculum in a number of ways. A scripture mastery icon  identifies the treatment of scripture mastery passages in the lesson material. Scripture mastery passages are introduced and discussed in the context of the chapter where they are located. Additional teaching ideas for scripture mastery passages appear at the end of the lessons in which they are located. These additional teaching ideas help balance the four elements of scripture mastery (locating, understanding, applying, and memorizing) with regard to each passage. For example, if the lesson helps students to understand and apply the scripture mastery passage, then the additional teaching idea will help them with locating or memorizing the passage.

The curriculum also regularly provides scripture mastery review activities that can be used as time allows and in harmony with the scripture mastery goals of your class. These reviews can be supplemented with the scripture mastery activities listed in this appendix. You might use extra time at the beginning or end of a shorter lesson to do one of these review activities.

### Suggested Approaches for Scripture Mastery

To aid students with **locating** skills, you could plan to introduce the 25 mastery passages near the beginning of the course and then work on deepening mastery throughout the course. Or you could introduce a few passages each month and focus on mastering those passages during that month. Such introductions could include suggesting that students mark scripture mastery passages in their individual copies of the scriptures, helping students think of ways to remember key words and references, and explaining doctrines and principles contained in each passage. You could also involve students in introducing scripture mastery passages by assigning them to use passages in their devotionals or by inviting them to teach each other how to remember and locate the passages. Provide accountability for remembering scripture mastery passages with periodic

quizzes and locating activities (see the scripture mastery activities in this appendix for examples). A list of the 25 scripture mastery passages for this course of study can be found on the student bookmarks and scripture mastery cards.

To assist students in their **understanding** of scripture mastery passages, emphasize these passages as they come up in your daily lessons. You might also use the scripture mastery activities in this appendix to increase students' knowledge of and ability to explain the truths contained in the passages. Give students opportunities in devotionals or during class to explain how the truths in scripture mastery passages help them better understand the Basic Doctrines.

To support students in their **application** of truths found in scripture mastery passages, encourage them to follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost to understand how

the truths in the passages apply in their lives. To help students act on the truths they learn, you could occasionally post on a bulletin board in class a challenge related to a scripture mastery passage. Or you could give students opportunities in class to practice teaching doctrines and principles of the gospel using the scripture mastery passages (see the scripture mastery activities in this appendix for ideas). You might also invite students to apply the principles they learn in the lessons where scripture mastery passages appear. Provide students with opportunities—in devotionals or at other times—to report their experiences. This will help them to increase their witness of the truths they have learned from the scripture mastery passages.

To help students **memorize** the 25 scripture mastery passages, you could plan to commit to memory two or three

passages each month in class. You could also challenge students to memorize certain passages at home (they could do this with their families or recite passages to a parent or family member). You could make memorization a part of daily devotionals by asking the class to recite a passage or by providing time for students to memorize in pairs. Giving students opportunities to recite scripture mastery passages in pairs or small groups or in front of the class can help them be accountable for their efforts. The scripture mastery activities in this appendix include a variety of memorization methods. Take care to tailor memorization expectations to each student's abilities and circumstances. Students should not be made to feel embarrassed or overwhelmed if they are unable to memorize a scripture passage.

## Scripture Mastery Activities

### Introduction

This section provides some ideas you can use to assist students in mastering key scripture passages. As you assist and encourage students to develop these skills, you are helping them to become self-reliant in their study of the scriptures. Students can use these mastery skills throughout their lives to better locate, understand, apply, and memorize passages in the scriptures. Teaching ideas for each element of scripture mastery are listed below. Using a variety of these types of activities can help students to more successfully master scripture passages.

### Activities That Help Students Locate Scripture Mastery Passages

#### Marking Passages

Marking scripture mastery passages can help students remember these passages and locate them more quickly. Consider encouraging students to mark these key passages in their scriptures in a way that sets them apart from other passages they mark.

#### Knowing the Books

Memorizing the names and order of the books in the Old Testament and the Pearl of Great Price can help students locate scripture mastery passages more quickly. The following are some examples of activities that can help students become familiar with the books in the Old Testament and the Pearl of the Great Price:

- **Find the Table of Contents**—Help students become familiar with the table of contents in the Bible and in the Pearl of Great Price to help them locate the books in which scripture mastery references are found.
- **Sing a Song**—Teach students the song “The Books in the Old Testament” (*Children’s Songbook*, 114–15). Have them sing it periodically throughout the year to help them remember the names and order of the books in the Old Testament.
- **Use First Letters**—Write the first letters of the books on the board

(G, E, L, N, and so on). Have them practice saying the names of the books that correspond with each letter. Repeat this activity until they can recite names of the books from memory.

- **Book Chase**—Call out one of the books in which a mastery passage is located, and have students open their scriptures to any page in that book. Time how long it takes the entire class to find each of the books. This activity could be repeated to allow students to become more proficient at remembering and finding the books in the Old Testament and the Pearl of Great Price.

### Remembering References and Content

As students learn the location and content of scripture mastery passages, the Holy Ghost can help them recall scripture references as needed (see John 14:26). Key words or phrases, such as “peculiar treasure” (Exodus 19:5) and “the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7), can help students remember the content and doctrinal teachings of each passage. The following methods can help students associate scripture mastery references with their content or key words. (You may want to save activities that involve competition, racing, or being timed for later in the year, after students have demonstrated that they know where the scripture mastery passages are located. Such activities will then help reinforce what they have learned.)

- **References and Key Words**—Encourage students to memorize the references and key words of each scripture mastery passage listed on the scripture mastery cards. (Scripture mastery cards can be ordered online at [store.lds.org](http://store.lds.org). You could also have students create their own sets of scripture mastery cards.) Give students time to study the cards with a partner and then quiz each other. Encourage students to be creative in the ways they study together and quiz each other. As they become more proficient with the scripture mastery passages, you might invite them to use clues that involve context or application of doctrines and principles from the passages. The

person being quizzed could respond verbally or in writing.

- **Scripture Mastery Cards**—This activity could be used to introduce or review a set of scripture mastery passages. Select a number of the scripture mastery cards, and prepare to distribute them among your students. (Be sure to have multiple copies of each card so more than one student receives the same scripture mastery passage. You may want to have enough cards for each student to have two or three different passages.) Pass them out to the class. Allow students time to study the scripture mastery passage, the reference, the key words, the context statement, the doctrine or principle, and the application ideas on each card. Call out some clues from the cards (for example, words from the scripture mastery passage or the key words, context, doctrine or principle, or application). Students who have the associated card should stand and say the scripture mastery reference aloud.
- **Scripture Chase**—Use clues to help students practice quickly locating passages in their scriptures. For clues, you could use key words, context statements, doctrines and principles, and application ideas from the scripture mastery cards. You could also make up your own clues. Scripture chase activities in which students race to locate passages can help them actively engage in learning scripture mastery passages. When using scripture chase activities to help with scripture mastery, do it in a way that does not cause hurt feelings or offend the Spirit. Help students avoid treating their scriptures irreverently or being overly competitive. Also consider having students compete against a standard rather than each other. For example, students could race against the teacher, or you could have them race to see if a certain percentage of the class can find a particular passage in a specified amount of time.
- **Story Chase**—Give clues by making up scenarios that demonstrate the relevance of scripture mastery passages to everyday life. For example, as a clue for Exodus 20:3–17 or Joshua 24:15,

you could say, “Mary’s testimony of the gospel is increasing, and she is making some important changes in her life. Her longtime friend invites her to miss her Church meetings to attend a recreational activity on the Sabbath. She feels unsettled about what to do. She would love to attend the activity with her friend but also wants to keep the Sabbath day holy. As she prays about her decision, she remembers that the prophet Joshua invited the Israelites to put away false gods and choose whom they would serve.” As students listen to the scenarios, have them locate relevant scripture mastery passages in their scriptures.

- **Quizzes and Tests**—Provide students with opportunities to test their memory of scripture mastery passages. Clues could include key words or scripture references, quotations from passages, or scenarios that illustrate the truths taught in passages. Quizzes and tests could be given verbally, on the board, or on paper. After students have taken a quiz or test, consider pairing high-scoring students with students who have lower scores. The higher-scoring student could act as a teacher to help the student with the lower score study and improve. As part of this effort, the pair could also set a goal to achieve a higher combined score on the next test. Consider creating a chart or bulletin board to display students’ goals and recognize their progress.

## Activities That Help Students Understand Scripture Mastery Passages

### Defining Words and Phrases

Defining words and phrases in scripture mastery passages (or helping students to define them) will help students understand the meaning of the entire passage. When such definitions are critical to understanding the doctrines and principles in a passage, you may want to encourage students to write these definitions in their scriptures. Review meanings of words and phrases as you review scripture mastery passages.

### Identifying Context

Identifying the context of a scripture passage can help students better understand

the meaning of the passage. Context includes information concerning who is speaking to whom and why, the setting of the passage (historical, cultural, and geographical), and the question or situation from which the content of the scripture passage arose. For example, the exclamation found in Genesis 39:9 is part of Joseph of Egypt’s response to Potiphar’s wife when she invited him to commit sexual sin. To commit sexual sin would not only be a severe betrayal to Joseph’s master, but a “sin against God.” Knowing this information can help students understand more clearly the severity of choosing to commit sexual sin, and it can give them a question to ask themselves when they feel tempted—“How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” As you teach lessons that include scripture mastery passages, emphasize the context surrounding those passages. Additional activities like the following can also help students understand these key passages.

- **Identify Context**—Write the following headings across the top of the board: *Speaker, Audience, Purpose, and Other Helpful Insights*. Divide students into groups, and assign each group a scripture mastery passage. Invite them to discover the context of their assigned passages by identifying information that corresponds to the headings on the board. Have them write their findings on the board. Then ask each group to explain the context of their assigned passages and how this information affects their understanding of the truths in each passage. To add another dimension to this activity, you might want to challenge the class to guess the scripture mastery references based on the descriptions on the board before each group explains what they have written.

### Analyzing

Analyzing involves identifying doctrines and principles found in scripture passages. It also includes helping students understand how these truths are relevant to them. This can lead to deeper application of doctrines and principles in their lives. The following activity can help students analyze scripture mastery passages:

- **Write Clues**—As students become more familiar with scripture mastery passages, invite them to create questions, scenarios, or other clues that

illustrate the doctrines and principles taught in the passages. These could be used to quiz the class.

### Explaining

Having students explain scripture passages deepens their understanding and improves their ability to teach doctrines and principles from the scriptures. The following are two methods that can help students learn to explain scripture mastery passages:

- **Key Words and Phrases**—Invite students to read the same scripture mastery passage on their own and identify a word or phrase they think is especially important to the meaning of the passage. Then invite a student to read the passage to the class and give emphasis to the word or phrase he or she has chosen. Ask the student to explain why that word or phrase is important to understanding the passage. Invite a few other students to do the same. Students may choose different words or phrases for the same passage. As class members hear these different points of view, they can gain deeper understanding of the passage.
- **Prepare a Devotional**—Give students opportunities to use scripture mastery passages as they prepare and present devotionals at the beginning of class. Help them prepare to summarize context, explain doctrines and principles, share meaningful experiences or examples, and testify of the doctrines and principles in the passages. You might also suggest that students consider using an object lesson to explain the ideas in the passages.

### Feeling the Importance of Doctrines and Principles

Help students understand and gain a spiritual witness of the doctrines and principles taught in the scripture mastery passages. Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained, “A true teacher, once he [or she] has taught the facts [of the gospel] . . . , takes [the students] a step further to gain the spiritual witness and the understanding in their hearts that brings about the action and the doing” (“Teaching by Faith” [address to CES religious educators, Feb. 1, 2002], 5, si.lds.org; see also *Teaching Seminary: Preservice Readings* [2004], 92). When students feel the

truth, importance, and urgency of a doctrine or principle through the influence of the Holy Spirit, their desire to apply that truth in their lives grows. Teachers can help students invite and nurture these feelings of the Holy Spirit by giving them opportunities to share experiences they have had with living the gospel principles found in scripture mastery passages. This will help students better understand the truths taught in the scripture mastery passages and ensure that these truths are written in students' hearts. The following activity can help students feel the importance of the doctrines and principles taught by scripture mastery passages:

- **Listening for Scripture Passages**—Invite students to listen for scripture mastery passages in talks and lessons at church, in general conference addresses, and in discussions with family and friends. Periodically invite students to report on which passages they have heard, how the passages were used, what truths were taught, and what experiences they or others have had with the truths that were taught. Look for opportunities to testify (and invite students to testify) of the truths taught by scripture mastery passages.

## Activities That Help Students Apply Scripture Mastery Passages

### Teaching

The scripture mastery passages and the Basic Doctrines were developed together and are intentionally aligned for the benefit of students. (Scripture mastery passages are shown throughout the Basic Doctrines document.) When students learn and express the doctrines and principles contained in scripture mastery passages, they will also be learning and expressing the Basic Doctrines. And as students learn to express the Basic Doctrines in their own words, they may rely on memorized scripture mastery passages to help them. Giving students opportunities to teach doctrines and principles of the gospel using scripture mastery passages can increase their confidence in themselves and in their knowledge of the scriptures. When students teach and testify of the doctrines and principles found in scripture mastery passages, they can also strengthen their testimonies. Encourage students to use scripture mastery passages to teach and

explain the gospel in class and in conversations with friends, family, and others.

- **Present a Message**—Assign students to prepare 3- to 5-minute talks or lessons based on scripture mastery passages. Have them prepare in class or at home. In addition to the scripture mastery passages, they could use other resources to help them prepare, such as scripture mastery cards, the Topical Guide, the Guide to the Scriptures, or *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference*. Each talk or lesson should include an introduction, the scripture mastery passage, a story about or an example of the principle being taught, and the student's testimony. Students could volunteer to present their messages in class, in a family home evening, or to their quorums or classes as part of their Duty to God or Personal Progress efforts. If students present their talks or lessons outside of class, consider inviting them to report on their experiences.
- **Missionary Role Play**—Prepare a number of cards with questions an investigator might ask that can be answered with the help of scripture mastery passages (for example, "What do members of your church believe about Jesus Christ?"). Invite pairs of students to come to the front of the class to answer a question chosen from the cards. To help students understand how missionaries might answer similar questions, you could suggest a few effective teaching methods, such as (1) stating the context of the scripture passage, (2) explaining a doctrine or principle, (3) asking questions to find out if those they teach understand or believe what has been taught, (4) sharing experiences and testimony, and (5) inviting those they teach to act on the truth that was taught. Ask the class to give feedback on what they liked about how each companion answered their question.
- **Testify**—Invite students to look through the scripture mastery passages and choose one that contains a doctrine or principle of which they can testify. Invite them to testify of the truth they have selected and share experiences that led them to be able to testify of it. As students share their testimonies, the Holy Ghost will confirm the truth of the doctrines or principles of which they are testifying. Their

testimonies may also inspire others to act in faith.

*Note:* Opportunities for students to share their testimonies should be voluntary. Students should never be forced to share their testimonies or be made to feel that they must profess knowledge they don't feel they have. In addition, some students are reluctant to share their testimonies because they mistakenly think that they need to open with "I want to bear my testimony . . ." or that their expression of testimony must be accompanied by a display of emotion. Help students understand that when they testify, they can simply share doctrines or principles they know to be true. Sharing testimony can be as simple as saying "I believe this to be true" or "I know this is true" or "I believe this with all my heart."

### Living

Suggesting ways that students may apply the doctrines and principles contained in scripture passages (or inviting students to think of ways) gives them the opportunity to learn by exercising faith. Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said:

"A learner exercising agency by acting in accordance with correct principles opens his or her heart to the Holy Ghost and invites His teaching, testifying power, and confirming witness. Learning by faith requires spiritual, mental, and physical exertion and not just passive reception. It is in the sincerity and consistency of our faith-inspired action that we indicate to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our willingness to learn and receive instruction from the Holy Ghost" ("Seek Learning by Faith," *Ensign*, Sept. 2007, 64).

Give students opportunities to share and testify of the experiences they have had with applying doctrines and principles. The following is one way to encourage students to apply scripture mastery passages in their lives:

- **Set Goals**—Based on the application section of the scripture mastery cards, invite students to set specific goals to better live the principles found in scripture mastery passages. Have them write their goals on a piece of paper to carry with them as a reminder. When appropriate, invite students to report on their successes.

## Activities That Help Students Memorize Scripture Mastery Passages

### Memorizing

Memorization of scripture passages can deepen understanding and enhance a student's ability to teach the gospel. When students memorize scriptures, the Holy Ghost can bring phrases and ideas back to their memory in times of need (see John 14:26; D&C 11:21). Remember to adapt memorization activities to the abilities of your students. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles encouraged the memorization of scriptures when he said:

"Great power can come from memorizing scriptures. To memorize a scripture is to forge a new friendship. It is like discovering a new individual who can help in time of need, give inspiration and comfort, and be a source of motivation for needed change" ("The Power of Scripture," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 6).

Each of the following activities could be repeated several days in a row at the beginning or end of class to help students achieve long-term memorization:

- **One-Word Race**—Challenge the class to say a scripture mastery passage one word per student at a time. For example, when helping students memorize Genesis 1:26–27, the first student would say the word *And*, the second student would say *God*, the third student would say *said*, and so forth until the entire verse is completed. Time the class, and give them multiple tries to achieve a target time. As you repeat this activity, consider shifting the order of students so they have to say different words.
- **First Letters**—Write on the board the first letters of each word in a scripture mastery passage. Point to the letters as the class repeats the passage with you, using their scriptures as needed. Repeat this activity until students feel confident in their ability to recite a passage with only the help of the first letters. You may want to erase a few of the letters each

time students recite the passage. This will gradually increase the challenge until students can repeat the passage without using the first letters.

- **Wordstrip Puzzles**—Write, or have students write, the words of a scripture mastery passage on a lined piece of paper. Cut the paper in strips, leaving lines of the scripture intact. Cut some of the strips shorter to include just a few words of the passage on each. Mix up the paper strips and give them to pairs or small groups of students. Challenge students to arrange the paper strips in order, using their scriptures as a guide. Have them practice until they no longer need to use their scriptures. After they have finished, ask them to recite the passage aloud. You could also time students to see which group can put the strips in the correct order the fastest. Or you could time the entire class to see how long it takes for all of the groups to complete the puzzle (as the first groups finish, let them assist the slower groups).

## 100 Scripture Mastery Passages

Old Testament	New Testament	Book of Mormon	Doctrine and Covenants
Moses 1:39	Matthew 5:14–16	1 Nephi 3:7	JS—H 1:15–20
Moses 7:18	Matthew 11:28–30	2 Nephi 2:25	D&C 1:37–38
Abraham 3:22–23	Matthew 16:15–19	2 Nephi 2:27	D&C 6:36
Genesis 1:26–27	Matthew 22:36–39	2 Nephi 9:28–29	D&C 8:2–3
Genesis 2:24	Matthew 28:19–20	2 Nephi 25:23, 26	D&C 10:5
Genesis 39:9	Luke 24:36–39	2 Nephi 28:7–9	D&C 13:1
Exodus 19:5–6	John 3:5	2 Nephi 31:19–20	D&C 18:10–11
Exodus 20:3–17	John 14:6	2 Nephi 32:3	D&C 18:15–16
Joshua 24:15	John 14:15	2 Nephi 32:8–9	D&C 19:16–19
1 Samuel 16:7	John 17:3	Mosiah 2:17	D&C 19:23
Psalms 24:3–4	Acts 2:36–38	Mosiah 3:19	D&C 25:13
Psalms 119:105	Acts 3:19–21	Mosiah 4:30	D&C 46:33
Psalms 127:3	1 Corinthians 6:19–20	Alma 7:11–13	D&C 58:27
Proverbs 3:5–6	1 Corinthians 15:20–22	Alma 32:21	D&C 58:42–43
Isaiah 1:18	1 Corinthians 15:40–42	Alma 37:35	D&C 64:9–11
Isaiah 5:20	Galatians 5:22–23	Alma 39:9	D&C 76:22–24
Isaiah 29:13–14	Ephesians 4:11–14	Alma 41:10	D&C 76:40–41
Isaiah 53:3–5	Philippians 4:13	Helaman 5:12	D&C 78:19
Isaiah 58:6–7	2 Thessalonians 2:1–3	3 Nephi 12:48	D&C 82:10
Isaiah 58:13–14	2 Timothy 3:15–17	3 Nephi 18:15, 20–21	D&C 88:124
Jeremiah 1:4–5	Hebrews 12:9	Ether 12:6	D&C 89:18–21
Ezekiel 37:15–17	James 1:5–6	Ether 12:27	D&C 107:8
Amos 3:7	James 2:17–18	Moroni 7:41	D&C 121:36, 41–42
Malachi 3:8–10	1 Peter 4:6	Moroni 7:45, 47–48	D&C 130:22–23
Malachi 4:5–6	Revelation 20:12	Moroni 10:4–5	D&C 131:1–4

## Introduction to Basic Doctrines

The following Basic Doctrines should be highlighted in seminary:

- Godhead
- Plan of Salvation
- Atonement of Jesus Christ
- Dispensation, Apostasy, and Restoration
- Prophets and Revelation
- Priesthood and Priesthood Keys
- Ordinances and Covenants
- Marriage and Family
- Commandments

Teachers are to help students identify, understand, believe, explain, and apply these basic doctrines of the gospel as they study the scriptures. Doing so will help students strengthen their testimonies and increase their appreciation for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Learning the Basic Doctrines will also help students be better prepared to live the gospel and teach these important truths to others. The lessons in this manual were created with the Basic Doctrines in mind. It is important to recognize that other significant doctrines of the gospel will also be emphasized in this manual, even though they are not listed among the Basic

Doctrines. The teaching of basic doctrines of the gospel occurs as you study the scriptures daily with students and as you help them master key scripture passages. You should not divert from sequential scripture study to focus on these doctrines. Rather, you should give attention to them as they naturally arise in the course of study and as you help students master key scripture passages. For example, as you teach that “Jesus Christ created the heavens and the earth under the direction of the Father” in Moses 1, you might want to point out to students that this truth can help them understand the Basic Doctrine of the Plan of Salvation. You might ask students to explain what else they know about the Creation. Also, as students learn the scripture mastery passage in Isaiah 1:18, you could help them see that the passage helps us understand the doctrine of the Atonement of Jesus Christ by explaining that though our sins make us unclean—unworthy to dwell in the presence of God—the Savior desires to help us become clean and pure. Growth in understanding, believing, and living the Basic Doctrines is a process that occurs over the four years of seminary and continues for the rest of a student’s life. You may want to provide students with a list of the Basic Doctrines.

### Basic Doctrines Assessment

A Basic Doctrines Assessment has been designed to provide teachers with information they can use to better bless the lives of their students. We recommend that teachers administer this assessment during the first week of class and again toward the end of the year. To find the Basic Doctrines Assessment and other assessments on the S&I website ([si.lds.org](http://si.lds.org)), search using the key word *assessment*.

Teachers who send their students’ assessment results to the S&I Office of Research will receive a report that will help them adapt their teaching to better meet the needs of their students. For example, if results indicate that students did not understand the doctrine of repentance, several lessons in the yearly curriculum would be identified that may help students better understand this doctrine. As teachers prayerfully use this information in their sequential scripture teaching, our youth and young adults will be better prepared to accomplish the Objective of Seminaries and Institutes of Religion.

## Basic Doctrines

The Basic Doctrines should be highlighted in both seminary and institute classes. Teachers are to help students identify, understand, believe, explain, and apply these doctrines of the gospel. Doing so will help students strengthen their testimonies and increase their appreciation for the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. A study of these doctrines will also help students be better prepared to teach these important truths to others.

Most of the 100 scripture mastery passages selected by Seminaries and Institutes of Religion were chosen to support students' understanding of the Basic Doctrines. The majority of the scripture references listed in this document refer to scripture mastery passages. They have been included to show how they relate to the Basic Doctrines.

### 1. Godhead

There are three separate personages in the Godhead: God, the Eternal Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–20). The Father and the Son have tangible bodies of flesh and bone, and the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit (see D&C 130:22–23). They are one in purpose and doctrine. They are perfectly united in bringing to pass Heavenly Father's divine plan of salvation.

#### *God the Father*

God the Father is the Supreme Ruler of the universe. He is the Father of our spirits (see Hebrews 12:9). He is perfect, has all power, and knows all things. He is also a God of perfect mercy, kindness, and charity.

#### *Jesus Christ*

Jesus Christ is the Firstborn of the Father in the spirit and is the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. He is Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Messiah of the New Testament.

Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and made a perfect Atonement for the sins of all mankind (see Alma 7:11–13). His life is the perfect example of how all mankind should live (see John 14:6; 3 Nephi 12:48). He was the first person on this earth to be resurrected (see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22). He will come again in power

and glory and will reign on the earth during the Millennium.

All prayers, blessings, and priesthood ordinances should be done in the name of Jesus Christ (see 3 Nephi 18:15, 20–21).

Related references: Helaman 5:12; D&C 19:23; D&C 76:22–24

#### *The Holy Ghost*

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead. He is a personage of spirit without a body of flesh and bones. He is often referred to as the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, and the Comforter.

The Holy Ghost bears witness of the Father and the Son, reveals the truth of all things, and sanctifies those who repent and are baptized (see Moroni 10:4–5).

Related references: Galatians 5:22–23; D&C 8:2–3

### 2. Plan of Salvation

In the premortal existence, Heavenly Father introduced a plan to enable us to become like Him and obtain immortality and eternal life (see Moses 1:39). The scriptures refer to this plan as the plan of salvation, the great plan of happiness, the plan of redemption, and the plan of mercy.

The plan of salvation includes the Creation, the Fall, the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and all of the laws, ordinances, and doctrines of the gospel. Moral agency—the ability to choose and act for ourselves—is also essential in Heavenly Father's plan (see 2 Nephi 2:27). Because of this plan, we can be perfected through the Atonement, receive a fulness of joy, and live forever in the presence of God (see 3 Nephi 12:48). Our family relationships can last throughout the eternities.

Related references: John 17:3; D&C 58:27

#### *Premortal Life*

Before we were born on the earth, we lived in the presence of our Heavenly Father as His spirit children (see Abraham 3:22–23). In this premortal existence we participated in a council with Heavenly Father's other spirit children. During that council, Heavenly Father presented His plan

and the premortal Jesus Christ covenanted to be the Savior.

We used our agency to follow Heavenly Father's plan. We prepared to come to earth, where we could continue to progress.

Those who followed Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were permitted to come to the earth to experience mortality and progress toward eternal life. Lucifer, another spirit son of God, rebelled against the plan. He became Satan, and he and his followers were cast out of heaven and denied the privileges of receiving a physical body and experiencing mortality.

Related reference: Jeremiah 1:4–5

#### *The Creation*

Jesus Christ created the heavens and the earth under the direction of the Father. The earth was not created from nothing; it was organized from existing matter. Jesus Christ has created worlds without number (see D&C 76:22–24).

The Creation of the earth was essential to God's plan. It provided a place where we could gain a physical body, be tested and tried, and develop divine attributes.

We are to use the earth's resources with wisdom, judgment, and thanksgiving (see D&C 78:19).

Adam was the first man created on the earth. God created Adam and Eve in His own image. All human beings—male and female—are created in the image of God (see Genesis 1:26–27).

#### *The Fall*

In the Garden of Eden, God commanded Adam and Eve not to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the consequence of doing so would be spiritual and physical death. Spiritual death is separation from God. Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the mortal body. Because Adam and Eve transgressed God's command, they were cast out from His presence and became mortal. Adam and Eve's transgression and the resultant changes they experienced, including spiritual and physical death, are called the Fall.

As a result of the Fall, Adam and Eve and their posterity could experience joy and

sorrow, know good and evil, and have children (see 2 Nephi 2:25). As descendants of Adam and Eve, we inherit a fallen condition during mortality. We are separated from the presence of the Lord and subject to physical death. We are also tested by the difficulties of life and the temptations of the adversary. (See Mosiah 3:19.)

The Fall is an integral part of Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. It has a two-fold direction—downward yet forward. In addition to introducing physical and spiritual death, it gave us the opportunity to be born on the earth and to learn and progress.

### **Mortal Life**

Mortal life is a time of learning when we can prepare for eternal life and prove that we will use our agency to do all that the Lord has commanded. During this mortal life, we are to love and serve others (see Mosiah 2:17; Moroni 7:45, 47–48).

In mortality, our spirits are united with our physical bodies, giving us opportunities to grow and develop in ways that were not possible in the premortal life. Our bodies are an important part of the plan of salvation and should be respected as a gift from our Heavenly Father (see 1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

Related references: Joshua 24:15; Matthew 22:36–39; 2 Nephi 28:7–9; Alma 41:10; D&C 58:27

### **Life after Death**

When we die, our spirits enter the spirit world and await the Resurrection. The spirits of the righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise. Many of the faithful will preach the gospel to those in spirit prison.

Spirit prison is a temporary place in the postmortal world for those who die without knowledge of the truth and for those who are disobedient in mortality. There, spirits are taught the gospel and have the opportunity to repent and accept ordinances of salvation that are performed for them in temples (see 1 Peter 4:6). Those who accept the gospel will dwell in paradise until the Resurrection.

Resurrection is the reuniting of our spirit bodies with our perfected physical bodies of flesh and bones (see Luke 24:36–39). After resurrection, the spirit and body will never again be separated and we will be

immortal. Every person born on earth will be resurrected because Jesus Christ overcame death (see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22). The righteous will be resurrected before the wicked and will come forth in the First Resurrection.

The Final Judgment will occur after the Resurrection. Jesus Christ will judge each person to determine the eternal glory that he or she will receive. This judgment will be based on each person's obedience to God's commands (see Revelation 20:12; Mosiah 4:30).

There are three kingdoms of glory (see 1 Corinthians 15:40–42). The highest of these is the celestial kingdom. Those who are valiant in the testimony of Jesus and obedient to the principles of the gospel will dwell in the celestial kingdom in the presence of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ (see D&C 131:1–4).

The second of the three kingdoms of glory is the terrestrial kingdom. Those who dwell in this kingdom will be the honorable men and women of the earth who were not valiant in the testimony of Jesus.

The telestial kingdom is the lowest of the three kingdoms of glory. Those who inherit this kingdom will be those who chose wickedness rather than righteousness during their mortal lives. These individuals will receive their glory after being redeemed from spirit prison.

Related reference: John 17:3

## **3. Atonement of Jesus Christ**

To atone is to suffer the penalty for sin, thereby removing the effects of sin from the repentant sinner and allowing him or her to be reconciled to God. Jesus Christ was the only one capable of making a perfect atonement for all mankind. His Atonement included His suffering for the sins of mankind in the Garden of Gethsemane, the shedding of His blood, His suffering and death on the cross, and His Resurrection from the tomb (see Luke 24:36–39; D&C 19:16–19). The Savior was able to carry out the Atonement because He kept Himself free from sin and had power over death. From His mortal mother, He inherited the ability to die. From His immortal Father, He inherited the power to take up His life again.

Through grace, made available by the Savior's atoning sacrifice, all people will

be resurrected and receive immortality. The Atonement of Jesus Christ also makes it possible for us to receive eternal life (see Moroni 7:41). To receive this gift, we must live the gospel of Jesus Christ, which includes having faith in Him, repenting of our sins, being baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring faithfully to the end (see John 3:5).

As part of His Atonement, Jesus Christ not only suffered for our sins but also took upon Himself the pains, sicknesses, and infirmities of all people (see Alma 7:11–13). He understands our suffering because He has experienced it. His grace, or enabling power, strengthens us to bear burdens and accomplish tasks that we could not do on our own (see Matthew 11:28–30; Philippians 4:13; Ether 12:27).

Related references: John 3:5; Acts 3:19–21

### **Faith in Jesus Christ**

Faith is a "hope for things which are not seen, which are true" (Alma 32:21; see also Ether 12:6). It is a gift from God.

Faith must be centered in Jesus Christ in order for it to lead a person to salvation. Having faith in Jesus Christ means relying completely on Him and trusting in His infinite Atonement, power, and love. It includes believing His teachings and believing that even though we do not understand all things, He does (see Proverbs 3:5–6; D&C 6:36).

More than passive belief, faith is expressed by the way we live (see James 2:17–18). Faith can increase as we pray, study the scriptures, and obey God's commandments.

Latter-day Saints also have faith in God the Father, the Holy Ghost, and priesthood power as well as other important aspects of the restored gospel. Faith helps us receive spiritual and physical healing and strength to press forward, face our hardships, and overcome temptation (see 2 Nephi 31:19–20). The Lord will work mighty miracles in our lives according to our faith.

Through faith in Jesus Christ, a person may obtain a remission of sins and eventually be able to dwell in God's presence.

Related reference: Matthew 11:28–30

## Repentance

Repentance is a change of mind and heart that gives us a fresh view about God, about ourselves, and about the world. It includes turning away from sin and turning to God for forgiveness. It is motivated by love for God and the sincere desire to obey His commandments.

Our sins make us unclean—unworthy to return to and dwell in the presence of our Heavenly Father. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, our Father in Heaven has provided the only way for us to be forgiven of our sins (see Isaiah 1:18).

Repentance also includes feeling sorrow for committing sin, confessing to Heavenly Father and to others if necessary, forsaking sin, seeking to restore as far as possible all that has been damaged by one's sins, and living a life of obedience to God's commandments (see D&C 58:42–43).

Related references: Isaiah 53:3–5; John 14:6; 2 Nephi 25:23, 26; D&C 18:10–11; D&C 19:23; D&C 76:40–41

## 4. Dispensation, Apostasy, and Restoration

### Dispensation

A dispensation is a period of time when the Lord reveals His doctrines, ordinances, and priesthood. It is a period in which the Lord has at least one authorized servant on the earth who bears the holy priesthood and who has a divine commission to dispense the gospel and to administer the ordinances thereof. Today we are living in the last dispensation—the dispensation of the fulness of times, which began with the revelation of the gospel to Joseph Smith.

Previous dispensations are identified with Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus Christ. In addition, there have been other dispensations, including those among the Nephites and the Jaredites. The plan of salvation and the gospel of Jesus Christ have been revealed and taught in every dispensation.

### Apostasy

When people turn away from the principles of the gospel and do not have priesthood keys, they are in a state of apostasy.

Periods of general apostasy have occurred throughout the history of the world.

One example is the Great Apostasy, which occurred after the Savior established His Church (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3). Following the deaths of the Savior's Apostles, the principles of the gospel were corrupted and unauthorized changes were made in Church organization and priesthood ordinances. Because of this widespread wickedness, the Lord withdrew the authority and keys of the priesthood from the earth.

During the Great Apostasy, people were without divine direction from living prophets. Many churches were established, but they did not have the authority to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost or perform other priesthood ordinances. Parts of the holy scriptures were corrupted or lost, and the people no longer had an accurate understanding of God.

This apostasy lasted until Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son appeared to Joseph Smith and initiated the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel.

### Restoration

The Restoration is God's reestablishment of the truths and ordinances of His gospel among His children on the earth (see Acts 3:19–21).

In preparation for the Restoration, the Lord raised up noble men during what is called the Reformation. They attempted to return religious doctrine, practices, and organization to the way the Savior had established them. They did not, however, have the priesthood or the fulness of the gospel.

The Restoration began in 1820 when God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph Smith in response to his prayer (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–20). Some of the key events of the Restoration were the translation of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods, and the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830.

The Aaronic Priesthood was restored to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery by John the Baptist on May 15, 1829. The Melchizedek Priesthood and keys of the kingdom were also restored in 1829, when the Apostles Peter, James, and John conferred them upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

The fulness of the gospel has been restored, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth” (D&C 1:30). The Church will eventually fill the whole earth and stand forever.

Related references: Isaiah 29:13–14; Ezekiel 37:15–17; Ephesians 4:11–14; James 1:5–6

## 5. Prophets and Revelation

A prophet is a person who has been called by God to speak for Him (see Amos 3:7). Prophets testify of Jesus Christ and teach His gospel. They make known God's will and true character. They denounce sin and warn of its consequences. At times, they prophesy of future events (see D&C 1:37–38). Many teachings of prophets are found in the scriptures. As we study the words of prophets, we can learn truth and receive guidance (see 2 Nephi 32:3).

We sustain the President of the Church as a prophet, seer, and revelator and the only person on the earth who receives revelation to guide the entire Church. We also sustain the counselors in the First Presidency and the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as prophets, seers, and revelators.

Revelation is communication from God to His children. When the Lord reveals His will to the Church, He speaks through His prophet. The scriptures—the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price—contain revelations given through ancient and latter-day prophets. The President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is God's prophet on the earth today.

Individuals can receive revelation to help them with their specific needs, responsibilities, and questions and to help strengthen their testimonies. Most revelations to leaders and members of the Church come through impressions and thoughts from the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost speaks to our minds and hearts in a still, small voice (see D&C 8:2–3). Revelation can also come through visions, dreams, and visitations by angels.

Related references: Psalm 119:105; Ephesians 4:11–14; 2 Timothy 3:15–17; James 1:5–6; Moroni 10:4–5

## 6. Priesthood and Priesthood Keys

The priesthood is the eternal power and authority of God. Through the priesthood, God created and governs the heavens and the earth. Through this power He redeems and exalts His children, bringing to pass “the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39).

God gives priesthood authority to worthy male members of the Church so they can act in His name for the salvation of His children. The keys of the priesthood are the rights of presidency, or the power given to man by God to govern and direct the kingdom of God on the earth (see Matthew 16:15–19). Through these keys, priesthood holders can be authorized to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances of salvation. All who serve in the Church are called under the direction of one who holds priesthood keys. Thus, they are entitled to the power needed to serve and fulfill the responsibilities of their callings.

Related reference: D&C 121:36, 41–42

### Aaronic Priesthood

The Aaronic Priesthood is often called the preparatory priesthood. The offices of the Aaronic Priesthood are deacon, teacher, priest, and bishop. In the Church today, worthy male members may receive the Aaronic Priesthood beginning at age 12.

The Aaronic Priesthood “holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism” (D&C 13:1).

### Melchizedek Priesthood

The Melchizedek Priesthood is the higher, or greater, priesthood and administers in spiritual things (see D&C 107:8). This greater priesthood was given to Adam and has been on the earth whenever the Lord has revealed His gospel.

It was first called “the Holy Priesthood, after the Order of the Son of God” (D&C 107:3). It later became known as the Melchizedek Priesthood, named after a great high priest who lived during the time of the prophet Abraham.

Within the Melchizedek Priesthood are the offices of elder, high priest, patriarch, Seventy, and Apostle. The President of the Melchizedek Priesthood is the President of the Church.

Related reference: Ephesians 4:11–14

## 7. Ordinances and Covenants

### Ordinances

In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an ordinance is a sacred, formal act that has spiritual meaning. Each ordinance was designed by God to teach spiritual truths. The ordinances of salvation are performed by the authority of the priesthood and under the direction of those who hold priesthood keys. Some ordinances are essential to exaltation and are called saving ordinances.

The first saving ordinance of the gospel is baptism by immersion in water by one having authority. Baptism is necessary for an individual to become a member of the Church and to enter the celestial kingdom (see John 3:5).

The word *baptism* comes from a Greek word meaning to dip or immerse. Immersion is symbolic of the death of a person's sinful life and his or her rebirth into a spiritual life, dedicated to the service of God and His children. It is also symbolic of death and resurrection.

After a person is baptized, one or more Melchizedek Priesthood holders lay their hands on the person's head and confirm him or her a member of the Church. As part of this ordinance, called confirmation, the person is given the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The gift of the Holy Ghost is different from the influence of the Holy Ghost. Before baptism, a person can feel the influence of the Holy Ghost from time to time and through that influence can receive a testimony of the truth (see Moroni 10:4–5). After receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, a person has the right to His constant companionship if he or she keeps the commandments.

Other saving ordinances include ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood (for men), the temple endowment, and the marriage sealing (see D&C 131:1–4). All saving ordinances of the priesthood are accompanied by covenants. In the temple, these saving ordinances can also be performed vicariously for the dead. Vicarious ordinances become effective only when the deceased persons accept them in the spirit world and honor the related covenants.

Other ordinances, such as administering to the sick and the naming and blessing

of children, are also important to our spiritual development.

Related reference: Acts 2:36–38

### Covenants

A covenant is a sacred agreement between God and man. God gives the conditions for the covenant, and we agree to do what He asks us to do; God then promises us certain blessings for our obedience (see D&C 82:10).

All the saving ordinances of the priesthood are accompanied by covenants. We covenant with the Lord at baptism and renew those covenants by partaking of the sacrament. Brethren who receive the Melchizedek Priesthood enter into the oath and covenant of the priesthood. We make further covenants in the temple.

Related references: Exodus 19:5–6; Psalm 24:3–4; 2 Nephi 31:19–20; D&C 25:13

## 8. Marriage and Family

Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God, and the family is central to His plan of salvation and to our happiness. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between a man and a woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife. Parents are to multiply and replenish the earth, rear their children in love and righteousness, and provide for the physical and spiritual needs of their children.

Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other. Fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and provide the necessities of life. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners.

The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to continue beyond the grave. The earth was created and the gospel was revealed so that families could be formed, sealed, and exalted eternally. (Adapted from “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129; see also LDS.org/topics/family-proclamation.)

Related references: Genesis 2:24; Psalm 127:3; Malachi 4:5–6; D&C 131:1–4

## 9. Commandments

Commandments are the laws and requirements that God gives to mankind. We manifest our love for Him by keeping His commandments (see John 14:15). Keeping the commandments will bring blessings from the Lord (see D&C 82:10).

The two most basic commandments are “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . And . . . love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:36–39).

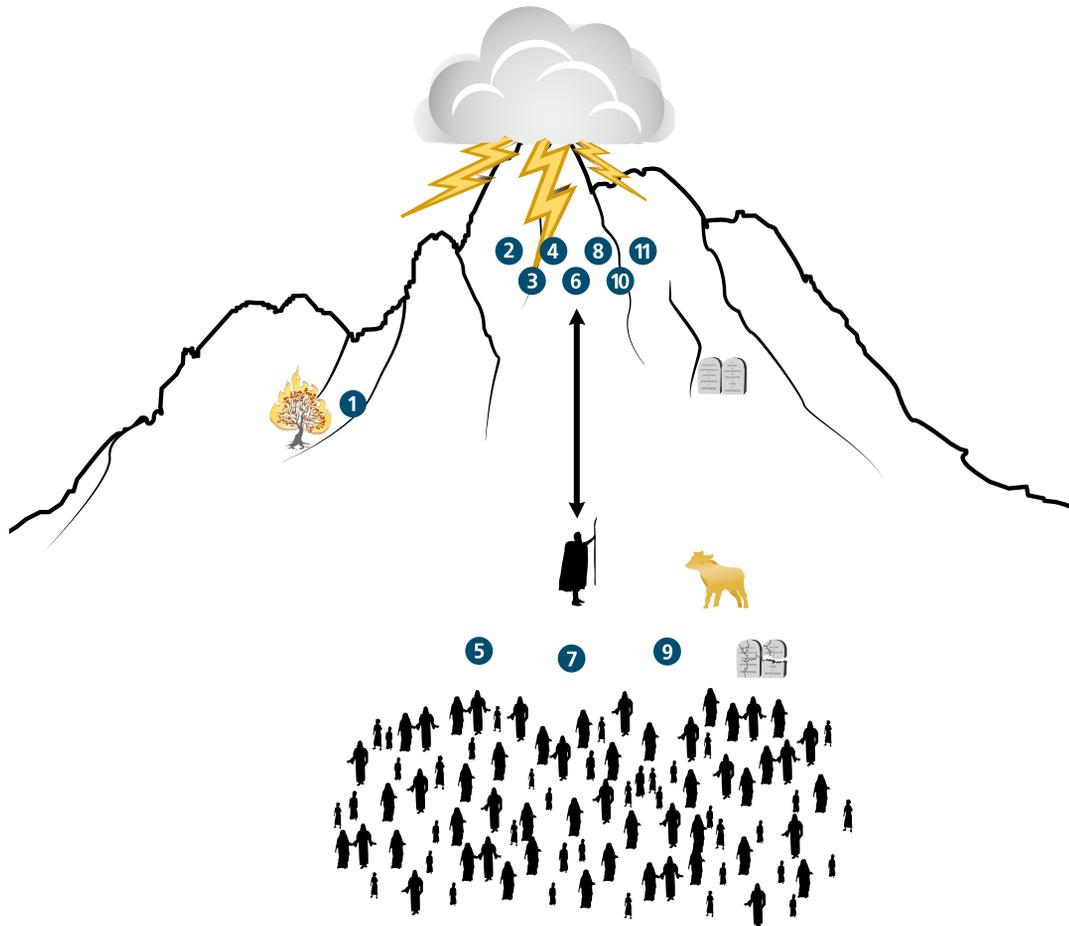
The Ten Commandments are a vital part of the gospel and are eternal principles that are necessary for our exaltation (see Exodus 20:3–17). The Lord revealed them to Moses in ancient times and has restated them in latter-day revelations.

Other commandments include praying daily (see 2 Nephi 32:8–9), teaching the gospel to others (see Matthew 28:19–20), keeping the law of chastity (see D&C 46:33), paying a full tithe (see Malachi 3:8–10), fasting (see Isaiah 58:6–7), forgiving others (see D&C 64:9–11), having a spirit of gratitude (see D&C 78:19), and observing the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89:18–21).

Related references: Genesis 39:9; Isaiah 58:13–14; 1 Nephi 3:7; Mosiah 4:30; Alma 37:35; Alma 39:9; D&C 18:15–16; D&C 88:124

For more information on these topics, go to [LDS.org](http://LDS.org), Teachings, Gospel Topics; or see *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004).

## Moses's and Israel's Experiences with Jehovah at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19–34)



- 1 God calls Moses to deliver Israel (see Exodus 3:1–12).
- 2 God invites Israel to be His covenant people (see Exodus 19:3–7).
- 3 Moses reports Israel's desire to enter God's covenant (see Exodus 19:8–14).
- 4 God warns that the people are not yet prepared to enter His presence (see Exodus 19:16–25).
- 5 God speaks the Ten Commandments to the Israelites (see Exodus 20:1–20).
- 6 God gives Israel additional laws (see Exodus 20:21–24:4).

- 7 Israel enters into the covenant (see Exodus 24:5–8).
- 8 God writes His law on stone tables (see Exodus 24:9–31:18).
- 9 Israel breaks the covenant (see Exodus 32:1–20).
- 10 Moses pleads for the people (see Exodus 32:30–33:7).
- 11 God writes His law on new stone tables but withholds the higher priesthood and its ordinances (see Exodus 34:1–32; Joseph Smith Translation, Exodus 34:1–2; D&C 84:25–27).

## Old Testament Selected Images



*An Angel Saves Abraham (see Abraham 1)*



*Melchizedek Blesses Abram (see Genesis 14)*



Lot's family fleeing Sodom and Gomorrah (see Genesis 19)



*Joseph Forgiving His Brothers (see Genesis 45)*



*Moses Parting the Red Sea* (see Exodus 14)



*Hannah Presenting Her Son Samuel to Eli (see 1 Samuel 1)*



SEMINARIES AND  
INSTITUTES OF RELIGION

---

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

ENGLISH

